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## **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

### **Toward a pentecostal eschatology: discerning the way forward**

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**Toward a Pentecostal Eschatology**  
**Discerning the Way Forward**

By

Larry R. McQueen

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
School of Theology and Religious Studies  
College of Arts, Education, and Humanities  
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## **Abstract**

This thesis explores the topic of eschatology from the perspective of the Pentecostal tradition. Growing out of the need to articulate a Pentecostal eschatology that is consistent with the theological beliefs, spiritual experience, and hermeneutical insights of the movement, this study provides an interdisciplinary approach to the subject, integrating historical, biblical, and theological studies. After providing a comprehensive review of the current state of Pentecostal eschatology, the study explores the periodical literature of the earliest years of the movement, understanding this period to be the heart or originating source of the tradition. Drawing upon insights gained from this exploration, the boundaries for discerning a contemporary Pentecostal eschatology are established and a constructive, biblical-theological contribution to this subject is offered, framed around the narrative testimony of the fivefold gospel that emerges from the heart of the tradition.

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I also wish to acknowledge the helpful services of the Paris Public Library in Paris, Texas. During the final phase of the research, the friendly staff there kept a steady stream of books and articles coming my way through inter-library loan.

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## Abbreviations

### Early Pentecostal Periodicals

<i>AE</i>	<i>The Apostolic Evangel</i>
<i>AF</i>	<i>The Apostolic Faith</i>
<i>ALW</i>	<i>A Living Word</i>
<i>CE</i>	<i>The Christian Evangel</i>
<i>COGE</i>	<i>The Church of God Evangel</i>
<i>HA</i>	<i>The Holiness Advocate</i>
<i>MDS</i>	<i>Meat in Due Season</i>
<i>PE</i>	<i>The Pentecostal Evangel</i>
<i>PHA</i>	<i>The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate</i>
<i>PT</i>	<i>Pentecostal Testimony</i>
<i>TBM</i>	<i>The Bridegroom's Messenger</i>
<i>TBT</i>	<i>The Blessed Truth</i>
<i>TOF</i>	<i>Triumphs of Faith</i>
<i>TP</i>	<i>The Pentecost</i>
<i>TPT</i>	<i>The Present Truth</i>
<i>TVW</i>	<i>The Voice in the Wilderness</i>
<i>TWT</i>	<i>The Whole Truth</i>
<i>WE</i>	<i>Weekly Evangel</i>
<i>WW</i>	<i>Word and Witness</i>

### General

<i>AJPS</i>	<i>Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies</i>
<i>BZNW</i>	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
<i>DPCM</i>	Burgess, S.M., et al (eds.), <i>Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements</i> (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988).
<i>IJST</i>	<i>International Journal of Systematic Theology</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JEPTA</i>	<i>Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association</i>
<i>JES</i>	<i>Journal of Ecumenical Studies</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JPT</i>	<i>Journal of Pentecostal Theology</i>
<i>JPTSup</i>	<i>Journal of Pentecostal Theology, Supplement Series</i>
<i>JSNTSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Supplement Series</i>
<i>LXX</i>	Septuagint
<i>NIDPCM</i>	Burgess, S.M., and E.M. van der Maas (eds.), <i>The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements</i> (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003).
<i>NT</i>	New Testament
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>OT</i>	Old Testament
<i>Pneuma</i>	<i>Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies</i>
<i>TDNT</i>	Kittel, G., G. Friedrich, and G.W. Bromily (eds.), <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, abridged edn, 1985).
<i>WTJ</i>	<i>Wesleyan Theological Journal</i>

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

‘God is the last thing.’<sup>1</sup>

### I. The Task

As a teenager growing up as a third-generation classical Pentecostal in the Southern United States, I vividly remember attending a week-long prophecy revival held in my district church. The evangelist had set up a huge prophecy chart that stretched across the podium and served as the backdrop to his deeply intriguing and spiritually convicting nightly sermons and morning lectures. As a young person prone to solving puzzles and seeking to know all the right answers, I was spell-bound. His ability to explain the ‘little horn’ on Daniel’s fourth beast (Dan. 7.8) or the ‘ten kings’ who serve the beast of the Apocalypse (Rev. 17.12-14) was matched by his capability to quote verbatim chapter-length portions of Scripture in a deep, sonorous voice. This evangelist had given me the tools finally to understand the mysteries of the books of Daniel and Revelation and to explain why the rapture would definitely be ‘pre-trib’!<sup>2</sup> Any inconsistencies that I noticed were duly pushed to the side. For years afterward, I reveled in possessing an accurate map of the future and assumed that this was the only valid method to comprehend eschatology as a Pentecostal believer.

My experience is probably not very different from the majority of Pentecostals in the US and in many parts of the world. When I entered college and seminary, I learned about and began to share the commonly-held ambivalent feelings toward our ‘dance partner’ in eschatology, classical dispensationalism,<sup>3</sup> a relationship made even more tenuous in the light of an increasing awareness of a unique Pentecostal hermeneutic and the inconsistencies this produces toward an eschatology that must be modified to accept Spirit baptism as a present-day

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<sup>1</sup> S.J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (JPTSup, 1; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993; Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2010), p. 197. Page numbers cited in this study follow the Sheffield edition.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Pre-trib’ is an in-house reference to the view that the Church will be taken up to heaven prior to a period of tribulation.

<sup>3</sup> For an overview of the distinguishing features of dispensationalism, cf. C.B. Bass, *Backgrounds to Dispensationalism: Its Historical Genesis and Ecclesiastical Implications* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960), pp. 13-47.

experience.<sup>4</sup> In recent years, this tension has increased, both in the academy and in the local church, as younger scholars have abandoned the dispensational view with few resources to help replace it, and as sermons about the coming of Jesus, not to mention the millennial reign, have become the exception.

Is there an authentic way in which Pentecostals can pursue the study of eschatology? A survey of contemporary contributions to Pentecostal eschatology reveals that the influence of classical dispensationalism is still active in varying degrees, yet some are calling for an eschatology that is consistent with our dynamic spirituality grounded in the core theological presuppositions of the movement.<sup>5</sup> Most of the constructive work that has been done in this regard, however, is limited to broadly defined categories to suggest a way forward.<sup>6</sup> Some of this constructive work is also heavily dependent upon outside theological voices,<sup>7</sup> a move that could lead inadvertently to theological incompatibilities, a situation not unlike the one we have recognized regarding dispensationalism. And none of these works engage the Scripture in detail, something central to a Pentecostal hermeneutic.

Is it possible to draw from our own theological wells in order to develop a consistent Pentecostal eschatology? How might the distinct theological beliefs, spiritual experience, and hermeneutical insights of the Pentecostal tradition be incorporated fully into the study of eschatology? This is the task this study seeks to address.

## II. The Method

The methodology employed in historically focused portion of this study follows the ground-breaking work of Kimberly Alexander in her exploration into the early

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<sup>4</sup> G.T. Sheppard, 'Pentecostals and the Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism: The Anatomy of an Uneasy Relationship', *Pneuma* 6.2 (Fall, 1984), pp. 5-33. Cf. Chapter 2 below.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Chapter 2 below.

<sup>6</sup> Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, pp. 197-208, proposes the broad category of eschatological trinitarianism; P. Althouse, "'Left Behind'—Fact or Fiction: Ecumenical Dilemmas of the Fundamentalist Millenarian Tensions within Pentecostalism', *JPT* 13.2 (2005), pp. 187-207, suggests the category of 'proleptic anticipation'; and A. Yong, *In the Days of Caesar: Pentecostalism and Political Theology* (Sacra Doctrina; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), pp. 316-58, proposes a focus on 'pneumatological apocalypticism'.

<sup>7</sup> Among others, Jürgen Moltmann is referenced heavily. Cf. P. Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days: Pentecostal Eschatology in Conversation with Jürgen Moltmann* (JPTSup, 25; London: T&T Clark International, 2003); M.K. Thompson, 'Kingdom Come: Revisioning Pentecostal Eschatology' (PhD dissertation; Luther Seminary, 2007); H.D. Hunter, 'Some Ethical Implications of Pentecostal Eschatology', *JEPTA* 22 (2002), pp. 45-55.

periodical literature of the Pentecostal movement in order to set forth a Pentecostal theology of healing.<sup>8</sup> This method of hearing the voices of our forebears during the earliest years of the movement, what some have called the theological heart of the movement,<sup>9</sup> allows a contemporary construction of eschatology to be grounded fully in the heart of the tradition. Entering into this literature brings the voices of Pentecostals from a broad spectrum of socio-economic, geographic, and clergy-laity backgrounds to the theological table, supplementing the contemporary communal witness integral to a Pentecostal hermeneutic. This method is inductive, allowing one to explore not only *what* early Pentecostals were saying about eschatology, but also *why* they were saying it. What was the theological and spiritual ethos surrounding these articulations? What methodologies did they employ in their approach to Scripture? What outside voices were influential in their theological constructions?

In the light of Alexander's conclusion that the different soteriological underpinnings of the two major streams of early Pentecostalism (the Wesleyan Holiness stream and the Finished Work stream) resulted in two models of healing,<sup>10</sup> it is appropriate to ask if the soteriological narratives of the two streams also led to different articulations of eschatology. Further, given the general view of historians that all early Pentecostals were (modified) dispensationalists from the beginning, a major interest is to test the validity of this hypothesis by exploring the relationship between dispensationalism and Pentecostalism in the earliest years of the movement. What was the extent of influence exerted by dispensationalism, and was the influence exerted equally among all early Pentecostal groups? Are there untapped resources in the periodical literature that might support a desire to be more consistent about our eschatology today? The goal of this investigation is to allow any helpful insights gained through a close reading of the early Pentecostal periodical literature to be integrated into the development of a contemporary approach to Pentecostal eschatology.

In the final, constructive portion of this study, a methodology of discernment is employed which is drawn from the inductive study of the periodical literature.

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<sup>8</sup> K.E. Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing: Models in Theology and Practice* (JPTSup, 29; Blandford Forum: Deo Publishing, 2006), pp. 5-6.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. W. Hollenweger, 'Pentecostals and the Charismatic Movement', in C. Jones, G. Wainwright and E. Yarnold, SJ (eds.), *The Study of Spirituality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 551; Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, p. 26; Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing*, p. 66.

<sup>10</sup> Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing*, pp. 195-215.

In particular, the practice of discernment that flourished in the earliest years of the Pentecostal movement serves as a model to point the way forward toward the development of a Pentecostal eschatology today. Discernment involves reading relevant biblical texts concerning eschatology in the light of the theological commitments and dynamic spirituality of the movement in the context of the community. This hermeneutical move links current articulations of eschatology to the heart of the movement, allowing them to be faithful to the early spirituality of the tradition. Of course, to speak of the experience of the Spirit is to interject subjectivity into the hermeneutical process. There are, however, checks and balances in this methodology. First, the Scripture itself sets the boundaries for the discussion. Though interpretation is always negotiable, the text itself is non-negotiable. Second, the experience of the Spirit, while personal, is also communal. Thus, the community as a whole is involved in the discerning process. This means not only that individual voices in the community are heard, but also that each interpreter is shaped by the community. Eschatology is articulated within a community that discerns.

### **III. The Flow of the Study**

This study begins with a comprehensive survey of scholarly contributions to the field of Pentecostal eschatology. These are presented in Chapter 2 within the broad categories of historical explorations, biblical studies, and constructive theological contributions. This review establishes what has been accomplished to this point and provides a wide-ranging perspective of the current state of Pentecostal eschatology. This survey is intended to help clarify the recent emphases in this area and to expose any gaps that require attention.

Next, the results of my exploration into the early Pentecostal periodical literature are presented. I engage with the Wesleyan Holiness stream in Chapter 3 and with the Finished Work stream in Chapter 4. Here, the many testimonies, excerpts from sermons and articles, prayer requests, and editorial comments that are woven into the presentation allow the early voices to speak in their own terms and help to relay a sense of the ethos of the earliest years of the movement.

Chapter 5 opens with an explanation and assessment of insights that were discovered in the early Pentecostal literature. Here, the boundaries are established for discerning the way forward in the construction of a contemporary Pentecostal

eschatology. These boundaries also enable an assessment of the current contributions to Pentecostal eschatology (surveyed in Chapter 2) in order to determine their viability as dialogue partners. At the heart of Chapter 5, a constructive Pentecostal eschatology is offered, framed around the narrative testimony of the fivefold gospel that flows from the originating source of the tradition. It engages heavily with the book of Revelation, though this is not the only text relevant to such an enterprise, and concludes with an example of how a contemporary approach to Pentecostal eschatology may be employed in theology and ministry.

