

## ~Preterism 101~ by David A. Green

Following this brief article are 100 biblical, preterist "time-indicators." (hence the title.) There are many more than 100 to be found in Scripture, but these are probably the most blunt and obvious of them all. If we were to include every preterist time-indicator in Scripture, the number would possibly be in the hundreds. My purpose in displaying these passages (with some cross references) is to lay out in a concise, easy-to-read format the overwhelming testimony that our Lord actually fulfilled the Law and the Prophets, as He said He would. (Matt. 5:17)

Now it seems to me that there are only two ways to "get around" these 101 Scriptures and remain a futurist. One of those ways is to dismiss the spirit of imminence that saturates the New Testament and to say that it only indicates things that are "soon in God's sight."

There are some major problems with that approach. If the imminence saturating the New Testament was only an "in-God's-sight" imminence, then why was the Old Testament not also saturated with an "in-God's-sight" imminence? Why did God not tell Adam and Eve, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand?" Why did He not tell Abraham, "The Son of Man is about to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds?" Why did He not say to Malachi, "This generation will not pass away until all these things take place?"

Why is it that a Second Coming in the 21st century was "imminent" in the 1st century, but was not imminent before the 1st century? There is no substantive defense against this objection. The fact is that what God said was near to the Apostles, He said was not near to the earlier prophets. Perhaps the clearest illustration of this truth is found in a comparison of Dan. 8:26 and Rev. 22:10:

**•6th century B.C.: "Seal up the vision; for it shall be for many days." (Dan. 8:26)**

**•1st century A.D.: "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near." (Rev. 22:10)**

What God said was far away in Daniel's time, He said was imminent in the Apostles' time. The implication is inescapable: The imminence in the New Testament was real.

Granted, it is not unreasonable to use an expression of imminence or brevity in reference to a relatively long period of time, but it is biblically unreasonable to interpret *every* statement of eschatological imminence throughout the New Testament as meaning "2,000 years later." If we are going to claim scriptural support for such a hermeneutical approach, the only option is to make II Peter 3:8 ("with the Lord a day is like a thousand years") a "Code Key" that unlocks the "secret" meaning of the Spirit. But

not only is that method Gnostic-like, it makes eschatology (and ultimately, soteriology) utterly impossible to understand correctly without the mystical elucidation of II Peter 3:8 (and Ps. 90:4).

The second technique that is employed to "get around" the New Testament declarations of imminence is to dichotomize the spirit of imminence (and therefore the unified eschatological theme of Scripture), and to say that some or most New Testament imminence Scriptures do, indeed, indicate nearness in time (such as in references to the Great Tribulation in A.D. 66-70 and to a "coming" in judgment in A.D. 70.) but that other imminence Scriptures are, in reality, not statements of imminence at all. (In this approach, all references to the second coming, the resurrection of the dead and the "final judgment" are said to contain no indications of imminence whatsoever.)

The problem with this method is simply this: denial. The Bible says it. They deny it. They have thereby been forced to construct a duplicitous, theological system of "Yes" and "No." They have created a kind of twilight land of both "shadow" and "substance." (the land of partial preterism and historicism) They are rather like Saul of Tarsus, a man who sincerely and ignorantly "kicked against the goads" of the plain declarations of Scripture.

Many who have found themselves in this predicament recognize that they are in abject exegetical poverty, and so they end up appealing strictly and only to the authority of "the historic Church and her creeds." Not unrelated to this sad phenomenon is the defection of many Protestants to the Eastern Orthodox Church.

Denial is a complicated and destructive thing indeed. Like deception, it becomes a tangled web. The incredible eschatological confusion that has plagued the Christian world since the days of the Reformation is a testimony to that fact.

But in contrast to the chaos of futurism, the Scriptures (below) have a straightforward teaching, which is this: The fulfillment of all prophecy was "at hand," "near," "soon," "about to be," etc. when the New Testament was written, and it was all to be fulfilled by the time the old covenant vanished and its temple was destroyed (in A.D. 70).

The prophetic message is so simple, yet it is so profound. In a way it is not surprising that we missed it for so long.

Now a final note. The Apostle Peter was referring to eschatology when he said the following:

"...in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction." (II Peter 3:16)

Be careful what you do with the truth. Being in possession of a true, biblical proposition is by no means an evidence of being wise, no matter how wonderful the proposition is. There is no denying that some preterists are "untaught and unstable," and have used preterism to "distort" the Scriptures. (They are Universalists, Arians, Neo-Gnostics, etc.) They despise the collected teachings of the historic Church as being little more than the tricks of jugglers, and have blasphemed virtually every pillar of the Faith. They imagine themselves to be pioneers, but they are revilers in the tradition of II Peter and Jude. Do not follow them. Avoid them at all cost.

