

# “FOUR REASONS WHY I CANNOT BELIEVE THE 70AD DOCTRINE”

By Cougan Collins

Some good brethren in the church have become obsessed with the 70AD doctrine to the point of making it a hobbyhorse. Simply stated, the 70 AD doctrine teaches that all prophecies were fulfilled by 70 AD. This means that the second coming of Jesus, the resurrection, and the Day of Judgment happened at the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD. This may sound crazy to most of us, but those who embrace this doctrine feel as if they have found something new that sheds light on certain difficult verses in the Bible. However, this doctrine has many problems when you honestly look at the word of God. I once asked a prominent teacher of this doctrine if I would be lost if I did not believe the 70AD doctrine. He simply told me to turn to 2 Peter 3:16. This scripture talks about how certain people were twisting the scriptures to their own destruction, which had to do with the end times. Ironically, Paul informs us of how some were doing this very thing. *“And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.”* (2 Tim. 2:17-18) Now let us look at several reasons why I cannot accept the 70AD doctrine.

**1. The 70AD doctrine teaches that the resurrection happened at the destruction of Jerusalem and denies a bodily resurrection.** Is this the case? To answer this question let us examine Jesus’ resurrection. Apparently, some in the Corinthian church were denying that Jesus had been raised from the dead. Paul set out to correct them in 1 Corinthians 15. He pointed out how over 500 people had witnessed Christ bodily resurrection (vs. 4-8). Paul goes on to say that Christ, who was

raised from the dead, is the first fruits and when He comes again, those who belong to Him will be raised from the dead as well (vs. 20-23). Since Jesus is the first fruits and his resurrection was a bodily one, this would indicate that our resurrection is to be a bodily one as well. The only way the 70AD doctrine could be true is if Jesus’ resurrection was not a bodily one.

We learn from Paul that at the resurrection we will be changed in the twinkling of an eye and we will have an incorruptible body (1 Cor. 15:50-54). Paul also tells us that a Christian’s citizenship is in heaven and how they were eagerly waiting for Jesus’ return so that he would transform their lowly bodies and conform them to His glorious body (Phil. 3:20-21). John agrees with this when he says, “when Christ is revealed, we shall be like Him and see Him as He is” (1 Jn. 3:2). Have these things already happened as the 70AD doctrine teaches? If they have, I personally am not impressed with this new glorious body that is suppose to be immortal and incorruptible. Are you? Obviously, the resurrection has not happened yet.

During Jesus’ earthly ministry, the Sadducees were trying to trap Jesus in a question about the resurrection. Jesus responded to them by saying, **“The sons of this age marry, and are given in marriage. But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection”** (Luke 20:34-36). Jesus’ words here are a big deathblow to the 70AD doctrine. Notice, at the resurrection we will not marry or be given in marriage. We cannot die anymore and we are equal with angels. First of all, it’s obvious that we are still marrying, giving in marriage, and we are still dying. Now if the 70AD advocates try to make dying a spiritual concept, then this means we cannot sin, because sin is what causes spiritual death (Rom. 6:23). Are you ready to accept such a notion? Did the resurrection happen in 70AD? Absolutely not!

**2. The 70 AD doctrine teaches that Jesus second coming and judgment was at the destruction of Jerusalem.** I cannot accept this because this denies a visible return of Jesus Christ. Hebrews 9:28 is the only verse that specifically mentions Jesus’ coming as being a second one. **“So Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation”** (Heb. 9:28). How did Jesus appear the first time? We know with out a doubt that he appeared visibly. He lived and died on this earth. How will he appear the second time? The word “appear” gives us a clue that we will see him when he comes. We learn from Luke that Jesus’ disciples literally and visibly saw Jesus taken up and received out of their sight (Acts 1:9). We also learn that Jesus will return a second time in a like manner (Acts 1:11). John makes it clear that Jesus’ second coming will be visible because he says that every eye will see him (Rev. 1:7; see also Col.3:4). If the 70AD doctrine is correct, then we have to deny that Jesus literally and visibly went up into heaven. Are you willing to accept that? I cannot.