A summary of contributions and implications for further study is offered in Chapter 6.

## Chapter 2

### **Pentecostal Eschatology in Bibliographic Review: From Retrieval to Revision**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of scholarly publications concerning eschatology in the Pentecostal movement. This review will deal first with works that discuss the role that eschatology played in the historical development of Pentecostalism, followed by those that examine the subject in the early Pentecostal movement itself. This is followed by a review of scholarly contributions made by Pentecostals to the discussion of biblical texts that are relevant to the study of eschatology. Finally, I will review attempts by Pentecostals to construct an eschatology, including works that have been influenced to varying degrees by classical dispensationalism and those that attempt to construct a more consistent and thoroughgoing Pentecostal eschatology. The movement of this chapter is from historical, to biblical, to theological studies. The themes that are introduced here will contribute to my own research in the remaining chapters of this thesis.

#### **I. The Role of Eschatology in the Formation of Pentecostal Thought**

The three works that are reviewed in this section provide a helpful introduction to the historical background to Pentecostalism, while they also serve to introduce many of the issues with which this study deals.

**D. Dayton.** In a 1987 landmark study, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, Donald Dayton traces the theological heritage of early Pentecostalism to the Wesleyan and American Holiness movements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>1</sup> The major thesis of this book is that the inner logic of early Pentecostal thought may be articulated by tracing the development of the four components of the ‘full gospel’ message of the early Pentecostals: Jesus as Savior, Spirit-baptizer, Healer, and Coming King. Dayton acknowledges the historically

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<sup>1</sup> D.W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987). For an article length summary of Dayton’s conclusions, cf. D.W. Dayton, ‘Theological Roots of Pentecostalism’, *Pneuma* 2.1 (Spring, 1980), pp. 3-21.

prior fivefold pattern that also includes Jesus as Sanctifier, prominent among Wesleyan Holiness groups, but claims that the inner logic of Pentecostalism is best represented by the fourfold pattern. Indeed, the bulk of the work (Chapters 2, 3, and 4) is devoted to tracing the evolution of the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification into the Pentecostal doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.<sup>2</sup> In this way, Dayton points toward soteriology as the crucial element around which the other elements of the Pentecostal ‘full gospel’ adhere. As such, healing is seen to be the result of the radicalization of sanctification as an instantaneous event. Similarly, premillennialism is viewed as the consequence of over-investing postmillennial hope with perfectionist expectations. Dayton notes that the historical events of post-Civil War America also contributed to the abandonment of the postmillennial vision. The decline of society became another convincing sign to Holiness adherents that they truly were living in the last days. These shifts in the theological and social terrain took place in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, just before the Pentecostal movement began.

Although Dayton sees eschatology and the doctrine of ‘the latter rain’ as being integral to the logic of early Pentecostalism, he concludes that ‘eschatology is *a* crucial element but not *the* central theme of Pentecostalism’ (emphasis in original).<sup>3</sup> Significantly, he does not believe that one should view the eschatology of early Pentecostalism as a non-critical assimilation of classical dispensational categories, for several reasons. First, the emphasis on the ‘latter rain’ and ‘restoration of spiritual gifts’ does not fit within the dispensational categories that easily. Second, Pentecostalism generally adopted different periodizations of history (tripartite) than the classic dispensational model. Third, the biblical hermeneutic of Pentecostals allowed the application of OT promises and several NT texts directly to the Church (e.g. sermon on the mount) that dispensationalists relegate to the millennium. Rather, Dayton proposes that Pentecostal eschatology should be seen as a parallel development (or occasionally an antecedent) to the rise of classical dispensationalism, with common dynamics and much intermingling. Furthermore, he indicates that the eschatology of the holiness and

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. also D.W. Dayton, ‘From “Christian Perfection” to the “Baptism of the Holy Ghost”’, in V. Synan (ed.), *Aspects of Pentecostal-Charismatic Origins* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1975), pp. 39-54.

<sup>3</sup> Dayton, *Theological Roots*, p. 33, n. 44.

ethnically defined branches of Pentecostalism may show less of a dependence upon dispensational categories.

**D.W. Faupel.** The PhD thesis of William Faupel was in progress at the University of Birmingham when Dayton's book was published. Subsequently published in 1996, Faupel's work expands that of Dayton's and is more historically focused, assigning eschatology a more central role in early Pentecostalism.<sup>4</sup> Although Faupel sees the same historical-social forces and theological shifts at work in the emergence of Pentecostalism as does Dayton, Faupel contends that the self-identifying labels used by early Pentecostals indicate the centrality of eschatology in understanding the movement.<sup>5</sup> These include: (1) *Full Gospel (or Fivefold Gospel)*: This refers to the five cardinal doctrines that occur throughout the early literature: justification-salvation, sanctification, baptism in the Holy Spirit, healing, and the premillennial second coming of Jesus. This corresponds to the christological focus of Jesus as Savior, Sanctifier, Spirit-Baptizer, Healer, and Coming King. (2) *Latter Rain*: This name, based on the physical phenomenon of the early and latter rain in ancient Israel, provided the movement's philosophy of history. This was the rain of God's Spirit that would bring in the final harvest. (3) *Apostolic Faith*: The movement understood itself to be the restoration of the NT Church. The sequence of restoration was justification by faith, sanctification, divine healing, the premillennial second coming of Jesus, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. (4) *Pentecostal*: The movement claimed this title above the others to emphasize both the (tripartite) dispensational aspect in which the latter rain was inaugurated by a second Pentecost, and the spiritual aspect in which every member was expected to experience a personal Pentecost. Each of these ways of referring to the movement pointed to a single expectation: the second coming of Jesus.

The metaphor of conception, gestation, and birth is used by Faupel to describe the emergence of Pentecostalism out of the womb of nineteenth-century North American Perfectionism. Three major insights should be highlighted. First,

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<sup>4</sup> D.W. Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel: The Significance of Eschatology in the Development of Pentecostal Thought* (JPTSup, 10; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996; Blandform Forum: Deo Publishing, 2009). Page numbers in this study follow the Sheffield edition.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. also D.W. Faupel, 'The Function of "Models" in the Interpretation of Pentecostal Thought', *Pneuma* 2.1 (Spring, 1980), pp. 51-71.

Faupel contends that the shift during the mid- to late-nineteenth century (the ‘gestation period’) within the Holiness movement from soteriological to pneumatological categories left the movement with three distinct positions concerning sanctification and Spirit baptism: (1) the Classical position, which integrated sanctification (purity) and baptism in the Holy Spirit (power) in a single experience; (2) the Keswick solution, which subsumed sanctification within regeneration (worked out experientially in a crisis-progress dialectic) and assigned power for service to baptism in the Spirit; and (3) the Three Blessings formulation, which viewed Spirit baptism as a third crisis experience subsequent to entire sanctification, which was, in turn, subsequent to regeneration.

Second, Faupel maintains that a shift in worldview gave rise to premillennialism as the dominant eschatological perspective within all three branches of the American Holiness movement by the late nineteenth century, arising first within the Reformed tradition. Faupel describes the rise of futurist premillennialism in the early 1830s among the Plymouth Brethren, propagated most prominently by John Nelson Darby, and its acceptance by Reformed leaders in America by means of several personal visits by Darby (1862-1877), the publication of a monthly periodical (beginning in 1863), and the propagation of the teaching at various Bible and prophecy conferences (1875-1900). Conversely, the prophecy conferences were also the means through which the Keswick view of holiness was introduced to Reformed leaders. Faupel proposes that for this group, the logic worked in the direction from applying historical categories of eschatology to personal experience: Reformed adherents, who had previously (and easily) accepted Darby’s dispensational scheme with its Calvinistic presuppositions, synthesized this understanding of the end of the age of the Spirit with their newly accepted Keswick understanding of sanctification.

For those who held the Classical view of sanctification (equated with Spirit baptism) in the Wesleyan wing of the Holiness movement, the logic worked in the direction from applying personal experience to historical categories: the experience of sanctification as both negative (cleansing) and positive (power for service) was translated to give meaning to historical time periods (dispensations) in which God worked to judge and to save. A question that Faupel does not address explicitly is whether this logic worked in the same way for the Three Blessing adherents in the Holiness movement.

Third, Faupel maintains that several issues were surfacing in the late 1800s that led to the emergence of American liberalism and its opposite reaction, fundamentalism. These issues focused on naturalistic explanations of historical development embodied in Darwinism and biblical higher criticism. The liberal approach was to ‘sanctify’ the secularization with Christian symbolism and to view scientific investigation and education as God’s means to work through history within a postmillennial framework. Conversely, those who wanted to maintain the traditional understanding of the Christian faith and the accuracy of the Scriptures felt that the postmillennial view must be abandoned. They actually used the same underlying presuppositions of modernity that the liberal approach used: scientific empirical investigation proved that ‘the “facts” of Scripture correlated with the “facts” of history and of the natural order. Darby’s doctrine of dispensations provided the framework upon which they could build their case.’<sup>6</sup> When theology becomes a science, prophecy becomes, as one practitioner noted, the ‘photographically exact forecasting of the future’.<sup>7</sup>

Continuing with his helpful metaphor, in the last three chapters Faupel describes the ‘birth pangs’ (individual ministries that anticipated the Pentecostal message), the ‘birth’ (the Azusa Street revival in 1906 and its immediate spread around the nation and the world), and the period of ‘growth’ (the years 1910 through 1920 during which issues, such as William Durham’s Finished Work teaching and the ‘New Issue’ of the Oneness doctrine, forced Pentecostals to define the parameters of Pentecostal thought). In these chapters Faupel shows that early Pentecostal adherents believed that the outpouring of the Spirit in the early twentieth century was the answer to the eschatological expectations of the late nineteenth-century Holiness movement. The prior adoption of a premillennial viewpoint positioned these adherents to accept the new ‘Pentecostal’ movement as the final empowerment for end-time missions. Postmillennial hope for conversion of the nations, however, was replaced by a last-days effort to warn the nations of impending judgment and to prepare the bride of Christ to meet the soon-coming bridegroom.<sup>8</sup> At first, many believed that the gift of tongues would be the supernatural means whereby all the nations would be quickly evangelized in order

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<sup>6</sup> Faupel, *Everlasting Gospel*, p. 112.

<sup>7</sup> Faupel, *Everlasting Gospel*, p. 113, n. 127.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. also J.R. Goff, Jr, ‘Closing Out the Church Age: Pentecostals Face the Twenty-First Century’, *Pneuma* 14.1 (Spring, 1992), pp. 7-21.

that Christ may return. The revival was a sure sign that the end was near. They also believed that God was unifying the Church by bringing people from many denominations into the blessing of Pentecost. Both of these expectations, however, soon faded away as missionaries realized that they would still have to learn foreign languages the normal way, and instead of bringing unity, the movement brought even more division to the Church. By 1920, the movement had produced several separate organizations that began to operate increasingly like the denominations which the earlier Pentecostal believers had denounced.

According to Faupel, then, eschatology served as the catalyst to bring Pentecostalism to birth. It was essential in the *development* of Pentecostal thought, but not so much in its long-term growth. In his view, as the original vision was challenged within and beyond the first decade of the movement, eschatology became less prominent in the overall definition of Pentecostal identity.<sup>9</sup>

**P.E. Prosser.** Another monograph that deals with the relationship between eschatology and the formation of Pentecostalism is by Peter Prosser,<sup>10</sup> whose primary purpose is to describe how the Pentecostal movement was influenced and eventually ‘taken over’ by classical dispensational eschatology. After a brief historical overview of the origin of Pentecostalism and its ‘preoccupation’ with premillennialism, Prosser explores the relationship between dispensational millenarianism and fundamentalism, drawing most heavily from the work of James Barr. His conclusion that fundamentalism is an outgrowth of dispensational premillennialism is developed in detail throughout several chapters that outline the development of millennialism, dispensationalism, and fundamentalism.<sup>11</sup> This was especially evident, Prosser maintains, in how the use of the Bible in fundamentalism was prefigured by the reification of biblical texts

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<sup>9</sup> A similar conclusion is reached by Robert Mapes Anderson, who believes that the immediacy of the coming of Jesus was eventually replaced in Pentecostal thought with the immediacy of speaking in tongues. Cf. R.M. Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 79-97.

<sup>10</sup> P.E. Prosser, *Dispensationalist Eschatology and Its Influence on American and British Religious Movements* (Texts and Studies in Religion, 82; Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1999).

