

The Harvester



Preparing Souls

To Serve The Lord



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“Then Cometh the End” or Has It Already Happened?

By Brian R. Kenyon

Though it seems the passages are clear concerning the bodily resurrection at the end of time on Judgment Day (cf. Mt. 25:31-46; Jn. 5:28-29; Rev. 20:11-15), there are some who think that all these passages were fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem (AD 70). In fact, this writer was recently told that “nothing in the Bible refers to anything past the destruction of Jerusalem.” While there are many facets to this strange belief, this article will examine First Corinthians 15:24-28 and compare the reality of this present world to see if the end was already past or if it is still future.

Events That Coincide with The End

Paul wrote, “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power” (1 Cor. 15:24). First, when the end comes, Jesus will

deliver the kingdom to God, the Father (1 Cor. 15:24a). “Shall have delivered up” is from a Greek word that means to hand or give over, deliver up (also found in 1 Cor. 5:5; 11:2, 23; 13:3, “give;” 15:3; Gal. 2:20, “gave;” 1 Tim. 1:20; Jude 3). “Kingdom of God,” first and foremost, refers to the reign of God (cf. Mt. 8:11-12; 11:12; Lk. 17:20-21), which in this age is the church of Christ, the final manifestation of God’s kingdom this side of eternity (cf. Col. 1:13; 1 Thes. 2:12; Heb. 12:28; Rev. 1:9). It is clear that in the end Jesus will “deliver up” the kingdom, not “establish” it as Premillennialism teaches! Has Jesus already delivered the kingdom, His church, to the Father? Of course, not! Jesus still exercises “all power [authority, NKJ]” just as the Father gave Him before His ascension (Mt. 28:18). People are still being added to the church as they obey the Gospel (cf. Acts 2:41, 47). Jesus is still the head of His church (cf. Eph. 1:22-23), and has not yet delivered it to His Father!

Second, when the end comes, Jesus will have destroyed all opposition (1 Cor. 15:24b). The term “Put down [abolished, ASV; puts an end to, NKJ]” is from a word (*katargeo*, καταργέω) that means to render ineffective, nullify, cancel; destroy, abolish, do away with. It may be translated “bring to naught” (1 Cor. 1:28; 2:6); “destroy” (1 Cor. 6:13; 15:26); “shall fail” (1 Cor. 13:8); “done away” (1 Cor. 13:10a); and “vanish away” (1 Cor. 13:10b). Paul lists what Jesus will ultimately destroy. “Rule” (from *arche*, ἀρχή) refers to a ruler, authority; it is often translated “principalities” (Rom. 8:38; Eph. 1:21; Eph. 3:10; 6:12; Col. 1:16; 2:10, 15; Tit. 3:1). “Authority” (from *exousia*, ἐξουσία) is power exercised by rulers or others in high places by virtue of their position (Bauer 278); it is often translated “power” (Eph. 1:21; 2:2; 3:10; 6:12; Col. 1:13, 16; 2:10, 15;



Leaving A Smile

On July 29, 2014, our brother Sam Bolding, beloved husband (for 68 years) of our secretary bettye, passed from this life. “Uncle Sam from Alabam”

served the Lord in many capacities, perhaps best known as a song leader. He loved God, his family, music, and storytelling. He always encouraged FSOP!

**August 11 Begins Our
46th School Year!
(see page 4)**

Tit. 3:1). “Power” (from *dunamis*, δύναμις) is strength; the power residing in a thing, such as a king or ruling authority (Rom. 1:16; 8:38; Eph. 1:21, “might”). “Rule ... authority ... power” are not to be taken as precise types of authority, but that together they emphasize that “in that day there will be no governing power of any kind that will not be completely subservient to Christ” (Morris 211). Is all rule, power, and authority on earth subservient to Christ right now? No, they are not! This is not to say that earthly rulers and opposing forces are not amenable to Christ—they are—but all have not either voluntarily or forcefully become subservient to Him. Thus, the end about which Paul wrote has not yet come!

