

Preterist ApoLOGICetic

By Joseph E. Gautier Jr.

"The burden of proof in the argument rests not on those who assert, but on those who deny the past advent." (Ernest Hampden-Cook, *The Christ Has Come*, 1891)

Plain Language

"They lived expecting a consummation which was to arrive in their own time, and which they might witness with their own eyes. This fact lies on the very face of the New Testament writings; it is the key to the interpretation of much that would otherwise be obscure and unintelligible, and we shall see in the progress of this investigation how consistently this view is supported by the whole tenor of the New Testament scriptures." (J.S.Russell, *The Parousia*, 1878)

The New Testament is full of clear, plain language statements of **when** Christ would return. Jesus and His inspired apostles taught that His return would be during their generation. Do we believe them? No. Because of our misunderstanding of the Parousia of Christ, Christians have had to come up with excuses and explain away all of the plain language time statements. If this wasn't bad enough, there's another school that recognizes the implications of the time statements, yet says, **the apostles were wrong**. What? This passes as an acceptable option? An insidious explanation, which boils down to this...God lied to them! God, through the Holy Spirit, had His apostles write lies to those early Christians?

"Make no mistake about it, the imminency statements throughout the New Testament commit the discerning scholar to recognize that Jesus Christ really did promise to come again within the bounds of the first century with all the related events coming at the same time." (Walt Hibbard, *Eschatology Seminar*, 1998)

In his book, *The Last Days According to Jesus*, R.C. Sproul states that, "**For the preterism of Russell and others to work, they must give a credible explanation for how these verses fit into the time-frame of the first century.**"

I disagree. Jesus said to the thief on the cross, "**I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.**" (Luke 23:43 *NIV*) Definite time-frame statement. I am taking Jesus' word for it. Do I have to prove to the Christian World **how** that thief actually went to Paradise on that day, for it to have happened? God has plainly told us the "**When**". From this solid foundation we go forward and learn the "**How**".

"While there may indeed be details remaining to be worked out, difficulties often associated with the topics of the millennium, the resurrection of the body, and the last judgment...However, these merely challenge us to dig deeper, until all the details are cleared up. The clear passages should be the basis for interpreting the not-so-clear passages, according to sound hermeneutics." (Walt Hibbard, *Ibid.*)

"The belief that Christ's Second Advent, with its accompaniments of a resurrection and a judgment, took place at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem rests on precisely the same basis as the expectation of the events ever taking place; namely, on the plain, emphatic, and continually repeated statements of our Lord and His apostles given beforehand... He himself predicted that these events would take place at the close of the Jewish dispensation. To Christian believers this affords the strongest possible presumption that they did take place...The burden of proof in the argument rests not on those who assert, but on those who deny the past advent...To deny the truth of His predictions because we are unable historically to verify a certain portion of them is simply to make manifest the shallowness of our faith in Him. To disprove the truth of those predictions would be to shake the Christian religion to its very foundations. Let God and God's Son be true, and, if need be, every mere man a liar!" (E. Hampden-Cook, *The Christ Has Come*, 1891)

A Third Coming?

"The more I pondered the awesome implications of Jesus' words, the more I realized their truly revolutionary significance for eschatology. Without exception, every event foretold by the Biblical prophets was fulfilled within that generation, as Jesus said." "Scripture foretells a Second Coming – not a third!" (David Chilton, Foreword to *What Happened in AD 70?* By Ed Stevens, 1997)

The partial preterist is familiar with the time-frame statements. He believes there was *a type of* coming of Christ in AD 70. Ken Gentry holds that only when there is an obvious "**soon**" or "**at hand**" reference are we supposed to assign them to AD 70. In other words, every other time that Jesus or His Apostles spoke **to their generation** about His Parousia, and the events relating to it, they *must* have been alluding to some future-to-us Advent. Partial preterism is not new. It has been around for centuries. It is evident though, that when the creeds were written, it did not exist in strength. The creeds reflect the **one** future-to-the New Testament writers Coming of Christ. The partial preterist teaches **two**. In reality, the partial preterist believes in a Third Coming of Christ.

