

Preterism and the Future, Physical Fulfillment of Biblical Prophecies

WHEREAS some people today perpetuate the error of Hymenaeus and Philetus (2 Tim. 2:17, 18) by teaching that the resurrection has already past, considering the promise of resurrection as previously fulfilled "spiritually" with the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70; and

Some people, known as Preterists, hold that during the Jewish War of AD 67–70 Jesus Christ came spiritually in judgment against Jerusalem, thereby fulfilling the Biblical prophecies concerning His second coming and judgments on all His enemies;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the messengers of the churches in fellowship with the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, meeting for our 73rd Annual Conference in Lakeland, Florida, June 28–July 1, 2005, solemnly reaffirm our belief that many Biblical prophecies still await future, physical fulfillment;

THAT we unequivocally reject the idea that prophecies of the second coming, resurrection, and future judgments were fulfilled in the first century. We do not think that Christ's millennial kingdom is here and now since Christ has not yet returned bodily to the earth in the same way in which He went up into Heaven (Acts 1:11), nor has He yet executed His judgments against the nations and Satan (Rev. 19:11–20:3);

THAT we reconfirm our faith in the future rapture of the Church, an event that can occur at any moment, but that will take place before the future seven years of worldwide tribulation; an event during which the Lord Jesus Himself shall descend from Heaven to the clouds, the dead in Christ will be raised with tangible resurrection bodies, the living in Christ will be given actual glorified bodies, and together we will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:13–5:11);

THAT the Tribulation will culminate with the future, physical return of Jesus Christ in power and great glory (Matt. 24:30) to sit upon the throne of David and to establish His earthly, millennial Kingdom (Isa. 9:6, 7; Luke 1:32, 33);

THAT at His future return to the earth, the Lord Jesus will gather Israel from her worldwide dispersion and will settle the nation in her promised land; that all Israel, beloved and chosen by God, will be saved since a Deliverer, Who will turn away godlessness from Jacob, will come out of Zion; that God will give Israel a new heart so that by His Spirit the nation will repent of her waywardness and will do His will; that in that day the desolate places of the

promised land will be tilled, the ruined walls rebuilt, and the empty cities filled with God's holy flock of people; that the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will be God's special people and that He will be their God; and that they will not hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Isa. 11; Ezek. 36; 37; Rom. 11);

THAT we restate our belief concerning our future, glorified bodies. Since the apostle Paul taught that Christ's resurrection was "the firstfruits" (1 Cor. 15:23); since we know our glorified bodies will "bear the image of the heavenly" (15:49); since Christ's resurrection body was of "flesh and bones" (Luke 24:39) and He was capable of eating food (24:41-43); and since our future, glorified bodies will be like unto Christ's "glorious body" (Phil. 3:21), we therefore believe we will experience a future, physical resurrection;

THAT we comfort one another with these words of hope regarding a future, physical resurrection (1 Thess. 4:18) and not sorrow as others who have no hope (4:13);

THAT we purify ourselves since we know that when Christ will appear, we will be like Him, for we will see Him as He is (1 John 3:2, 3);

That we devote ourselves to spread the gospel throughout the entire world since the eyes of unbelieving Israel are presently darkened so that the fullness of the Gentiles might obtain mercy (Rom. 11:25-32);

THAT we worship our great, trustworthy God Who will do these future, physical things, not because the Church, Israel, or the nations deserve such blessings, but because He has determined to sanctify Himself among the nations and before Israel by demonstrating His faithful love, so that we exclaim with the apostle Paul, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:33).

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