<sup>11</sup> For the relationship between premillennialism and evangelicalism, of which fundamentalism is one part, see T.P. Weber, ‘Premillennialism and the Branches of Evangelicalism’, in D.W. Dayton and R.K. Johnston (eds.), *The Variety of American Evangelicalism* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991), pp. 5-21.

in classical dispensationalism. Prosser maintains that the primary influence of dispensationalism on the Pentecostal movement came through the widely distributed study Bible edited by C.I. Scofield, which began to be used in many Pentecostal Bible Schools shortly after its initial publication in 1909.

Following a critique of fundamentalist dispensationalism, Prosser concludes that the dispensational eschatology adopted by the Pentecostal movement is 'alien' to the original vision of Pentecostalism. The tension is most evident in the Pentecostal belief that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is the fulfillment of OT prophecy. Prosser challenges Pentecostals to develop a more hopeful eschatology more in keeping with the black and Hispanic parts of the movement.

## **II. Eschatology in Early Pentecostalism and Beyond**

Eschatology in early Pentecostalism is the subject of various scholarly pieces, comprised of chapter-length studies and observations woven into monograph length works. These are arranged generally in a chronological order of the subject matter, moving from early Pentecostalism to the present.

**G. Wacker.** An introduction to Pentecostalism by historian Grant Wacker focuses on the significance of early Pentecostalism as a cultural and religious phenomenon within American culture.<sup>12</sup> Wacker investigates Pentecostalism within the broad categories of primitivism and pragmatism. The topic of eschatology is the subject of the final chapter. Wacker proposes that Pentecostalism adopted the framework of classical dispensationalism but modified it in three major ways. First, Pentecostals claimed that only those believers who were baptized in the Holy Spirit would be taken up in the rapture. Second, they believed that all of the world must hear the Pentecostal message (the *full* gospel) before Christ would come to take away his bride. Third, the present age of the Church, rather than being an interruption or parenthesis in God's plan as the dispensational view proposed, was the fulfillment of God's plan for history, being marked in its beginning and ending periods with the outpouring of the Spirit (the 'former rain' and 'latter rain' respectively). Thus, the restoration of miracles and other gifts of the Spirit, which

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<sup>12</sup> G. Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostalism and American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), pp. 251-65.

had ceased according to the dispensationalists, became the primary sign that the present age was drawing to a close.

Wacker summarizes the sense of imminence that pervaded the early Pentecostal worldview under three major categories. First, the imminent end spelled *doom* for the world. Military rhetoric lent force to this sense of an impending crisis. Second, for the true believer the end was filled with *hope* because the coming of Jesus meant that their suffering would end. This hope was most often expressed as a literal ‘catching away’ of the saints to be with Jesus in heaven. Third, *expansionism* was inherent in the initial Pentecostal vision. The coming catastrophe meant that time was short to do God’s work. According to Wacker, the rhetoric of global conquest far outstripped reality, but as parochial and triumphalistic as the early Pentecostals were, they did develop a world consciousness and crossed many cultural barriers.

**D. Jacobsen.** Douglas Jacobsen published a monograph that highlights the theological contributions of twelve diverse Pentecostal leaders who wrote book-length treatises within the first generation of the movement.<sup>13</sup> Because he deals with the eschatological views of these leaders to varying degrees, the strength of this contribution lies in the broad contrasts and comparisons that Jacobsen lays out between them. The cosmic and historical-apocalyptic worldview that frames the eschatology of Charles Parham is contrasted with the communal and egalitarian vision of Richard Spurling. Jacobsen delineates the similarities between the pastoral focus of William Seymour at the Azusa Street mission and the motivational emphasis of David Wesley Myland. These stand in contrast to the precise and sometimes speculative tendencies of George F. Taylor. While Joseph H. King stresses the ongoing process of salvation throughout eternity, William H. Durham focuses on the purification of the gospel message for the close of the age. Finally, G.T. Haywood incorporates a modified dispensational perspective into an expansive view of history, while Andrew David Urshan focuses upon the revelation of ‘Jesus’ as God’s name to signal the close of the gospel dispensation.

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<sup>13</sup> D. Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit: Theologies of the Early Pentecostal Movement* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003).

**L. Callahan.** The eschatology of Charles Parham is discussed in great detail in a PhD dissertation by Leslie Callahan in 2002.<sup>14</sup> Callahan frames her discussion in the larger context of the way that Parham integrated a theology of the physical human body in his understanding of conversion and sanctification. Callahan explores Parham's interest in the sanctified body by focusing on his doctrine of divine healing (Chapter 1), his support of women in ministry (Chapter 2), his theory of creation and subsequent racial ideology (Chapter 3), the role of marriage, sexuality, and family in his life and thought (Chapter 4), and his view of eschatology as bodily destiny (Chapter 5). Callahan locates Parham historically within the rise of premillennialism generally and dispensationalism in particular. She points out several ways that Parham modified the dispensational script. These modifications were a result of several of Parham's unique points of view including his belief in British-Israelism; his taxonomy of Christians into four groups: the Church, the Bride, the Man-child, and the Saints; his separation of the resurrection of Christians from the rapture (which will be experienced only by the ultra elite Man-child group); and his belief in conditional immortality. Callahan concludes that Parham's understanding of bodily destiny reveals ambivalence toward the human body and a projection of social norms into an eschatological future.

**R. Cornwall.** The eschatology of Aimee Semple McPherson, Pentecostal evangelist and founder of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, is the subject of an article by Robert Cornwall.<sup>15</sup> The author emphasizes the role that primitivism played in early Pentecostalism by which the eschatological scheme of classical dispensationalism was modified. He notes that McPherson promoted the 'finished work' doctrine of William Durham and emphasized a fourfold gospel, what she came to call the 'foursquare' gospel. While accepting the pessimistic view of world history that dispensationalism promoted, McPherson refused to separate the Church age from the apostolic age. Indeed the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was evidence that the latter rain was falling, serving both as a sign of the restoration of the Church to its original intention and as a sign that the last days had come. Early in her ministry, McPherson spoke of a threefold form

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<sup>14</sup> L.D. Callahan, 'Fleshly Manifestations: Charles Fox Parham's Quest of the Sanctified Body' (PhD dissertation; Princeton University, 2002).

<sup>15</sup> R. Cornwall, 'Primitivism and the Redefinition of Dispensationalism in the Theology of Aimee Semple McPherson', *Pneuma* 14.1 (Spring, 1992), pp. 23-42.

of dispensationalism based on the persons of the Trinity, similar to that developed by John Fletcher. Later, she affirmed a more expanded scheme comprised of six ages with the important modification of a conflation of the Church age with the age of Christ. Although she viewed Spirit baptism as the primary sign that God was restoring the Church to its first-century fullness, McPherson believed that complete restoration would come when all the spiritual gifts and fruit became prominent throughout the Church. In conclusion, Cornwall notes that McPherson's 'dispensationalism is dependent on her primitivist positions',<sup>16</sup> resulting in a gospel of hope that offered a preview of the coming kingdom in the midst of dark days.

**G. Menzies and G.L. Anderson.** The eschatology of Daniel Warren Kerr, one of the founding fathers in the Assemblies of God, is reviewed in a brief article by Glen Menzies and Gordon L. Anderson.<sup>17</sup> They place Kerr's thought in the context of the early Pentecostal movement when unity of the Spirit was held to be more important than unity of doctrine. Kerr himself believed that creeds and doctrines could be divisive. His influence in this regard is reflected in the statements concerning eschatology in the denomination's 'Fundamental Truths', which allowed for a variety of opinions about the exact sequence of future events. Indeed, Kerr himself held to the standard dispensational view, but modified it to include a second, post-tribulation rapture for those Christians who were not ready to meet Christ at the beginning of the tribulation. The authors conclude with a call to Pentecostals to continue to emphasize mission over organization, leaving room for alternate opinions about non-essential doctrinal matters, as long as divisiveness is avoided.

**W.K. Kay and A.E. Dyer.** A number of excerpts from primary sources are made available in a chapter devoted to Pentecostal eschatology in *Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies: A Reader*, edited by William K. Kay and Anne E. Dyer.<sup>18</sup> These are arranged in roughly chronological order and show that although the

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<sup>16</sup> Cornwall, 'Primitivism', p. 41.

<sup>17</sup> G. Menzies and G.L. Anderson, 'D.W. Kerr and Eschatological Diversity in the Assemblies of God', *Paraclete* 27.1 (Winter, 1993), pp. 8-16.

<sup>18</sup> W.K. Kay and A.E. Dyer (eds.), *Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies: A Reader* (London: SCM Press, 2004), pp. 25-46.

majority of early Pentecostals adopted Scofieldian dispensationalism as the basic outline of their eschatology, many variations within this position existed. Moreover, contributions from Neo-Pentecostals reveal that the eschatologies of their respective denominations—Roman Catholic, Anglican, Baptist, etc.—have been retained most often without much modification. Kay and Dyer helpfully include pieces from the early British Pentecostal movement, most notably from Alexander Boddy, an important leader whose periodical, *Confidence*, was Britain's first Pentecostal journal.<sup>19</sup>

**W.K. Kay.** In a monograph length study, *Pentecostals in Britain*, William Kay includes a brief description of the development and present status of eschatological beliefs within the Pentecostal denominations in Britain.<sup>20</sup> Kay notes that early Pentecostals in Britain embraced the premillennial eschatology of J.N. Darby, having been popularized through the *Scofield Reference Bible* and promoted by early British Pentecostal journals such as *Confidence*. By the 1950s, however, the Pentecostal churches had become small and stagnated, which Kay attributes to a ghetto mentality resulting from the stoic defeatism of their premillennial eschatology. He is not surprised, therefore, to find the charismatic movement of the 1960s embrace a new kind of eschatology, one that linked amillennialism to a dynamic understanding and experience of the Holy Spirit. Kay notes that all of the Pentecostal denominations included belief in premillennialism in their original statements of faith, as amillennialism was not a live option at the time. In 1994, only after heated debate, the Elim Pentecostal Church removed any reference to a millennium in its Fundamental Truths to allow a wider range of views to be held within that denomination.

**J.J. Glass.** Another work that explores the subject of eschatology from a British Pentecostal perspective is a chapter-length study by James J. Glass.<sup>21</sup> First, Glass seeks to understand why early Pentecostals embraced the eschatology they did and what impact this had on the Pentecostal movement. He concludes that many who

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<sup>19</sup> M.J. Cartledge, 'The Early Pentecostal Theology of *Confidence* Magazine (1908-1926): A Version of the Five-Fold Gospel?' *JEPTA* 28.2 (2008), pp. 117-30, identifies a fivefold soteriological emphasis in this periodical.

<sup>20</sup> W.K. Kay, *Pentecostals in Britain* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2000), pp. 129-33.

<sup>21</sup> J.J. Glass, 'Eschatology: A Clear and Present Danger—A Sure and Certain Hope', in K. Warrington (ed.), *Pentecostal Perspectives* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1998), pp. 120-46.

came into Pentecostalism from other traditions, including Brethrenism, brought their eschatology with them and, as it did not seem to be in conflict with the Pentecostal teaching on the Holy Spirit, left it intact. Significantly, British Pentecostalism grew out of the Anglican Church, which in turn had been influenced by Brethren leader, J.N. Darby, by means of the prophetic conferences of the early 1800s. Dispensational premillennialism also appealed to the literalist approach to the interpretation of Scripture (and to Christology) found among Pentecostals, which in their perspective, safeguarded against theological liberalism and the ‘abstraction’ of revelation. The radical, crisis-oriented character of the early Pentecostal ethos predisposed adherents toward a radical, crisis-oriented eschatology. Glass believes that the present shape of Pentecostal eschatology, with its pessimistic outlook for human society, was galvanized by the event of the Great War, further strengthening ‘premillennialist convictions for it appeared to demolish any remaining hopes of a kingdom established through the church’.<sup>22</sup>

Several factors, however, have challenged the existing stance on eschatology among British Pentecostals, resulting in a ‘lower profile given to Bible prophecy in post-70’s Pentecostalism’.<sup>23</sup> Among these, Glass includes (1) a long term sense of disappointment, as world crisis after world crisis did not bring about the rapture, (2) the rise of the Renewal movement that challenged the long-held belief that historical denominations represented the last-days apostate Church, and (3) the rise of the Restoration house church movement that shared most Pentecostal beliefs and practices, yet espoused an optimistic eschatology of glory and dominion, instead of doom and gloom. Overall, the charismatic movement has brought a renewed focus on the presence of the kingdom *now*. Furthermore, a younger generation of evangelical scholars has challenged the dispensational stance, and as Pentecostals become more educated and widely read, they too are being given the courage and tools to challenge ‘the eschatological shibboleths of [their] forefathers’.<sup>24</sup> Glass concludes by challenging Pentecostals to develop an

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<sup>22</sup> Glass, ‘Eschatology’, p. 135.