Christ Is to Reign Until All Are Subject to Him

Christ will not deliver up His kingdom, the church, to the Father until the last and ultimate enemy is destroyed! Paul continued, “For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. ²⁶The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. ²⁷For he hath put all things under his feet” (1 Cor. 15:25-27a cf. Ps. 110:1). “For he must reign” is a reminder of Christ’s role in plan of salvation (cf. Mt. 28:18; 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14; 19:16). The expression “hath put all . . . under his feet” refers to the total subjection of all objects (cf. Heb. 2:8). The last enemy to be destroyed is death (1 Cor. 15:26 cf. 1 Cor. 15:54-57).

In the context of First Corinthians 15, “death” refers to physical death, not spiritual death. Note the verses immediately before the focus of this study.

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. ²¹For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. ²²For

as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. ²³But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming. (1 Cor. 15:20-23)

Christ *was not* raised from spiritual death. Jesus never sinned, so He never died spiritually! In the Old Testament, “firstfruits” were the earliest gathered

fruits of harvest that were offered to God on the day after the Sabbath following the Passover Feast in recognition of God’s blessings upon their crop (Lev. 23:9-11). The firstfruits consecrated the whole harvest and signified the remainder was to follow (Ex. 23:19; 34:26; Num. 15:17-21). Christ is not the firstfruits of those who rise, but of those who are dead! “Sleep” is a euphemism for death (cf. 1 Cor. 15:18; 1 Thes. 4:13-14). Christ was not the first one to be raised from the dead (1 Kgs. 17:22; 2 Kgs. 4:45; 13:21; Mt. 9:25; Lk. 7:15; Jn. 11:44; Acts 9:40), but He was the first one to be raised from the dead to never see death again (cf. the resurrection at the end of time).

Again, the resurrection here is the bodily resurrection from physical death. All people die physically because of Adam (1 Cor. 15:21a, 22a). As a consequence of Adam’s sin, he and Eve (and all humanity) were driven from the Garden of Eden wherein was located the “tree of life,” from which as long as they were able to eat, they would “live for ever” (Gen. 3:22-24 cf. Heb. 9:27a). “All” do not die spiritually in Adam (Ezk. 18:20)—we die spiritually because of our own sins (Rom. 5:12)!

All people will be raised by Christ in the general resurrection at the end of time (1 Cor. 15:21a, 22a). If these verses referred to spiritual life and death, then not only would they teach total heredity depravity (i.e., we inherit the guilt of Adam’s sin), they would also teach universal salvation (i.e., everyone will be saved because “in Christ shall all be made alive”)—but they do not! Christ’s resurrection assures that all the dead will rise at His end of time coming (cf. Mt. 25:31-46; Jn. 5:28-29; Rev. 20:11-15). “They that are Christ’s” focuses on the resurrection of the saved ones (cf. 1 Cor. 15:51-57; 1 Thes. 4:13-18).

First Corinthians 15:25-26 gives insight as to whether or not “the end” has come. First, Christ will reign at God’s right hand until the last enemy is destroyed (1 Cor. 15:25). Christ was reigning at God’s right hand when the Christian age began (Acts 2:33; 5:31 cf. Acts 1:9-11). The resurrection of the dead will come at the end of the age (1 Cor. 15:24). Second, the last enemy to be destroyed is physical death (1 Cor. 15:26), and that will occur when all the dead have been raised (cf. 1 Cor. 15:51-57). Since physical death continues to be a present reality, a rational person can know that death has not been destroyed, and since death has not been destroyed, a rational person can know “the end” could not have occurred in the past! Even if one were to take death here as spiritual (which is not possible, given the context), “the end” could not be because people are still dying spiritually. In no sense of meaning can “death,” as it relates to humans, be implied to no longer exist!

