



Seek The Old Paths

“Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths. . . and walk therein”
(Jeremiah 6:16)

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THAT COMMON THREAD IN THE BIBLE #1

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

***God had a special purpose for the earth's accomplishment
but an eternal earth was not in that plan either in foundation or in the
superstructure of this mundane realm.***

Gratitude is expressed to the editor, Garland Robinson, for the invitation to write this series of articles. I welcome his excellent magazine each time it comes. From it I have learned much through the years.

It has been my longtime judgment that we face more “isms” and errors than any of the preceding generations have faced. They just pile higher and higher with the passing of each day. It is strange how so much error is taught and accepted so widely. Stranger still is how error just stays on and on. It has been suggested that error can march all the way around the world while truth is getting on its boots. Truth is so awesome, beautiful and powerful, that all error should fall flat on its face permanently.

SOME NEGATIVES NOTED

In looking at that “common thread” running through the Bible from Genesis through Revelation, let's consider some important points.

(1) That thread is not that God made man and woman yet did not put souls in either one. Adam was made a living soul (Gen. 2:7). Adam and Eve were not just flesh, bones and blood and nothing more. Such is an insult to the God of creation. Later in the book of Genesis we read of the demise of Jacob's beloved Rachel. Genesis 35:18-20 states that her soul departed

at her death. It is said of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that at physical death they were gathered to their people (Gen. 25:8; 35:29; 49:33). Their spirits still lived with God. Jesus made that very plain to the modernistic Sadducees in Luke 20:38 — God “*...is not a God of the dead, but of the living.*” The same truth is said of other Old Testament people.

Jesus spoke about the soul in Matthew 10:28 and 16:26. His half brother in the flesh and full brother in the faith, James, viewed death as separation of body and spirit (cf. James 2:26). The body dies but the spirit lives on. This is part of that common thread.

(2) God never intended that the coming Messiah would establish an earthly kingdom and would rule here on earth — either this old earth or a renovated one. Original founders of such an idea were filled to overflowing with materialism and totally lacking spiritual realities. During one of His mock trials, Jesus stressed to Governor Pilate that His kingdom would not be of this world (John 18:36). It would be a spiritual kingdom with rich redemption offered therein for lost men and women. Jesus spoke of such a kingdom to his nighttime visitor, Nicodemus, of its spiritual nature (John 3:3,5,7). A spiritual kingdom was not what Nicodemus and his Sanhedrin colleagues anticipated and de-

sired.

Prior to His coming, hungry Jews for power eagerly awaited a military Messiah somewhat like David who would throw off Roman chains and be chief among the nations. That thought dominated the thinking of His disciples until the Holy Spirit came in Acts 2 and they saw clearly the noble nature of the Messianic mission. Again, this is not that common thread running through God's Sacred Book.

(3) It was not that common thread that the earth, which had a beginning in Genesis 1, would abide forever. God had a special purpose for the earth's accomplishment but an eternal earth was not in that plan either in foundation or in the superstructure of this mundane realm. The apostle Peter made that matter as clear as a sunny day that total destruction was in the future of this earth (2 Peter 3:7-12). Much more, and in far greater detail, will be set forth in our second article. NO prophet or apostle ever taught differently than did Peter in the final chapter he penned for the Divine Volume. Again, this was not that common, thread interwoven within Sacred Scripture

(4) It was not that common thread that heaven would be here and not above. At ascension time in Acts 1 Je-

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That Common Thread...



Editorial...

HEAVEN ON EARTH? No! #2

Garland M. Robinson

Heaven is God's dwelling place from which He speaks (cf. Mark 1:11). Jesus taught us to pray "our Father which art in heaven" (Luke 11:2). We are to rejoice and be exceeding glad because our reward is great "in heaven," not on the earth (Matt. 5:12). Jesus can never be a priest on earth (cf. Zech. 6:12-13; Heb. 8:1-4). He can never be a king on earth (Jer. 22:28-30; Matt. 1:11-12). Heaven is always UP, never BELOW (Mark 16:19).