"...the creeds nowhere say anything about a '**coming in judgment at AD 70**' like Gentry believes. Yet, he teaches at least two different major '**comings of the Son of Man**' separated by thousands of years. This is not exactly '**strict conformity**' with the great creeds and confessions of the Christian faith." (Ed Stevens, *Stevens Response to Gentry*, 1997)

"Personally I cringe at the idea of going against such a unified and strong testimony to the historic faith, even though I grant the possibility that they are wrong at points. All who are inclined to differ with the creeds should observe a warning light and show great caution. Of course this warning light pales in comparison to the authority of Scripture itself." (R.C. Sproul, *The Last Days According to Jesus*, 1998)

"...there is a definite difference between '**creedal orthodoxy**' and '**Biblical orthodoxy**', and that only Scripture can determine true orthodoxy. Gentry seems to posit far more authority to the creeds than either the Bible or the Reformers. Now that there has arisen a conflict between the Biblical imminency statements and the creedal interpretations of a postponement, we must decide where to stand. Full preterists safeguard Biblical inerrancy, even though it contradicts the

interpretations and applications of uninspired men (in the creeds). Gentry gives up Biblical integrity to maintain creedal integrity." (Ed Stevens, *Ibid.*)

The creeds intimate an incorrect view of the *timing* and the *nature* of that **one** Return. One strength of the preterist position is that the Coming of Christ in AD 70, was identical in *nature* to the blueprint of Comings set before us in the Old Testament. We *should have* learned from these. Will the partial preterists' future-to-us Coming of Christ be according to the *nature* that has already been established? **The impact of what really happened back then was lost. To be found nowhere in the creeds.**

"It is admitted that belief in the immediateness of His return began to grow obsolete at the end of the first century; and it is clear that men of a subsequent generation who knew nothing of the event having been realised at the destruction of Jerusalem would not have gratuitously attributed to Jesus predictions which had apparently been falsified." (E. Hampden-Cook, *The Christ Has Come*, 1891)

All of the Old Testament *Comings* belonged to the Father. In AD 70, **shortly** after Israel had rejected and crucified the Christ, the **one and only** New Testament Coming occurred. It belonged to the Son.

The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, was the signal event that proved that the Christians had "Victory in Jesus".

"...He entered heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf...the way into the true Holy Place is not yet open so long as the outer tent still remains in existence...(He)will appear a second time, separated from sin, to those who are eagerly expecting Him, to make their salvation complete." (Hebrews 9:24,8,28, *N.T. In Modern Speech*, Richard F. Weymouth, 1909)

The preterist enjoys an understanding of what God has *already accomplished* for us through His Son. A completed salvation in Him. If He has yet to "appear a second time," is our salvation complete?

The "*re-appearance*" of Christ would give relief to **those** persecuted Christians.

"...because of your patience and faith amid all your persecutions and amid the afflictions which you are enduring...it is a righteous thing for Him to requite with affliction those who are now afflicting you; and to requite with rest you who are suffering affliction now – rest with us (Paul,Silas&Timothy) at the re-appearing of the Lord Jesus from Heaven, attended by His mighty angels. He will come in flames of fire to take vengeance on those who have no knowledge of God...They will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, being banished from the presence of the Lord and from His glorious majesty, when He comes on that day..." (II Thessalonians 1:4-10, *N.T.*, Weymouth)

"...that their sufferings would be of but short continuance; that they who were the chief sources of their present troubles, would ere long be deprived of the power of injuring them, as they had hitherto done, and in a word, that the promised coming of their Lord was at hand, to take vengeance on them for their obstinate infidelity and unreasonable and violent opposition to the gospel; and that then their sufferings from that quarter would cease, and be succeeded by a glorious and signal deliverance from the impending calamities! A greater design than this, or one

more suitable to the known situation of the Christians, to whom the epistles were addressed, can hardly be conceived!" (N. Nisbett, *The Prophecy of the Destruction of Jerusalem*, 1787)

"...the Second Coming of Jesus had very narrow limits of time assigned to it. These coincide unmistakably with the winding up of the Jewish age, at the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A .D. The New Testament writers were entirely of one mind as to the speedy advent of the heavenly King and the heavenly kingdom." (E. Hampden-Cook, *The Christ Has Come*, 1891)

I repeat. The impact of what really happened *back then* has been lost!

