

## Implying Universalism

Scott Klaft

As controversial as it may seem among the religious world, I contend that the church spoken of in the Bible still exists today as an exclusive institution of God that is *not* made up of denominations. The denominational world seems to be purposely maintaining (and increasing) those departures from approved biblical patterns and distinguishing identifiers. The churches of Christ in our modern era have those identifying marks and/ or, at least, understand the need for them.

One of those identifying marks, however, is the autonomy of the individual congregation to make their own determinations about things. Generally, this is a good thing, allowing individual congregations to learn and grow without outside interference. But it also has led to many congregations failing in that respect, and adopting the denominational approach to biblical authority; which, in turn, makes that individual congregation equal to those denominations. They have departed from the biblical truth. The most they have to offer is a sign out front that makes the claim “Church of Christ.” I do not associate myself to those groups, unless it is to seek an opportunity to win them back to the biblical way of thinking.

Of course, some of those who would agree with the above paragraphs would want to turn it around back upon me. My “study of final things” (eschatology) does not agree with what is popularly held among the churches of Christ; and, because there have been people who would agree with my eschatology who have fallen into the denominational, Universalist practices, some assume *that* is what my eschatology leads to. I disagree. Not only does my view *not* lead to Universalism, it rather confirms to me those principles for which the churches of Christ have always contended in the exclusivity and infinite glory of God in the one true church belonging to Christ. Moreover, I have discovered that it is the traditional, futuristic view of “final things” that *actually* implies Universalism.

Here is what I mean. The “study of final things” is greatly concerned with the fulfillment of predictive prophecy in the Bible. The inspired writers of the New Testament are very decisive in their language concerning it. Take, for example, what Jesus had to say about the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Covenant:

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled” (Matthew 5:17, 18).

The traditional, Amillennial, futurist view of the Law of Moses says the Law was done away at the crucifixion of Jesus. That implies, when viewed with this passage, all of the prophecies found within the Law of Moses and the prophets were completely fulfilled at the cross. This is easily proven untrue with only the predictions of the destruction of the Jews as a nation found within the Old Testament writings. I will not take the time to discuss that just here.

But, what about all of the predictions of the resurrection of the Messiah, the institution of church/ kingdom of Heaven, the salvation of the soul, the resurrection of the saints? All of those predictions are

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found in the Old Testament. How could it be said to have been fulfilled at the cross? It cannot be both ways. Either every single “jot and tittle” of the Law of Moses remained in force until *ALL* of those things were fulfilled, or Jesus was mistaken about the subject.

Now, I know that those holding the traditional view will not say Jesus was mistaken. Yet, at the same time, they will insist that the “heaven and earth” (v. 18) is to be taken literally, and that its “passing” is referring to a yet-future destruction of the material universe, as well as a yet-future resurrection of the saints. But, again, this contradicts their first view about the Law of Moses, because Jesus insisted that the law would not pass until *ALL* of those prophetic predictions were fulfilled. The passing of “heaven and earth” and the resurrection of the saints are a part of that. If they have not yet happened, then the Law of Moses is still in force to this day.

Suppose, just for the sake of argument, they are right that all the predictive prophecies of the Old Covenant were fulfilled (somehow) at the cross. There is very little argument about the purpose for Jesus dying on the cross to bring the grace of God’s salvation to mankind. And, “...the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men” (Titus 2:11).

IF all of the Old Covenant prophecies (which included the resurrection) were fulfilled and everything in God’s plan to save mankind were complete *at the cross* – before the institution of the church, before the first gospel sermon (which includes a “this is that” referring to the prophet Joel, by the way), before bringing the Samaritans and the Gentiles into the kingdom of God, and before God’s vengeance on the disobedient Jewish nation – THEN all of those things that happened after the cross were unnecessary to God’s plan, merely recorded as part of a historical record that has nothing to do with salvation.

This removes the necessity of the church. This diminishes the need for teaching others the gospel. This removes all conditional responses to preaching the gospel. No conditions must be met, but God’s grace is available to all because Jesus died on the cross for the sins of all mankind: “...He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world” (1Jn. 2:2).

Friends, *that* is the Universalist position, not my position. My position is not in conflict with Jesus’ words in Matthew 5:17, 18. My position is in accord with Jesus as He told His disciples when the fulfillment would take place:

“And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that **ALL THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN MAY BE FULFILLED**...when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh” (Luke 21:20 – 22, 28 – caps my emphasis, SK).