At the second coming all will be resurrected (John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15, 1Cor. 15:50-54), all will be judged (Mat. 25: 31-46; 2 Tim. 4:1; Jude 15; John 12:48), and all the righteous will be caught up in the air with Jesus and be with him forever (1 Thes. 4:17; John 14:2-3; Phil. 3:20-21). When we all stand at the judgment seat of Christ, we will all bow to him and confess to God that Jesus is His Son (Rom. 14:10-11). There will be no more death, tears, sorrows, or pains (Rev. 21:4; 1 Cor. 15:26). When Jesus comes, He will come like a thief in the night and there will be no escape (1Thes. 5:1-3). The earth will be burned up with fervent heat (2 Peter 3:10-13). Did any of these things happen in 70AD? Of course not. If the final judgment *has* already occurred, as the 70AD doctrine teaches, then there is nothing we can do for the saved or the lost because everyone has already been separated to eternal life or eternal punishment (Mat. 25:46).

Another big problem for the 70AD doctrine is that it does not have any early historical evidence. There is not one shred of early Christian writing to prove that Christians believed that Jesus’ second coming happened at 70AD. Instead, the following writers from about 75 AD to 150 AD all spoke of Jesus’ second coming as a future event: Justin Martyr, Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp (a student and friend of the apostle John), Irenaeus, and Hippolytus. One would think he would find at least one early church writer that expressed the 70AD view if it were true. However, one cannot be produced. Was Jesus’ second coming in 70AD? Absolutely not!

**3. The 70AD doctrine teaches that all prophecy was fulfilled by 70AD and that the law was still in effect for the Jews until that time.** To make this whole argument crumble all one needs to do is produce one prophecy that was fulfilled after 70AD. Before I do that, I want to show that the verse they take out of context to support their view does not teach what they say it does. **“For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled”** (Matt. 5:18). Those who hold the AD 70 view will say, “see the law cannot pass away until all is fulfilled.” In order to understand what is being said here lets examine the context. In Matthew 5: 17 Jesus said, **“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”** In this passage Jesus tells us that He did not come to destroy the law but to fulfill it. With this in mind, we can understand that in verse 18 the law will not pass away until Jesus fulfills it. Jesus wanted to make sure his disciples understood this, so after he was raised from dead, he said the following. **“These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me”** (Luke 24:44). Jesus’ point that He is trying to get across to His disciples is this.

Remember when I said the law would not pass away till all was fulfilled (Matt. 5:17-18)? That has now happened! This same thought is also found in Acts 13:27-29. This harmonizes perfectly with the numerous Scriptures that state that the Old Covenant was replaced with the New Covenant at the death of Jesus (Heb. 9:15; Heb. 8:6-7; Gal. 3:23-25). The handwriting of requirements of the law were nailed to the cross (Col. 2:14) and put to death in his flesh (Eph. 2:14-16). Paul tells us that the Christians before 70AD were no longer under the law (Rom. 6:15; Rom. 7:1-6; 8:1-4). Those Christians who believed in Jesus and were led by the spirit were no longer under the law (Rom. 10:4; Gal. 5:18). Finally, Paul proclaimed that if Christians tried to go back to the law for justification they would fall from grace (Gal. 5:4). Although the law was still being practiced by some of the Jews, its authority ended at the cross and the New Covenant took its place. Contrary to the 70AD doctrine, we have clearly seen that the law was fulfilled at the point of Christ's death and not at the fulfillment of all prophecy.