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God Is to Be "All in All"

Paul concluded, "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28). When all things are subject to Christ, He then will be subject to the Father (1 Cor. 15:28a). Christ's subjection to the Father here is not because the Son is inherently inferior. This is a subjection resulting from the Son's instrumental role in God's plan of salvation (cf. Ps. 8:6). The future tense ("shall ... be subject") and the fact that it reads "that God may be all in all," not "that the Father may be all in all," refute any idea of inherent inferiority. Jesus, who is by nature God (Jn. 1:1-2), took upon Himself human nature (Phil. 2:5-7), so He could defeat sin in the flesh (Phil. 2:8-11; Rom. 8:3-4), and serve as our perfect high priest/mediator (Heb. 4:15; Rom. 8:34). Due to His coming in the flesh, living among us, dying for us, and being raised from the dead as a guarantee of our resurrection, Jesus is forever identified with humanity (cf. 1 Jn. 3:2). Establishing and reigning over the kingdom has been the crowning work of Christ since His ascension (Acts 1:9-11), but at the consummation of this final age of human history this side of eternity, Christ's mediatorial work will be complete.

When the kingdom has been delivered to the Father (1 Cor. 15:24), thus signifying the end of this age, God will be "all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28b). At the end of this age, the purpose of everything created will have been fulfilled (cf. Col. 1:16b); thus, the only state remaining will be one in which all things are bound to God's ideal will (cf. Zech. 14:9), similar to the state before creation (cf. Jn. 17:5). "Paul refers neither to pantheism nor universalism, but speaks of the new heaven and new earth in which all things are in harmony with God" (Rogers and Rogers 387).

J. W. McGarvey summarized well the necessary connection between the bodily resurrection at the end of time

and the crowning state of God being "all in all" when he wrote,

The supreme glorification ... the crowning of God as all in all, is predicated upon a resurrection as a condition precedent Paul's logic ... runs thus: no glorification until the mediatorial kingdom is turned over to God [the Father]; no turning over of this kingdom until its work is complete; no completion of its work till all its enemies are destroyed; no destruction of all these enemies while death, a chief one, survives; no destruction of death save by the resurrection; therefore no full glorification of God without a resurrection. (152)

Conclusion

Having examined these verses in First Corinthians and considering the reality about us, it is difficult to comprehend how some people could believe that the kingdom, the church, has been delivered to the Father, that all opposition to God is now subservient to Him, that physical death has been done away, and that what can be observed and/or experienced on earth, even atheistic rebellion against God, is the culminating state of "God ... all in all." Be not deceived! There is a future bodily resurrection of all people and a final day of judgment! Are you ready? 🙏

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The Harvester

August 2014

Page 4

August 11 Begins Our 46th School Year!

Paul echoed the prophet Joel when he wrote, “whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Rom. 10:13 cf. Joel 2:32). This call is universal! Salvation is offered to all people if they will just “call on the name of the Lord,” which, of course, means to obey Him (cf. Acts 22:16). However, there are some prerequisites that must be in place before anyone can call on the name of the Lord. A person must first believe in the Lord before he can call on Him. “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?” (Rom. 10:14a). Before a person believes, he has to hear. “How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?” (Rom. 10:14b). In order for a person to hear, someone has to preach and/or teach the

Gospel. “How shall they hear without a preacher?” (Rom. 14c). Before a preacher can be the instrument through which people hear the Gospel, he must be prepared. “How shall they preach, except they be sent?” (Rom. 10:15a). By God’s grace, through your prayers and assistance, we are expecting a larger than usual number of full-time men. The school helps to support these men, but, as you know, “money does not grow on trees.” The support we give has to come from somewhere. Many of our readers consistently support the school, and for this we are very appreciative! Please continue your regular support. For those who are not yet financially contributing to the school, now would be a great time to start. Thanks for helping! —*Brian*

Our Students Need Your Financial Support



Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock? ⁸Do I say these things as a mere man? Or does not the law say the same also? ⁹For it is written in the law of Moses, “You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain.” Is it oxen God is concerned about? ¹⁰Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. ¹¹If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? ¹³Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar? ¹⁴Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel. (1 Cor. 9:7-14, NKJV)