Taking Jesus’ words together, we have nowhere else to go with the passing of the “heaven and earth” (those elevated places only priests were allowed to go in the physical temple called, “heaven,” and the outer courts called, “earth,” where the common folks were allowed). We have nowhere else to go with the end of the Old Covenant Law. We have nowhere else to go with the redemption of Israel than in the events surrounding the “days of vengeance” in which Jerusalem was “compassed” by armies. Yes, A.D. 70. That is when all things written in the Law and the prophets were fulfilled.

Regardless of what other men may have done who might agree on this subject, those who are teaching a future passing of heaven and earth, or a future coming of Jesus in fulfillment of prophecy, they are either implying that the Law of Moses is still in force today or they are implying Universalism. That is not a position I would want to be in, and neither should you.

The kingdom of God remains today, and the same conditions of entrance remain as when it was still under construction. If you have already believed the gospel, repented of sins, confessed your faith, been baptized for the remission of sins, and entered into the one true, saved, and exclusive, body of Christ, then

please bring this matter up to the leadership in the congregation where you attend. Offer them this publication if it would help. Assist us in purging out the spiritual blindness-causing error of the traditions of men and futurist teachings in order that the bride of Christ may continue without denominational baggage. And may she never again be heard *Implying Universalism*. [SK]

## A Gross Abuse of Logic and Eschatology

An Examination and Exposal of some Syllogisms

Don Preston

It has been fascinating lately that on Steve Baisden's FaceBook page "As It Is Written" we have seen a number of "defenders of the faith" appear, and claim that they could refute the truth of the Lord's coming in AD 70. Yet, after a few brief exchanges, they completely disappear never to return. This has happened repeatedly. Sometimes these men are respectful, sometimes hateful. One such man was Howard Denham. After only a few brief exchanges he completely withdrew. But, he has not been silent. No, he constantly, and caustically, writes against preterism, claiming there is no one that can answer his logical syllogism.

Denham constantly boasts of his prowess in logic. However, his presuppositional theology has distorted his use of logic to such an extent that his "arguments" are literally laughable, they are that bad, and most assuredly false. Steve Baisden has asked that I respond to a series of syllogisms by Denham.

The reader needs to know that Denham boasts that I will not debate him. The fact is that when Denham challenged me, he attempted to dictate every detail of the proposed debate, dates, venue, propositions, etc. *with absolutely no mutual negotiation*, no give and take. This is unheard of in the world of proper debate - not to mention patently unfair. It was either his way or the highway. I refused to submit to his unreasonable - and illogical - demands. In addition, his hateful, un-Christian demeanor completely turned me off. I refuse, as much as possible, to engage in debates with men who cannot conduct themselves with Christian decorum (see 2 Timothy 2:24). I repeatedly told Denham that if he would conduct himself with proper decorum, and treat me with respect, that I would debate him. My request was met with name calling, and more hate filled rhetoric in which he impugned my integrity. Therefore, I will not debate him.

With that said, I am glad to examine Denham's syllogism / arguments. Due to space limitations, I can only examine one or two at a time, but, will provide enough food for thought that the reader can see how truly shallow, illogical and false Denham's arguments are.

Here is the first syllogism from a list that Steve Baisden sent me. It was cut and pasted, with no changes or alterations of any kind.

**Major Premise:** If it is the case that Paul taught In Acts 17:31 that the Second Coming of Christ was imminent at the time of Paul's sermon on Mar's Hill, then it is the case that the Second Coming of Christ was imminent at the time of the penning of 2 Thessalonians 2:1-10.

**Minor Premise:** It is not the case that the Second Coming of Christ was imminent at the time of the penning of 2 Thessalonians 2:1-10.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, it is not the case that Paul taught In Acts 17:31 that the Second Coming of Christ was imminent at the time of Paul's sermon on Mar's Hill.

This is a horrible "argument." Let me illustrate.

