

End Times Bible Prophecy Debate: Dr. Jay Adams vs

Dr. John McLean

Bible Prophecy Debate

By Larry Wessels

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Announcer. If you would like a free newsletter on this or other subjects, just give us a call at Christian Answers. The phone number is (512) 218-8022 or you could email us at cdebater@aol.com. Thank you.

Lee Meckley. Good evening, welcome to Christian Answers Live. I'm Lee Meckley, Director of Radio Outreach for Christian Answers. We have a very good show for you this evening that's going to keep us all occupied. We have another debate on a very relevant subject so keep listening. The first hour we're going to be going through the debate itself, and the second hour from 7 until 8 we will be taking phone calls for the participants in our debate tonight on the subject that we're going to be dealing with.

Is there anyone listening to this program who has never heard of Hal Lindsey? For the past two decades some of the most well-known and widely read books in evangelicalism written by Hal Lindsey and others have focused on the area of theology known as eschatology or the study of last things. Specifically these books have been written from the perspective of premillennialism or the view that the Second Coming of Christ will usher in a thousand year period of time, hence the term millennium, during which Jesus Christ will dwell in the world bodily and rule the earth. This will be followed by the day of the Lord which is referred to several times in the Bible when God brings about the new heavens and the new earth and the eternal state. Now the premillennial viewpoint in various forms has come to dominate evangelical thought and ask the question: is the time of our Lord's return at hand? Now while premillennialism is by no means a novel viewpoint, the church today would probably be surprised to discover that until the 1800s the church embraced a very different viewpoint almost universally for more than 10 centuries. This viewpoint known as amillennialism declares that the Second Coming of Christ will bring about the new heavens and the new earth with no millennium in between, and while this view is not quite as colorful in the minds of some as the premillennial view, it nonetheless continues to maintain favor in Reformed and Lutheran circles as well as many other groups while the premillennial viewpoint continues to dominate most Baptist and Bible churches. Today we're going to bring these two views to a head so that you can, or bring these two views head-to-head so that you, the listener, can make up your own mind.

I want to say that Christian Answers does not take a position on this either way and we certainly acknowledge very competent scholars on both sides of the debate who can still unite on, shall we say, more essential issues of theology. And with that said, let's go ahead and introduce our participants in tonight's debate which are two very able scholars on both sides of this question. We have, and I want to make a note at this point that originally we had Tommy Ice from the Pretrib Research Center who was going to be representing the premillennial position, and he was not able to make it tonight, so he has recommended a very able person in his stead, Dr. John McLean. Dr. John McLean has his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan and is President of Michigan Theological Seminary.

Dr. McLean, how are you this evening?

Dr. John McLean. I'm fine. How are you this evening?

Lee. Oh, I'm just fine. And heading off with Dr. McLean is going to be Dr. Jay Adams. Jay Adams has his doctorate from the University of Missouri. He also has degrees from Johns Hopkins University and Reformed Episcopal Seminary among several others, and he is currently pastor of the Harrison Bridge Road Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church and, Dr. Adams, I image that takes up two lines in the phone book.

Dr. Jay Adams. Oh, that's alright. I'm glad you got it all out there.

Lee. Okay. Now, Dr. Adams, you are going to begin tonight's debate. Each of these gentlemen will have 10 minutes to present their position, 10 minutes each, and then we're going to have 5 minutes each of rebuttals, and then we're going to have 2 minutes each of a closing statement, and then next hour we're gonna get into question and answers, these gentlemen will have an opportunity to ask questions of one another. I'm going to be asking questions and you, the listeners, are going to have the opportunity to ask questions and, again, we'll be opening our phone lines on the, during the next hour.

Having said all of that, Dr. Adams, from right now you have 10 minutes to present your position.

Dr. Adams. Okay, let me say hi to John, first of all. Glad to be on here with you. I don't think we've ever met, have we?

Dr. McLean No, I don't think we have.

Dr. Adams. Well, maybe some day we will.

Dr. McLean. Yes.

Dr. Adams. In all fairness, what you said, Lee, isn't exactly accurate. Premillennialism, of course, was in early days a viable option just as amillennialism was. Justin Martyr, for

example, around 100 spoke about premillennialism and he espoused it himself and so did some of the other early fathers of the church. So even though it faded and then came back again around 1800, particularly in its pretrib form in 1830 and thereafter, nobody ever had premillennial, pretribulation premillennial views presented before the Irvingite and Darby movement, but they certainly, a premillennial view of a different sort, a posttrib view was prevalent early in the church. So I want to set that straight and I'm sure that John would like to do that too.

The view that I hold is not really amillennialism. I think that's a very terrible word. It speaks as though you don't believe that there is a thousand years mentioned in Revelation 20, and of course we do believe in a thousand years that's mentioned in Revelation 20. What I would prefer to call it is the realized millennial views over against the two unrealized millennial views. Postmillennialism and premillennialism have a lot in common because both of them are looking forward to an earthly thousand year period here on this, in this world before the eternal state and before the world is dissolved and before people live in the new heavens and the new earth, and so they're really looking forward to something that's future. They're both futuristic views. Now they disagree as to when and that will happen and as to what will bring it to pass, but they certainly do look forward.

The so-called amillennialist or realized millennialist as I prefer to call it, is one who believes that the thousand year period is representative of the period that's often called the church age, the period in which we're now living. It's a view that says that the book of Revelation is both symbols, you have a giant dragon knocking down stars with his tail, you have in the very 20th chapter an angel dealing with chains and locking Satan up and putting him in a bottomless pit and things of that sort, and so you have symbolic items in this book and you have 144,000, 12,000 exactly of this tribe, that tribe and the other tribe, obviously speaking of Jewish people, and so symbolically a thousand years is a long period of time and that's what we view this as being.

Now one of the things that we're concerned about in talking about millennialism is the idea that people have stuffed into this thousand years of Revelation 20 all kinds of passages that really there's no evidence have anything to do with it. Many many many Old Testament passages are said to be expletive of what the thousand year period is all about but if you read Revelation 20 carefully, it only says one thing and that is that during the thousand years the souls of the martyrs reign and it says that the devil is bound in one respect only, and that is that he might deceive the Gentiles no more during that thousand year period. I would say to you that the only real difference that you see visibly, one of the major differences in what Christ did on the cross is that the devil has been bound in that respect. In the Old Testament era, Gentiles went their way apart from God, apart from Israel, apart from the truth of God in the Old Testament, in the prophets and from salvation, but the church today is largely a Gentile church. This is the times of the Gentiles which are to be fulfilled before the coming of Christ.

