

Realized Eschatology

The 70 A.D. Doctrine

"As the Ancient of days he came."

DANIEL 7:13



THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

by MAX R. KING

A Divisive Theory

Richard Thetford

What Is Realized Eschatology?

“**Eschatology**” doctrine of last things, means the ideas entertained at any period on the future life, the end of the world (resurrection, judgment...), and the eternal destinies of mankind.”

(*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*)

“**Realized**” signifies accomplishment

Realized Eschatology is a doctrine of completed last things



Max King became the leading proponent of this false doctrine, writing “*The Spirit of Prophecy*” in 1971. His book is quoted in various places in this booklet.

What Does This Doctrine Teach?

◆ At the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., **ALL** Bible prophecy was fulfilled. This would include the following:

The Second Coming of Christ: All the New Testament passages about the second coming of Christ have nothing to do with the actual return of Jesus for the saved. Instead, all the second coming passages have to do with a spiritual (invisible) coming of Jesus in 70 A.D. “*The fall of Jerusalem was the last day, and therefore the second coming of Christ*” (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, P. 150).

The Resurrection of the Dead: The resurrection does not involve the physical body. Instead, the resurrection of the dead actually refers to a resurrection of the Christian system (or the church) from persecution inflicted by the Jews between 30 and 70 A.D.

The Day of Judgment: Not a time in the future when all men and women will give an account to God for the deeds done in their physical bodies. Instead, the judgment day was the destruction of Jerusalem, which occurred in 70 A.D. “*The world reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men (2 Peter 3:7), was the Jewish world*” (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, P. 131).

The Kingdom of Christ: Not fully established on Pentecost. Instead, the kingdom was born or established on Pentecost, but it did not come with “power” and in its fullness until 70 A.D.

The End of the World and the “last days”: Not the passing away of the earth. Instead, it is the dissolving of the Jewish world.

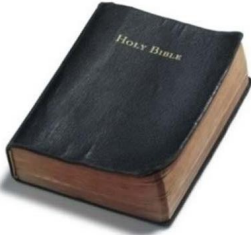
“The world marked for destruction in prophecy, the end of which involved the second coming of Christ, and resulted in the redemption of true Israel, was the Jewish world. Therefore, it is the end of the Jewish world, not this material earth” (The Spirit of Prophecy, P. 83).

“The last days, therefore never apply to the Christian age, but always to the closing period of the Jewish age, which ran from Pentecost to the fall of Jerusalem” (The Spirit of Prophecy, P. 79).

Central Thesis of the Doctrine

ALL prophecy was fulfilled as of 70 A.D., and there is no event referred to in Scripture that is to come in the future. The key period of time is the forty-year period between the cross of Christ (30 A.D.) and the fall of Jerusalem (70 A.D.). The significance of this period and its events culminating in the fall of Judaism in 70 A.D. is regarded as the essential element of biblical study and the key to proper understanding of God’s scheme of redemption. Basically, all the elements of God’s plan came together during this period of time.

“The fall of Judaism (and its far reaching consequences) is, therefore, a major subject of the Bible. The greater portion of prophecy found its fulfillment in that event, including also the types and shadows of the law. It was the coming of Christ in glory that closely followed his coming in suffering (1 Peter 1:11), when all things written by the prophets were fulfilled (Luke 21:22; Acts 3:21). It corresponded to the perfection of the saints (1 Corinthians 13:10) when they reached adulthood in Christ, receiving their adoption, redemption, and inheritance. The eternal kingdom was possessed (Hebrews 12:28) and the new heaven and earth inherited (Matthew 5:5; Revelation 21:1, 7)”
(The Spirit of Prophecy, P. 239).



The Error of Realized Eschatology

◆ **The Second Coming of Christ:** The 70 A.D. doctrine teaches that the prophecy of the second coming of Christ has already been fulfilled. “...prophecy found its complete fulfillment in the second coming of Christ, and now may be regarded as closed and consummated” (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, P. 65). According to this doctrine, there are now no prophecies awaiting fulfillment, including that of the second coming of Christ.

The Bible, however, teaches a visible return of Jesus: “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” (Hebrews 9:28).