<sup>23</sup> Glass, ‘Eschatology’, p. 139.

<sup>24</sup> Glass, ‘Eschatology’, p. 144.

eschatology that is faithful to current biblical scholarship as well as to the historical and theological ethos of the Pentecostal movement.<sup>25</sup>

*W. Ma.* Wonsuk Ma explores the development of Pentecostal eschatology from an Asian perspective.<sup>26</sup> Ma's investigation has four aspects. First, he examines the impact of eschatology on early Pentecostal theology, concluding that eschatological urgency led Pentecostals to interpret the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as a sign of the end, led to an other-worldly orientation and fervent missionary impetus, and became subject to revision by default, as 'the message of the Lord's return began to disappear slowly, but steadily, from Pentecostal pulpits'.<sup>27</sup> Second, Ma investigates in what form Pentecostal eschatology was transmitted to Asians, noting that the greatest impact was made in the 1960s by missionaries of the second and third generations from North America and Europe. By then, Ma says, Pentecostal eschatological urgency had waned and been replaced with this-worldly concerns such as blessing and church growth, concerns that soon became the central message of the Charismatic movement. Third, Ma examines the lasting impact such a revised eschatology has had upon Asian Pentecostalism, noting both the positive and negative aspects of the attention on 'here and now' that continues to characterize Asian Pentecostal churches today. Fourth, Ma points to areas in which Asian Pentecostals are being challenged to provide sound eschatological engagement, including the predisposition of Asian worshipers to have a utilitarian approach to spiritual power, the neglect of foreign missions while focusing on local church growth, and a tendency toward triumphalistic attitudes concerning human suffering. In conclusion, Ma encourages the development of a 'pilgrim identity' among Pentecostal Christians where 'miracles and healings can be interpreted, not as the manifestation of the "Kingdom now," but as the sign of the token "invasion" of the kingdom of God

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<sup>25</sup> Glass, 'Eschatology', p. 145, suggests that the theology of someone like G.E. Ladd would serve as a possible model for Pentecostals to emphasize both the present activity of the Spirit as well as the hope for a future millennial reign of Christ. This balance is necessary to avoid allowing eschatology to override other important components in a Pentecostal worldview (i.e. the death and resurrection of Christ and the coming of the Holy Spirit).

<sup>26</sup> W. Ma, 'Pentecostal Eschatology: What Happened When the Wave Hit the West End of the Ocean', in H.D. Hunter and C.M. Robeck, Jr (eds.), *The Azusa Street Revival and Its Legacy* (Cleveland, TN: Pathway Press, 2006), pp. 227-42. Ma notes that the reader should 'keep in mind the complexity and diversity of Asian countries in their history, society, culture, religion, economy and political systems' (p. 229).

<sup>27</sup> Ma, 'Pentecostal Eschatology', p. 232.

that was inaugurated by Christ and in the anticipation of its fulfillment in the unknown near future'.<sup>28</sup>

**K.B. Deel.** In a Master's thesis that examines the continuing influence of classical dispensationalism within Pentecostalism, Keith B. Deel seeks to discover the extent to which ministers within the Church of God (Cleveland, TN) have accepted dispensational eschatology.<sup>29</sup> After presenting an historical overview of the development and spread of classical dispensationalism, Deel sketches a brief history of the denomination, noting especially the previous religious traditions from which the early leaders came. Deel concludes that F.J. Lee had the widest influence in establishing dispensational eschatology within the Church of God.

Next, Deel presents the results of a survey randomly distributed to one hundred Church of God ministers in the state of Virginia in order to determine to what extent they held to a dispensational viewpoint. The survey indicates that a conflict exists between the view of ecclesiology commonly held in the Church of God and its dispensational eschatology, which is grounded in a very different ecclesiology. The commonly held belief in the present operation of spiritual gifts also stands in disagreement with the same principles of interpretation that resulted in the teaching of a pre-tribulation rapture. In conclusion, Deel calls for an honest evaluation of these conflictive teachings within the Church of God.

**D.J. Wilson.** In the 1988 *DPCM* article on eschatology, D.J. Wilson proposes that classical dispensationalism has become the view that has dominated Pentecostalism.<sup>30</sup> He characterizes Pentecostal eschatology as premillennial, dispensational, pre-tribulational, and antinomian. According to Wilson, adopting this particular stance led Pentecostals to support modern Zionism and to join fundamentalism in applauding the establishment of the nation of Israel, consistently siding with the Jews in the ongoing Jewish-Arab conflicts. The expectation of 'the Battle of Armageddon' and the identification of Russia with 'Gog and Magog' in Ezekiel 38–39 has also led to a history of anti-Russian

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<sup>28</sup> Ma, 'Pentecostal Eschatology', p. 241.

<sup>29</sup> K.B. Deel, 'Has Dispensationalism Affected the Church of God (Cleveland): An Historical Inquiry' (MA thesis; Regent University, 1992).

<sup>30</sup> D.J. Wilson, 'Pentecostal Perspectives on Eschatology', *NIDPCM*, pp. 601-605. Cf. F.L. Arrington, 'Dispensationalism', *NIDPCM*, p. 585, who believes that 'in recent years there has been less dependency among Pentecostal scholars on the dispensational system'.

sentiments among Pentecostals. Similarly, each of a series of international alliances involving European nations has been interpreted as ‘the revived Roman Empire’, serving as harbingers of Armageddon. Wilson concludes that an imminent sense of impending doom for the world and the hope for Christ’s return have motivated Pentecostals to massive evangelistic efforts, focusing on spiritual transformation instead of social change.

*A. Anderson.* Allan Anderson in *An Introduction to Pentecostalism* offers a brief overview of Pentecostal eschatology.<sup>31</sup> Anderson helpfully summarizes several key points. First, he notes that early Pentecostal eschatology was premillennial and fueled the urgency of mission and evangelism. Most early Pentecostals believed that their missionary efforts would hasten the coming of Jesus in fulfillment of Mt. 23.14. Even the restored gifts of the Spirit were signs of ‘the last days’. Second, early Pentecostal eschatology employed the futurist framework of dispensationalism propagated by J.N. Darby, and made popular by the *Scofield Reference Bible*, even though some elements of dispensationalism were in tension with Pentecostal practice. According to Anderson, the *initial* significance of this teaching for Pentecostals was that the world must be evangelized quickly. Only later, after a period of institutionalization, did Pentecostals develop a detailed premillennial eschatology to explain in a more theologically intentional way the imminence of Christ’s return. Anderson notes that millennial zeal is most active today among Majority World Pentecostals who do not share the upward mobility of North Americans. Furthermore, the stress on imminence of the end has resulted in a lack of ongoing social concerns among most Pentecostals. Third, Anderson notes that the Pentecostal emphasis on the presence of the Spirit among believers, resulting in a kind of ‘apocalyptic existence’, tends toward a partially realized eschatology. The tension between the ‘already’ and the ‘not yet’ is somewhat blurred. This present coming of the Kingdom is what makes Pentecostalism so appealing to the poor, the oppressed, and the dispossessed of the world.

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<sup>31</sup> A. Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 217-20.

**K. Warrington.** In his recent primer on the current state of Pentecostal theology, Keith Warrington outlines what he believes to be the major elements of Pentecostal eschatology.<sup>32</sup> Warrington accepts the premise that ‘during the earliest years of Pentecostalism, its adherents adopted the eschatological vision of Fundamentalism or Dispensationalism’.<sup>33</sup> Although premillennialism still dominates the theological landscape, some elements of postmillennial triumphalism associated with the optimism derived from the massive, global spread of the movement may be detected. Warrington also notes that ‘a significant minority of Pentecostals prefer an amillennial perspective’.<sup>34</sup>

Drawing from several Pentecostal authors, Warrington presents as the majority view a script of future events which follow the classical dispensational perspective. Significantly, however, he notes that ‘clear unanimity’ does not exist and that some are calling for a re-evaluation of Pentecostal eschatology. Pentecostal views of heaven and hell, according to Warrington, are based on literalistic interpretations of Scripture, and he surmises that Pentecostals need to adopt appropriate hermeneutical methods to interpret such apocalyptic writings. He notes that the position toward the nation of Israel held by most Pentecostals has been informed by classical dispensationalism, but that there is a shift toward viewing the Church as the new Israel, so that Israel no longer holds ‘a special place with God in comparison with the other nations’.<sup>35</sup>

Warrington concludes his study by offering ‘some ways forward’, including (1) a rediscovery of the ‘original eschatological fervor that characterized much of the dynamic of early Pentecostalism’,<sup>36</sup> (2) clear, biblical exegesis of passages that deal directly with the return of Jesus, (3) the move away from timetables of future events toward the theological explication of eschatological issues, resulting in relevant approaches to the environment and missions, (4) a greater openness to reflect on the validity of other eschatological options, and (5) a focus on articulating a general eschatological framework that would bring unity to the movement.

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<sup>32</sup> K. Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter* (London: T&T Clark, 2008). Cf. esp. pp. 309-23.

<sup>33</sup> Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, p. 309.

<sup>34</sup> Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, p. 311.

<sup>35</sup> Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, p. 321.

<sup>36</sup> Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, p. 322.

### **III. Biblical Contributions to Eschatology by Pentecostal Scholars**

A primary component of eschatological thought among Pentecostals derives from the study of particular biblical texts. The following pieces are arranged according to the canonical order of the texts under examination.

***P.C. Patten.*** The relationship of parable and ‘secret’ in the Gospel of Mark in the light of Jewish apocalyptic literature is explored by Priscilla Patten in a PhD dissertation submitted to Drew University in 1976.<sup>37</sup> After examining the function of parables in select apocalyptic writings, Patten concludes that parables were used to convey divine truths or mysteries, but retained an enigmatic quality, necessitating an inspired word of interpretation to a select group for the meaning to be understood. In comparison, parables in the Gospel of Mark function in a similar way. Parables are used by Jesus to teach the crowds, but only the disciples are given the meaning, i.e. the ‘mystery of the kingdom’. This unfolding of the mystery is comprised of two categories: the Passion predictions (Mk 8.31-32, 9.31, 10.33-34) and the apocalyptic chapter, Mark 13. As the Passion predictions revealed that the rejection and vindication of the Son of Man would take place according to the divine plan, so the period of persecution and tribulation predicted in Mark 13 would reveal a similar divine purpose. The sequence of signs in Mark 13, paralleled in apocalyptic writings, was given to signal the approaching end and the coming of the Son of Man. But only those to whom they were revealed would recognize them. Thus, Mark’s placement of ch. 13 after the Passion predictions spoke a message of encouragement to Mark’s community which was undergoing a period of persecution. Just as Jesus was vindicated after suffering tribulation in fulfillment of the divine plan, so also the followers of Jesus would be vindicated after a period of persecution and tribulation.

***F.L. Arrington.*** In a PhD dissertation published in 1977, French Arrington examines the eschatology of First Corinthians in the light of late Jewish apocalyptic, with a particular emphasis on the apocalyptic scheme of the two-

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<sup>37</sup> P.C. Patten, ‘Parable and Secret in the Gospel of Mark in Light of Select Apocalyptic Literature’ (PhD dissertation; Drew University, 1976). Particular aspects of her study are highlighted in P. Patten, ‘The Form and Function of Parable in Select Apocalyptic Literature and their Significance for Parables in the Gospel of Mark’, *NTS* 29 (1983), pp. 246-58.

aeons.<sup>38</sup> He points to a scholarly consensus that Paul's correspondence with the Corinthian church arose out of his concern that the Corinthian believers viewed the future consummation as having already taken place. The problems dealt with in the correspondence reflect this underlying error. Thus, Paul not only addressed the symptomatic issues, but the fundamental error as well. Paul utilized the apocalyptic motif of the two-ages but modified it by claiming that the coming age has begun with Christ's resurrection, but it will not be completely realized until Christ's *parousia*. Arrington notes particularly that Paul understood the present activity of the Holy Spirit to be the primary evidence that the new age has already begun, while also serving as a guarantee that future fullness awaits. Furthermore, for Paul, Christ's death and resurrection constituted a victory over the demonic powers of the evil age, yet the believer must still contend against them until the last enemy is defeated at the *parousia*. Thus, the life of the believer is characterized by the wisdom and power of God revealed in the cross, as opposed to the wisdom of the world that is passing away. What distinguishes the ages, according to Paul, was not as much a *time* difference, as a *moral and spiritual* difference. The characteristic mark of the Christian is not temporal spiritual gifts as the Corinthian enthusiasts imagined, but love, an eschatological quality the Corinthian believers lacked.