We need to re-*defind* it!

Jesus Christ is God! He is the only true way to the Father! This was proven to the whole world, when He came back as The King of Kings, in AD 70. The enemies that rejected and crucified the Lord of Glory were destroyed. The King came with his army and conquered all! The King Has Come into His Kingdom!

"The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. 'He will rule them with an iron scepter.' He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." (Revelation 19:14-16, *NIV*)

"The most significant, redemptive, historical action that takes place outside the New Testament, is the judgment that falls on Jerusalem, and by which judgment the Christian Church now emerges as The Body of Christ." (R.C. Sproul, *Dust to Glory* video series, 1997)

"It was also said, 'IF ANY MAN PUTS AWAY HIS WIFE, LET HIM GIVE HER A WRITTEN NOTICE OF DIVORCE' (Deut. 24:1). But I tell you that every man who puts away his wife except on the ground of unfaithfulness causes her to commit adultery..." (Matthew 5:31-32, *N.T.*, Weymouth)

God said that the only Just reason for divorcing your wife was "on the ground of unfaithfulness". Also, that a "written notice of divorce" must be given. Would God not abide by His own laws? Just prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, God served Israel her divorce papers. The Book of Revelation. "*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*"!

"I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband." (Revelation 21:2, *NIV*)

When was the *Old* Jerusalem destroyed? So when should the "*new Jerusalem*" have been established? Isn't the Church the "*bride*" of Christ?

In AD 70, God divorced Himself from the adulterous, harlot wife and gave to His Son a new Bride! That's Us! These are the last few words of the Bible!

This is what should be important! This is the climax!

"Paradise Restored!"

The Sky is Falling!

"...There is the foundation of the apostle's inference and exhortation, seeing that all these things, however precious they seem, or what value soever any put upon them, shall be dissolved, that is, destroyed; and that in that dreadful and fearful manner before mentioned, in a day of judgment, wrath, and vengeance, by fire and sword; let others mock at the threats of Christ's coming: He will come - He will not tarry; and then the heavens and earth that God Himself planted, - the sun, moon, and stars of the Judaical polity and church, - the whole old world of worship and worshippers, that stand out in their obstinacy against the Lord Christ, shall be sensibly dissolved and destroyed: this we know shall be the end of these things, and that shortly." (Dr. John Owen, *sermons on II Peter 3*, 1721)

"But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare... That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat" (II Peter 3:10,12, *NIV*)

The "**elements**" spoken of, are not the literal, physical rocks and gravel which make up our planet. Every other instance in the New Testament that this Greek word, **stoicheion** (**στοιχειον**) is used, (Gal. 4:3, 9-10; Col. 2:8, 20-21; and Heb. 5:12-14), it is always referring to "the elements (of knowledge): elemental things, or elementary principles," or rudimentary notions. (*NAS Exhaustive Concordance w/ Greek Dictionary*)

Peter was saying that the *false* "elements" of Judaism would soon be destroyed!

"...men living in the world are said to be the world, and the heavens and the earth of it. The time when the work here mentioned, (Isaiah 51:15,16) of planting the heavens and laying the foundation of the earth, was performed by God when He **divided the sea** (v.15) and **gave the law** (v.16), and said to Zion, **Thou art my people**; that is, when He took the children of Israel out of Egypt, and formed them in the wilderness into a church and state; then planted the heavens and laid the foundation of the earth: that is, brought forth order, and government, and beauty from the confusion wherein before they were. This is the planting of the heavens and laying the foundation of the earth in the world. And since it is that when mention is made of the destruction of a state and government, it is in that language which seems to set forth the end of the world... It is evident, then, that in the prophetic idiom and manner of speech, by heavens and earth, the civil and religious state and combination of men in the world, and the men of them, were often understood." "On this foundation I affirm that the heavens and earth here intended in this prophecy of Peter, the coming of the Lord, the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men, mentioned in the destruction of that heaven and earth, do all of them relate...to that utter desolation and destruction that was to be made of the Judaical church and state." (Dr. John Owen, *sermons on II Peter 3*, 1721)