- ◆ Jesus appeared the first time, and He appeared visibly.
- ◆ Jesus lived and died on this earth.
- ◆ Jesus will **appear** a second time — His apostles **saw** Jesus taken out of their sight when He ascended to heaven (*Acts 1:9*).
- ◆ Jesus will return the second time in like manner (*Acts 1:11*).
- ◆ Every eye will see Him (*Revelation 1:7; Colossians 3:4*).
- ◆ At His second coming, **ALL** will be resurrected (*John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; 1 Corinthians 15:50-54*).
- ◆ At His second coming, **ALL** will be judged (*Matthew 25:31-46; 2 Timothy 4:1; Jude 15; John 12:48*).
- ◆ At His second coming, **ALL** the righteous will be caught up in the air with Jesus and be with Him forever (*1 Thessalonians 4:17; John 14:2-3; Philippians 3:20-21*).
- ◆ At His second coming, there will be no more tears or sorrow (*Revelation 21:4; 1 Corinthians 15:26*).
- ◆ At His second coming, He will come as a thief in the night (*1 Thessalonians 5:1-3*).
- ◆ At His second coming, **ALL** the elements will be burned up (*2 Peter 3:10-13*).

◆ **The Resurrection of the Dead:** The 70 A.D. doctrine teaches that the resurrection of the dead is not to be taken in a literal sense, but in a spiritual one. It has nothing to do with a “resurrection” of a physical body at some future time. The physical body is discarded forever at death, and an individual receives a spiritual body in which he will dwell immediately and eternally in heaven. This spiritual body is a “new creation,” so no physical body is resurrected from a grave.

The resurrection is claimed to have been fully accomplished in the period leading up to 70 A.D. The key point is that the resurrection is a spiritual process of dying to the old Judaism and rising to the kingdom of God, with the entire process beginning with Christ’s resurrection and culminating in 70 A.D. Passages such as 1 Corinthians 15 and 2 Corinthians 5:1-8 are interpreted with this theory in mind.

The Bible, however, teaches that the resurrection will be a **literal resurrection** (*John 5:28-29*).

- ◆ Five hundred people witnessed the bodily resurrection of Jesus (*1 Corinthians 15:4-8*).
- ◆ Christ was the first fruits, and when He comes again, those who belong to Him will be raised from the dead as well (*1 Corinthians 15:20-23*).
- ◆ At the resurrection we will be changed, and we will have an incorruptible body (*1 Corinthians 15:50-54*).
- ◆ Our lowly bodies will conform to His glorious body (*Philippians 3:20-21; 1 John 3:2*).
- ◆ At the resurrection we will not marry or be given in marriage, nor can we die anymore (*Luke 20:34-36*).

It is obvious that we are still marrying, giving in marriage, and we are still dying. If the 70 A.D. advocates try to make dying a spiritual concept, then this would mean that we cannot sin, since sin is what causes spiritual death (*Romans 6:23*).

Did the resurrection really happen in 70 A.D.? No, it did not.

◆ **The End of the World and the Day of Judgment:** The 70 A.D. doctrine teaches that the term “world” is not to be understood literally, but is spiritual in meaning: covenant, age, body. Since the second coming was imminent in the New Testament, the resurrection, judgment, and the end of the world had to be imminent as well. All of this was fulfilled in the period leading up to and culminating in 70 A.D. at the destruction of Jerusalem. Those days are identified as the “last days.” The “end of the world” is not literal, but refers to the end of the Jewish age. According to this doctrine, we now live in the “eternal age” of the kingdom of God.