The major premise is true: Paul did teach that the parousia (Second Coming) of Christ was imminent in Acts 17. Paul actually told the Athenians that the judgment was "about to come." Paul used the word "mello" in the infinitive, and the Blass-Debrunner Greek Grammar says: "mellein with the infinitive expresses imminence" (Blass-DeBrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early*

*Christian Literature*, (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1961)181). See the *Analytical Greek Lexicon*, Revised, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1978)262: “to be about to be, be on the point of.” In a newer work, among many that could be cited, Robinson and House say: “with the infinitive *I am about to, I intend.*”(Analytical Lexicon of New Testament Greek, Edited by Maurice Robinson and Mark House, (Peabody, Mass., 2012)231). Among many Greek commentators that could be cited, see *The Expositors Greek Testament* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1970)379) where Knowling says that the meaning of *mello* in the form used in Acts 17 (with the infinitive, DKP) “may equal its use in Acts 12:6” and therefore mean - to be “on the point of judging.”

Denham knows that if *mello* indicates imminence his entire eschatology is false. He has thus, in the past made some astoundingly bad arguments in his desperate attempt to negate that imminence. But, all he has done is to expose his desperation, and in his claimed examples of the use of *mello* where imminence is supposedly not present, demonstrates his abuse of language. The fact is that the primary meaning of *mello* with the infinitive is “about to be, to be on the point of.” This does not mean, as with many, many words that there are no exceptions to the rule. But, proper logic knows that exceptions to a rule do not negate the rule!

A key question is, did Paul, not only at Athens, but in other texts, preach the imminence of Christ’s coming? And the answer is unequivocally Yes he did!

Among a host of texts that could be cited, for brevity, consider Hebrews 9:28- 10:37. Hebrews 9:28 is almost universally recognized as a “Second Coming” text. Christ would come for salvation. Well, in chapter 10:35-39 which has no break from the discussion of the coming parousia and judgment, Paul said: “And now, in a very, very little while, (Greek *mikron hosan hosan*) the one who is coming will come and will not tarry.” That coming would be to give “the great reward” to those who endured to the end, and did not draw back to prediction.

So, granting the Pauline authorship of Hebrews, we have an explicit, emphatic and undeniable prediction of the imminence of the Second Coming. That leads us to Denham’s minor premise, which is fundamentally false.

Denham argues that in 2 Thessalonians 2 Paul taught that the parousia was not near. Patently false.

The coming of the Lord would be in the lifetime of the Thessalonians, per 2 Thessalonians 1! Follow me here, as I must be brief:

The Thessalonians— 2000 years ago— were being persecuted (2 Thessalonians 1:4f). Paul was not writing to, or about a far distant as yet not occurring persecution.

They were being persecuted by the Jews (Acts 17).

Paul said it was a righteous thing with God to give persecution to “those who are troubling you.” That means that God was going to give to the Jewish persecutors what they were doing to the Thessalonians.

Paul promised that the Thessalonians would be given “rest” - from *anesis*, which means *relief*, not reward.

Paul said that relief, and persecution of their persecutors, would be given “when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven.”

Now, this demands in the proper use of logic - that the Thessalonians would have to be alive, under persecution “When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven.” Jesus could not give them relief from persecution at his coming, if they were not being persecuted when he came! That is logically impossible!

Thus, Paul affirmed the imminence of Christ’s coming, in the very book in which Denham says he denied it! Denham is patently wrong. In fact, Paul denied that the Day of the Lord *had already come!* Paul did not say, as the KJV says “Do not be deceived that the Day of the Lord is at hand.” That is a false and misleading translation, as I prove in my book *How Is This Possible?* An examination of well over 50

translations reveals that only a tiny fraction of them agree with KJV, and what is more, the tense of the word translated as “at hand” by the KJV simply does not allow the “at hand” rendering. It is in the perfect tense, and in all occurrences of the word in the perfect tense, it is rendered past (or even now present). So, once again, Denham is wrong.

Denham might, perhaps, say that Paul was arguing that two things had to occur before the parousia, and thus, those two events, not having occurred, per Denham, would prove the non-imminence of the parousia. Once more, Denham’s presuppositional theology is proven wrong.

1. Paul said the apostasy had to occur. Fact: Jesus said that the apostasy would occur in his generation, prior to his coming in AD 70. See Matthew 24:10-12– and see the NASV especially, to catch the full power of the text.
2. The Man of Sin had to appear. Fact: The Man of Sin was already alive and operating, but simply not yet fully manifested!

By the way, Denham does not believe there are signs of the parousia, and yet, here he is appealing to a text that gave two signs that had to appear before the coming of the Lord!