Our whole lives we've been taught that Jesus would someday come back to this planet and destroy it! II Peter 3, Right? The idea of some literal, earth-shattering, catastrophic, cataclysmic, "universe-collapsing", element-melting, star-falling, sun-darkening, sea of blood, future-to-us Second Coming of Christ is foreign to Scripture. **Dare I say, that it even contradicts Scripture?**

Knowing God

"What, of all the states God ever sees man in, gives Him most pleasure? Knowledge of Himself." "Our point is one to which every Christian heart will warm, though the person whose religion is merely formal will not be moved by it." (J. I. Packer, *Knowing God*, 1973)

After the flood, God made a covenant with Noah, a promise to mankind.

"...I will never again curse the ground for man's sake...nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done...I will remember my covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh...the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature..." (Genesis 8:21; 9:15-16, *NIV*)

How we interpret II Peter 3, has a profound influence on what we bring into *these* verses. If we think that Peter was speaking of a global meltdown, then of the Genesis passage we say, "Yeah, He said that He wasn't going to do it by flood again; but I know how He'll do it in the future...by FIRE!"

Is this the God of Scripture? That He would make a covenant with man, with an escape clause in it? One that He could exercise at any time in the future? Did God purposely leave Himself room for a **different mode** of destruction?

Or is this a Promise too never "again destroy every living thing"?

This is not a covenant built upon conditions. It is unconditional. God did not say, "If you...Then I." Exactly the opposite happened. God was saying, that despite the fact that "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth," and will continue to be;"I will never again curse the ground for man's sake...nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done."

This is very important! **Have we been contradicting Scripture?**

(adapted from - *II Peter 3, The Late Great Kingdom*, Don K. Preston, 1990)

"We can apply our minds to contemplate the several perfections whereby the blessed God discovers to us His being, and can in our thoughts attribute them all to Him, though we have still but low and defective conceptions of each one. Yet so far as our apprehensions can correspond to the discovery that He affords us of His several excellencies, we have a present view of His glory." "But the incomprehensibility of the Divine nature is not a reason why we should desist from reverent inquiry and prayerful strivings to apprehend what He has so graciously revealed of Himself in His Word. Because we are unable to acquire perfect knowledge, it would be folly to say we will therefore make no efforts to attain to *any* degree of it." (Arthur W. Pink, *The Attributes of God*, 1975)

The Sound Of Silence

"The first Christians undoubtedly believed themselves to be standing on the verge of a great catastrophe, and we know what intensity and enthusiasm the expectation of the almost immediate coming of the Lord inspired...The same event cannot be imminent at two different periods separated by nearly two thousand years. There must, therefore, be some grave mis-conception on the part of those who maintain that the Christian church of to-day occupies precisely the same relation, and should maintain the same attitude, towards the 'coming of the Lord' as the church in the days of St. Paul." "It will be a sufficient recompense of his labour if he succeeds in elucidating in any degree those teachings of divine revelation which have been obscured by traditional prejudices, or misinterpreted by an erroneous exegesis." (J.S. Russell, *The Parousia*, 1878)

You will find that there are certain *areas* where the partial preterists are very quiet. They have to be, because of the resultant effect. These *areas*, if brought up, would certainly do damage to their "**theological**" paradigm.

