

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 Christ's flesh (Eph. 2:14-16). Paul tells us that the Christians before AD 70 were no longer under the Law (Rom. 6:15; 7:1-6; 8:1-4). Those Christians who believed in Jesus and who 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 when the New Covenant took its place. Contrary to AD 70 doctrine, we have clearly seen that the Law was fulfilled at the point of Christ's death—not at the “fulfillment of all prophecy.”

Now, however, let us look at one fulfilled prophecy that happened almost 400 years **after** AD 70. As we look at this, please remember that if we can show even one prophecy that was fulfilled after AD 70, then the whole AD 70 doctrine crumbles. In Daniel 2, four different kingdoms are presented. The fourth kingdom is described as having legs of iron and feet composed partly of iron and partly of clay (vs. 33). We learn that this fourth kingdom would be in power at the time the kingdom/church would be established (vs. 44). There can be no doubt that this fourth kingdom is the Roman Empire. In this prophecy, Daniel informs us that the fourth kingdom will be destroyed (vss. 34-35; 44-45). Was the Roman Empire destroyed by AD 70? No, it was not destroyed until AD 476. This one prophecy, by itself, destroys the AD 70 doctrine. All prophecy was not fulfilled by AD 70.

**4. The AD 70 doctrine teaches that the kingdom started at Pentecost, but did not come with power** (i.e. was not “established”) **until** AD 70. Mark tells us that some of those standing in the presence of Christ would not die before the kingdom would come with power (Mk. 9:1). Luke tells us that the power and the Spirit would

come together (Lk. 24:29; Acts 1:8). We learn that the power and Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), which was when the kingdom/church was established with power. The kingdom did not have to wait until AD 70 to have power or to be established. The Bible does not speak of the kingdom starting “without power.” The writer of Hebrews tells us that Jesus' New Covenant was established on better promises (Heb. 8:6). Notice, that he did not say that it was to be established, but that it **was** established. You cannot find a single 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 the deity of Jesus Christ (Mt. 16:18). Jesus is the Head of the kingdom/church (Col. 1:18) and He has all authority over Heaven and Earth (Mt. 28:18). I do not see how anyone could say that Christ's kingdom was “lacking in power” until AD 70. Paul informs us that Jesus already had power and glory **before** AD 70 (1Cor. 5:4; Eph. 1:19-23; 1 Pt.1:20-21). Paul did not view the church as either “lacking power” or “anticipating future power.” Instead, he said that the church already existed in power (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). AD 70 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 AD 70? The reason Paul could say this is because the Bible does not teach what the AD 70 advocates want it to teach. Paul tells us that Jesus must reign until He comes again (1 Cor. 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 AD 70, then we should not be praying in the name of Jesus. Rather, we should pray directly to God. Please notice that Paul tells us when Christ hands the kingdom over to God, there will be no more death (1 Cor. 15:26). I have pointed this out already, but it is worth repeat-

ing: If this refers to physical death, then we should not be dying. If it refers to spiritual death, then we cannot sin.

The AD 70 advocates try to use Luke 17:20-21 to support their view. Notice what this passage says:

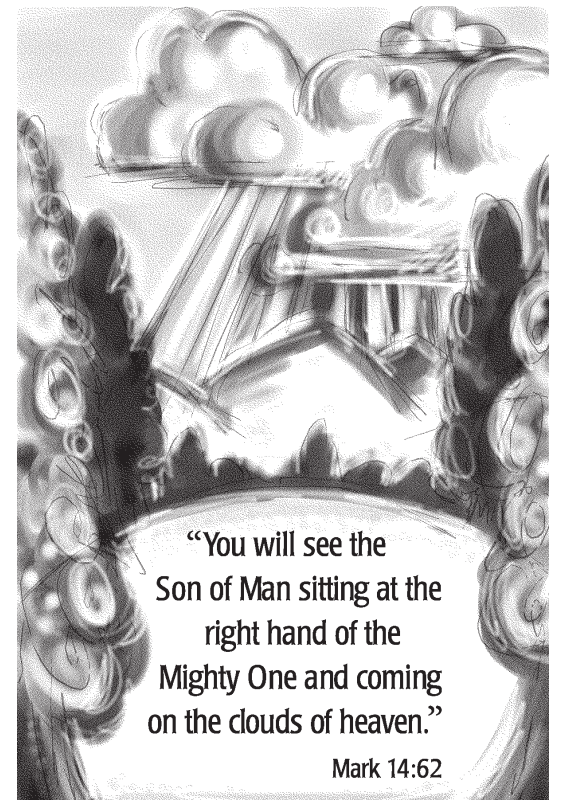
“Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, ‘The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, “See here!” or “See there!” For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.’”