So very readily that fits the picture of the thousand years that we're talking about as being a period of time in which we are now living. The martyrs who are talked about in that

passage are martyrs who during the period that the book of Revelation is speaking about were killed and who are living and reigning with him. The book of Revelation is not speaking about some future period. Again and again in the book we're told, for example in the first part of the book: a revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave him to show to his servants even the things that must shortly come to pass for the time is at hand. And also in chapter 22, verse 6, we read about the things that must shortly come to pass, and especially you read at the end of the book: seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book for the time is at hand.

Now Revelation and Daniel have a lot in common and one of the things they have in common is that they both speak about sealing or not sealing their books in the last chapter. The book of Daniel says seal up the words of the prophecy of this book because it was prophesying things that had to do with the Greek and the Roman empires which are way off in the future, not even in a whisper in people's minds at that moment. And yet the book of Revelation in contrast to Daniel was looking way into the distant future, says do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book because the time is at hand. These things are about to take place.

And so these were the martyrs who died under the Jewish persecution against the church, who died under the Roman persecution against the church, and who were living and reigning with Christ. All the way through the book of Revelation we read about these martyrs. There's a martyr trail, you might call it, through the book of Revelation. It's of deep concern to them, to the writer, to John, as to what will happen to these martyrs. And this was the book that enabled Christians by the hundreds of thousands to endure the persecutions that were coming upon them in the near future and they did. This book was given in order to help people not in some far distant period to which it would have, which would have no relevance to people then, but to help people right then and there who were going to face this Roman beast and they were going to face the Jewish persecution prior to that. What the book of Revelation is all about is how God deals with those enemies of the church, brings them to an end, the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD and clearly this book is before 70 AD because the temple stills stands, it tells you which rulers were still in existence in Rome, and it places it prior to that destruction, and the Roman persecutions that were going to occur and devastate the church so seriously.

So what we have here is a book that is dealing with the near future from John's time and which then was a great support to the church going through the tribulations and difficulties that they experienced in those early days under Rome and, first of all, the Jewish persecutions of which Paul was a part. So what we believe, then, about this matter is that as Peter said, we're looking for a new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells, and like the New Testament preachers we preach about the heaven that is yet to come, the eternal state that's yet to come, the new earth that's yet to come, all those new things and not some quasi-golden age of a thousand years on earth in which mortals and immortals dwell together and Christ is brought back and the temple is revived and sacrifices are again operative, and all sorts of things that Christ said were done away with. In the prophecies of the Old Testament that are applied to the book, applied to Revelation 20 by premillennialists in general really have to do with two things

or three things but the restoration in some of the passages of the people of God with the New Testament era and with the eternal state, and we see nothing in the New Testament in which anybody was to look forward to anything other than the new heavens and the new earth at the coming of Christ.

I think my time is just about completed.

Lee. Okay, thank you very much, Dr. Adams. And Dr. McLean, you now have 10 minutes from right now to give us your position.

Dr. McLean. Alright, well let me begin, first of all, by expressing my appreciation to Dr. Adams for driving Christian counselors to the Scriptures over the years and for encouraging all of us to find our answers in the Bible for the spiritual problems and difficulties that we face.

As far as premillennialism, premillennialism is the doctrine that believes that after Jesus Christ comes again to earth, he will establish his kingdom on earth and that kingdom is going to be a fulfillment of the many covenants that were promised to Israel in the Old Testament, the Abrahamic covenant, the Palestinian covenant, the Davidic covenant, the new covenant, and also the Levitical covenant, and that after Jesus Christ comes to earth, he will establish this kingdom on earth in fulfillment of the many many promises that were given in the Old Testament.

Now premillennialism has two major divisions from that point. Historic premillennialism which Dr. Adams was kind enough to refer back to in the historical perspective that both premillennialism and amillennialism can be seen in the eyes of the interpreter as they look at the church fathers, the Ante-Nicean fathers, and they both claim Augustine and others, and so historically these views have been around for some time. Historic premillennialism, though, has a tendency to put its roots back in the early representation of premillennialism and in many ways historic premillennialism holds a lot more in common with the amillennialism or postmillennialism as opposed to the second view or the second division of premillennialism which is dispensational premillennialism.

So I'll represent dispensational premillennialism because I think it draws a sharper distinction between amillennialism and premillennialism. In dispensational premillennialism, some of the main distinctions are that they would see God administrating stewardship over history in different ways at different times. They would appeal to the first three chapters of Ephesians where the word "stewardship" is used, a word that can be understood in the sense of a dispensation, that there was a previous dispensation, that of the period of law, that there is a current dispensation, and then there is a future dispensation of the summing up of all things, and that God has administrated these periods of stewardship and for dispensational premillennialism, they would see a difference between the administration of the old covenant, Old Testament covenant for Israel, and the New Testament covenant for the church or what is called the body of Christ. Dispensational premillennialism would see that the church began at Pentecost and that it is a separate entity or program from Israel. Generally speaking, amillennial or

postmillennial positions will often suggest that the church is spiritual Israel, that the church in some way will fulfill the Old Testament covenants that were given to Israel in some kind of spiritual way.

So premillennialism maintains that particular distinction suggesting that the church began at Pentecost and that it was a new work, a mystery not previously revealed in the Old Testament but revealed in the New Testament and particularly through Paul. The church was not predicted in the Old Testament but it is the bride of Christ and that the church has its particular period of stewardship. This church age which is in part the time of the Gentiles will continue in the future until a time when Jesus Christ will come and he will rapture the church, he will receive the church off of the earth to heaven, and will complete that period of this particular administration or stewardship. Dispensational premillennialism, then, would see that there is in the future after the church is raptured, a period called the tribulation, a seven year period as spoken of first of all in Daniel 9, and then also referred to in the Olivet discourses of Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21, and then expanded upon in the book of Revelation, and so they would anticipate in the future this last seven year period, the fulfillment of God's prophetic calendar, the 70 weeks of 7 that were prophesied by Daniel, and that this is a time that is particularly focused upon the judgment of the world, the purging and cleansing of Israel, and the deliverance and the salvation of Israel, the seven year period, of course, being divided into two periods of 3 ½ years beginning with the confirmation or affirmation of a covenant by the antichrist which begins the timetable or the final stopwatch counting off the seven years. In the midst of that seven year period, there is the abomination of desolation where the antichrist turns his persecution upon the people of Israel in particular and then the seven year period culminating with the Second Coming and the completion of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to deliver the people out.