### **Preterist Time-Indicators**

1. "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." (Matt. 3:2)

2. "Who warned you to flee from the wrath about to come?" (Matt. 3:7)
3. "The axe is already laid at the root of the trees." (Matt. 3:10)
4. "His winnowing fork is in His hand." (Matt. 3:12)
5. "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 4:17)
6. "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 10:7)
7. "You shall not finish going through the cities of Israel, until the Son of Man comes." (Matt. 10:23)
8. "...the age about to come." (Matt. 12:32)
9. "The Son of Man is about to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds." (Matt. 16:27)
10. "There are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." (Matt. 16:28; cf. Mk. 9:1; Lk. 9:27)
11. "'When the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?' '...He will bring those wretches to a wretched end and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers, who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons.' '...Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it.' ...When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them." (Matt. 21:40-41,43,45)
12. "This generation will not pass away until all these things take place." (Matt. 24:34)
13. "From now on, you [Caiaphas, the chief priests, the scribes, the elders, the whole Sanhedrin] shall be seeing the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." (Matt. 26:64; Mk. 14:62; Lk. 22:69)
14. "The kingdom of God is at hand." (Mk. 1:15)
15. "What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vine-growers, and will give the vineyard to others. ....They [the chief priests, scribes and elders] understood that He spoke the parable against them." (Mk. 12:9,12)
16. "This generation will not pass away until all these things take place." (Mk. 13:30)
17. "Who warned you to flee from the wrath about to come?" (Lk. 3:7)
18. "The axe is already laid at the root of the trees. " (Lk. 3:9)
19. "His winnowing fork is in His hand...." (Lk. 3:17)
20. "The kingdom of God has come near to you." (Lk. 10:9)
21. "The kingdom of God has come near." (Lk. 10:11)
22. "What, therefore, will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy these vine-growers and will give the vineyard to others." ...The scribes and the chief priests ...understood that He spoke this parable against them." (Lk. 20:15-16,19)
23. "These are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled." (Lk. 21:22)
24. "This generation will not pass away until all things take place." (Lk. 21:32)
25. "Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold, the days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us.'" (Lk. 23:28-30; Compare Rev. 6:14-17)
26. "We were hoping that He was the One who is about to redeem Israel." (Lk. 24:21)
27. "I will come to you. ...In that Day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.' ...'Lord, what then has happened that You are about to disclose Yourself to us, and not to the world?'" (Jn. 14:18,20,22)
28. "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?" (Jn. 21:22)
29. "This is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel: 'And it shall be in the last days...'" (Acts 2:16-17)
30. "He has fixed a day in which He is about to judge the world in righteousness..." (Acts 17:31)
31. "There is about to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked." (Acts 24:15)
32. "As he was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment about to come..." (Acts 24:25)

33. "Not for [Abraham's] sake only was it written, that [faith] was reckoned to him [as righteousness], but for our sake also, to whom it is about to be reckoned." (Rom. 4:23-24)
34. "If you are living according to the flesh, you are about to die." (Rom. 8:13)
35. "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is about to be revealed to us." (Rom. 8:18)
36. "It is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand." (Rom. 13:11-12)
37. "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet." (Rom. 16:20)
38. "The time has been shortened." (I Cor. 7:29)
39. "The form of this world is passing away." (I Cor. 7:31)
40. "Now these things ...were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come." (I Cor. 10:11)
41. "We shall not all fall sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed." (I Cor. 15:51-52)
42. "Maranatha!" [The Lord comes!] (I Cor. 16:22)
43. "...not only in this age, but also in the one about to come." (Eph. 1:21)
44. "The Lord is near." (Phil. 4:5)
45. "The gospel ...was proclaimed in all creation under heaven." (Col. 1:23; Compare Matt. 24:14; Rom. 10:18; 16:26; Col. 1:5-6; II Tim. 4:17; Rev. 14:6-7; cf. I Clement 5,7)
46. "...things which are a shadow of what is about to come." (Col. 2:16-17)
47. "...we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord... ...We who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds... ...You, brethren, are not in darkness, that the Day should overtake you like a thief." (I Thess. 4:15,17; 5:4)
48. "May your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Thess. 5:23)
49. "It is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire." (II Thess. 1:6-7)
50. "Godliness ...holds promise for the present life and that which is about to come." (I Tim. 4:8)
51. "I charge you ...that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Tim. 6:14)
52. "...storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for that which is about to come, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed." (I Tim. 6:19)
53. "In the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self... ...Avoid these men. For of these are those who enter into households and captivate weak women... ...These also oppose the truth... ...But they will not make further progress; for their folly will be obvious to all..." (II Tim. 3:1-2,5-6,8-9)
54. "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is about to judge the living and the dead..." (II Tim. 4:1)
55. "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son." (Heb. 1:1-2)
56. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who are about to inherit salvation?" (Heb. 1:14)
57. "He did not subject to angels the world about to come." (Heb. 2:5)
58. "...and have tasted ...the powers of the age about to come." (Heb. 6:5)
59. "And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not thrown down". (Matt 24:2)
60. "When He said, 'A new covenant,' He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear." (Heb. 8:13)