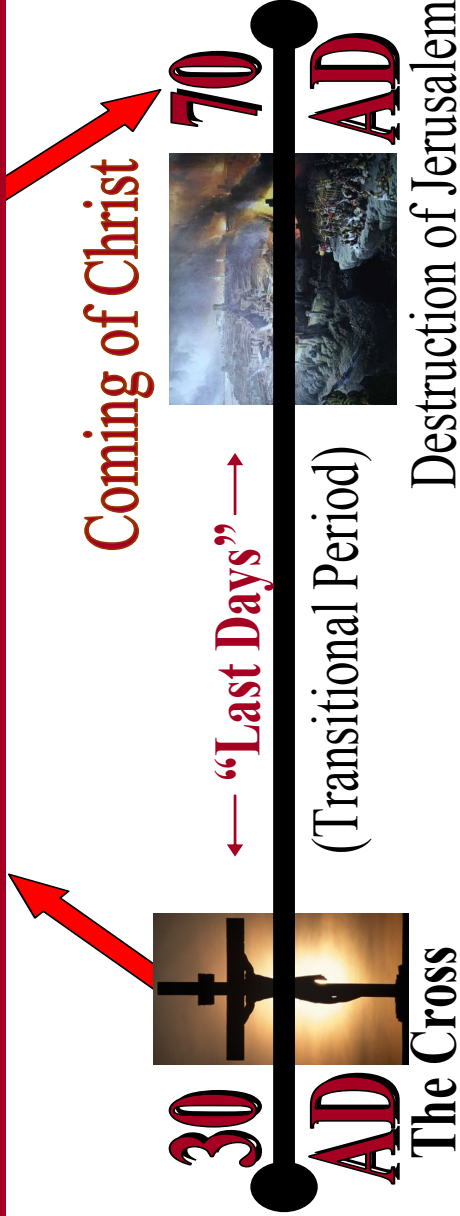
When exactly the “last days” took place is one of King’s major points: *“Applying the last days to the Christian age is a misapplication fostered by a misconception of such terms as “this world” and the “world to come.” While Pentecost, in a sense, was the beginning of the Christian dispensation, yet the New Testament writers often spoke of it as a world or age to come, because the Jewish age had not ended at the time of their writings.... Therefore, statements such as “this world” are interpreted as meaning this **present material world** rather than the **Jewish age**, and the “world to come” is interpreted as meaning what follows the end of this present material world rather than the new heaven and earth, or Christian age that followed the end of the Jewish age”* (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, P. 79).

The Bible, however, teaches that the end of the world and the judgment of Christ are still future and did **NOT** occur in 70 A.D. at the destruction of Jerusalem.

- ◆ The heavens and earth (literal) are to be destroyed at the Lord’s second coming (*2 Peter 3:9-12*).
- ◆ Jesus will come again and judge **ALL** men (*Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; John 12:48; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Matthew 12:36; Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Hebrews 9:27-28*).
- ◆ Felix was “afraid” of the judgment to come — he would not have been troubled to learn of a coming judgment upon Jews! The Romans would have been the victors (*Acts 24:25*)!

70 A. D. Doctrine

ETERNAL DAYS



◆ **The Kingdom of Christ:** The 70 A.D. doctrine teaches that the kingdom started at Pentecost but did not come with power (was not established) until 70 A.D. The distinction is drawn between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of God, the former existing only during the forty-year period between Pentecost and the destruction of Jerusalem. The kingdom of God would be established in 70 A.D. According to this teaching, Colossians 1:13 only applies to those who lived in the forty-year kingdom of Christ which ended at 70 A.D. and has no direct application to us today.

The Bible, however, teaches that the church has already reached its eternal reality. The church is the spiritual kingdom (Matthew 16:18). We become citizens of it by obeying the gospel (John 3:1-5). This kingdom is an eternal kingdom, one that “cannot be moved” (Hebrews 12:28). It will be delivered up to the Father at the Lord’s second coming, at which time Jesus’ reign will be over (1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

- ◆ The kingdom would come with power (*Mark 9:1*).
- ◆ The power and the Spirit would come together (*Luke 24:29; Acts 1:8*).
- ◆ Both the power and Spirit came at the day of Pentecost (*Acts 2:1-4*).
- ◆ The kingdom/church was established with power on Pentecost.
- ◆ The New Covenant **was established** on better promises (*Hebrews 8:6*).
- ◆ God delivered the Colossians out of darkness and translated them into the kingdom of the son (*Colossians 1:13*).
- ◆ Christians were complete in Christ when translated into the kingdom (*Colossians 2:10*).
- ◆ Jesus will reign until He comes again (*1 Corinthians 15:23-25*).
- ◆ After Jesus comes, the kingdom will handed over to God and Jesus will no longer be a mediator (*1 Corinthians 15:28*).

Analysis of the 70 A.D. Doctrine

Biblical terms redefined: The 70 A.D. doctrine uses many biblical terms, but nearly all of them are used with changed definitions.