Most partial preterists today, know, that they can no longer "split" Matthew 24.* The so-called "split" begins at verse 36. The "splitting" partial preterist says that, everything Jesus said up to verse 34 refers to AD 70. But everything after that, Jesus *must now* be telling His disciples about events which will happen on "**That Day**" still in **OUR** future. **Matthew 24:29-31, however, presents a problem.**

* See the chart by Ed Stevens in his books, "*What Happened In A.D. 70?*" and "*Stevens Response To Gentry*". The chart proves, through the analogy of Scripture (Luke 17), the error of splitting Matthew 24.

"Immediately after the distress of those days 'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.' At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other." (Matthew 24:29-31, *NIV*)

The Loudest Second Coming verses in the Bible are where the partial preterists are at their quietest. These verses are before the split! Every partial preterist must assign these verses to AD 70! **How many partial preterists use this as a proof - passage for a future-to-us Coming?**

Matthew 16:27 poses another problem.

"For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done." (v.27 *NIV*)

Verse 28 contains a definite time-frame statement, which most partial preterists place at Christ's coming in AD 70.

"I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." (v.28 *NIV*)

The *content* forces the partial preterist to divorce verse 27 from verse 28.

Verse 27 is speaking of judgment. Not just any judgment, but **The Judgment!** (Read Revelation 20:12-13, and 22:12, virtually verbatim Matthew 16:27). The partial preterist *must* place verse 27 in our future. But because of the time statement, verse 28 is placed in AD 70. Look at the contortions that must be performed for this to work.

This would mean that Jesus was speaking **to His disciples** about **The Coming** at the *end of the world*, which wasn't to be for at least another two thousand years; and in the same breath, **out of chronological order**, He tells them of some *other* coming. **Is this the way Jesus spoke? In a broken, non-sensical manner?** Now I understand how **inspired** writers could get so confused.

It's also the content of Chapters 20-22, that makes the partial preterist believe that only "the bulk" of the The Book of Revelation refers to AD 70. Revelation begins with the statement, "**...the things which must shortly take place**" (1:1) The Book ends with the exact same statement! (22:6)

Who are we, that we pick and choose, what we will, or will not allow, inside these "sandwich" statements! Everything which must shortly take place!

"...for he there says, 'Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand.' According, therefore, to the author's own declaration, the Apocalypse contains prophecies with which the very persons to whom it was sent were immediately concerned. But if none of these prophecies were designed to be completed till long after their death, those persons were not immediately concerned with them, and the author would surely not have said that they were blessed in reading prophecies of which the time was at hand, if those prophecies were not to be fulfilled till after a lapse of many ages." (J. D. Michaelis, *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. iv, 18th century)

"...as you encounter people who have been pointed to the imminency passages in the New Testament; they study them, they're quite intrigued by them, they're amazed how they could overlook them in previous readings. They think, 'Well you know, this is what the Bible teaches'. Then, they do not seem to be able to fit their ideas and interpretations of the areas (millennium, last judgment, resurrection) into the full preterist position. So what happens? They give up being preterists. They say, 'What about that? Well, that keeps me from being a full preterist. I can't be a full preterist because, you know, the resurrection, I can't see that.'" (Walt Hibbard, *Eschatology Seminar*, 1998)

The partial preterist will sometimes leave the plain language *timing* references, for their own idea of *the nature* of the event.

"...we sacrifice the love of truth to the support of a preconceived opinion." (J. D. Michaelis, *Intro. to N.T.*, vol. iv.)

I Thessalonians 4, is no different. Once again, a confrontation.

Timing vs. Nature

" For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; (sure sounds like Mtt. 24:30-31, you know, before the "split") and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus **we** shall always be with the Lord. Therefore **comfort one another with these words.**" (I Thess. 4:15-18 *NASB*)

What kind of " **comfort** " is it for the Thessalonians, Paul, if it's not going to happen for thousands of years?

In "*The MacArthur Study Bible*", John MacArthur says of this verse, "**4:15 - the word of the Lord - Was Paul referring to some saying of Jesus found in the gospels? No. There are none exact or even close.**"

I disagree. In Matthew 16:28, speaking of **when** it would happen, Jesus claims the same *timing* as Paul.