61. "The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way of the [heavenly] Holy Places has not yet been revealed, while the outer tabernacle is still standing, which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation." (Heb. 9:8-10; Compare Gal. 4:19; Eph. 2:21-22; 3:17; 4:13)
62. "But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things about to come..." (Heb. 9:11)
63. "Now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin." (Heb. 9:26)
64. "For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things about to come..." (Heb. 10:1)
65. "...as you see the Day drawing near." (Heb. 10:25)
66. "...the fury of a fire which is about to consume the adversaries." (Heb. 10:27)
67. "For yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay." (Heb. 10:37)
68. "For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the one that is about to come."  
(Heb. 13:14)
69. "Speak and so act, as those who are about to be judged by the law of liberty." (Jms. 2:12)
70. "Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you. ...It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure!" (Jms. 5:1,3)
71. "Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord." (Jms. 5:7)
72. "You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand." (Jms. 5:8)
73. "...salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (I Peter 1:5)
74. "He ...has appeared in these last times for the sake of you." (I Peter 1:20)
75. "They shall give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead." (I Peter 4:5)
76. "The end of all things is at hand; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer." (I Peter 4:7)
77. "For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God." (I Peter 4:17)
78. "...as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is about to be revealed." (I Peter 5:1)
79. "We have the prophetic word ...which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the Day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts." (II Peter 1:19)
80. "Their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep." (II Peter 2:3)
81. "In the last days mockers will come. ...For this they willingly are ignorant of..." (II Peter 3:3,5)
82. "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God." (II Peter 3:10-12)
83. "The darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining." (I Jn. 2:8)
84. "The world is passing away, and its desires." (I Jn. 2:17)
85. "It is the last hour." (I Jn. 2:18)
86. "Even now many antichrists have arisen; from this we know that it is the last hour." (I Jn. 2:18; Compare Matt. 24:23-34)
87. "This is that of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world." (I Jn. 4:3; Compare II Thess. 2:7)
88. "For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation. ...About these also Enoch ...prophesied, saying, 'Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly...'"  
(Jude 1:4,14-15)
89. "But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they were saying to you, 'In the last time there shall be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts.' These are the ones who cause divisions..." (Jude 1:17-19)
90. "...to show to His bond-servants, the things which must shortly take place." (Rev. 1:1)

91. "The time is near." (Rev. 1:3)
92. "Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come." (Rev. 2:25)
93. "I also will keep you from the hour of testing which is about to come upon the whole world."  
(Rev. 3:10)
94. "I am coming quickly." (Rev. 3:11)
95. "And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is about to rule all the nations with a rod of iron."  
(Rev. 12:5)
96. "And in her [the Great City Babylon] was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who  
have been slain on the earth." (Rev. 18:24; Compare Matt. 23:35-36; Lk. 11:50-51)
97. "...to show to His bond-servants the things which must shortly take place." (Rev. 22:6)
98. "Behold, I am coming quickly." (Rev. 22:7)
99. "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near."  
(Rev. 22:10; Compare Dan. 8:26)
100. "Behold, I am coming quickly." (Rev. 22:12)
101. "Yes, I am coming quickly." (Rev. 22:20)

*Surely, we cannot ignore this great weight of evidence on the 'time-lines' and suppose that NONE of it is literal as the Futurists believe. If the Lord and His Apostles were to convey that He was coming back within a few short years after His death and resurrection, I do not know how else He could have said it. Could you??*