There are those who will take God off His throne in heaven and bring Him down to earth and subject Him to reside on His footstool — a physical earth. Advocates of the "renewed earth" doctrine tell us that heaven and earth will become one and the same; i.e. at the Lord's second coming, heaven comes down to earth and joins with it to be "heaven on earth." The Bible doesn't teach this doctrine (cf. Acts 7:49; Isa. 66:1; Psa. 45:6).

Jesus revealed to the apostle John, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3:21). Where is the Lord's throne upon which He now sits and rules? Where did Jesus go to sit on His throne? That's where we will go. The Scriptures are clear. He ascended up into heaven (leaving the earth) and sat down on His throne at God's right hand. "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God" (Mark 16:19; Acts 1:2; Heb. 1:2-3; 10:12). John saw a "throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne" (Rev. 4:2). "The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven" (Psalm 11:4; 1 Kings 22:19; 2 Chron. 18:18; Matt. 5:34; 23:22; Rev. 16:17).

Man is condemned when he perverts the Scriptures in any respect (cf. Acts 13:10; Gal. 1:7). That's certainly true when he pulls God and Christ off their throne in heaven and has

them to dwell on the earth with the redeemed. The righteous "go" to live eternally with God and Christ in heaven (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:16-17). But, renewed physical earth advocates have God and Christ leaving their throne in heaven and coming down to earth to live with man! This doctrine destroys the one hope we have and read about in Ephesians 4:4. A Christian's hope is far removed from this earth. Our hope is to be with God in heaven for eternity.

Regarding our hope, look at the Holy Spirit's words in Hebrews 6. This chapter describes Christians who remain steadfast and do not surrender to the temptations of this world. Some of the brethren in the first century were leaving the Lord's church and going back into Judaism to live under the law of Moses. They were abandoning the Lord and returning to a system that could not save. There's only one way to heaven and those who reject it can't be saved. The way to heaven is in the church of Christ. Those who obey the Gospel are added to the church (Acts 2:47). The church is the Lord's body (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18). He is the savior of it (Eph. 5:23).

While exhorting Christians to remain faithful, Hebrews 6:7-8 reminds us that the earth "...which beareth thorns and briers **is rejected**, and is nigh unto cursing; **whose end is to be burned.**" It's the same end of the earth described in 2 Peter 3:7-12. It's the end that is "...reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (v.7). At the Lord's second coming "...the heavens shall **pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up**" (v.10). The entire earth will be "dissolved" (v.11). "...Wherein the heavens being on fire shall be **dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat**" (v.12). Jesus plainly said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away" (Matt. 24:35).

Knowing that the earth and all the works in it are going to be burned up, dissolved, melted, gone; of those who remain steadfast in the Lord, Hebrews 6:9 says "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things which accompany salvation." Though the earth passes away (cf. Heb. 6:6; Matt. 24:35), those who have "patiently endured" have "the full assurance of hope unto the end" (Heb. 6:15,11). The faithful "...have a strong consolation (encouragement, solace, comfort), who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the **hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus...**" (Heb. 6:18-20). As a ship's anchor holds it fast, a Christian's hope is both sure and steadfast. Storms of life and persecution may rage, but our hope to live with God in heaven never falters. It holds us firm because God promised it and He cannot lie (Heb. 6:18). Socrates is credited with saying, "to ground hope on a false assumption, is like trusting in a weak anchor."

Hebrews 6:19 assures us that Jesus entered "within the veil" with His own blood as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of mankind. Where is the "veil" into which He entered? It's in heaven of course! It's not on earth! Read heaven's words: "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the **holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us**" (Heb. 9:12). "For Christ is not entered into the **holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us**" (Heb. 9:24).

Jesus not only entered within the veil (the holy of holies in heaven) as a sacrifice for man (Mark 10:45), but He entered that eternal place as a "forerunner" for us — the redeemed, the saved (Heb. 6:20). He went into heaven "for us" — on our behalf. A forerunner is one who goes before others, ahead of others, in advance of those who will follow. The idea presented is that of a scout who goes ahead of those who are following behind him. Again, the Scriptures are clear. Jesus went into heaven, ahead of the redeemed. This is the theme, the continuity, that runs throughout the Bible and matches in perfect detail in both Old and New

Testaments. Jesus told the apostles, and all the saints of God, “...I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and **receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also**” (John 14:2-3). You can’t get Jesus coming to live with man on the earth out of that. We go to Him. He does not come to us! If so, then I guess that makes us the forerunner for Him so that He follows us. Sorry “renewed earth” advocates, your doctrine goes down in flames. That’s tragic indeed. It would be far better to go up to heaven. We hope you will learn the Scriptures and heed them before it’s too late. The Lord loves your soul and we love your soul too.