Well, space forbids further development, but let me summarize:

His major premise - a conditional statement - is true: Paul did preach the imminence of the parousia in Athens, and Paul posited the imminence of the Day of the Lord - even in Thessalonians.

Denham has to pervert the Greek of 2 Thessalonians 2 in order to maintain his minor premise. He has to deny that the apostasy was a first century event-*contra* Jesus. He has to deny that the Man of Sin was already alive, *contra* Paul. Thus, his minor premise is totally false.

**Since his minor premise is totally false, Denham’s conclusion is falsified. [DP]**

## William Bell Reminisces of an MSOP Visit

### William Bell

Some years ago, I was accosted in the office at the Memphis School of Preaching (MSOP) by Curtis Cates. I had stopped by to donate a copy of my book to the library. While in the office Curtis Cates came in and challenged me claiming he could refute Covenant Eschatology with one argument.

He tried to make an argument on the Lord's Supper and I shut him down with one counter argument. He then claimed he could do it with the dating and time of fulfillment of the Book of Revelation. By that time, students had begun to gather in the library adjacent to the office.

When he made the traditional Revelation is about the fall of Rome argument, I picked it apart piece by piece and he began to get nervous. Then, after realizing we now had a huge audience (almost every student in the school), he asked that we move into one of the smaller study rooms behind a close door to continue the conversation. I initially refused, asking him in a voice that all in the library could hear because I knew they were listening as I stood facing the library.

I asked him why did he want to go and hide after the conversation had started. I told him I had nothing to hide and chose to finish the conversation out in the open where it began. He was noticeably nervous and after a couple of attempts wanted to shut the conversation down. I realized this was perhaps the only chance I'd get to discuss it with him and reluctantly agreed to enter a room with masonry brick walls (that conducted audio vocals very well, I later learned). Garland Elkins and Billy Bland joined us in the room.

For the next two hours or so we went round and round. They first asked why I would think they'd want a book on Preterism in the library donated to the memory of late Frank D. Young. I asked them why not?

After all, they had tons of books by Methodists, Catholics, Baptists, Presbyterians, Mormons, etc. They even had a Cotton Patch version of the Bible. They couldn't answer me.

Then, Cates made his best argument on Revelation and I refuted it so well that Garland Elkins agreed with me. (I knew he would because I'd heard Elkins make the similar argument on his radio program in the past).

At one point, Cates got so angry that he (a much shorter man than I) stood up over me while I was sitting down, pointed his finger in my face and shouted "answer me" on some point where he was out of order and had totally lost control of himself. I then stood up about a head and half taller and much bigger than he was, looked down on his head and told him he was out of order, pointed it out to Elkins and Bland and they agreed. They then made rules that we each speak one at a time and get an answer then allow the next man to answer. Cates agreed and calmed down.

They asked me every answer and tried every argument they could to refute Preterism. After they couldn't at the end they asked me for a copy of my book. I only had two copies and I told Bland I would later mail him a copy which I did.

Then they found a convenient time to exit the conversation claiming it was lunch time. "Food was more important than truth". So, we left the room on a more congenial tone than when the conversation began. As we stood in the lobby, Cates considered taking my "earned" diploma because of my views. (This was years after I'd graduated).

Then I asked him if would he take the earned diplomas of the men who taught at the school who earned them in denominational universities like Cumberland Presbyterian, etc. End of that discussion.

Then he claimed I lied and secretly taught Covenant Eschatology while a student in school. I almost laughed out loud. Every student in the school and faculty member knew my views on eschatology. I had friendly debates with most of them during our school term, including Ron Reeves, Dean Gittings, Joe Spangler, William McNeil, Peter Moss, Steve Nowlin and others. I also had direct conversations with the Director, Bro. Hearn and Frank Young even presented two lectures on it at an MSOP lecture on the A.D.70 Theory and Premillennialism as a direct result of knowing what I believed and taught.

At a later MSOP lectureship where Terry Varner spoke, Cates tried to make the same claim that I had deceived the school faculty who was unaware that I taught Covenant Eschatology. Dean Gittings was standing in the breezeway right outside the office between the main auditorium and told Cates that he knew for a fact I taught it while in school. Cates got angry and walked away. In fact, while in school one student went directly to the office in an attempt to get me kicked out of school and his attempt failed.