Now let us look at one fulfilled prophecy that happened almost 400 years after 70AD. As we look at this, please remember that if I can show one prophecy that was fulfilled after AD 70, then the whole belief system crumbles. In Daniel 2, we four different kingdoms are presented. The fourth kingdom is described as having legs of iron and its feet being partly iron and clay (vs. 33). We learn that this fourth kingdom would be in power at the time the church/kingdom would be setup (vs. 44). Without a doubt, this fourth kingdom is the Roman Empire. In this prophecy, Daniel informs us that the fourth kingdom will be destroyed (vs. 34-35; 44-45). Was the Roman Empire destroyed by 70AD? No, it wasn't destroyed until 476AD. This one prophecy, by itself, destroys the 70AD doctrine. All prophecy was **not** fulfilled by 70AD.

**4. The 70AD doctrine teaches that the kingdom started at Pentecost but did not come with power or was not established until 70AD.** Mark tells us

that some of those standing in the presence of Christ would not die before the kingdom would come with power (Mark 9:1). Luke tells us that the power and the spirit would come together (Luke 24:29; Acts 1:8). We learn that the power and spirit came at the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4) and that was when the kingdom/church was established with power. The kingdom did not have to wait until 70AD to have power or to be established. The Bible does not speak of the kingdom starting without power. The Hebrew writer tells us that Jesus' New Covenant was established on better promises (Heb. 8:6). Notice, it did not say that it was **to be established**, but that it **was established**. You cannot find a biblical example where someone thought that the kingdom/church was lacking power or was not yet established. The church was established on the bedrock of Jesus Christ (Mat. 16:18). Jesus is the head of the kingdom/church (Col. 1:18) and he has all authority over heaven and earth (Mat. 28:18). I do not see how anyone could say that Christ' kingdom was lacking power until 70AD. Paul informs us that Jesus already had power and glory before 70AD (1Cor. 5:4; Eph. 1:19-23; 1 Pet.1:20-21). Paul didn't view the church as lacking power or anticipating a future power. Instead, he said that they had the power now (Eph. 3:20). Paul told the Colossians that God had delivered them out of darkness and had translated them into the kingdom of the son of his love (Col. 1:13). Now the 70 AD advocates will say that the kingdom was incomplete at this time, but notice what Paul says about these Christians who had been translated into the kingdom. Paul said, **"you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power"** (Col. 2:10). How could Paul say that these Christians were complete in the kingdom if the kingdom was not to be completed until 70AD? The reason Paul could say this is because the Bible does not teach what the 70AD advocates want it to teach. Paul tells us that Jesus must reign until He comes again (1Cor. 15:23-25). At that time He will hand the kingdom over to the Father and He will cease to be a mediator (1 Cor. 15:28). If this

occurred at 70AD, then we should not be praying in the name of Jesus but directly to God. Please notice that Paul tells us when this happens there will be no more death (1Cor. 15:26). I have pointed this out already, but it is worth saying again. If this refers to physical death then we should not be dying. If it refers to spiritual death then we cannot sin.

The 70AD advocates try to use Luke 17:20-21 to support their view. Notice what this passage says, **"Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."** I have no idea why the 70AD advocates even try to use these verses, because this very passage disproves their doctrine. We have to remember that the Jews were looking for a physical kingdom and did not really understand that the kingdom would be a spiritual one (Acts 1:6). So, Jesus explains to them that they would not be able to observe its coming. Now remember, the 70 AD doctrine teaches that the kingdom came at the destruction of Jerusalem. Now, I ask you, do you think that the Jews could have observed the Roman armies coming to destroy them? Of course they could. Jesus even warned his disciples to watch for the armies coming so that they could escape (Mat. 24:15-16). So, if the kingdom could not come with observation, it certainly could not come at the destruction of Jerusalem because everyone saw that coming.

We could examine how the Bible teaches that we are in the last days right now (Joel 2:28-30; Acts 2:16) or talk about how we are to partake of the Lords Supper until he comes (1 Cor. 11:26). We could look at more arguments like these, but these four should be enough to show that the Bible simply does not support the 70AD doctrine. If you have any questions or comments please email me at [bible@ardmoreweb.com](mailto:bible@ardmoreweb.com).

# A. D. 70

# Doctrine

# Exposed!!

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