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That Common Thread...

(Continued from page 73)

sus did not say their apostolic reward would be a renovated earth for eternity. The reason He did not is because there is not a syllable of truth in that allegation. This is closely kin to Jehovah’s Witness Doctrine since Russell and Rutherford taught it in the late 1800s. This harmful ism teaches that only 144,000 will be in heaven and the remainder will live eternally on a renovated earth. Who would have ever thought that some of our brethren would accept and teach this damnable error? Jesus went UP at this time as per Acts 1:9-11. He was lifted UP into heaven as per Mark 16:18-20. Subsequent to final judgment He will take His redeemed UP into heaven, into that very realm He has been preparing (John 14:1-6). He had come “from” heaven, remained on earth for 33 years and then went back “to” heaven, Jehovah’s residing place. In His long intercessory prayer in John 17, He desired for his disciples to be with Him in that eternal realm of glory (John 17:24). This will be in heaven and not on a renovated earth which has already been destroyed according to Peter in his final chapter (2 Peter 3:7-12). This is what a precious hymn has taught for generations, “*How Beautiful Heaven Must Be.*” How excellent and elegant are its various sentiments! This hymn composer, Mrs. A. S. Bridgewater, surely did not have a renovated earth in her literary heart. Neither did A. P. Bland who set it to majestic music. It is one of my favorite hymns relative to the home of the soul. Again, the focus is on earthly destruction and on heavenly reality which is ABOVE and not BELOW. This, too, is not that common thread in God’s Sacred Scriptures.

(5) That thread is not heaven as a boring place as the wealthy Ted Turner once described heaven. “Who would want to go to a place where boredom reigns,” he asked? With glaring blasphemy in every Turner syllable, Turner said he desired hell; he looked forward to going to hell. Unless he obeys truth and dies in the Lord, then he is on a speeding roller coaster rapidly headed to eternal *Gehenna*. He fits into hell’s population. His vast wealth will not buy him a place on Christ’s right hand come final judg-

ment. One second in *Gehenna* will find his weeping and wailing a far different sentiment! As an unbeliever he will suffer *Hadean* torment prior to judgment. Again, this is not that common thread of the Bible.

(6) It is not that common thread which Universalism teaches — that all will be saved and not one person will be lost in eternal *Gehenna*. Some years ago I read in a national magazine a rather lengthy article the gist of which was that no population will burn in hell. Regardless of how wicked a vain person has been, he will not spend one second in hell. He stated in said article that mass murderers such as Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini and all Chinese Communists who have slain countless millions and all current dictators who murder all who get in their way are heaven bound — not outer darkness, not the lake of fire and brimstone and not the second death about which John the apostle taught in his apostolic writings. Before writing this damnable article, he should have read Matthew 25:30,46; Mark 9:44,46,48; Revelation 21:8 and Revelation 22:15. This is not that common thread set forth in God’s Book Divine.

(7) That thread is not like the Catholicism called *Purgatory* which teaches temporary punishment subsequent to physical demise. Duped Catholics have paid vast sums of money into Catholic coffers to get loved ones out of *Purgatory*. My late and beloved wife Irene, once worked for a very successful and wealthy lawyer. He was a very devoted Roman Catholic. He went to mass daily even if the Governor summoned him to the hill on government business. He would tell Irene that if the Governor called, “Tell him I WILL be there AFTER mass.” He told Irene time and time again that he was paying vast sums of money to get one of his grandfathers out of purgatory. He must have been quite reckless prior to death. This is one of many damnable doctrines taught by Roman Catholicism swallowed blindly by multiplied millions. How very sad! This is not that common thread running through the Bible.