I have no idea why the AD 70 advocates even try to use these verses, because this passage disproves their doctrine. We must remember that the Jews were looking for a **physical** kingdom. They did not understand that the kingdom would be a **spiritual** one (Acts 1:6). This is why Jesus explained to them that they would not be able to observe its coming. Remember that the AD 70 doctrine teaches that the kingdom came at the destruction of Jerusalem. 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 (Mt. 24:15-16). 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, we could discuss how we are to partake of the Lord's Supper “until He comes” (1 Cor. 11:26). But the four arguments I have presented here should be enough to show that the Bible simply does not support the AD 70 doctrine. If you have any questions or comments please e-mail me at bible@ardmoreweb.com.

# The AD 70 Doctrine Exposed

Cougan Collins



“You will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

Mark 14:62

Some good brethren in the church have become obsessed with the AD 70 doctrine—to the point of making it a hobbyhorse. Simply stated, the AD 70 doctrine teaches that all prophecies were fulfilled by AD 70. This means that the Second Coming of Christ, the resurrection, and the Day of Judgment happened at the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. This may sound strange 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 look honestly 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 AD 70 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). I would like to set forth several reasons why I cannot accept the AD 70 doctrine.

**1. The AD 70 doctrine: (a) teaches that the resurrection happened at the destruction of Jerusalem; and (b) denies a bodily resurrection.** Has the resurrection already occurred (in AD 70)? 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. In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul set out to correct them. He pointed out how over 500 people had witnessed Christ’s bodily resurrection (vss. 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 (vss. 20-23). Since Jesus is the first fruits,

and since His resurrection was a bodily one, this would indicate that our resurrection is to be a bodily one as well. The only way the AD 70 doctrine could be true is if Jesus’ resurrection was not a bodily resurrection.

We learn from Paul that at the resurrection we will be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and that 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 the first-century Christians 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 AD 70 doctrine teaches? If they have, I personally am not impressed with this new glorious body that is supposed 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” (Lk. 20:34-36).

Jesus’ words here are a deathblow to the AD 70 doctrine. Notice that at the resurrection we will neither marry nor be given in marriage. We cannot die anymore, and we will be equal with angels. However, it is obvious that we are still marrying, giving in marriage, and dying. If the AD 70 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 AD 70? No, it did not.

**2. The AD 70 doctrine teaches that both the Second Coming of Christ and the judgment occurred 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’ Second Coming. “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.” How did Jesus appear the first time? We know without a doubt that He appeared visibly. He lived and died on this Earth. How will He appear the second time? The word “appear” is a clear indication that we will see Him when He comes. We learn from Luke that Jesus’ disciples literally (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; cf. Col.3:4). If the AD 70 doctrine is correct, then we have to deny that Jesus literally (and visibly) ascended into heaven. Are you willing to accept that? I am not.

At the Second Coming, **all** will be resurrected (Jn. 5:28-29; Acts 24:15, 1 Cor. 15:50-54), all will be judged (Mt. 25: 31-46; 2 Tim. 4:1; Jude 15; Jn. 12:48), and all the righteous will be caught up in the air with Jesus to be with Him forever (1 Thess. 4:17; Jn 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, sorrow, or pain (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 (1 Thes. 5:1-3). The Earth will be burned up with fervent heat (2 Pet. 3:10-13). Did any of these things happen in AD 70? Of course not. If the final judgment has already occurred (as the AD 70 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 (Mt. 25:46).

Another problem for the AD 70 doctrine is that it does not have any early historical evidence. There is not one shred of early Christian writing to suggest that Christians believed that Jesus’ Second Coming occurred in AD 70. Instead, the following writers from about AD 75 AD 150 all spoke of Jesus’ Second Com-

ing as a **future** event: Justin Martyr, Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp (a student and friend of the apostle John), Irenaeus, and Hippolytus. If the AD 70 doctrine was true, we should find at least one early church writer who expressed support for it. However, not a single one can be produced. Was Jesus’ Second Coming in AD 70? No, it was not!

**3. The AD 70 doctrine teaches that all prophecy was fulfilled by AD 70, and that the Old Law was still in effect for the Jews until that time.** To completely undermine the entire AD 70 doctrine, all one needs to do is produce a single prophecy that was fulfilled **after** AD 70. Before I do that, I want to show that the verse the AD 70 advocates take out of context (to support their view) does not teach what they say it teaches. That verse is Matthew 5:18— “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.**” 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, we need to 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 (as verse 18 says) the Law would not pass away until Jesus fulfilled it. Jesus wanted to make sure that His disciples understood this, so after He was raised from dead, He said, “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” (Lk. 24:44). Jesus’ point to His disciples was this: “Remember when I said that the Law would not pass away until ‘all was fulfilled’? (Mt. 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 which state that the Old