So dispensational premillennialism would see a future seven year period and then after Jesus Christ comes again, dispensational premillennialism anticipates a fulfillment of the chronological and sequential nature of Revelation in chapter 20 when it says six times that there will be a kingdom and that those in the kingdom will rule for a thousand years, that Satan will be bound for a thousand years, and this is the only passage that defines the time length of the kingdom. And when we talk about stuffing into Revelation 20:1-10 all of these things, I don't think that dispensational premillennialists are stuffing into the passage all of this information. The passage of Revelation 20 simply gives us the timeframe and some additional elements about what the length is of this millennial kingdom. The other passages that help us illuminate what takes place during the kingdom from Isaiah and Ezekiel and Zechariah, are passages in which premillennialists have simply anticipated a natural fulfillment of prophecy as we naturally saw during the first coming of Jesus Christ between, you know, 200-300 Old Testament prophecies about Jesus Christ were, and I use the word "naturally," literally although within literalness I know that Dr. Adams and I understand that that involves figures of speech and poetry and metaphors and similes and symbolism and those kinds of things. But that there was a natural anticipation just as Old Testament prophecies dealing with everything from the flood that came upon the earth with Noah, to the fulfillment of the beginning promises of the Abrahamic covenant, to the beginning fulfillment of the Davidic covenant, to the

fulfillment of the new covenant, to the beginning fulfillment of the prophecies about the coming of Christ, that people expected to see natural, historical, recognizable events that would fulfill their anticipated understanding. So this is what premillennialism is expecting, a natural fulfillment.

Lee. Time.

We are talking about premillennialism and amillennialism. We are having a debate on that subject and if those seem like big theological words of little or no relevance, think of rapture, think of Christ as coming back soon, think of Hal Lindsey, think of a great deal of discussion that is going on on radio and tv talking about end times and that is precisely what we're dealing with. We are dealing with end times and we're dealing with two completely different interpretations of end times and how we should interpret passages in the Bible, especially passages in Revelation, the book of Revelation, but also in other apocalyptic books in the Bible, Daniel has been mentioned quite extensively, sometimes known as the Old Testament counterpart to the book of Revelation in the New Testament.

We have two very able scholars that are from each position that are telling us what they believe and telling us how they view the Scriptures in these areas. We have John McLean and John McLean taking the premillennial position, and Jay Adams taking the amillennial position and when we left, we had just heard from each gentleman giving 10 minutes apiece of his viewpoint, and we're going to go back now to Dr. Adams and, Dr. Adams, we're going to let you go ahead and take 5 minutes for a rebuttal.

Dr. Adams. Boy, that's hard to do in 5 minutes, but the point that I'd like to make and I think it's a very critical one in the whole discussion, is that our brother is talking about promises made to Israel. Now I agree that promises are made to Israel, however in Romans 9 at the sixth verse it says not all of those who are descendants of Israel are Israel, and it is very clear that the promises that were made to the Israel of the Old Testament are fulfilled in the Israel of the New where Paul says in Romans earlier that he is not a Jew who is a Jew outwardly but a Jew is one who has faith in Jesus Christ like faithful Abraham.

Now the covenant made to Abraham according to Galatians and according to Romans, was fulfilled in the church. The business of the temple was fulfilled in the church. We have spiritual sacrifices that are made today by a spiritual priesthood who are the church. We have the new covenant which is said in Hebrews to be fulfilled, not yet future as Dr. McLean suggests, but is already fulfilled, and that that new covenant that Christ spoke about which was in his blood is part of our fulfillment and the church and it was made with Israel. Of course it was made with Israel, the new covenant Israel, the New Testament Israel, the spiritual Israel, the Israel that offers spiritual sacrifices and not in Jerusalem but as Malachi predicted in the first chapter in the 11th verse, in every land. And as John's, as Jesus said in John 4 to the woman at the well, that Jerusalem would no longer be a center of worship but that people would worship God in spirit and in truth.

And as you look at 1 Peter, there doesn't seem to be much question as you look at the things that are mentioned there, the chosen race, a new nation, a kingdom, all these words are used of Old Testament Israel are used of the church today. In fact, in Ezekiel we read that David will appear on the scene. Well, who is that David? That's Jesus Christ. He is spiritualized into the Lord Jesus Christ. And the promises that are made to David were made to Christ and Christ does sit upon his throne today. As the second Psalm predicted, so in Acts 13 we're told that that second Psalm was fulfilled and it was fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus Christ we read in the 13th chapter of Acts.

So Christ was the high priest. He is a fulfillment of everything that had to do with the types and shadows of the high priesthood and the temple sacrifices. We have sacrifices of prayer and praise today. Jesus is the Lamb of God. The temple veil was his flesh which was torn. Christ is our Passover. He is our circumcision. We have a spiritual sacrifice inherited, preserved for us in heaven, according to 1 Peter 1. Everything that was prophesied, all the promises that were made to the Old Testament saints are ours today. As a matter of fact, the Old Testament saints were not looking forward to a physical inheritance Hebrews tells us, but Hebrews 12 tells us that after they received that physical inheritance, they had not really gotten the promises. The land wasn't the real promise, it was a heavenly country and a heavenly Jerusalem, and we today have come to that heavenly Jerusalem is what Hebrews tells us in the 12th chapter, not to Mount Zion, an earthly physical mountain, but to the heavenly Jerusalem and to the gathering of the saints of God. The whole of all of the promises that the Old Testament made to Israel in the Old Testament are either fulfilled now or will be fulfilled in the new heavens and the new earth in a spiritual way because we no longer go back to the weak and the beggarly elements that had been done away with in Christ. All the types and shadows are fulfilled in him and in his church and in eternity.

I think my time's gone.

Lee. Okay, thank you very much, Dr. Adams, and we'll go ahead and get Dr. McLean to respond. Dr. McLean, you've got 5 minutes from right now.

Dr. McLean. Yes, well I think the key word that Dr. Adams used which points out the difference between premillennial and amillennial approach to Scripture is when he says spiritually fulfilled, and this is, again, premillennialism expects a natural fulfillment as anticipated and illustrated in the life of Christ and throughout Old Testament history.

Now some of the points that I would mention, Dr. Adams brought up Romans 9 and yet he failed to bring up Romans 11 that talks about a future yet for Israel. I would agree with some of the things that Dr. Adams mentioned about fulfillment. Premillennialists today, dispensationalists and this particular new group that has been called progressive dispensationalists, would acknowledge that there are initial fulfillments of Old Testament prophecy that is coming to the church but the church is not the ultimate fulfillment. I prefer to use the word fruition.