According to Arrington, the *Urzeit-Endzeit* motif is reflected in Paul's use of Adam-Christ typology. This cosmic orientation involves a restoration of the original unity of humankind and creation. Arrington notes, 'The new creation begins with the resurrection of Christ which includes the restoration of all things to their primeval integrity and even to a higher state.'<sup>39</sup> With regard to the apocalyptic theme of final judgment, Arrington points to Paul's connection of judgment with the sacraments and to the *parousia* of Christ, which Paul equated with the apocalyptic 'day of the Lord'. At the *parousia*, God will reveal his eschatological victory over every enemy, even death, resulting in the resurrection and transformation of believers.

Arrington concludes that Paul's modification of Jewish apocalyptic has several implications for Christian eschatology. First, because the Holy Spirit is

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<sup>38</sup> F.L. Arrington, *Paul's Aeon Theology in I Corinthians* (Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1977).

<sup>39</sup> Arrington, *Paul's Aeon Theology*, p. 162.

the primary sign that the new age has already begun, Christian hope is based on God's redemptive activity both in the present and the future, and not on the knowledge that the present world is approaching the end. Second, such hope nullifies apocalyptic pessimism that does not expect God's intervention until the end. Rather, the divine plan for history is ordered under the two epochs of Adam and Christ. Christ's victory has begun a reversal of the old epoch. Arrington states, 'Paul offers no sketch of epochs nor an apocalyptic timetable. This stands in contrast to some elaborate schemes that assumed that the end could be determined.'<sup>40</sup> Third, because the two ages overlap, judgment and vindication has begun in the cross of Christ, and no speculations about the future turn of events are given. Finally, the conditions of the new age that the people of God already experience will be fully actualized throughout the entire cosmos at the *parousia* of Christ.

**C.L. Holman.** In a PhD thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham in 1982 and subsequently revised and published in 1996, Charles L. Holman investigates the origins of Christian apocalyptic expectation.<sup>41</sup> His intent is to examine the theological foundations of biblical expectation and relate his findings to the life of the Church today. The monograph is divided into three parts. In Part 1, Holman explores the emergence and development of expectation in the OT. He traces its grounding in patriarchal covenant promises, its expansion to a 'Golden Age' of hope in the Davidic covenant, its specific shaping toward national restoration and spiritual renewal in the eighth-century BCE prophets, and its movement toward apocalyptic in the exilic and post-exilic prophets. Holman concludes that, though fulfillment of expectation is more or less imminent in the exilic and post-exilic oracles, delay of fulfillment becomes an issue of increasing importance in the post-exilic period.

In Part 2 Holman examines the themes of expectation and delay in Jewish apocalypticism. He begins by noting that apocalyptic beliefs and ideas may appear in literature that is not strictly part of the apocalyptic genre. Especially important for his thesis is the appearance of a suprahistorical transcendental

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<sup>40</sup> Arrington, *Paul's Aeon Theology*, p. 176.

<sup>41</sup> C.L. Holman, *Till Jesus Comes: Origins of Christian Apocalyptic Expectation* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996) is a revision of his thesis, 'Eschatological Delay in Jewish and Early Christian Apocalyptic Literature' (PhD thesis; University of Nottingham, 1982).

perspective found in apocalyptic eschatology. A cluster of motifs (end-time woes, an anti-god figure, apostasy, persecution) surrounding the concept of two-ages is also central to apocalyptic thought. The overlap of various themes in both prophetic and apocalyptic literature leads Holman to conclude that the OT prophetic tradition is the probable origin of apocalyptic ideas. After examining two early Jewish apocalypses (Chapter 4)<sup>42</sup> and apocalyptic themes in other early Jewish writings (Chapter 5),<sup>43</sup> Holman reaches several conclusions (Chapter 6). First, the passing generations saw a continual renewal and adaptation of prophetic hope, with Daniel providing much of the content for subsequent thinking. Second, the variety of ways that Daniel's primary themes were updated for new generations points to different schools of thought, some emphasizing God's sovereign intervention (complete with a timetable) and others featuring the 'contingency factor' of Israel's repentance. Holman notes that the seventy heptads of Daniel 9 is a reinterpretation of Jeremiah's seventy-year prophecy. As evidenced by a continual return to Daniel in other apocalyptic works, Daniel remains prominent even into the first century CE. In the final section of Part 2 (Chapter 7), Holman examines later Jewish apocalypses (after 70 CE).<sup>44</sup> From his analysis, he concludes that the problem of delay becomes even more acute at this point, and is countered with appeals to God's sovereignty and with the theme of an imminent end. In these writings the messianic woes often contribute to the delay, yet the godly are protected from them.

Part 3 (Chapters 8-10) includes Holman's comments on NT apocalyptic writings, taken in chronological order. Though NT eschatology is christologically focused, Holman finds that the tension between delay and imminence continues to play a major role in how each writer accommodates the needs of his audience. In 2 Thessalonians 2, Paul teaches a delay of the *parousia* by appealing to the necessity of a prior time of apostasy and the arrival of a man of lawlessness, both ideas well established in Jewish tradition. The 'Synoptic Apocalypse' (Mark 13; Matthew 24-25; Lk. 21.5-36) also contains earlier Jewish apocalyptic themes and presents the imminence-delay tension in a progression (from Mark to Matthew to

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<sup>42</sup> Here Holman examines Daniel 7-12 and the two apocalypses of 1 Enoch (the Animal Apocalypse and the Apocalypse of Weeks).

<sup>43</sup> Holman includes Jubilees, Sibylline Oracles (Book 3), Psalms of Solomon, various writings found at Qumran, and the Testament of Moses in this group.

<sup>44</sup> These include 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and the Apocalypse of Abraham.

Luke) that reflects an increasing sense of delay. The book of Revelation is permeated by an ‘atmosphere of expectancy’, yet delay is clearly portrayed, especially in the martyrdom motif of ch. 6, which is extended in the parenthetical ‘interruptions’ of 7.1-17 and 11.1-13. Holman also notes that eschatological tension is evident in the Apocalypse between the final coming of Jesus in the *parousia* and the more localized and conditional ‘comings’ of Jesus mentioned in the letters to the seven churches.

Finally, in Part 4 Holman offers a review and conclusions, with implications for contemporary Christian praxis. He notes that a progression of eschatological hope is evident ‘from a focus on: 1) Israel, to 2) a redeemed Israel and the nations, to 3) what may be called a new Israel that *includes* the redeemed of the nations (e.g., Rev. 7:9-12; cf. Gal. 3:28f.)’ (emphasis in original).<sup>45</sup> After noting the similarities and differences between Jewish and early Christian apocalyptic, Holman proposes that the NT distinctive of a realized eschatology best explains the ‘more real and urgent expectation’ that characterizes the NT texts as well as the positive role that eschatological delay assumed in early Christianity. Holman concludes that the indefiniteness that characterizes the delay motif in biblical expectation should lead contemporary believers to retain the hope of Jesus’ *parousia*, allowing ‘the mystery of God’s sovereignty to have the final say’.<sup>46</sup> Biblical reinterpretation of earlier texts in new historical contexts leads to the hermeneutical implication that we should not press culturally conditioned content into our expectations of future fulfillment. Finally, Holman urges believers today to model the future age now in their ethics and spiritual giftedness, especially in relation to the mission of the Church.

**G.D. Fee.** In what has been described as ‘the theological crown of a distinguished exegetical career’, Gordon Fee offers a comprehensive study of the Holy Spirit in the letters of Paul.<sup>47</sup> Fee’s work is divided into two major parts: an extensive exegetical analysis of key Pauline texts, and a theological synthesis. He contends that Paul’s understanding of the Holy Spirit cannot be separated from the complex of other themes that together make up Paul’s theology.

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<sup>45</sup> Holman, *Till Jesus Comes*, p. 153.

<sup>46</sup> Holman, *Till Jesus Comes*, p. 161.

<sup>47</sup> G.D. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994).

According to Fee, eschatology is the essential framework within which all of the major themes of Paul are properly to be understood. Thus, Part 2 opens with a chapter entitled ‘The Spirit as Eschatological Fulfillment’.<sup>48</sup> In place of the Jewish understanding of a totally future eschatology, Paul instructed the early church that the future has already been set in motion by the death and resurrection of Jesus, but would not arrive in its totality until Jesus’ second coming. Thus, all of Christian existence is lived out in the tension of the ‘already’ and ‘not yet’. The Spirit may be called ‘the central element in this altered perspective’, because, as the hallmark of the future messianic age in Jewish expectation, the activity of the Spirit in the early church constituted both the *evidence* that the future had begun and the *guarantee* that it would be consummated.

Fee maintains that a major aspect of Paul’s understanding of the Spirit as fulfilled promise is the inclusion of the Gentiles into the people of God. He contends that the activity of the Spirit among Jews and Gentiles also marks the coming of the new covenant, by which also the Torah as both ‘identity marker’ and ‘religious instructor’ is replaced. This does not deny, however, continuity between Spirit and Torah in that the Spirit enables people ‘to live in such a way as to express the intent of Torah in the first place’.<sup>49</sup>

The life of the Spirit within the eschatological tension of the ‘already’ and ‘not yet’ is expressed in Paul, according to Fee, by his use of the contrasting phrases, living ‘according to the flesh’, and living ‘according to the Spirit’ (Gal. 5.13-6.10; Rom. 8.3-17; Phil. 3.3). These are essentially eschatological phrases that represent respectively the present age that is passing away and the new eschatological age set in motion by Christ and the Spirit. Fee contends that Paul navigates between triumphalism on the one hand (over-realized eschatology) and a constant struggle between flesh and Spirit on the other (under-realized eschatology). Paul views the Spirit as God’s empowering presence in the midst of natural human weakness.

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<sup>48</sup> Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, pp. 803-26.

<sup>49</sup> Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, p. 816.

**H. Jurgensen.** Hubert Jurgensen examines 1 Thess. 4.13–5.11 in an article that reflects his extensive doctoral research on the text.<sup>50</sup> He seeks to interpret the text through ‘careful exegesis, which is free from any biases ... as “historian of the text”’.<sup>51</sup> In each of two pericopes (4.13-18 and 5.1-11), Jurgensen focuses upon grammar and philology, as well as the rhetorics of the text. He then turns to the hermeneutics and implications of each pericope.

According to Jurgensen, the purpose of Paul’s instruction in 4.13-18 is to bring consolation to the believers in Thessalonica concerning the participation of deceased Christians in the anticipated reunion with Christ. Paul addressed this issue by appealing to the commonly held belief in the death and resurrection of Christ (v. 14) and a prophetic ‘word of the Lord’ (vv. 15-17a), assuring them that their deceased loved ones will indeed participate in the coming of the Lord. The focus was not on the resurrection per se, but on ‘their being “taken up” (rapture) to meet the Lord...’<sup>52</sup> Noting its common features with the theophanies and assumptions recorded in the OT, Jurgensen reads the account of the *parousia* given here against the background of Jewish apocalypticism, and not in parallel with the Hellenistic ceremony of official visits. In conclusion, Jurgensen calls the Church back to ‘the fruitful tension between the “already” and the “not yet” experienced by primitive Christianity’.<sup>53</sup> He encourages Pentecostalism to renew its apocalyptic hope inherent in its spirituality and to foster an ‘eschatology of waiting’.

Jurgensen locates the second pericope, 1 Thess. 5.1-11, within the context of eschatological overexcitement that had overtaken the Thessalonian Christians. In addressing those in the church who sought to determine the precise date of the *parousia*, Paul emphasized the unpredictability of the final events. Indeed, assumptions of that sort can lead to a false sense of security, and believers can be caught spiritually asleep, like the unbelievers whom God has appointed to suffer divine wrath. Rather, believers should remain alert and expectant, confident in their hope of salvation. Jurgensen concludes that although several of Paul’s

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<sup>50</sup> H. Jurgensen, ‘Awaiting the Return of Christ: A Re-examination of 1 Thessalonians 4.13–5.11 from a Pentecostal Perspective’, *JPT* 4 (1994) pp. 81-113. Cf. also H. Jurgensen, ‘Saint Paul et la parousia: 1 Thessaloniens 4.13–5.11 dans l’exégèse moderne et contemporaine’ (DTh thesis; Université des Sciences Humaines de Strasbourg, 1992).

<sup>51</sup> Jurgensen, ‘Awaiting the Return of Christ’, p. 84.

<sup>52</sup> Jurgensen, ‘Awaiting the Return of Christ’, p. 89.

<sup>53</sup> Jurgensen, ‘Awaiting the Return of Christ’, p. 93.

themes shared common features with apocalyptic, his primary source of thought was early Christian preaching. Christians are not called to engage in eschatological speculation, but to conform their lives to the ethical values of faith, hope, and love, anticipating the day of the Lord with vigilant watchfulness.