(8) That common thread definitely is not a realm of fleshly indulgence with each man supplied with 72 virgins. Islam says it will be this way. The Bible teaches that heaven will be

a spiritual realm where fleshy lusts will be nonexistent. Such Islamic concepts leave Sodom and Gomorrah rather tame in what they did in the ancient past. If Islam had existed in Genesis 19, it could have had a heyday in these twin cities of corruption.

In this life, both men and women are instructed to marry eligible people to keep far away from fornication (1 Cor. 7). Jesus taught skeptical Sadducees that marriage will not be part of Heaven's environment (Matt. 22:29-30). Islamic teaching is not that common thread running through the Bible.

(9) That common thread is not the A.D. 70 doctrine. There are those who think and teach that A.D. 70 is the most important date in the Bible. Jesus Christ in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21, said some things about the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus and his Roman army in A.D. 70. But He did not teach what Max King, his father-in-law, C. D. Beagle, began to teach some fifty or more years ago. It began to surface here in the South at

the Freed-Hardeman Lectures in the early 1970s. Both of these men were preachers in the Ohio Valley. Shortly after it surfaced here in Tennessee, I met with Max while I was in a Gospel meeting in the Valley. Max drove down from Warren, Ohio, to Clarington and we discussed his doctrine almost a full day. I had met C. D. Beagle in the 1950s when he attended the first meeting I held in the Ohio Valley. I was unable to make a dent in his new doctrine. Max and his father-in-law made A.D. 70 a vastly important date, far, Far, FAR more than does the Bible. Max told me in our face-to-face meeting that the second coming, the resurrection from death, the final judgment, that the power came then and people entered heaven then. That doctrine has spread into more than half the states. Many others tried to get Max out of this harmful error inclusive of Ohio Valley preachers, brother Guy N. Woods and brother Gus Nichols at the F-HC Lectures. Later, brother Nichols had a debate with him at Warren, Ohio. Assuredly, this is not

that common thread running through God's Book, the Bible.

Seriously, how could any knowledgeable, sincere Bible student think for a moment that this common thread involved a Roman General and his army of some 60,000 destroying a wicked and rebellious city is the gist of Sacred Scripture? No Old Testament prophet ever taught such by predictive prophecy. Jesus Christ never taught it. None of His apostles and early disciples ever taught it. Sound and solid saints the past 2,000 years have not taught it. Such is an inexcusable insult to the whole army of great preachers and defenders of the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3). Rome and a rebellious city form NO part of that common thread in the Bible.

The second and final article on this topic will be more positive than the current article has been. I will base much of my material from a serious study of 2 Peter 3.

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"THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH" #2

Gary McDade

Only in the fictional writing of materialists are we introduced to rocks and dirt and plants and animals needing redemption and being capable of redemption through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

ISAIAH'S USE OF THE WORD "EARTH"

An understanding of Isaiah's use of the word "earth" is necessary to comprehend and appreciate the promise of "the new heavens and the new earth." For example, in Isaiah chapter 24 he says, "*Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.*" When Isaiah speaks of the earth he means the "inhabitants" of the earth. The earth does not have soul and spirit like the "inhabitants" do. Isaiah 24:4-6 mentions "the earth mourneth," meaning the "inhabitants" mourn: "*The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people*

of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left."

Those known as "materialists" inject into passages like this (Isa. 24) the earth having identical qualities the inhabitants of the earth have. When Isaiah says, "*The earth also is defiled ... Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth*" he means the inhabitants of the earth because the earth cannot literally mourn, languish, transgress God's laws, change the ordinance, or break the everlasting covenant, but people can. The peo-

ple, the Israelites, had transgressed the law of Moses (God's law). They had changed God's ordinances. They had broken God's everlasting covenant, violating the very concept of a "covenant" and were going to be judged by God. A hundred years later, standing at the precipice of the Babylonian Captivity, Jeremiah made the same point, "*Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After*

those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people” (Jer. 31:31-33). When Jeremiah prophesied, “O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord,” he was not speaking to rocks and dirt, but to people with ears capable of understanding what he was talking about. Jeremiah was prophesying of an entirely new order, what Isaiah called, “the new heavens and the new earth.”