There were promises in the Abrahamic covenant that had blessings for the Gentiles. The Davidic throne is expanded in the book of Proverbs to include a reign over the Gentiles and that does not mean that Christ won't also literally reign over the people of Israel here on earth in fulfillment of the Palestinian covenant. In amillennialism the suggestion is very often that the devil is bound, that Satan is bound by the Gospel and yet in our New Testament we have so many passages like 1 Peter 5:8, the devil like a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour, and Ephesians 6, that we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against these principalities, and so I think that that particular point is very difficult for the amillennialist to defend.

When they refer to the book of Revelation, I think that there is room for discussion on how to translate the particular Greek word which is translated "soon" or "shortly," it can also be translated "quickly," and however you understand that, I think Jesus was teaching more of an imminent return or an imminent expectation as opposed to a soon expectation.

The other point would be, for instance, in Acts 1:6 Jesus during the period from his resurrection to his ascension, it tells us in Luke that he spent many days, 40 days speaking to the disciples about the kingdom of God, opening up their minds, opening up their hearts to the Scripture, taking them from the law of Moses and the prophets and teaching about himself, and the last question that they ask him before he leaves in Acts 1:6 is, "Lord, is it at this time you're going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" They're still thinking of a literal kingdom. If you study Israel in the Luke vocabulary, it always refers to national Israel and Jesus doesn't correct them, he doesn't rebuke them, he doesn't say, "Oy vey, you dumb disciples! I've spent 40 days with you, don't you understand that the church is Israel and that there's a spiritual fulfillment of all these things? What's wrong with you expecting a kingdom?" No, he says, "It's not for you to know the times or the epochs which the Father has fixed by his authority, but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you." It's interesting that in the Gospels there's dozens and dozens of questions that are given to Jesus. Every time he corrects them, gives the proper information. Here Jesus doesn't correct them. I think it's a very strong indication that the disciples underneath the tutelage of Jesus were still expecting a kingdom to Israel.

So I think that that's important. Now Dr. Adams made the point that Revelation is all fulfilled and that if it wasn't, it must've been given to the people of that day for it to have relevance. I think it did have relevance to the people of that day but let's not forget the example of Daniel. I mean, Daniel was written with fulfillment hundreds and hundreds of years later. It still had relevance to the immediate generation. It had relevance to the Macabbeans. It had relevance to Josephus, he cited it. And it had relevance to the New Testament believers. And yet there is still a futuristic aspect to the final fulfillment of Daniel and so I think that there can be a very practical message to the first generation of those reading the Revelation as well as an understanding to our generation today.

Lee. Thank you very much, Dr. McLean. If you just tuned in, we're talking about premillennialism versus amillennialism. We're dealing with end times and we're specifically talking about how we are to interpret passages that in the Bible which speak prophetically, which tell us about end times. Essentially what seems to be developing

here is we definitely have an amillennial and premillennial position but essentially what we seem to have developing and we'll talk about this more later, is a view that sees these prophetic writings as speaking of things yet to come relative to us in the 20th century versus a viewpoint that says that many of these things were fulfilled much earlier in history, all the way back during the first century perhaps, and this has a great deal of relevance to many of us who will turn on the tv or the radio and hear our favorite teacher talking about how events going on in the Middle East or something may correlate to particular things spoken of in Scripture, and we're looking at what the Bible has to say about these things.

Again, we have two very able scholars that are defending each position and so you really need to be listening to the discussion. So Dr. Jay Adams taking the amillennial position and John McLean taking the premillennial position and we're talking about end times and you don't have to listen to Christian radio or television very long to find out the relevance of that particular topic. The difference between what you hear there and what you're hearing here is we're actually having different viewpoints facing off with one another so that we're gonna let you, the listener, decide how to interpret these different passages in the Scripture.

Now at this point, we're gonna go ahead and give each gentleman 2 minutes to make a closing argument but that is by no means the end of this discussion because we have a whole hour coming up in which we're going to be having question and answer. We're gonna have these gentlemen questioning one another, I'm gonna ask questions. Right now, though, let's go ahead and go to Dr. Adams and, Dr. Adams, you have 2 minutes from right now to give your closing argument.

Dr. Adams. Did I lose a 5 minute response or am I just missing something? The devil is found only in one respect and that is not to deceive the nations until the thousand years are over. That's specifically said and I mentioned that fact earlier. The whole business of the passage about the devil going as a roaring lion or principalities and powers is not relevant to the issue, and all these arguments about the devil must have a mighty long chain and so on, and a lot of nonsense because the passage is talking about only one respect in which the devil is bound. Certainly he isn't bound in other respects.

Now this literalism that we're hearing here is every bit as serious as we have heard it to be. It's called naturalism by Dr. McLean but the people who thought they were taking the Scriptures naturally were the people who crucified Jesus Christ. That's how serious it is. They did not want to understand what Jesus had to say. They didn't hear what he had to say. They heard it their way, the way they wanted it. They wanted a physical materialistic kingdom with Christ reigning on the earth and he said, "My kingdom is not of this world or my servants would be fighting."

Also, this business about an initial fulfillment as being something that is only a partial fulfillment kind of gets you off the hook a little bit because what you're trying to do now is to have it both ways. The Scriptures teach very plainly that the fulfillment of the second Psalm, the fulfillment of Jeremiah 31, the fulfillment of all these passages, what

Samuel predicted and all the prophets predicted, took place in Christ's day and now we're trying to hear how all these things were not fulfilled then, they were only partially or initially fulfilled. We read, "He foreseeing this," speaking of David in Acts 2 and talking about Christ sitting on his throne, raising up Christ, "spoke concerning the resurrection of Christ." Now he either spoke concerning the resurrection of Christ and that he would sit upon his throne at the resurrection or he didn't and there is no future kingdom of Christ sitting upon a throne that in any way approximates what happened at the resurrection of Christ when he came with clouds to the Father and the Ancient of Days gave him that kingdom.

Lee. Okay, thank you very much, Dr. Adams, and we'll go ahead and get a 2 minute closing argument from Dr. McLean.

Dr. McLean. Well, I don't think it's accurate to speak of naturalism in association with those who crucified Christ. This is certainly an unfair guilt by association. The idea of not naturalism but the natural reading or natural understanding of the text is that we expect these Old Testament prophecies to be fulfilled such as the expectation of those who have naturally written throughout history. If you look at the Maccabees, they anticipated and even identified the abomination of desolation of Daniel with the problems of their day. Josephus refers to the events of Daniel's 70th week in suggesting that the Jewish people believed that there was some fulfillment of it in their day. We also see in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21, the disciples, particularly Matthew, refers to the abomination of desolation as spoken of by Daniel, expecting a natural fulfillment and, of course, that is in light of the things that Jesus taught them about the three great questions that they were asked: when will these things be; when will be the destruction of the temple; and what is the sign of your coming?