**R.H. Gause.** A commentary on the book of Revelation written in 1983 by R. Hollis Gause moves the reader away from a purely dispensational perspective.<sup>54</sup> In the introduction Gause distinguishes between the interpretive models of dispensational theology and progressive revelation. His choice of the latter as the best model is based upon a number of considerations. First, the unchangeableness of God and the singularity of his Word unify law and gospel over the two testaments of the Bible. Second, the process of redemption understood as the covenant of grace is unified throughout Scripture. All subordinate covenants described in Scripture simply explicate this one covenant of grace. This results in a unified understanding of the concepts of Israel, the Church, and the kingdom of God. Thus, Gause proceeds in his commentary on the basis of a progressive unfolding of the history of salvation. The book of Revelation 'is the culmination of what God has been doing in all ages'.<sup>55</sup> In terms of sequence of fulfillment, after briefly describing the preterist, futurist, historicist, and idealist views, Gause proposes that there may be elements of truth in each one but that certainly a combination of the so-called preterist and futurist views would apply to the book.

The commentary that Gause offers, framed around nine chapters that correspond to the thematic progression of the book of Revelation, reflects this mixture of interpretive views. On the one hand, Gause follows the standard dispensational script of future events, including the rapture, tribulation, literal Antichrist, two literal witnesses, the battle of Armageddon, a thousand-year reign of Christ on the earth, final judgment, and a new heaven and new earth. On the other hand, Gause gives attention to some of the more symbolic characteristics of the book, such as the theological meaning of God's sovereignty and judgments,<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> R.H. Gause, *Revelation: God's Stamp of Sovereignty on History* (Cleveland, TN: Pathway Press, 1983).

<sup>55</sup> Gause, *Revelation*, p. 21.

<sup>56</sup> For example, Rev. 6.12-17 is viewed not in literal terms, but as the collapse of all that this world order considers secure. At the same time, the depiction of judgments in Revelation 8-11 and 16 are considered to be literal and supernatural acts of God.

the symbolic nature of the forty-two months that the beast reigns,<sup>57</sup> the symbolic character of the 144,000 thousand and the measuring of the temple,<sup>58</sup> and the symbolic meaning of the marriage supper of the Lamb which depicts final salvation in the new creation. Gause concludes that the announcement, 'Behold, I come quickly', as the anthem of the book, 'contains the entire eschatology of the Revelation'.<sup>59</sup>

**F. Martin.** Francis Martin contributed the article, 'Book of the Apocalypse', to the *DPCM* published in 1988.<sup>60</sup> In its purpose of providing correction and encouragement, Martin notes that the Apocalypse is not different from many other NT letters. Its uniqueness lies in its prophetic message that all of history is subject to God. Martin highlights three elements in regard to the pneumatology of the book. First, John's appeal to the Spirit as the source of the revelation is evident in his fourfold use of the phrase 'in the Spirit' (Rev. 1.10; 4.2; 17.3; 21.10). Second, the connection of the witness of Jesus with the 'Spirit of prophecy' (Rev. 19.10) means that Jesus' death and resurrection and its proclamation takes on prophetic authority. Third, the Spirit 'establishes the church in its unique identity as the Bride and witness of Jesus'.<sup>61</sup> In regard to the millennium (Rev. 20.1-10), Martin focuses upon its prophetic message of hope for 'the disinherited'. In sum, the Apocalypse is 'prophetic teaching by which we may measure our own situation with an eschatological perspective'.<sup>62</sup>

**S.M. Horton.** Stanley M. Horton produced a commentary on the book of Revelation in 1991.<sup>63</sup> This work begins with a brief introduction in which Horton explains his preference for a futurist interpretation of the book. His view corresponds closely with the standard dispensational scheme, according to which most of the content of the book of Revelation after ch. 3 is to be fulfilled in the

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<sup>57</sup> No appeal is made to fit a seven-year period into the book of Revelation.

<sup>58</sup> For Gause, the 144,000 represent, not a literal number of Jews, but the completion of God's covenant with Israel. The measuring of the temple (Rev. 11.1-2) represents their protection during the tribulation period. A rebuilt Jewish temple is not considered.

<sup>59</sup> Gause, *Revelation*, p. 279.

<sup>60</sup> F. Martin, 'Book of the Apocalypse', *DPCM*, pp. 11-13.

<sup>61</sup> Martin, 'Book of the Apocalypse', p. 13.

<sup>62</sup> Martin, 'Book of the Apocalypse', p. 13.

<sup>63</sup> S.M. Horton, *The Ultimate Victory: An Exposition of the Book of Revelation* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1991).

future, during a seven-year period of great tribulation. Further, a premillennial view of Christ's second coming is promoted because of 'its emphasis on as literal an interpretation as the context allows'.<sup>64</sup> Thus for Horton, the framework of future events depicted in the book of Revelation is as follows: the rapture of the Church to attend the marriage supper, a seven-year period of tribulation and rule of the Antichrist, Christ's return to the earth and the battle of Armageddon, a literal thousand-year reign of Christ on the earth, the white throne judgment, and the new heaven and new earth.

Horton's method of taking each passage as literally as possible leads him to remain inconclusive about several texts. These include the identity of the two witnesses (11.3-4), the meaning of the mark of the beast (13.16-18), and the identity of the group of 144,000 on Mount Zion (14.1). Furthermore, various texts that do not fit within a literal chronological order of end-time events are relegated to encouragement or warning for John's first readers (14.12-14; 18.4-5) or as previews of events in the more remote future (14.1-5, the millennium; 14.14-16, the *parousia*).

Another interpretive principle that guides Horton's interpretation is that Israel is kept distinct from the Church, a hallmark of classical dispensationalism. Horton bases his view upon a reading of Dan. 7.24-27, which is understood to predict the coming of a seven-year period in which God will deal with the nation of Israel immediately following the Church Age.<sup>65</sup> Thus, the 144,000 of Rev. 7.4-8 are understood as believing Jews, since, Horton argues, 'the church is never called sons of Israel, nor is it ever divided into tribes'.<sup>66</sup> Furthermore, during the millennium, the nation of Israel will be restored to all the land promised to Abraham, and will be ruled by the twelve apostles of the Church.<sup>67</sup> Horton appeals to several OT Scriptures to describe the state of the earth during the millennium (Isa. 11.6-9; 41.19-20; 51.3; 54.11-14; 58.8; Ezek. 36.33-38; 37.1-28; Zech. 9.16).

Horton's concluding comments include several admonitions to be ready to meet Christ in the rapture. He notes that the Church Age is about to close, and

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<sup>64</sup> Horton, *The Ultimate Victory*, p. 21.

<sup>65</sup> Horton, *The Ultimate Victory*, pp. 84, 95.

<sup>66</sup> Horton, *The Ultimate Victory*, p. 112.

<sup>67</sup> Horton, *The Ultimate Victory*, pp. 294-96.

that there will not be another dispensation between this age and the millennium.<sup>68</sup> He also mentions that the warning in Rev. 22.19 not to ‘take away’ anything from this book refers those who want to ‘spiritualize’ the prophecies of Revelation.

**R.C. Waddell.** In a ground-breaking study, Robby Waddell examines the role of the Spirit in the book of Revelation.<sup>69</sup> Though not specifically dealing with eschatological matters, Waddell’s treatment of the Apocalypse represents an alternative to the majority of Pentecostal interpreters, and thus implies an alternative eschatology. Waddell employs the literary theory of intertextuality as his primary methodology, seeking to engage the text (and intertexts) of Rev. 11.1-13 with the theological presuppositions and praxis of Pentecostalism. The argument begins (Chapter 1) with a survey of modern interpretations of the role of the Spirit in the Apocalypse. The lack of a consensus on this topic, along with the utilization of a variety of methodologies to account for the OT allusions in the text of Revelation, leads Waddell to identify the need to acknowledge his own interpretive context: postmodernism and Pentecostalism. Next (Chapter 2), Waddell examines the usefulness of intertextuality as a postmodern interpretive method, even for those (conservative interpreters) who do not share the ideological context of its originators. The application of intertextuality by previous scholars on the Apocalypse reveals its compatibility with the value that Pentecostalism places upon community participation and lived experience. Thus, after a brief description of the origins and theological ethos of Pentecostalism, Waddell moves toward the application of a ‘Pentecostal hermeneutic’ to the book of Revelation (Chapter 3). Here, he highlights aspects of the Apocalypse that find particular resonance within a Pentecostal ethos: the need for revelatory experience, the desire to keep (i.e. obey) the words of prophecy, the communal experience of being ‘in the Spirit’, and the fear of the Lord as an act of worship.

Finally, these insights are brought to bear upon Rev. 11.1-13 in order to offer an interpretation of the role of the Spirit in the Apocalypse (Chapter 4). An examination of the structure of the book reveals that 11.1-13 stands at the center both from a literary, and, Waddell suggests, a theological standpoint. Central to

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<sup>68</sup> Horton, *The Ultimate Victory*, p. 335.

<sup>69</sup> R.C. Waddell, *The Spirit of the Book of Revelation* (JPTSup, 30; Blandford Forum: Deo Publishing, 2006). This monograph is a revision of Waddell’s PhD thesis at the University of Sheffield.

his thesis is Waddell's identification of the little scroll that John eats (Rev. 10.2, 9-10) with the seven-sealed scroll that is opened by the Lamb (Rev. 5.1, 9), making 11.1-13 the predominant prophecy of the entire book. Unique to Waddell's treatment of this passage is his proposal that the mighty angel that delivers the scroll to John (Rev. 10.1) is a representation of the Spirit. The prophecy itself concerns the measuring of the temple and the ministry of the two witnesses. The intertextual echoes of Daniel 7 and (especially) Zechariah 4 support Waddell's conclusion that the prophecy is a call to the Church to be anointed and empowered by the Spirit to be witnesses of Jesus to the world in the midst of opposition. Thus, 'the role of the Spirit in the Apocalypse is to inspire the prophetic witness of a pneumatic church'.<sup>70</sup> The importance of this study for eschatology lies in its proposal for an ecclesiology (in relation to the role of the Spirit) that avoids the end-time sequence of events required by the ecclesiology of classical dispensationalism.

**R. Skaggs and P. Benham.** The Pentecostal Commentary Series volume on the book of Revelation was published in 2009.<sup>71</sup> Written by twin sisters, Rebecca Skaggs and Priscilla Benham, this commentary approaches the text of Revelation with an intentional Pentecostal perspective and seeks to incorporate such interpretive practices as reflective prayer, communal study and dialogue, and a dialogical presentation that includes 'periodic opportunities for reflection upon and personal response to the biblical text'.<sup>72</sup> As such, the commentary is infused with present day applications of the text of Revelation, focused on the individual reader's spiritual life. While recognizing the highly symbolic nature of much of the text, the authors take a 'modified historical-grammatical approach' and privilege a literal interpretation where possible. Although a futurist reading of Revelation 4–22 is a major presupposition of Skaggs and Benham, yielding a script of future events that reflects a dependence upon dispensational eschatology,

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<sup>70</sup> Waddell, *The Spirit of the Book of Revelation*, p. 189.

<sup>71</sup> R. Skaggs and P. Benham, *Revelation* (Pentecostal Commentary Series; Blandford Forum: Deo Publishing, 2009). Rather than being an entirely collaborative effort, this commentary was begun by Benham, who wrote the introduction and commentary through Revelation 13 before her death in 2000. Skaggs then completed the commentary and finalized the editing of Benham's contribution.

<sup>72</sup> Skaggs and Benham, *Revelation*, p. ix.

they also ‘attempt to determine the relevance of the book for contemporary church history’.<sup>73</sup>

Significantly, Skaggs and Benham believe that the statement in Rev. 19.10 that ‘the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy’ unites and directs all biblical prophecy towards the coming of God’s kingdom. They contend that because prophecy involves both a *discernment* of truth from falsehood and the *prediction* of God’s coming kingdom, which in turn demands a faithful *response*, the message of God’s triumph over evil is relevant to all periods of Church history.<sup>74</sup> Thus, while many of their conclusions are compatible with a classical dispensational reading of Revelation, they leave the door open for contemporary application.

**J.C. Thomas.** Portions of a forthcoming commentary on the Apocalypse by John Christopher Thomas have been presented at recent meetings of the Society for Pentecostal Studies, as well as adapted for publication as chapters in four edited volumes.<sup>75</sup> Using narrative and intertextual methodologies, the primary interpretive approach used by Thomas is to elucidate the effect of the book on its first hearers by bringing the text of the Apocalypse into conversation with the entire corpus of the Johannine tradition, as well as relevant OT Scriptures. Such a focus on how the book would be received by its initial audience not only highlights the auditory power of its highly descriptive images and symbols, but also keeps the interpretive spotlight on its canonical and first-century contexts and immediate appropriation as a word of prophecy. Thus, while no particular eschatological model is promoted by Thomas, his interpretation incorporates Pentecostal hermeneutical sensibilities. The results invite the readers of this commentary into the process of pneumatic discernment in which the first readers

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<sup>73</sup> Skaggs and Benham, *Revelation*, p. 13.