The position of the “materialists” on the meaning of the “earth” was notoriously advanced by John Calvin (1509-1564) from Calvin’s commentary on Romans 8:18-25, that the creation refers not to humanity but to the physical earth. The context supports the former and not the latter. Romans 8:18 speaks of “the glory that is to be revealed in us,” i.e. Christians, as we endure suffering. Verse 19, tells of the hope of the Christian as he/she awaits “the manifestation of the sons of God.” Verse 20, shows that before we became Christians we were subject to vanity or emptiness in order that we might seek out the hope of salvation. Verse 21, has the Christian’s hope of ultimate delivery from the bondage of corruption or sin. Verse 22, reaches out to all of humanity’s need for the salvation in Christ. Verse 23, identifies the Christians with all of humanity’s need for the redemption that is in Christ. And, verses 24 and 25, comfort Christians in suffering by urging them to live in hope of eternal life in Christ. The key word in the text is *ktiseos* or *ktisis* found four times in this text meaning creation or that which is created, created beings, creatures. *Ktisis* is found also in Mark 16:15 where Jesus commanded, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature [*ktisei*].” Further, *ktisis* is found in 2 Corinthians 5:17 where Paul says, “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [*ktisis*] old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

Only in the fictional writing of materialists are we introduced to rocks and dirt and plants and animals needing redemption and being capable of redemption through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Peter wrote, “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain con-

versation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1:18-19). The writer of Hebrews explains, “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. ... Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people” (Heb. 2:9-10,17). The material earth has not sinned and does not stand in need of redemption. Jesus tasted death for every man, not the physical earth.

One of the most respected commentaries on Isaiah in the brotherhood was written by Homer Hailey. After concluding his comments in an appendix to the book he devoted special attention to “the new heavens and the new earth.” He said, “We conclude that while Isaiah’s new heavens and new earth are the present order under Christ (65:17), which followed the passing of the old heathen systems (34:3-4) and the Jewish order (51:6,16), the new heavens and new earth of Peter [2 Peter 3:10-14] and John [Revelation 20-21] are the eternal arrangement of God beyond the judgment. In neither of the new orders — the one prophesied by Isaiah and the one prophesied by the apostles — is there a place for a millennial reign of Christ on earth, for modern-day concepts of a ‘new planet earth,’ or for a utopian ‘world of tomorrow.’ Such theories are figments of man’s imagination, illusions of error bereft of all truth” (p.539).

INSPIRATION FORSAKEN FOR IMAGINATION

By the inspiration of the living God, the apostle Paul instructed Timothy, and by extension and intention every faithful evangelist that comes along as long as the world stands, to “charge some that they teach no other doctrine” (1 Tim. 1:3). Some are teaching “other doctrines” on “the new heav-

ens and the new earth” and are close kin to the Epicureans and Stoics at Mar’s Hill in Paul’s day who “spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing” (Acts 17:21).

One source of infatuation today is a book called *Heaven* written by a denominational preacher **Randy Alcorn**. And, from the beginning of it he urges his readers on “the importance of using our imagination” (p.16). His philosophy about this is “we must begin by reasoning from God’s revealed truth. But that reasoning will call upon us to use our Scripture-enhanced imagination” (p.22). This is under the heading of “Fueling Our Imagination.” In his book he fuels his imagination with the fictional writings of C. S. Lewis (no less than 27 times), and many others, right along with the Scriptures. (See Alcorn’s explanation of animals in heaven, and they speak just like humans, p.404).

One congregation in Middle Tennessee began the year (2018) with a 4-part sermon series taken directly from Randy Alcorn’s book, *Heaven*. Additional lessons have followed recommending “first and foremost” Randy Alcorn’s, *Heaven*, stating it is “fascinating,” “exciting,” and “extremely beneficial” in teaching about heaven. The congregation there is now responsible for teaching this false doctrine from its pulpit and advancing it on the World Wide Web via their website where these lessons may be viewed at www.woodburychurchofChrist.org.

The apostle John concluded the Bible with his book which closes with a picture of heaven and a solemn warning, “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Rev. 22:18-19). This Scripture has been violated by Randy Alcorn and all those parroting his materialistic dogmas.