So my suggestion is that the person simply sit down reading the Old Testament or the New Testament and asking themselves the question: how is God communicating to me? What should I naturally understand God to be meaning as I listen to this particular text or read this particular text? We find hundreds and hundreds of Old Testament prophecies fulfilled in the life of Jesus Christ in the first coming, and they were fulfilled naturally, in other words, historically according to the prediction of the prophets.

We also see that not everything from the Old Testament was fulfilled in the first coming of Christ. We have passages side-by-side in which one coming and the second coming are all together.

We also see that there is an importance to see here that there is some say an initial fulfillment, my particular language is fruition. We do see Old Testament prophecies partially fulfilled in the life of Christ and then we see other ones fulfilled in the second coming. I think it is only natural to expect as we see the pattern of God's word, his prophecies being fulfilled literally and historically in earthly context, to expect the Abrahamic, Davidic, the Palestinian, and the Levitical covenants and the new covenant to be completely fulfilled in the nation of Israel in a historical, cultural, natural context.

Lee. Thank you very much, Dr. McLean, and we're coming right up to the top of the hour. You're listening to Christian Answers Live. This evening we are having a debate on the subject of premillennialism versus amillennialism and this is a very relevant topic. It's almost impossible to turn on Christian radio or tv without hearing long discussions about how current events that we see in the news and the headlines may or may not indicate how near we are to the return of Christ. A tremendous amount of study is offered as to whether or not a particular crisis developing somewhere in the world can be compared to events that we find in prophetic writings in the word of God, and it's quite often held to be true by many believers, I fear, that these prophetic writings are always to be interpreted in the way that is presented.

Now this evening we're going to be looking at some alternative views of the prophetic portions of Scripture and possibly Scripture as a whole because it's not so much pieces but it's all the word of God and all flows together; we get our doctrine from looking at all of the word of God to see what it has to say on any particular topic. And I want to throw in this note: Christian Answers does not take a position on this particular subject and if I, myself, seem somewhat critical or perhaps somewhat cynical in my tone, it's not because I'm being critical of either one of these viewpoints. Christian Answers and certainly I, myself, acknowledge very capable scholars on either side of this discussion. What disappoints me about Christian media is we don't have discussion about these matters. Quite often we'll hear a great deal of information from a particular viewpoint and not so much from another or depending on which particular media you're looking at, some various Christian media will cater to a particular denomination or a particular school of thought within Christianity, and so you may hear one view that is given a great deal of time and the only thing that you ever hear of the other view is going to be what the first view has to say about it. So I'm very interested in bringing together amillennialism and premillennialism so that we can have a discussion head-to-head to find out or to get the information that you, the listener, need to make up your own mind when you're listening to your favorite Bible teacher talk about his particular perspective on the prophetic Scriptures.

Now last hour, we had these two gentlemen which I'm about to introduce, give their viewpoints on amillennialism and premillennialism and this hour we're gonna have question and answer. I'm going to be asking some questions. My guests this evening are John McLean. Dr. John McLean is or has his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan and he is currently President of Michigan Theological Seminary. Dr. McLean, how are you this evening? Welcome back to the second hour of Christian Answers Live.

Dr. McLean. Thank you.

Lee. Okay, and also joining us is Dr. Jay Adams. Dr. Adams has his Ph.D. from the University of Missouri. He also has degrees from Johns Hopkins University and Reformed Episcopal Theological Seminary, and is currently pastor of Harrison Bridge Road Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. Dr. Adams, how are you this evening? Welcome back to the second hour.

Dr. Adams. Just fine. Delighted to be here.

Lee. Okay. Gentlemen, when we left our discussion from the last hour, we had found that there's more to amillennialism and premillennialism than simply just that, that we have shades of amillennialism, we have shades of premillennialism. Specifically we mentioned dispensational premillennialism versus historic premillennialism, which as Dr. McLean has pointed out, are quite different. Quite different. And this first question that I want to talk about this evening is directed more towards Dr. Adams but I want Dr. McLean to respond as well.

Dr. Adams, I'd kind of like to talk about for a little bit the idea of preterism. Now within amillennialism and I believe within postmillennialism as well, which is also a Reformed viewpoint or within the Reformed camp, more or less, there is the different views of the book of Revelation. We have, if I'm not mistaken, the preterist viewpoint, the historicist viewpoint, and....

Dr. Adams. ...a variety of views.

Lee. Yeah, there is the idealist or something. I wasn't sure. So now as I understand it, you're coming from the preterist viewpoint.

Dr. Adams. That's correct. Preterist means past.

Lee. Okay, if you could tell us how this differs from other ways of looking at the book of Revelation and then I'm going to get Dr. McLean to give his thoughts.

Dr. Adams. Well, you might say that the preterist view is the natural view of Revelation. What I'm trying to say is that it takes the book as referring to actual events that have occurred in the destruction of Jerusalem and then the fall of Rome as over against other views, and there are many of them, I mean, we can't even articulate all of them tonight, just as there are many views of premillennialism, by the way, you've heard not only about posttribulation or historic premillennialism but you also heard about progressive premillennialism or progressive dispensationalism of a sort that's very different from the old Chafer view and Scofield view of dispensationalism which was, bordered on heretical views in which they said that there were two ways of salvation, for Israel one way, and for the church another. I'm glad to know that our, that Dr. McLean doesn't hold to that view and that he holds a much closer view to the one that I hold. But one of the views that is often presented is sort of the book of Revelation deals with basic themes and these themes are always relevant in every age. Another view is it deals with the whole period of Christianity from the beginning to the end. Another is that there is recapitulation, every time you have a series of seven, it starts all over again talking about the same period and then you have, you look at the same period in seven different ways that progressively through history from a different perspective each time.

So there are a variety of these views. I don't hold to any of those. I hold to the one that says was talking about the Jews and the destruction of Jerusalem which it talks about, the

city where our Lord was crucified and how that destruction takes place, but that's talking about the destruction of Jerusalem. It talks about Babylon and the woman who sits on the seven hills, that's talking about Rome which was on seven hills, and that's the destruction of Rome. And finally at the end you have the wrap-up of what happens to Satan and all what energized these persecutors of the church and brought about the martyrs.

Lee. Now is there any room within the amillennial position to hold to a futuristic view of the book of Revelation? In other words, to be amillennial yet to see events spoken of in the book of Revelation as yet to come?