Later, after he graduated, that same student called me on the phone and apologized, then said he agreed that Revelation was written before and fulfilled in 70AD.

Now, after we dispersed that day, I didn't hear anything until later, one of the second-year students called me on the phone and identified himself as one of the students who was at the school the day Cates, Elkins, Bland and myself had the meeting. He said, the students listened through those brick masonry walls and heard the entire conversation.

They were so disturbed and demoralized that they went back upstairs to their classroom and no one could speak. They said you could hear a pin drop in the room. Why?

The student told me that Cates and the Faculty had bragged to them how easy it was to refute Covenant Eschatology. They often had mock debates "proving" they could refute it. But, they said, when they got their chance to do it, they ran and hid in a private room. But even then, after hearing everything that was said through the walls, they realized these men had failed miserably in their attempt. (By the way, my voice carries well and I usually don't need a mic. They put a mic on me to turn my volume down!)

Then a few years later, when I challenged the school to host the debate with me and Terry Varner, they sent me a letter saying there would be no debate. Later, I was told that when I debated Stephen Wiggins, the school threatened all the students saying that they would be disciplined if they attended the debate. I think maybe one of them came incognito and he adopted preterism and wrote under a pen name. Dean Gittings has passed but there should be a few names and references here for anyone who wants to corroborate what I've written to do so. [WB]

## Q&A: What is Left for Us?

Scott Klaft

**Question:** If what you believe is true, that the judgment and resurrection has come and that the heavens and earth have passed away and we now can live in the New Heavens and Earth, if these things be true, then what is left for us today?

**Answer:** I relate to the questioner a great deal. As I studied the subject matter and began to understand that honesty demanded I change my previous views, I went through months of an increasingly unsettled feeling of "What is left?" After a little while, I identified where that feeling was coming from. I, like most people, had been taught that the Second Coming of Jesus, the Judgment, the Resurrection, and other related ideas were attached to the complete and final end of everything. (This, by the way, is why people accuse us of "stealing hope" and destroying Christianity.)

While that is far from the truth, and while we may be able to acknowledge that intellectually, we have a lingering emotional reaction to the mention of those things. But the only "end" Jesus was coming the second time to initiate was the end of the Old Covenant system, the nation of Israel (Judah), and the age of ignorance.

The prophetic "end" *never was* the end of time, the end of human history, or the end of the material universe. Christianity, the kingdom of Christ, was the point of Old Testament Israel experiences (cf. 1Corinthians 10:11). It was the purposed goal of the Law of Moses (cf. Romans 10:4). It was the aim of giving the Law and prophets in the first place (cf. Galatians 3:24, 25). That being true...

1. Consider that, from the foundation of the world, God had been working in the lives of mankind to bring events to the perfect point in time where the Christ could bring to a reality a solution to the problem of sin (cf. Ephesians 3:9-11; Galatians 4:4, 5). It was His eternal purpose. God's interventions in the events of the world for those 4600 years would be impossible to list here.
2. Consider all the sufferings the Old Covenant heroes of faith endured in their participation in bringing about that eternal purpose. The inspired Hebrews penman only touches on it: Hebrews 11:32 - 40, but God saw that the sufferings of those men were necessary, and worth it all, to accomplish the longer-term goal.
3. Consider all the miracles and sufferings of the first generation of Christians in order to confirm the gospel message, both for them and to preserve God's word in the Bible for all of posterity (cf. 2Tim 3:16,17; Psm. 119:160; 1Pet. 1:23).

Aside from all the passages that speak of the kingdom as an eternal and perpetual institution, do we really think that Almighty Creator of the Universe went to all that trouble to bring the kingdom to the availability of only *one generation* of people? That He made it all come to fruition only to stop paying any attention to people afterward?