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DANGERS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS #4 (ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION)

Randy Kea

In my study of the ESV, I have learned it is a “light revision” of the notorious Revised Standard Version. By putting them side by side, one can see the great similarity between the two. In fact, in most places there is no difference at all. I believe this point is generally unknown among many in the Lord’s church who have “latched on” to this modern translation. We note here, to their credit, they did change “young woman” to “virgin” in Isaiah 7:14.

As we have emphasized in previous articles, there are two dangerous issues in connection with modern translations generally: (1) Modern translations, as a rule, do not use the text-base used by the KJV. (The KJV uses the Received Text for the New Testament and the Masoretic Hebrew text for the Old Testament.) (2) Modern translations that have attained any notoriety use for their translation technique a “dynamic equivalency” technique instead of a “verbal and formal” technique. See my previous articles for a full discussion of this: seektheoldpaths.com/pdf/HowWeGotTheBible.pdf

Although in the preface of the ESV the claim is made that the ESV is in harmony with the “Tyndale-King James legacy,” upon close examination this is a claim that cannot be substantiated.

(1) The Textus Receptus (Received Text) was used as the textual basis for translation in the New Testament by the KJV. The text base of the ESV in the New Testament was the modern UBS 4th edition/Nestle-Aland 27th edition Greek Text (this is a faulty text base).

(2) The Hebrew Masoretic Text was used by the KJV for Old Testament translation. The ESV used the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Septuagint, the Samaritan Pentateuch...and other sources for Old Testament translation purposes. (See the preface of the ESV). They used these spurious sources to modify the Hebrew text which underlies the KJV.

(3) The KJV used italics to indi-

cate when a word was not represented in the original text but was demanded by syntax, grammatical structure, etc. The ESV has no use of italics like this whatsoever.

(4) Here are a few of some other serious issues with the ESV:

a) In John 7:53-8:11 and Mark 16:9-20, brackets are used and footnotes that cast serious doubt on the integrity of these whole sections of the Word of God.

b) “Only begotten” is deleted from these precious passages: John 1:14,18; 3:16-18; 4:9. The original word for only begotten is *monogenes*. The unparalleled linguists of the KJV rendered this word as “only begotten.” The ASV (American Standard Version), the NASV (New American Standard Version), and the NKJV (New King James Version) all retain the words “only begotten” as the correct translation of this word. The ESV along with the RSV (Revised Standard Version), TEV (Today’s English Version), and the NIV (New International Version) have abandoned “only begotten” as the correct translation. To remove “only begotten” from these passages is an attack on the virgin birth and deity of Christ. One of the best brief summaries of the cumulative evidence through the centuries concerning the truth of this matter that I’ve run across is found in a lecture by brother Robert Taylor entitled “Jesus, The Only Begotten Son” (Sixth Annual Firm Foundation Lectureship on John, 1989, pp 81-91).

c) Clearly, changing “regeneration” to “in the new world” has a pre-millennial slant in Matthew 19:28. The word “regeneration” is also found in Titus 3:5 where it refers to the period of the new birth which is the New Testament or Gospel period under which we now live.

d) Matthew 19:9. Changing the specific word “fornication” to “sexual immorality” which is generic and too inclusive and also leaving out the last phrase of Matthew 19:9 has far-reaching implications. The last phrase says, “and whoso marrieth her which is put

away doth commit adultery.” Lasciviousness is a type of sexual immorality but it is not fornication. In other words, all fornication is sexual immorality, but not all sexual immorality is fornication.

e) By cross examining Matthew 5:17 and Ephesians 2:15, the ESV has Jesus and Paul contradicting each other with reference to the “abolishing” of the Old Testament Mosaic Law. The ESV says: “Do not think that I have come to *abolish* the Law or the Prophets; *I have not come to abolish* them but to fulfill them.” The KJV says: “Think not that I am come to *destroy* the law, or the prophets: *I am not come to destroy*, but to fulfil.” Now, consider also Ephesians 2:15: ESV: “by *abolishing* the law of commandments expressed in ordinances...” KJV: “Having *abolished* in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments...” The ESV has Jesus contradicting Paul in these passages (Matt. 5:17; Eph. 2:15) on the termination of the Mosaic system at the cross. One of the reasons Jesus came into the world was to “abolish” the Law of Moses. He did not come to “destroy” it, we still have it. We learn from it (Rom. 15:4). But Jesus did “abolish” it. He took it out of the way “*nauling it to his cross*” (Col. 2:14).