Jesus - ***some of you standing here shall not taste death***

Paul - ***we who are alive and remain***

The two statements intimate the same thought! Taken individually, each statement means: *Some Would Live To See It!* Whatever **it was, **it** happened in their lifetime! Jesus, in Matthew 16:28 *could have* just as easily said: Some of you will be "**alive and remain**" to see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom. Likewise, Paul *could have* written: There be "**some standing here who shall not taste death**" until the coming of the Lord. **They mean the same thing!****

So, what is the partial preterist to do? He has rightfully assigned Matthew 16:28's "**some standing here**" to AD 70. But now he is in a dilemma. To be consistent, he **must** now place his *rapture* there too. Scripture interprets Scripture. If we're not consistent with Scripture, then we're not right!

"...1800 years ago it was revealed on divine authority to our Lord's earthly contemporaries that, some of them should in no wise taste of death until they had witnessed His Second Advent." (E. Hampden-Cook, *The Christ Has Come*, 1891)

MELLO (μελλω)

Thayer's Greek English Lexicon defines this word as, "**to be about to do anything.**" This definition sums it up best. You can look the word up in any Greek Dictionary and they will all connote a similar meaning.

This is an extremely important word that has been lost in the *traditional* shuffle. You don't have to be a Greek scholar to see that in our popular versions an effort was made to hide the **power** of this word, and the meaning that it conveys. I believe the translators had good intentions. They wanted to protect the integrity of Christ and the Apostles. But I also believe that God knows what word to use! Translate it properly!

In our popular versions, (just pick one), any time the word is used in a non - eschatological reference it is usually rendered correctly. Conversely, whenever the word is found in an eschatological passage, with its certain preterist implication, it's been given a meaning that has

sucked all of the *life* out of it. Reading these verses as *Originally Intended* resuscitates them *back to life!*

I am **about to** submit a few of my favorite "**mello**" passages for consideration. All taken from [The Interlinear NASB-NIV Parallel New Testament in Greek and English](#), 1986, 1993. (unless otherwise specified).

Matthew 16:27 "**is about** For the Son of man to come in the glory of the Father..."
(Now read v's. 27 and 28 together. They sure compliment one another.)

Acts 17:30-31 "...God now declares to men, all men everywhere to repent because he set a day in which **he is about** to judge the inhabited earth..."

Acts 24:24-25 "...he sent for Paul. And [he] heard him concerning the faith in Christ. And [Paul] having reasoned concerning righteousness and self control, and the Judgment that is **about to be**..." (The Literal Translation of the Holy Bible, Jay P. Green, Sr. 1995)

Hebrews 1:14 "Are they not all ministering spirits for service being sent forth because of the ones **being about** to inherit salvation?"

Hebrews 10:27 "...but some fearful expectation of judgment and zeal of fire **being about** to consume the adversaries." (Compare with II Thess. 1:4-10, on p. 3)

I Peter 5:1 "...a witness of the Christ's sufferings and a sharer of the glory **being about** to be revealed."

Acts 24:15 "...a resurrection to be about to be both of just and of unjust."

II Timothy 4:1 "I solemnly witness before God and Christ Jesus, the [one] being about to judge living [ones] and dead, both [by] the appearance of him and [by] the kingdom of him."

Although these verses may be in direct conflict with what you *think*, they are, nevertheless, in complete harmony with "**the whole tenor of the New Testament**".

Getting It

"I walked in the sunshine with a scholar who had effectively forfeited his prospects of academic advancement by clashing with church dignitaries over the gospel of grace. 'But it doesn't matter,' he said at length, 'for I've known God and they haven't.'" (J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*, 1973)

All over the world, on a daily basis, people are being converted to Christianity. Likewise, all over the world, on a daily basis, Christians are *converted* to Calvinism. Can the opposite be said? Are there any Calvinists, I mean real Five-Pointers that *get it*, being convinced that Calvinism is wrong, and go back to thinking the way they used to? It doesn't happen! I don't know of one Christian who *used-to-be* a Calvinist!

What does this say about the truth of Calvinism?

