

PRETERIST OR FUTURIST? IT'S ALL BY FAITH

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My Aversion To Labels, Once Labeled Always Labeled, Preterism Defined, Futurism Defined, My Introduction To Futurism, God Woke Me Up, My Personal Quest For Scriptural Truth, Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?, My Current Position Regarding Preterism, Two Bookends In Book Of Revelation, We Should Not Have To See Before We Will Believe, The Kingdom Of God Cometh Not With Observation, Doubting Thomases Amongst The Futurists, Futurist Errors In Understanding Both Daniel And Revelation, Without Faith It Is Impossible To Please God, I Come Quickly, Spirit Of Expediency In The Book Of Revelation, Seal The Book Versus Seal Not The Sayings Of The Prophecy Of This Book, God Does Not Lie, I Will Do All My Pleasure, Lack Of Faith Leads To Creating False Doctrines, Conform Your Beliefs To The Bible And Do Not Conform God's Word To Your Beliefs, Wresting The Scriptures, No Doctrinal Debates, Closing, Suggested Reading

Let me begin this article by saying that when it comes to our Christian faith, I don't particularly like using labels. There are two primary reasons for this. First of all, there now exist so many different labels within our faith, that I am personally convinced that they cause both division and confusion within the Body of Christ. The second reason why I normally strive to stay away from using labels, is because using them may result in a person automatically making wrong assumptions regarding someone else's personal beliefs. Let's face it; people are people. The minute some label has been put on you, whether you like it or agree with it or not, you have been categorized and classified in people's minds and it can be difficult to shake off the false perception that some people may have of you.

But despite my personal position regarding this particular issue, nevertheless, on occasion, some of my online Christian friends will inquire of me whether I am a Preterist or else a Futurist. For those of my readers who may not be too familiar with these two terms, eschatologically speaking, Preterism is a theological perspective which views and interprets many --

if not all -- Bible prophecies as having been fulfilled in the past during the First Century AD, or earlier than that. In particular, certain key prophetic events were fulfilled during the seven-year First Jewish-Roman War, which occurred from 66 AD to 73 AD. As I explain in some of my other BBB articles, it was during this terrible war that Jerusalem and the temple compound were destroyed in AD 70 by General Titus -- who was the son of Emperor Vespasian, and a future emperor himself -- and his Roman legions, along with their allies.

In contrast, if you have read any of my prophecy-related articles such as "Fight Against Futurism!", then you may already know that Futurism pertains to the modern doctrine and practice of taking ancient, already-fulfilled Bible prophecies, and applying them to our modern times, as if they have not been fulfilled yet. As I fully explain in my seven-part series entitled "Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?", I was first introduced to Futurism as a teenage Christian about fifty-four years ago. Not having a firm foundation in God's Word at that particular time in my life, I not only eagerly embraced Futurism, but for the next forty years or so, I likewise enthusiastically taught it to others as well. I was in fact a solid believer in Futurist doctrine and much of what it entails.

In short, for four long decades, I had pretty much the same personal expectations as many Futurist-leaning Christians still have today, particularly with regard to the Rapture of the Saints and the long-awaited and long-anticipated Return of Jesus Christ. However, as I mention in the aforementioned series, around 2011-2012, the Lord really began to speak to my heart regarding certain Bible verses which quite simply contradicted my Futurist leanings. In fact, to be honest, I had begun doubting the validity of my beliefs about eighteen years prior to that time. However, it wasn't until 2011-2012 when things really came to a head, and God began to wake me up to the truth of His Word insofar as Bible prophecy is concerned.

As a result of those simmering doubts, I embarked on a very serious, dedicated, personal study and re-examination of the Scriptures, which I concluded when I finished writing "Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?" in 2016. If you are interested in learning more about the specific results of my research, I invite you to read the series. Trust me when I say that if you are a Futurist -- as I was for those many years -- that series will more than likely challenge some of

your current beliefs to a certain degree. But quite frankly, that is what it should do. It is supposed to wake you up and shake you up, and pull you out from under the deception of Futurist doctrine.