Other errors could be noted but these are enough to demonstrate that the ESV is not trustworthy.

We conclude by saying the ESV has the wrong text base in both testaments and translation issues with doctrinal consequences. We continue to urge all to stay with the accurate and reliable KJV.

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A review of the ESV by Robert R. Taylor, Jr. is available at: seektheoldpaths.com/pdf/ESV-Taylor.pdf

How We Got the Bible (Jan-June 2018) by Randy Kea is available at: seektheoldpaths.com/pdf/HowWeGotTheBible.pdf

November’s review of modern versions will be: “New King James Version.”

THE PEACEFUL KINGDOM

Bill Boyd

If renewed earth advocates put their proof texts in context, they lose their continuity, but if they cling to their renewed earth system out of context, they lose their credibility.

At my side is a book from my father's library titled, "Christ's Second Coming," with a subtitle on the inside, "Will It Be Premillennial?" by David Brown. David Brown was co-author of the highly acclaimed *Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary on the Whole Bible*. In Brown's introductory remarks he says, "Premillennialism is no barren speculation — useless though true, and innocuous though false. It is a school of Scripture interpretation; it impinges upon and affects some of the most commanding points of the Christian faith; and, when suffered to work its unimpeded way, it stops not until it has pervaded with its own genius the entire system of one's theology, and the whole tone of his spiritual character..." Brown has much to say about the materialistic nature of the premillennial hope, and much of what he says applies equally to the renewed earth hope. Yet, strangely, the commentary of which he was a co-author will sometimes suggest or meekly allows for a materialistic renewed earth.

"Renewed earth" advocates tell us that their own "school of Scripture interpretation" brings "continuity" to Bible teaching, but upon closer examination, their continuity breaks down into a string of proof texts out of context. Here is the dilemma for the renewed earth continuity school: If they put their proof texts in context, they lose their continuity, but if they cling to their renewed earth system out of context, they lose their credibility.

Consider Isaiah's description of "The Peaceful Kingdom" in Isaiah 11. Here is a portion of the prophecy from the King James Version: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And

the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:6-10).

Renewed earth advocates read this as a glimpse of a restored Eden in a renewed heaven and a renewed earth. It is true that Christ restores "spiritually" what was lost in Eden through sin, but does that mean he will renew the earth "materially?"

The old prophets are a challenge. Their themes go from the sublime to the horrific, but their language is beautiful. They preached in poetry. It can be difficult to know if they are speaking of their own time, or of a time to come. As with the Ethiopian in his chariot we ask, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this? Of himself, or of some other man" (Acts 8:34)?

The following are three keys that unlock the true beauty of Isaiah's peaceful kingdom.

The **first key** is in the passage itself. The peaceful kingdom is in "my holy mountain" (Isa. 11:10). This is not the first time we read of the holy mountain in Isaiah. In Isaiah 2:2-4 the prophet said: "It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

In prophetic language, a mountain is a government, a kingdom. "The mountain of the LORD's house" is "the kingdom of God." It will be "established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills" because it will be greater than any earthly kingdom. It will begin in Jerusalem, and from there the Gospel will go into all the world, for "out of Zion shall go forth the law" (Isa. 2:3), and "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord" (Isa. 11:9). We are reminded of the great commission (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:44-47). All of every nation who come to this holy mountain will come together in peace, "...neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa. 2:4). The peace is described as beating their swords into plowshares in Isaiah 2, and as a wolf dwelling with a lamb in Isaiah 11, but it is the same peace. This is the peace we enjoy with all of every nation "in the church" (Eph. 2:11-19). The mountain of Isaiah 2 is the mountain of Daniel 2:35 ("the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth") and Daniel 2:44 ("in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever"). Isaiah spoke of the "the last days" in Isaiah 2:2. In Acts 2:36-37 Peter identified the "last days" as the time spoken of by Joel (Joel 2:28), and identified these last days with the new dispensation that began on Pentecost. The "holy mountain" in Isaiah 11:9 is "the church" of Acts 2:47.