The eternal infinite God is as universal in His love as He is in His power, knowledge, and presence. He continues to appeal to us with the same message, unendingly. This implies the same universal standard for right and wrong, the structure and work of the kingdom. Which also implies that His message may be known, understood, and correctly obeyed. Which also implies that every other way is incorrect. No, we

are not destroying Christianity or its hope. Indeed, we more solidly establish it in the recognition of the Lord's kingdom. [SK]

## Hymenaeian Heresy

Holger W. Neubauer

Over the years those in the denominational world have utilized certain scriptures, lifting them out of their immediate and remote context, making unsound and false arguments, and then touting them as the answer for their false views. The “thief on the cross” argument is an example of such an argument. The penitent thief is often cited as proof that one need not be baptized for the remission of sins to be saved (Luke 23:43). This argument ignores the fact that today we must believe in the risen Christ in order to be saved (1 Corinthians 15:4). Did this thief believe that Jesus had been raised? On one occasion Jesus told a lame man to take up his bed and walk. Jesus demonstrated that he had power to forgive sins on “earth” (Mark 2:8). Today, no one would dream that carrying one's bed through town would constitute proof of having obtained the remission of sins. Yet, many are quite sure the thief on the cross is ample proof that baptism has nothing to do with salvation today. Jesus gave the Great Commission which included baptism after his resurrection (Matthew 28:18-20). The denominational view of baptism is wrong because it fails to look closely to the immediate context and remote context of scripture as well. A similar argument is made by many in the church that attempt to refute the irrefutable fact that the resurrection took place when Jerusalem fell. Opponents of ours often cite 2 Timothy 2:17, 18 which refers to Hymeneus and Philetus saying, “the resurrection is past already.” What the thief on the cross is to the denominational world, this passage is to the church as they attempt to answer our arguments. But this passage teaches no such thing. To be frank, this argument fails to see what is so obvious, that the traditional position cannot have reference to the rising of dead out of physical tombs and bringing about the end of human history. Hymeneus and Philetus taught the “resurrection is past already” (2 Timothy 2:18), because they would not honor Jesus' own statement as to when the resurrection would take place and implied by their doctrine that the Jewish system including the temple was to continue.

First, if the common belief of the early church was that the resurrection was to take place at the end of physical universe, then how could have Hymeneus and Philetus influenced anyone at all? A simple walk to the grave yards would have sufficed. They would have been viewed as crackpots that had lost their minds and no one would have taken them seriously. Paul would not have wasted the precious words of inspiration on such nonsensical false teachers. But if they were saying that the resurrection was past while Jerusalem was still standing they would have been teaching the same thing as the Judaizing false teachers or the early church, which taught the law and temple would remain. The false prophets of 2 Peter 3:4 were of this ilk, which said, “all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation” which contradicted Peter's own words, that “the end of all things was at hand” (1 Peter 4:7). The Jewish age was to come to an abrupt end with the destruction of its temple and law (Mt 24:3, 34; Daniel 9:24-27).

Second, Hymeneus and Philetus could have influenced the early church only if the disciples believed that the resurrection was to take place in the very generation in which they lived. Jesus said, “the men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation” (Matthew 12:41). Jesus was referring to that particular generation that was then living. When Martha said of Lazarus, “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day” (John 11:24) she was referencing the Jewish age and not the Christian age. Martha was a Jew and lived in the Jewish age. She knew that Daniel was to, “stand in his lot at the end of the days” (Daniel 12:13). Daniel was referencing the end as it was attached to the “abomination of desolation,” a clear reference to the end of the temple and the daily sacrifice (Daniel 12:11; Matthew 24:15). The Jews knew that resurrection would take place at the end of their age, not at the end of another distant age. The “last day” (John 11:24) cannot have reference to the last day of the Christian age, for an age that has no end can have no last day!

Third, the only time there is specific mention of a resurrection of both the just and unjust in the Old Testament is found in Daniel 12:2, which says, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Daniel tells us that this resurrection would take place at "the time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time" (Daniel 12:1). This time reference is the time of the great tribulation where Jesus said, "For then there shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matthew 24:21). Jesus taught the same emphatic truth that resurrection would take place at the fall of Jerusalem. Listen to the Savior, "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet (this is the last trump!) and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Mark's account says, "from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven (Mark 13:27). This is resurrection language and the fulfillment of Isaiah 24:19-23 and Genesis 49:10. This was all to take place within that generation (Matthew 24:34). Again, the resurrection was to take place at the time of the great tribulation. When Paul argued his case before Felix, he affirmed that he believed "all things which are written in the law and the prophets: and hope toward God, which THEY (the Jews) also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the just and the unjust" (Acts 24:14, 15). Paul said that he was "bound for the hope of Israel" (Acts 28:20). There is no Christian hope that is not fulfilled in Israel's hope. Paul was quoting from Daniel's prophecy because he argued that the Jews had the same hope. The Jews were not trusting the words of Jesus! Neither did they learn about resurrection from Jesus. Where did the Jews get their hope of resurrection? They received their doctrine of resurrection of the just and unjust in the only place in the Old Testament that there is a specific mention of it, Daniel 12:2. Too, Daniel cannot be speaking of a resurrection of a cause, because the unjust are resurrected at the same time. Neither can he be speaking of the resurrection of the saints in Matthew 27:52 for the resurrection of Daniel 12:2 was to take place at the time of the great tribulation, which would take place forty years later.