Returning to the question which I am sometimes asked, if you read enough of my BBB articles, look at my graphics, read my poetry, or listen to some of my original songs, it becomes apparent where I now stand doctrinally and eschatologically speaking. It is not something which I have tried to hide under a bushel. To the contrary, I have been preaching this openly for years now, despite much consternation from my Futurist-leaning friends who view me as being deceived, or worse.

So regarding Preterism, to be quite honest, I have not fully decided the issue yet. At the very least, I would say that I lean towards it 90% as being the correct interpretation of Bible prophecy, which is a complete reversal from what I had formerly believed. In fact, at this point in time, perhaps I even embrace it almost 100%, based on what I refer to as the two "bookends" which we find in the Book of Revelation. For those of you who may not be aware of it, I am referring to the following two verses which precisely set the time frame for the entire prophetic Book. Please take special note of the words I have placed in uppercase letters:

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must SHORTLY COME TO PASS; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:"

Revelation 1:1, KJV

"And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things WHICH MUST SHORTLY BE DONE."

Revelation 22:6, KJV

As some of my like-minded friends may possibly know, a big problem with many of the Futurist-leaning Christians is that because they cannot comprehend everything with their limited, carnal minds, they seem to erroneously jump to the conclusion that what is written in the Book of Revelation, Daniel, the various chapters in the Gospels, etc., could not possibly have happened already. In other words, it doesn't make sense to them simply because they cannot actually SEE it with their eyes. However, we should NOT have to see before we'll choose

to believe. As we all know, that was the dear Apostle Thomas' mistake. Yet by adopting this misguided position, Futurists seem to be knowingly, or unknowingly, choosing to ignore what Jesus said in the Gospel of Luke, and that is the following. Consider also what Jesus said to Thomas:

"And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God COMETH NOT WITH OBSERVATION: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."

Luke 17:20-21, KJV

"But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

John 20:24-29, KJV

In short, similar to the Apostle Thomas who doubted Jesus' resurrection from the dead, Futurists refuse to believe that what John wrote in the Book of Revelation has already come to pass, because they cannot see it physically; plus they have zero physical evidence for it. This same thing applies to parts of the Book of Daniel, particularly the 70th week of the Seventy Weeks Prophecy, which I amply discuss in an article of the same name. Because they don't understand how it was fulfilled two thousand years ago, they separate the seventieth week of the prophecy and push it two thousand years into the future as if it has not been fulfilled yet. But again, you see, my friends, that is their great error. They seem to lack faith to just believe because God's Word says so. However, without faith it is impossible to please God, as we read in this verse:

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he

that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Hebrews 11:6, KJV

For me personally, if 2,000 years ago the Lord said "SHORTLY COME TO PASS" and "WHICH MUST SHORTLY BE DONE" -- and thus sandwiching the entire Book of Revelation between those two verses or bookends -- then quite frankly, I accept it on faith as being so, even if I don't understand it all yet. Do I need to even mention the fact that Jesus also said "I come quickly" four times in the Book of Revelation? If you doubt that this is so, consider the following group of verses:

"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

Revelation 3:11, KJV

"Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book."

Revelation 22:7, KJV

"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

Revelation 22:12, KJV

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Revelation 22:20, KJV

So as you can see, there is a certain spirit of expediency in the Book of Revelation. That is precisely why we see the Angel Gabriel telling the Prophet Daniel to seal his book until the time of the end -- meaning until the end of the 490-year prophetic age of Daniel -- while the Angel tells John to NOT seal his Book, because those things were about to happen TWO THOUSAND YEARS AGO. In my view, to believe otherwise is basically to call Jesus a liar, and to say that you can't believe God's Word unless you actually see it with your own eyes. It makes the fulfillment of God's prophetic Word conditional based upon your personal faith. Consider the following two Bible verses:

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

Daniel 12:4, KJV

"And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand."