The **second key** is the context. The prophecy begins and ends with the coming of the "Branch" from the "root of Jesse" (Isa. 11:1 and 11:10). It is prophetic poetry; it is not a literal "root." We speak of hair as having roots, but this is not about Jesse's receding hairline. We speak of teeth as

having roots, but this is not about a bad tooth. The root of Jesse is his posterity, his bloodline, living as a root out of sight, but from this root the Messiah shall come, “as a root out of dry ground” (Isa. 53:2). This speaks of the coming of Christ when He came to give His life a ransom for many (cf. Mark 10:45). It is not speaking of his second coming, for as his second coming he shall come in his glory and not as a root out of dry ground.

The great dynasty of David shall be cut down as a tree, but it will live on in the roots. In Nazareth a branch of Jesse sprang forth, “that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets” (Matt. 2:23). The “branch” of Isaiah 4:2 is in the very context of the Pentecost prophesy of Isaiah 2:2-4. This is the “Branch” of Jeremiah 23:5 that will come as a king. It is the “Branch” of Jeremiah 33:15 that will grow up unto David. It is the “Branch” of Zachariah 3:8 that will come as a servant. And it is the “Branch” of Zachariah 6:12-13 that will build his temple, and sit and rule on his throne, and be a priest on his throne. It is the “Branch” that cannot be a priest on the earth; “for if he were on earth, he should not be a priest” (Heb. 8:4).

When the prophet says, “the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him” (Isa. 11:2), we are reminded of the Holy Spirit “lighting upon him” at his baptism (Matt. 3:16) and “abode upon him” (John 1:32-33). When the prophet says, “he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes” (Isa. 11:3), we are reminded of how Jesus taught, “Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment” (John 7:24). Where the prophet speaks of the “poor” and of the “meek” (Isa. 11:4), we are reminded of the “poor in spirit” to whom came “the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 5:3), and of the “meek” who did “inherit the earth” in the same spiritual kingdom (Matt. 5:5). It does the prophecy an injustice to wrest it from its context.

The **third key** is the use that the apostle Paul made of this passage. The New Testament is the best commentary of the Old Testament. With the New, we can sometimes understand the old prophets better than the prophets understood themselves (cf. 1 Peter 1:10-12). In Romans 15:9-12, Paul wrote of the Gospel going to the Gentiles as a theme running through the Old Testament; from 1 Samuel 22:50, “It is written, For this cause I will confess thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name;” to Deuteronomy 32:43, “And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people;” to Psalm 117:1, “And again, Praise the LORD all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.” Then quoting Isaiah 11:10 Paul said, “And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.” When it comes to Old Testament prophecy, a New Testament “this is that” is the end of controversy.

The “material” focus of the renewed earth school of thought subdues the sublimity of the “spiritual” in these old prophetic passages. Some have decried the ever-present controversies in the church, along with the sometimes-bad behavior of the contenders, as evidence that Isaiah must have been speaking of something else. If it is difficult to see the peaceful kingdom in the church of Christ, the fault is not in God’s plan, but in us. Jesus said, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 15:35). Peter admonished, “Ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren,

be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it” (1 Peter 8-11).

Paul’s reference to Isaiah’s peaceful kingdom came immediately after he admonished the saints in Rome, “That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another; as Christ also received us to the glory of God” (Rom. 15:6-7). He taught the church in Thessalonica, “Be at peace among yourselves” (1 Thess. 5:13). In Ephesians 4:3 Paul admonished, “Keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” The doctrinal “unity of the Spirit” is not of itself sufficient for peace in the kingdom, for we are to keep this unity in “the bond of peace.” This calls for the spiritual virtues of “lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love” (Eph. 4:2). Perhaps, if we would pay more attention to nurturing the “the bond of peace,” it would be easier for the world to see the will of God on earth as it was intended in heaven.

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