Dr. Adams. Well, there are some people who do. You see, that's what all these other views that I've told you about really do look at, they say, one of them is called the church historical view and that is it runs the book of Revelation according to people who hold that view say that it covers the period from the beginning of the church up to the coming of Christ. So, yes, a lot of people look at the book of Revelation as at least in part predicting the future.

Lee. Okay. Dr. McLean, and by the way, gentlemen, I'm gonna go ahead and let both of you interact on this, but your response to my question to Dr. Adams, do you have anything to add?

Dr. McLean. No, I think he's represented preterism correctly. Preterism often will try to see the far majority of the fulfillment in 70 AD, certainly in the first century it wants to see its fulfillment and I think that, again, is the crux of the issue of interpreting the Scripture. John is writing somewhere, generally accepted in the 90s AD, he is interesting that the first six seals of the book of Revelation pattern very closely the events of the Olivet Discourse leading up to the abomination of desolation and John writing in the 90s is describing these things that lead up to the abomination of desolation and yet in the preterist viewpoint, they would say, "Well, all of those things were fulfilled in 70 AD," and yet John seems to be relating them in 90+ AD.

Also it falls into the section of the book of Revelation that is I would call the third prophetic section. You know, Revelation 1:19 kind of gives us a structure to the book right there for the saints that you have seen, the first chapter, the things which are, the letters to the seven churches, and then the things that take place after these things, and that picks up in chapter 4 of Revelation where John is told to, "Come up here and I will show you the things that must take place after these things." And it would be my suggestion that certainly from Revelation 4 on is something that is futuristic where the preterist sees it in the past, and that it is certainly futuristic to 95 AD which is post-destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

I think also placing the fulfillment of the Olivet Discourses of Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21, in the future. You remember that the disciples asked three basic questions in that context: when will these things be, that is, the destruction of Jerusalem? What will be the sign of your coming? And then what will be the end of the age? I think it's very difficult to see all those three questions fulfilled in the past and I think for them to be

fulfilled in the past you'd have to have the book of Revelation, you know, somewhere written before 70 AD.

So I think Dr. Adams has represented the preterist view correctly but I, myself, am from the futuristic camp thinking there's good reasons to yet expect a natural literal fulfillment of the book of Revelation.

Dr. Adams. I would like to respond to that just briefly.

Lee. Alright, go ahead. Sure.

Dr. Adams. About seven times we heard the word 90s but that's not an accepted view. That is one of two views strongly supported from both sides. There's a book just been published by Ken Gentry and that book strongly established the fact that the book of Revelation was written prior to 70 AD. The 70 AD destruction of Jerusalem seems to be absolutely certain because the temple's still standing in the book of Revelation and the downfall of the city of Jerusalem is predicted in that book. The idea that it was in the 90s is only one viewpoint. It certainly is not established as the viewpoint and if anybody reads Ken Gentry's book, "Before 70 AD," then I believe that they will be more than persuaded that the book of Revelation was not written in the 90s but that it was written prior to the destruction in 70 AD.

Dr. McLean. Yeah, and I would say that, and this is very important for Gentry to try to establish a pre-70 writing of the book of Revelation because of the difficulty that I've just mentioned of it being a post-90 makes it difficult to fulfill the preterist view. Now Gentry's book is worth reading and he argues very strongly. Robert Thomas from Master's Seminary has sought to answer and critique Gentry and so that's certainly an important area for a diligent student to examine is the question of the date.

Now when I say, you know, Gentry is not standing in a great group though, I mean, a 90s date has been one of the major dates for many many years and it's being pushed back in part because of this problem of the preterist having to get it all fulfilled in 70 AD and the awkwardness of having a book in the 90s being written that would be after these things were all supposed to be fulfilled.

The second thing I would say is just simply the reference to the temple. I don't think that we have to conclude that because John refers to the temple in the book of Revelation that it has to be the temple of 70 AD. It has been understood by premillennialism that there will be a reconstruction of the temple as you see much interest in that today in the land of Israel. They certainly want to see a reconstruction of the temple. So a futuristic reconstruction of the temple is certainly believable and can certainly fit into the futuristic approach to the book of Revelation.

Dr. Adams. The comments are not exactly accurate. When I hear my friend say that this was a very meagerly held viewpoint, I have in front of me at the moment, I could read to you the names of over 50 men with men like Westcott, Hort, with Lightfoot, with Ferrar,

with Sweet, with all kinds of people who are very fine scholars who have held over the years a pre-70 AD date. Don't get the idea from what you're hearing which is inaccurate, that this is a view of so many people and so few hold to this other view. No, there are many many good men who have held to a pre-70 AD date and when you look at the internal evidence in the book, I believe that you will be persuaded that's true. I've amassed this together in a book called "The Time is at Hand."

Lee. The first question deals with the book written by McPherson, I believe his name is Jim McPherson. I'm not sure but it's called "The Incredible Coverup," that suggests that the pretribulation rapture viewpoint has started within the last 100 years, and if I'm not mistaken this is the book that attributes the pretribulation rapture view to a prophetic utterance by Margaret McDonald in 18-something, I can't remember the date. Anyway, I guess we'll start out with John McLean and get his response to that.

Dr. McLean. Well, I would say this is an old straw man argument that just doesn't stand up. By straw man, I mean the construction of a position or a historical situation that the writer constructs and then tears apart or knocks down.

In recent articles in bibsac, the Dallas Theological Seminary Journal, Tommy Ice and another gentleman wrote about a finding that was discovered by Grant Jeffrey that goes back to the fourth century called pseudo-Ephraim in which in this particular writing, it is clearly demonstrated a pre and I'm going to use a different term than pretribulationism, but a pre-70th week or pre-great tribulation rapture. And so there are books out now that can demonstrate as the work has been done, that the pretribulation rapture or the pre-70th week rapture has far more historical linkage than was seen before. So I would say that the book is a straw man. We need to look at the latest scholarship which is this particular citing by pseudo-Ephraim.

Lee. Dr. Adams, do you have anything to add?

Dr. Adams. Well, I just would want to say that there's far more evidence for this as an early date is going a little far. The idea is that there may be something that seems to be close to it but we know, all of us know that the modern way in which this began was with the Irvingite movement that began as a result of Revere's Spanish Jesuit's book that was translated by Edward Irving and Lacunza's book and those kinds of things in that movement. But that really is irrelevant. I just think it's irrelevant because the question is what do the Scriptures teach?

Dr. McLean. Yes, and I think that's where we do have to go and yet it has been the straw man argument to try to suggest that pretribulationism is recent therefore it is not necessarily true, that pretribulationism is associated with less than orthodox people, therefore it is less than orthodox. And the latest scholarship has done a tremendous job and the readers, the listeners, they want to go to some recent works by Grant Jeffrey and by Tommy Ice and bibsac and see that there is a much stronger, clearer, historical transmission of the pretribulation pre-70th week doctrine and it's not just occasional or similar, it's very very strong statements.