<sup>74</sup> Skaggs and Benham, *Revelation*, pp. 194-96.

<sup>75</sup> J.C. Thomas, ‘The Mystery of the Great Whore – Pneumatic Discernment in Revelation 17’, in P. Althouse and R. Waddell (eds.), *Perspectives in Pentecostal Eschatologies: World Without End* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010), pp. 89-114; ‘The Thousand-Year Reign – Revelation 20.1-10’, in A. Davies and R.P. Pope (eds.), *The Spirit in Society: Perspectives in Pentecostalism in Honour of William K. Kay* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, forthcoming); ‘Toward a Pentecostal Theology of Prophetic Witness: The Testimony of the Apocalypse – Revelation 11.3-14’, in D. Moore (ed.), *Festschrift for Vinson Synan* [working title] (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, forthcoming); and ‘Pneumatic Discernment: The Image of the Beast and His Number – Revelation 13.11-18’, in S.J. Land, R.D. Moore, and J.C. Thomas (eds.), *Passover, Pentecost, and Parousia: Studies in Celebration of the Life and Ministry of R. Hollis Gause* (JPTSup, 35; Blandford Forum: Deo Publishing, 2010), pp. 106-24.

were engaged. For example, the response of John to the vision of the great whore (Rev. 17.6), connected as it is to the worship of the dragon and the beast (Rev. 13.4), generates questions about the nature of the temptation to idolatry, questions that are applicable for the first readers, as well as for all subsequent readers.<sup>76</sup>

Significantly, Thomas engages the text of Rev. 11.3-14 as a contribution toward the development of a Pentecostal theology of prophetic witness, suggesting that the ministry of the two witnesses conveys to the hearers a reference to ‘the prophetic, Spirit inspired witness of the church itself’.<sup>77</sup> Rather than reducing the book of Revelation to ‘history written in advance’, the author calls for a theological appropriation of the text. Likewise, Rev. 13.11-18 is seen by Thomas to call the hearers to pneumatic discernment of the beast, the process of which would lead them to realize the seriousness of their commitment to the faithful witness of Jesus, and to gain the wisdom needed in their present and future encounters with a power that claims such cosmic aspirations. Specifically, the text calls for the Church to examine its complicity with commercial and economic systems that may compromise its prophetic witness.<sup>78</sup> Finally, reading the book of Revelation narratively, Thomas views the thousand-year reign in Rev. 20.1-10 as a literal, earthly reign of Christ and his faithful, resurrected followers, that is to be characterized by an emphasis on the close relationship of Christ and his saints, the fulfillment of humanity’s commission to care for the earth, and the abounding desire of God for all nations to repent.<sup>79</sup>

#### **IV. Constructive Contributions to Pentecostal Eschatology**

##### **A. Introduction: G.T. Sheppard’s Critique**

As noted in the overview of works dealing with eschatology in early Pentecostalism and beyond, a primary issue was the degree to which Pentecostals adopted classical dispensationalism as the framework within which to explicate their eschatology. In an important article, Gerald Sheppard contends that ‘an uneasy relationship’ has existed between classical dispensationalism and

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<sup>76</sup> Thomas, ‘The Mystery of the Great Whore’, pp. 100-101.

<sup>77</sup> Thomas, ‘Toward a Pentecostal Theology of Prophetic Witness’, (forthcoming).

<sup>78</sup> Thomas, ‘Pneumatic Discernment: The Image of the Beast and His Number – Revelation 13.11-18’, pp. 113-14, 122-23.

<sup>79</sup> Thomas, ‘The Thousand-Year Reign’, pp. 1, 12-13, 16, 22-23.

Pentecostalism from the beginning.<sup>80</sup> The tension is easily discerned, Sheppard suggests, when one considers that the twin pillars of dispensationalism are (1) a literal interpretation of biblical promises and (2) the strict separation of the Church and Israel, resulting in a view of the Church age as parenthetical. In this view, ecclesiology is primary; eschatology is derivative. Thus, the doctrine of the rapture is determined more from an understanding that the Church is the heavenly people of God who must be removed from the earth so that God can then deal with Israel, his earthly people, during the tribulation. In this view, the OT prophets did not predict anything about the Church, as their prophecies dealt only with God's earthly people, Israel. When Sheppard analyzes the earliest doctrinal statements concerning eschatology among Pentecostal denominations, he notes that the ambiguous language that was used allowed for a variety of specific viewpoints. Moreover, rather than focusing upon the catastrophes facing those left behind, 'for Pentecostals the emphasis on eschatology belonged more naturally to the sense of a final glorious revelation and outpouring of the Spirit in the last days'.<sup>81</sup> It was only in the early 1930s, Sheppard notes, that the Assemblies of God conformed the language of its official statements to that of classical dispensationalism. In addition, major publications by Assemblies of God leaders such as Myer Pearlman (*Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible*, 1937), Ralph M. Riggs (*The Path of Prophecy*, 1937; *Dispensational Studies*, 1948), P.C. Nelson (*Bible Doctrines*, 1948), E.S. Williams (*Systematic Theology*, 1953), and Frank M. Boyd (*Ages and Dispensations*, 1955) reveal an ever increasing acceptance of dispensational eschatology and eventually, in the case of Frank Boyd, its ecclesiology as well. In general, these Pentecostals rejected the strict Israel–Church dichotomy, while (inconsistently) embracing the eschatology of dispensationalism. Sheppard proposes that early Pentecostals assumed that the sense of imminence of the return of Jesus inherent in their spirituality was best preserved by the teaching of a pre-tribulation rapture, resulting in 'an intuitive-contextual defense of a doctrine which was only necessitated by a particular

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<sup>80</sup> G.T. Sheppard, 'Pentecostals and the Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism: The Anatomy of an Uneasy Relationship', *Pneuma* 6.2 (Fall, 1984), pp. 5-33.

<sup>81</sup> Sheppard, 'Pentecostals and the Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism', p. 9.

system for interpreting Scripture',<sup>82</sup> a system in which Pentecostals had nothing invested.

Sheppard focuses this hermeneutical dilemma upon two particular beliefs within Pentecostalism. First, whereas dispensationalists did not believe that the OT prophets predicted anything about the Church, Pentecostals believed that the Church was founded on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) in direct fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel (2.28-32). The renewal of the gift of the Spirit in the early twentieth century, known by Pentecostals as the 'latter rain', extended this OT prophecy into the present time. Second, strict dispensationalists adhered to the cessation of the charismata after the first century. Pentecostals, by contrast, derived their very identity from the belief in the ongoing charismatic activity of the Spirit in the Church.

Sheppard notes that some Pentecostals have attempted to solve this dilemma by moving toward a dispensational ecclesiology, viewing the activity of the Spirit in the Church as only a 'type' of the future fulfillment after the rapture.<sup>83</sup> He concludes that this trend will undermine the most basic doctrines common among Pentecostals, as well as encourage negative sociological and political consequences. Sheppard challenges the Pentecostal movement to avoid the kind of apocalyptic worldview of fundamentalist-dispensationalist groups that encourages 'passive acceptance of evil in the world as a hopeful sign of the last days'. They should opt instead for a prophetic worldview by which they can offer a broad social and cultural critique, a worldview more in keeping with the eschatology and ecclesiology of the black and Hispanic elements of the movement.<sup>84</sup>

In the light of Sheppard's critique, the following review of constructive contributions to Pentecostal eschatology is divided into two groups: those who display a significant dependence upon the presuppositions and conclusions of classical dispensationalism, and those who allow Pentecostal theology and spirituality to shape directly their constructive efforts.

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<sup>82</sup> Sheppard, 'Pentecostals and the Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism', p. 22.

<sup>83</sup> Sheppard, 'Pentecostals and the Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism', p. 25, offers the examples of Frank M. Boyd and J.G. Hall.

<sup>84</sup> Sheppard, 'Pentecostals and the Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism', pp. 32-33, n. 77.

## **B. The Continuing Influence of Classical Dispensationalism**

Several works by contemporary Pentecostals reveal the continuing influence of classical dispensationalism upon their attempts to construct a Pentecostal eschatology.<sup>85</sup> The following works will be examined in chronological order by date of publication.

*W.J. Maybin, I.W. Lewis, and J.C. Smyth.* A compilation of articles written by scholars and leaders in the Elim Pentecostal Church, edited by P.S. Brewster, reveals a dependence upon dispensational categories of thought. The three articles of this volume that deal specifically with eschatology take up the themes of biblical prophecy, the rapture of the Church, and the signs of the times. All three authors agree upon a literal interpretation of Scripture, the strict separation of Israel and the Church, and the sequence of future events proposed by most dispensational schemes. Maybin supports his thesis that biblical 'prophecy is history written in advance' by pointing out the fulfillment of OT messianic, Israeli, and Gentilic prophecies in subsequent biblical passages.<sup>86</sup> Lewis argues for a pre-tribulation rapture and rejects the idea of a partial rapture, according to which only those who have reached Christian perfection or have been baptized in the Holy Spirit will participate.<sup>87</sup> John C. Smyth, drawing upon the dispensational views of L.S. Chafer, F.A. Tatford, and J. Dwight Pentecost, argues that a clear understanding of God's program of events at the end of time is crucial to interpret the signs of the times.<sup>88</sup>

*G.P. Duffield and N.M. Van Cleave.* Guy P. Duffield and Nathaniel M. Van Cleave present a comprehensive statement of doctrine from the perspective of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel.<sup>89</sup> This work treats major

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<sup>85</sup> There are numerous published works by Pentecostals on eschatology that are intended for the popular reader. The present review is limited to those pieces that are written by or for scholars.

<sup>86</sup> W.J. Maybin, 'Bible Prophecy', in P.S. Brewster (ed.), *Pentecostal Doctrine* (n.p.: P.S. Brewster, 1976), pp. 211-25.

<sup>87</sup> I.W. Lewis, 'The Rapture of the Church', in Brewster (ed.), *Pentecostal Doctrine*, pp. 259-71.

<sup>88</sup> J.C. Smyth, 'The Signs of the Times', in Brewster (ed.), *Pentecostal Doctrine*, pp. 381-91.

<sup>89</sup> G.P. Duffield and N.M. Van Cleave, *Foundations of Pentecostal Theology* (Los Angeles: L.I.F.E. Bible College, 1983). For a similar Foursquare perspective in testimonial format, cf. Raymond Cox, 'Eschatology: A Pentecostal Perspective', in *A Reader on Eschatology: Jesus the Coming King* (Los Angeles: International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, 1996). Applying scientific knowledge of earthquakes and meteor showers to the book of Revelation, Foursquare

theological subjects in a systematic format, including those doctrines that are distinctive to the Pentecostal movement (e.g. baptism in the Holy Spirit, healing, spiritual gifts). While the eschatology presented in this volume is decidedly dispensational, even drawing upon a separation of Israel and the Church, the ecclesiology is modified to include the present operation of spiritual gifts. The authors base the present activity of the Holy Spirit in the Church upon the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost as prophesied by Joel.<sup>90</sup> They note that the Church has temporarily displaced rebellious Israel in God's redeeming purpose, but 'when the Church has been completed, God will yet deal with and fulfill His promises to the remnant of national Israel (Rom. 11:16-24; Jer. 11:16, 17)'.<sup>91</sup>

Though the authors do not mention dispensationalism, they draw heavily upon contemporary dispensational authors<sup>92</sup> to construct a sequence of end-time events. These include the rapture of the Church, the tribulation period, a rebuilt Jewish temple, the rise of the Antichrist, the battle of Armageddon, a literal thousand-year reign of Christ, eternal punishment for the wicked and eternal bliss for the righteous.

***E.L. Hill.*** In a work focused upon the relationship of the prophecies of Daniel and the book of Revelation, Elijah L. Hill of the Church of God in Christ combines elements of classical dispensationalism with specific hermeneutical presuppositions that result in a rather fluid interpretation.<sup>93</sup> Hill connects the books of Daniel and Revelation by means of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2.26-45), arguing that the four kingdoms represented by the statue (Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome) appear in Revelation 4–5 as the four living beings. The fifth seal represents the persecution of Christians that began in the Roman

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pastor and founder of King's College and Seminary, Jack Hayford, presents a pastoral message to a popular audience in *E Quake: A New Approach to Understanding the End Time Mysteries of the Book of Revelation* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999).