Revelation 22:10, KJV

However, as I have mentioned many times before, if there is one thing of which I am absolutely certain, it is that God is NOT a liar, His Word is the truth, and everything that He says He will do, He does in fact do in the appointed time. As we read in the Book of Isaiah, the omnipotent God will do all His pleasure. Consider the following group of Bible verses:

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: HATH HE SAID, AND SHALL HE NOT DO IT? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

Numbers 23:19, KJV

"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I WILL DO ALL MY PLEASURE:"

Isaiah 46:9-10, KJV

"He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."

Deuteronomy 32:4, KJV

"Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth."

Psalms 31:5, KJV

"That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes."

Isaiah 65:16, KJV

"And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not."

John 8:45, KJV

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

John 14:6, KJV

"God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as

it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."

Romans 3:4, KJV

"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;"

Titus 1:2, KJV

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

John 8:44, KJV

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son." 1

John 2:22, KJV

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son."

1 John 5:10, KJV

"If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

1 John 1:10, KJV

So it seems to me that it is because of their lack of faith to believe and accept God's Word for exactly what it says, that some of the Futurists are forced to invent all kinds of misguided doctrines and interpretations, in order to force God's Word fit into what they want to believe, instead of the other way around. In other words, instead of conforming their beliefs to God's Word, they try to conform God's Word to their beliefs. Sadly, there is now a major twisting and perverting of the Scriptures in our modern day. I see it all the time on the social networks. Some of the things they say are simply outlandish, to say the least. That is how they make God's Word more palatable for themselves. They create doctrinal loopholes. But consider what the Apostle Peter had to say:

"And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also

in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."

2 Peter 3:15-16, KJV

In the previous verses, the word "wrest" is translated from a Koine Greek word which means to twist, pervert, torture or distort. It is being used in a literary sense in those two verses. You see, those people were doing the same thing that the Futurists are doing today. They didn't understand some of the things which the Apostle Paul wrote. Thus, they twisted Paul's words to fit their own understanding. That is a big no-no!

So, my friends, that is where I currently stand with regard to Preterism and Futurism. Whether you agree with me or not, please understand that I do NOT engage in online doctrinal debates. I find them to be both a waste of time, exercises in futility, nonproductive, and contrary to the Scriptures. If you are interested in acquiring a deeper understanding of my personal position regarding Bible prophecy, or any other issue, I encourage you to dig into my many articles here on the Bill's Bible Basics website. Whatever you do, please do NOT try to drag me into online doctrinal debates because I will definitely not reciprocate. You can use your own page if you want to criticize my beliefs. Thanks!

With these thoughts, I will bring this article to a close. It is my hope that you've found it informative and enlightening, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life as well. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or with any other social network, I would really appreciate if you'd take the time to click or tap on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information and further study, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were either mentioned in this article, or which contain topics which are related to this article. All of these articles are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics web server. To read these articles, simply click or tap on any link you see below.

Abomination of Desolation: Explained!
Are You Flexible?

As a Thief in the Night
Fight Against Futurism
He That Shall Endure unto the End
Humility in Our Understanding of God's Word
In the Ages to Come
Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?
Modern Deception: Shall a Nation Be Born at Once?
Modern Deceptions: Return to Israel, the Fig Tree and This Generation
My Evolving Theology
Please Stop Misinterpreting the Scriptures
Prophetic Comparisons: Moshiach, Mahdi and Messiah
Psalm 83 War False Doctrine Exposed!
Seventy Weeks Prophecy: What It Means
Sorry, Jesus Is Not Coming at Any Moment
The Day of the Lord: What It Really Means
The Great Tribulation and the Rapture
The Last Seven Years Chart
The Misguided End of the World Predictions of Harold Camping
The Triumphant Touchdown of Jesus Christ
The Two Sackcloth Witnesses of Revelation 11
The Woman in the Wilderness and the 144,000
Tradition or Truth? Old Wine or New Wine?
Understanding the Bible in Context
Vespasian, Titus and the Fall of Jerusalem
When Was Satan Cast Out of Heaven?
Who Hindered the Antichrist?
Who is Babylon the Great?
Who is Moshiach ben David?
Who is Who?: Defining Important Prophecy Terms

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