Dr. Adams. Well, as far as I'm concerned, it's a moot question. It really is....

Dr. McLean. Yes.

Dr. Adams. ...is unimportant to me because you can trace everything back and because you can, you can trace the start of premillennialism, you can trace amillennialism. So we've got the issue again that in the early church, in the Middle Ages, we have all kinds of things coming into the picture so that doesn't prove anything to us. Tertullian thought there were demons that came out from underneath your armpit.

Dr. McLean. Yeah, he was mistaken, it was the nose.

Dr. Adams. Ah, I think you're right.

Dr. McLean. I agree we've got to go back to the Scriptures.

Lee. Okay, gentlemen, we have a caller on the line who has a question from the Scriptures. Alan, what can we do for you?

Alan. I'm talking about John 6 and for at least three occasions where Jesus makes a statement that he will raise, he will raise up all that God has given him on the last day, or then other times he says, "If a person believes in me, I will raise him up on the last day." And how do you relate this "last day" to the millennium or do you not relate it to the millennium?

Lee. Okay, Alan, we're having a little bit of a problem with the phone lines so I'm gonna go ahead and let you listen off the air.

Alan. Alright.

Lee. You say your question is John 6, on the last day, does this refer to the millennium or how does it relate to the millennium?

Alan. Yes. Yes.

Lee. Okay, thank you very much for your call and, gentlemen, I guess either one of you can jump in and...

Dr. Adams. Go ahead, John.

Dr. McLean. I think he's referring to something like John 6:40 where it says, "For this is the will of my Father that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in him may have eternal life and I myself will raise him up on the last day," or in the last day. And I'm just trying to see what other references the author, our questioner was asking. In premillennial...

Dr. Adams. [unintelligible] he had in mind, too, right?

Dr. McLean. Pardon me?

Dr. Adams. Did he have 39 in mind?

Dr. McLean. Yeah, probably 39 in mind, maybe 44 and 54.

Dr. Adams. 39, 40 and those others you mentioned.

Dr. McLean. Yeah, 44 says, "I will raise them up on the last day," and then 54.

Dr. Adams. Right.

Dr. McLean. Ah, premillennialism understands that there is at the rapture of the church there is the uniting of the believers of the church with that which is mortal becomes immortal, 1 Corinthians 15, and that which is corruptible become, puts on incorruptibility, and so there is the resurrection of the church, then following Revelation 20, we would see a first resurrection as mentioned of the first of its two, the first being the resurrection of the murdered saints from the tribulation, and then there's another resurrection at the end which is the resurrection to the Great White Throne Judgment. The statement that is used here by Jesus, "in the last day," I think is a period, is a term taken in the end times or in the last day which is the great Day of the Lord, and so I think it's more specifically defined than in Revelation as to what that day entails. The promise of Jesus, I think is that those that believe in him will be resurrected.

Dr. Adams. But I think that it also says at the last day, which premillennials believe is prior, that the resurrection of the believers who have been given to Christ which the premillennials believes is prior to the millennium, will be the time when Christ raises them. The last day, not at some period following the last day which couldn't be the last day if there were a period after that, but that they are raised at the last day, that the last day is the last thing we have in our chronology for this period in which we live and that's when the resurrection of believers is going to take place, and that's the period.

Lee. Now let me get this straight. The premillennial view would say that the resurrection of believers takes place before the millennium and then the resurrection of unbelievers takes place after the millennium?

Dr. Adams. Right, which makes a resurrection to take place in a day after the last day, namely the resurrection of unbelievers. So you have a last day after a last day.

Dr. McLean. The term "last day" for a premillennialist would be similar to like the Day of the Lord, it is not necessarily a 24 hour period of time, and this can be seen, I think, throughout Scripture that sometimes day whether it's the Hebrew term yom or the Greek

term for the age, it sometimes can be a 24 hour period, it sometimes can be a long period of time, it can be an age.

John 6, I don't think is referencing a 24 hour period of time, but the eschatological future last day. For instance, we are living now in the last days...

Dr. Adams. I do not believe we're living in the last days. The last days of which the passages speak that he would be referring to this time has to do with the last days of the Old Testament era, but the last day that Jesus is looking forward to is the day of the resurrection of believers and according to premillennialism, that's a thousand years before the very last day in which unbelievers will be raised. So it's not really the last day at all and it troubles me just a bit, you know, that we're gonna have a period of time of resurrection, a long period of time, not some kind of a time in which this happens as an event but rather as a period as we just heard. I don't believe the resurrection's gonna be a period of time over which people are going to be resurrected over maybe a thousand years or something, but it's going to be an event where Christ returns and we're gonna be raised. According to pretrib premills, they're all gonna rise and be with the Lord for seven years and that means it's an event, not a long period at all.

Dr. McLean. This is where it comes down to, again, how you would naturally read or interpret. Dr. Adams referred to Revelation 20 earlier suggesting that there was only one main thing or one thing here in the passage, the souls of the martyrs being raised, and then he mentioned a second thing, Satan being bound from deceiving the Gentiles, but as a premillennialist would read verses 4 and 5 and I'll just summarize, it says, "I saw thrones. They sat upon them and judgment was given to them. I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus, because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received a mark upon their forehead and upon their hand." And it says, "They came to life. They reigned with Christ for a thousand years," verse 5. "The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed." So the premillennialist looks at that and says, "Well, I see a resurrection of martyred saints. I see a thousand year period mentioned six times in the text. And then I see a second resurrection, or the rest of the dead coming to live a thousand years later." Those, of course, are those who go on for the Great White Throne Judgment. So premillennialism reads it naturally, sees two resurrections in this passage separated by a thousand years.

Dr. Adams. We also read this very naturally when we read about the last day, that there's not a thousand years after it, that there's not another resurrection after it, that there's not all kinds of things that take place afterwards, but that this is the last day when the resurrection takes place. But I think we've milked that as far as we can.

Lee. We have Dr. Jay Adams who is very capably representing the amillennial position and Dr. John McLean who is also very capably representing the premillennial position, and as we have discovered in our conversation, Dr. McLean is coming from the position of dispensational premillennialism for you Bible scholars out there, and Jay Adams is coming from the position of amillennial preterism. And this has been a very good

discussion because these views are quite different, they're about as far apart as you can get within this discussion of end times, and that makes it good because this is something that's not being talked about. Quite often you'll hear somebody assuming a particular position as he gives you information on whatever his topic is, and it's a very good idea that we are exposed to the other viewpoints and have these viewpoints interact so that we can make up our minds for ourselves.