The following common biblical terms have been redefined by Max King to fit his theory:

- ◆ The “second coming” does not denote a literal return of Christ in the future, but a spiritual, invisible coming in 70 A.D.
- ◆ “Resurrection” hasn’t anything to do with the human body; rather, it refers to a resurrection of the Christian system from the persecution inflicted by the Jews between 30 and 70 A.D.
- ◆ The “judgment day” is not a time when all men will give account to God, it is the destruction of Judaism.
- ◆ The “end of the world” is not the passing of the earth; it supposedly is a reference to the dissolution of the Jewish world.

The “tunnel-vision” problem: “Tunnel-vision” is understanding a term the same way every time it is used regardless of context and/or obvious difference in usage.

- ◆ Example: “World” = Jewish or Christian Age (never literal) in *Luke 20:35; John 18:36; 2 Peter 3:7, 10*. Where is the evidence to support this practice other than a presupposed doctrine?

Pre-70 A.D. dating of ALL New Testament books:

- ◆ The 70 A.D. doctrine turns “a matter of opinion” on the dating of Revelation and other books into an absolute necessity that they were all written prior to 70 A.D. and everyone **MUST** accept that.
- ◆ It cannot be proven “beyond a doubt” that **ALL** New Testament books were dated before 70 A.D. and this casts a dark cloud of great uncertainty over the 70 A.D. doctrine. In fact, there is strong evidence that as many as five books were written after 70 A.D.

Some More Scriptural Objections

- ◆ **Acts 1:9-11; Revelation 1:7** — did not happen in 70 A.D.
- ◆ **2 Peter 3:5-7, 10-11** — cannot spiritualize the meaning of “fire” because “water” is literal.
- ◆ **1 Corinthians 15** — The problem dealt with (v.12); central thought (v.20-23); further resurrection (v. 35ff). Resurrection cannot be changed into a spiritual meaning here since this would violate the whole purpose of Paul’s argument. He is arguing on a literal basis.
- ◆ **Romans 7:1-6** — It takes the death of one to begin another.
- ◆ **Colossians 2:13-15; Hebrews 9:16-17** — Cross is the focal point of removal of the old covenant — not 70 A.D.
- ◆ **2 Corinthians 3:14** — Old covenant already done away with before 70 A.D.
- ◆ **Hebrews 8:13** — Vanishing started in Jeremiah’s day and completed at the cross; Hebrews 10:9 — the first had to end in order to start the second.
- ◆ **Ephesians 2:13-18** — Christ brought full redemption and unity to the Jew and Gentile at the time of His death — not in 70 A.D.
- ◆ **Acts 2:38** — Remission of sins available; Max King denies this saying that sins were not taken away until the second coming in 70 A.D. (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, P. 63).
- ◆ **Isaiah 2:2** — The house of God was fully established in the “last days” not the “eternal days.”
- ◆ **1 Corinthians 11:26** — We are to observe the Lord’s Supper proclaiming His death “until He comes.” Should we stop observing it now? Max King says this is only referring to remembering what Christ’s death did in bringing about the change of the covenant that was fully established in 70 A.D., and that it is now a “fulfilled memorial” for us today (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, P. 246).

Unanswered Questions:

- ◆ Is 70 A.D. more important than the cross? Than Pentecost?
- ◆ Are we in a perpetual “eternal days” of struggle between sin and righteousness?
- ◆ Where does evil originate if Satan is already in the lake of fire? (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, P. 356)

Realized Eschatology, the 70 A.D. doctrine, teaches that the second coming of Christ, the establishment of the eternal kingdom, the day of judgment, the end of the world and the resurrection of the dead, occurred with the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. This is false! This is not a harmless doctrine, but rather a false theory that contradicts the plain statements of Scripture and undermines the Christian's hope.

Works Used

Gibson, Marc W. *The A.D. Doctrine Examined.*
Thousands of Sermons, 2008

Jackson, Wayne. *The A.D. 70 Theory: A Review of the Max King Doctrine.* Stockton, CA: Courier Publications, 1990

King, Max R. *The Spirit of Prophecy.* Warren, OH: Max King (1971)

Price, Joe. *The Second Coming of Christ: Did It Already Occur?*
Guardian of Truth. October 5-November 2, 1989

Willis, Mike. *A Study of the A.D. 70 Doctrine Realized Eschatology.* Guardian of Truth Foundation, 2006



*“And you shall
know the truth,
and the truth shall
make you free.”*

John 8:32