David Chilton

I love David Chilton. I never met him. I never saw him speak. I don't even know what he looked like. But, I've read his books, and I've listened to his tapes. I wish he was still alive. David Chilton died in 1997. He was 45 years old.

In the back of David's book, "[Paradise Restored](#)", publisher Gary North, had this to write about David and his work:

"There was no doubt in my mind: he was the most gifted writer in our movement."

"The book-writing experience and theological training that he received in Tyler (Texas) makes him the 'hottest theological property' in the West."

"If the dominion approach to the Bible becomes widespread; it should be remembered that it was David Chilton who first broke through to the Christian public at large with this unique system of biblical interpretation."

"...his style is brilliant..."

Of [Paradise Restored](#) and [The Days Of Vengeance](#), North says:

"Until someone with a great deal of writing skill and an even greater grasp of the Bible than Chilton possesses goes into print to answer [Paradise Restored](#) and [The Days Of Vengeance](#), these counterattacks against biblical optimism will prove to be fruitless."

"...two of the most important works in eschatology in the history of the church - perhaps the most important."

"No book in the history of the Christian church has stated the biblical case (I emphasize the word biblical) for long-term optimism more eloquently and clearly than [Paradise Restored](#)."

"Chilton has established the terms of debate over eschatology for the next hundred years, at the very least."

In his book, "[The Days of Vengeance](#)", David Chilton labels full preterism as heterodox:

"Contrary to the theories of those interpreters who would style themselves as '**consistent preterists**,' the Fall of Jerusalem did not constitute the Second Coming of Christ... its ultimate thesis - that there is no future Coming of Christ or Final Judgment - is heretical."

"...it has become popular in some otherwise apparently orthodox circles to adopt a heretical form of '**preterism**' that denies any future bodily Resurrection or Judgment, asserting that all these are fulfilled in the Resurrection of Christ, the regeneration of the Church, the coming of the New Covenant, and the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Whatever else may be said about those

who hold such notions, it is clear that they are not in conformity any recognizable form of orthodox Christianity."

Prior to his death in 1997, David Chilton held to "such notions".

"Some of you know my sort of gradual movement into full preterist position...I recently ran across a passage in 'Paradise Restored', that now I look at and think; that should have pushed me over the cliff, twelve years ago into full preterism! I don't know why it didn't! I don't know what I would have done if somebody had come to me and said, 'David Chilton, look at what you said!' What I'm getting at is, here I am as a full preterist..." (David Chilton, *Conference on Bible Prophecy*, Oklahoma City, 1997)

"The more I pondered the awesome implications of Jesus' words, the more I realized their truly revolutionary significance for eschatology. Without exception, every event foretold by the Biblical prophets was fulfilled within that generation, as Jesus said." "Scripture foretells a Second Coming - not a third!" (David Chilton, Foreword to *What Happened in AD 70?* By Ed Stevens, 1997)

The partial preterist finds he continually loses verses to *what happened in AD 70*. Passages he **thought** referred to our future, he now **knows**, have already been fulfilled. Many will cling to just one or two verses. Acts 1:11 is famous for this. They'll say, "Well, that hasn't happened yet", and declare that the Bible still teaches a future-to-us physical coming.

Question: Could you have come up with a whole future system of things, all of your ideas of **another** coming of Christ, **from one or two verses**?

If God never said it, it should never have been a thought in our head!

Partial preterism is merely syncretistic. Mixing the truth of preterism with the falsity of futurism.

How is it that David Chilton went **towards** heresy? Is that what we do? We just wake up one morning, and decide to embrace what *we know* is heresy? Could it be that David Chilton *got it* ?

All over the world, on a daily basis, traditional-thinking Christians are being *converted* to partial preterism. Will a partial preterist ever deny the truth of *a coming* in AD 70, and go back to thinking the way he used to?

Likewise, all over the world, partial preterists are studying themselves right into full preterism, shedding futurism along the way. The direction is *towards* the truth.

I don't know of one partial preterist who *used-to-be* a full preterist!

What does this say about the truth of full preterism!