Fourth, it is actually those who promote a futurist traditional view of the resurrection who are guilty of Hymeneus heresy. You see, these false teachers would not allow the words of scripture to be consistently applied. Resurrection was to take place at the time Jerusalem fell. In Revelation 1:18 we find Jesus had the keys to "death and hell." Hell here is the word Hades. Jesus came to destroy spiritual death and the Hadean world. Hades was the place Old Covenant saints had to rest because Christ had not removed their sins. Revelation 11 affirms unequivocally that the resurrection would take place at the fall of Jerusalem. Revelation 11:1, 2 speaks of the measuring of the temple and the forty- two months. Revelation 11:8 makes reference to the "great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." Now just where was Jesus crucified? Revelation 11:15 refers to the seventh angel sounding which is the last trump. The two witnesses are raised after the 3 ½ days (the symbol of the tribulation i.e., the 42 months, 1260 days. This time reference begins with Jewish revolt 66 A.D. and ends in the destruction of the temple three and one half years later in A.D. 70 (check Vines Dictionary under "zealot"). Revelation 11:18 announces the judgment had arrived as the "time of the dead, that they should be judged and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets." This great event took place at the time that the kingdoms of men would become the kingdoms of our Lord (Revelation 11:15). Revelation 11:19 affirms that "THE TEMPLE OF GOD WAS OPENED." The kingdom was now restored to God because the Old Covenant saints could approach God in Heaven (1 Corinthians 15:24). The kingdom that began at Pentecost would be completed when Jerusalem fell, as Jesus said, "So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom is nigh at hand." Revelation 12 repeats the same theme and verse 10 says, "then cometh Salvation, Strength and the Kingdom of our God." The kingdom would bring resurrection. Therefore, any interpretation of scripture which would place the resurrection 2000 years (and waiting) after the fall of Jerusalem is a false interpretation of scripture.

Fifth, the resurrection is missed because of the same prejudice that rejected Jesus in the first place. Jesus was rejected by the Jews because they were looking for a physical king who would punish their physical enemies (John 6:15). The premillennialists miss the kingdom because they are looking for a

physical kingdom where the lion would lay down in a physical way with the lamb (Isaiah 11:6, 7). The futurist position misses the resurrection because they are hoping in a physical resurrection, when Israel's hope was not physical at all. The death that Jesus came to destroy was not physical in its nature but rather exceedingly spiritual. 2 Timothy 1:10 says, "who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." The spiritual life that Jesus now offers is now complete. What began on Pentecost was completed when Jerusalem fell as the early saints were "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to revealed in the last time." The death that reigned in the Old Testament which death Jesus came to overcome was spiritual, not physical (Isaiah 25:8; Hosea 13:14). These are the very texts that Paul quotes in 1 Corinthians 15:54, 55, where death is swallowed up in victory. The sting of death of 1 Corinthians 15:56 is not the sting of physical dying, for physical death is the friend of a Christian (Philippians 1:21-23). The breaking of relationship with God because of sin was the "sting" that was overcome by Christ's second coming. God wills us to see the true spiritual significance of the fall of Judaism to the Christian. Resurrection was promised at the end of Judaism which came with the fall of their temple (Daniel 12:11-13). Any teaching which rejects the resurrection at the time of Jerusalem's fall is guilty of the same error of Hymeneus and Philetus. Hymeneus posited the resurrection before the fall of Jerusalem, the futurists affirm it is beyond the fall of the temple, but both are wrong. Hymeneus heresy is clearly alive and well. But the heresy resides not with those who hold to the spiritual concept, but with those who look for a physical resurrection to complete their salvation. Jesus said, "he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:26), and that leaves no room for another resurrection to revive us from a death we never have to experience. [HN]