Gentlemen, this is our last segment and I wanted to make this as relevant as possible. I want to spend some time talking about current events. I guess let's start off with Dr. Adams, is there any value whatsoever in coming from your perspective to looking at the newspaper headlines and seeing if there's any way that we can gain any kind of insight as to whether the coming of Christ is near? I assume that both of you gentlemen would be against any kind of date setting, saying that it's definitely going to take place a certain time, but is there a way that we can kind of feel out the seasons, so to speak?

Dr. Adams. We certainly are against, both of us I'm sure, date setting and there was somebody who tried to set a date about a year ago in September and again made a colossal failure and a mockery of the Christian faith. We wouldn't do that and I'm sure Dr. McLean wouldn't do that either.

The thing that's important is not to read your Bible through the daily newspaper. Premillennialists have been doing that for a long while and we've had everybody from Stalin and Mussolini and Hitler and everybody since by some premillennialist here or there, and I certainly wouldn't accuse Dr. McLean of doing that, as representing the antichrist or something of that sort, which is strange to me because I'm looking for a new heavens and new earth when Christ returns, I don't think that to hold to an imminent return as he mentioned in the very first part of this broadcast, any moment coming of Christ fits any kind of sign business beforehand because the Bible, what the Bible teaches now it taught then, and if it taught the imminent coming of Christ in the first century when it was written, then, you know, they couldn't have looked for any signs that should come later on, and certainly it didn't teach the imminent coming of Christ. Peter was still alive, everybody knew that he was still alive when he was writing. John had predicted that he would die. Christ couldn't have come then. The prediction of the death of others in Matthew 24:9, the Jews, I mean, 70 AD the destruction of Jerusalem was predicted, the fullness of the Gentiles was predicted, Christ going away and the parable, you've got a kingdom after a long time returning was predicted. Item after item was predicted and so the people then couldn't conceivably have looked for any kind of an imminent return.

What the Bible teaches is there has to be an apostasy and the man of sin has to be revealed and that this will take place when people are saying peace and safety. Now Dr. McLean will say that has nothing to do with the return of Christ the first time but that's on his second return seven years after the rapture of the saints, however I don't believe in two comings of Christ in the future but only one.

Lee. Okay, Dr. McLean.

Dr. McLean. You might just repeat your question, I mean, as far as the signs...

Lee. Yes.

Dr. McLean. ...if that's what you're referring to, I would agree that there has been all too many abuses in relationship to reading the Bible through the newspaper or all of the kinds of date setting. This has been very unfortunate and it's something that we have been told to avoid.

Now in dispensational premillennialism and particular pretribulational premillennialism, we believe that the signs that were given in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and in Luke 11 deal with the second coming of Christ and the future destruction of the reconstructed temple. Pretribulationists or pre-70th week rapturists believe that the church will be removed before that time. So those signs are not something for us to necessarily try to adhere to or to set. I think the main emphasis of Scripture is that, for instance in Titus 2, for the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires, to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. We are taught to expect Jesus Christ. I believe another long discussion is to the doctrine of immanency but I think the believers in the first century and believers today are taught to expect Jesus Christ, to look forward to the coming of Jesus Christ, and in light of the fact that we are going to meet him, we are going to be judged at the Bema seat of Christ and give an account for what we've done for our lives, that in light of all of that what kind of people ought we to be, that prophecy should stir us and spur us on to godliness and godly living, not speculation.

Lee. Okay, and getting a little bit more specific about current events, this is something that we've touched on in the last hour but I think it's worth mentioning again. As we look at what is taking place specifically I'm thinking of 1948, the return of Israel to, the return of the Jews to the land of Israel, and in '67 with the Jews regaining control of Jerusalem, Dr. Adams, from your perspective you would not see this as being biblically or prophetically significant, I take it?

Dr. Adams. Not prophetically significant in that there is anything whatsoever in prophecy that teaches that this would happen. Everything that has to do with the Jews and the temple and so on has all passed, it's been fulfilled, you don't have to repeat all this and have a restored Roman Empire, restored temple, restored people to the land and so on. The real question whether most of those people over there are of Jewish lineage, at least a good number of them would not be. God is not working with them as a separate people anymore. He's broken down the middle wall of partition but the dispensationalist continues to keep it in view.

So in my view, it's not significant. However earlier on in the broadcast there was a mention of the latter part of Romans where we read about Jews coming into the faith later on and I do believe that there's a place for that. When the time of the Gentiles is over and the thousand years is over, Satan goes out to deceive the Gentiles or the nations again,

that could very well be a time when many Israelites or many Jews or whatever you want to call them at this point in time, come into the church. But in no different way and with no different destiny, not as an earthly people and the church is a heavenly people, but as part of the body of Jesus Christ, the church of Christ on the same basis that they would come in now.

Lee. And Dr. McLean, the dispensational position would be that...

Dr. McLean. Well, Israel is very very significant and I think what has taken place in history here, if I can say is that the Zionist movement in the late 1800s and in the early 1900s that gave place and opportunity for the establishment of Israel, has allowed the Bible students to go back and what in the past was not conceivable now becomes believable. What could not be comprehended in the past can now be seen as a comprehensive fulfillment of Scripture. For instance, in Romans 11 Paul says in verse 25, "For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in." Verse 26 then says, "and thus all Israel will," futuristic, "be saved just as it is written." And then Paul quotes from Isaiah, "The Deliverer will come from Zion. He will remove ungodliness from Jacob, and this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins." So Paul puts these Isaiah prophecies as something that is going to be fulfilled in the future for all Israel. The premillennialist sees the Abrahamic covenant, the Davidic covenant, the Palestinian covenant, the Levitical covenant and the new covenant in their totality being fulfilled in the future.

Dr. Adams suggested that we "could not have it both ways" with the idea of initial fulfillment or fruition fulfillment and then a final culmination fulfillment but this is very typical of Scripture. The first and second comings of Christ are put side-by-side in the same passage within the same verse and there is an initial fulfillment and then there is a future fulfillment and I think that as more and more covenant theologians and dispensational theologians, premillennialists, amillennialists and postmillennialists begin to wrestle with these things, there is a coming together, a refinement and a closer understanding.

I'd just like to say in conclusion that although these two views are diversified, we hold so much more in common, the salvation through the Gospel, the blessings of the new covenant, the heavenly destiny, the eternal state, we are held together as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Lee. Thank you very much. Amen. And that'll be a good note to leave. Thank you very much for listening.

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