<sup>90</sup> Duffield and Van Cleave, *Foundations*, p. 426.

<sup>91</sup> Duffield and Van Cleave, *Foundations*, p. 457.

<sup>92</sup> These include Hal Lindsay, Tim LaHaye, Roy Hicks, and Kenneth Wuest.

<sup>93</sup> E.L. Hill, *The Unsealing of the Last Things!* (Kansas City, MO: End Time Prophetic World Explosion Ministries, 1993). Hill is a Pentecostal scholar who writes with a view to engage the laity in the study of eschatology.

period. Thus, the scroll is ‘mankind’s past, present, and future history written in symbols’.<sup>94</sup>

A key interpretive principle employed by Hill is that the book of Revelation is not successive, but repetitive, allowing him to view the beast out of the sea (Rev. 13.1-8) as the Roman Catholic Church in its historical development from 538 CE to the present (also called Babylon in Revelation 17–18), and the harvest of the earth (Rev. 14.14-16) as the rapture of the Church. Hill identifies five accounts of the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 6.14-17; 14.17-20; 16.12-21; 19.17-21; 20.7-10). The event of the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19.6-10) is repeated as the millennial reign with Christ (Rev. 20.4-6). For him, the thousand-year period is not literal, but figurative of ‘God’s time’,<sup>95</sup> a major departure from dispensationalism. The loosing of Satan after the millennium (Rev. 20.6-10) is identified with the earlier deception of the nations by the Antichrist (2 Thess. 2.9-12). Oddly, Hill concludes his remarks with the judgment of the wicked and does not describe the final state of the righteous.

**F.L. Arrington.** French L. Arrington of the Church of God (Cleveland) examines the doctrine of last things in the final two chapters of his three-volume work, *Christian Doctrine: A Pentecostal Perspective*.<sup>96</sup> Arrington assumes the validity of the sequence of end-time events developed by classical dispensationalism but focuses on how these events are integrated into Christology. Thus, his central claim is that the second coming of Christ is the center of NT expectation of the future. The events related to Christ’s second coming will bring an end to the present age and usher in the eternal age, bringing to completion the new creation that was begun with Jesus’ first advent and the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost. Arrington notes that the second coming of Jesus, best described as presence (*parousia*) and revelation (*apocalypsis*), will be accompanied by several signs, many of which have increased dramatically over the past century. He notes that ‘Israel does have a definite place in God’s consummation of all things’,<sup>97</sup> but he does not specify that role. Three purposes are listed for Christ’s second

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<sup>94</sup> E.L. Hill, *The Unsealing of the Last Things!* p. 58.

<sup>95</sup> E.L. Hill, *The Unsealing of the Last Things!* p. 120.

<sup>96</sup> F.L. Arrington, *Christian Doctrine: A Pentecostal Perspective*, III (Cleveland, TN: Pathway, 1994), pp. 221-54.

<sup>97</sup> Arrington, *Christian Doctrine*, III, p. 228.

coming: to reveal his lordship to the world, to gather his people to himself, and to bring judgment to believers and unbelievers.

Arrington defends a pre-tribulation rapture of the Church by appealing to a literal interpretation of 1 Thess. 4.17. 1 Corinthians 15.52 speaks of the transformation that will occur at the rapture, and Lk. 21.36 promises believers that they will escape the tribulation. There will be believers in the world during the tribulation, however, symbolized by the sealing of the 144,000 and the ministry of the two witnesses, neither group being identified further by Arrington. He notes that the NT does not specifically indicate an exact duration of the tribulation. The Antichrist, also called the man of sin (2 Thess. 2.3) and the beast (Rev. 13.1), will lead people astray, exalting himself in the (literal?) temple of God, but will be defeated at the battle of Armageddon by Christ who will return to the earth 'with all his saints' (1 Thess. 3.13). The millennium (a literal thousand years) will be characterized by the righteous rule of Christ on the earth, fulfilling the prophecies which speak of Christ being given the throne of his father David (Lk. 1.32, 33; cf. 2 Sam. 7.16; Ps. 89.20-37; Isa. 11.1-9; Jer. 23.5, 6). Nature will also be restored to a pre-fallen state (Isa. 11.6-8; 35.1-10; 65.16-25). Following the release and defeat of Satan at the end of the millennium, God will resurrect and judge the unsaved, casting them into the lake of fire, a literal place of eternal torment and separation from God. The eternal dwelling place of the saved will be a new heaven and new earth and the New Jerusalem, a literal city that will house the redeemed community.

**R.M. Pruitt.** The eschatology developed by Raymond M. Pruitt of the Church of God of Prophecy is grounded in the distinct roles of Israel and the Church, a hallmark of classical dispensationalism.<sup>98</sup> Pruitt notes that although the Church has taken Israel's place in its mediatorial service, fulfilling what Israel was called to do, it is still a unique entity with a distinct identity and destiny. The Church, having been betrothed to Christ on earth, will be taken to heaven in the rapture to be presented to Christ (at the judgment seat) and to partake of the wedding feast (Rev. 19.7-9).<sup>99</sup> The purpose of the tribulation period, lasting seven years, is to

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<sup>98</sup> R.M. Pruitt, *Fundamentals of the Faith* (Cleveland, TN: White Wing Publishing House, 1995). Cf. esp. pp. 227-61.

<sup>99</sup> Pruitt, *Fundamentals*, pp. 231, 252-53.

discipline and purify Israel in order to bring them back into a covenant relationship with God, and to judge the nations for oppressing Israel and rejecting Christ. According to Pruitt, that Israel will be restored is the clearest fact of prophetic truth.<sup>100</sup> Restored Israel will be prominent in the millennial kingdom and will inherit the promises made to the patriarchs long ago, most notably the division of the land of Palestine among the twelve tribes (Ezek. 48.1-35). The Church will reign with Christ over the Gentile world, glorified saints co-existing with mortal humans in a world marked by peace, prosperity, and longevity. The final state will be everlasting punishment and suffering in body, soul, and spirit for the wicked and eternal bliss for the righteous.

**S.M. Horton.** Stanley M. Horton of the Assemblies of God produced a volume on eschatology in which a modified dispensational approach is taken.<sup>101</sup> Horton introduces this study by explaining the relationship of eschatology to the gospel: the good news includes the promise of final salvation. The prior covenant of the Law is contrasted with the new covenant based on faith in Jesus in which hope for his return is grounded. In turn, this hope motivates toward godly living. Horton notes that Christ's resurrection was foreseen in the OT and, through the Holy Spirit, becomes the guarantee of the bodily resurrection of the believer. It is the presence of the Holy Spirit within that prepares the believer for resurrection or rapture at the coming of Christ, described in 1 Thess. 4.16-18 and 1 Cor. 15.52-54. Horton depicts future events in terms of the standard dispensational script: rapture of the Church, seven-year tribulation period, rebuilt Jewish temple, rise of the Antichrist, literal battle of Armageddon, thousand-year reign of Christ focused on the fulfillment of promises to Israel, eternal torment for the wicked and eternal life for the righteous in the new heaven and new earth.

The various millennial views are described in Chapter 5, largely through a historical review.<sup>102</sup> Adopting a modified or progressive dispensational

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<sup>100</sup> Pruitt, *Fundamentals*, p. 256.

<sup>101</sup> S.M. Horton, *Our Destiny: Biblical Teachings on the Last Things* (Springfield, MO: Logion Press, 1996). This volume is an expansion of his chapter on eschatology, 'The Last Things', in S.M. Horton (ed.), *Systematic Theology* (Springfield, MO: Logion Press, rev. edn, 1995), pp. 597-638. Horton does not claim explicitly to adopt a modified dispensational approach, but constructs and supports this interpretive model by citing other authors who embrace it. Cf. esp. Horton, *Our Destiny*, pp. 174-77.

<sup>102</sup> The millennial views are traced from NT times (early millennialism), through Constantinian Christianity, the Middle Ages, and the Reformation (amillennialism), through

premillennialism, Horton rejects the strict limitation of OT prophecies to Israel, noting especially the fulfillment of Joel 2.28-32 on the Day of Pentecost. He emphasizes that both Israel and the Church now partake of the one NT covenant, though they will not become totally unified until the final state in the New Jerusalem.<sup>103</sup>

**W. Simmons.** William Simmons of the Church of God (Cleveland) contributed the chapter on eschatology to a book on Pentecostal theology that takes the fivefold gospel as its outline.<sup>104</sup> Primarily addressing students of theology, Simmons offers a brief synopsis of the eschatological models available in the first century CE, contrasting the cyclical view of Greco-Roman eschatology with the teleological perspective of Jewish and early Christian thought. He notes that the Jewish view of two distinct ages has been radically modified in Christianity: the first advent of Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit has ‘initiated a proleptic realization (or advanced installment) of the kingdom of God’.<sup>105</sup> The NT notion that the Messiah would come first in humility and a second time in glory allowed the early Christians to gain a new perspective on OT prophecy. Simmons emphasizes the incarnation of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the charismatic community of faith as specific eschatological events in the NT that bring the end-time presence of God into the present. He notes that Jesus’ response to the apostles’ inquiry about when he would ‘restore Israel’ (Acts 1.6) links the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the Jewish concept of the end-time restoration of all things. With the outpouring of the Spirit, ‘the end-time presence of the Kingdom that was evident in the life and ministry of Jesus is now transferred to the charismatic community of faith in Christ’.<sup>106</sup> The concentration of God’s kingdom-work in his people results in an increasing struggle against the work of Satan. This struggle will culminate in ‘the cataclysmic event of the *parousia* [that] will initiate the transformation of the

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eighteenth century English Protestantism and early nineteenth century America (postmillennialism), to the late nineteenth century (dispensational premillennialism). Cf. Horton, *Our Destiny*, pp. 166-77.

<sup>103</sup> Horton, *Our Destiny*, p. 176, n. 49; p. 191.

<sup>104</sup> W. Simmons, ‘Eschatology’, in Y.C. Han (ed.), *Transforming Power: Dimensions of the Gospel* (Cleveland, TN: Pathway, 2001), pp. 233-92.

<sup>105</sup> Simmons, ‘Eschatology’, p. 243.

<sup>106</sup> Simmons, ‘Eschatology’, p. 260.

universe (Romans 8:19ff.), and the dwelling of God will be with men (Revelation 21:3)'.<sup>107</sup>

When Simmons delineates the specific events surrounding the second coming of Christ, he notes that dispensational premillennialism gained a strong foothold among Evangelicals and Pentecostals because it appealed especially to their preference for a literal interpretation of biblical prophecy. Simmons himself seems to prefer this interpretive model, including a pre-tribulation rapture, but also explains other views. He proposes the necessity of a seven-year period of tribulation, noting its relation to the present geopolitical significance and future destiny of Israel.<sup>108</sup> After explaining various millennial views, Simmons notes that the subject of eschatology should not become dogmatized.

**L.T. Holdcroft.** L. Thomas Holdcroft of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada defends a futurist view of the book of Revelation that is based upon the dispensational position and presuppositions developed by J.N. Darby, including the literal interpretation of Scripture and the separation of Israel and the Church.<sup>109</sup> The volume helpfully includes explanations and evaluations of other viewpoints. Holdcroft begins this study with a brief history of the development of futurist eschatology, a defense of the separation of Israel and the Church,<sup>110</sup> and a discussion of methods of interpretation. The remainder of the book takes up major topics (used as chapter headings) relevant to Holdcroft's futurist position: the rapture, the second coming of Christ, the intermediate state, the tribulation period, the resurrection of the dead, the divine work of judgment, the millennium, and the final state. It is noteworthy that Holdcroft does not bring Pentecostal categories of thought into dialogue with his formulation of eschatology. He understands Joel's prophecy of the Spirit to be partially fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, but its larger fulfillment awaits the millennium.

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<sup>107</sup> Simmons, 'Eschatology', p. 288.

<sup>108</sup> Simmons, 'Eschatology', p. 264, states, 'All of this [i.e. the events of the tribulation period] is done so that God might prepare a people for himself. He will deal with Israel again...'. Significantly, he references the work of J.D. Pentecost here.

<sup>109</sup> L.T. Holdcroft, *Eschatology: A Futurist View* (Abbotsford, BC: CeeTeC Publishing, 2001).

<sup>110</sup> Holdcroft, *Eschatology*, p. 20.

### **C. Toward a Consistent Pentecostal Eschatology**

The following works reveal a more consistent Pentecostal eschatology without a dependence upon dispensational categories. These are presented in chronological order by publication date.

**P. Kuzmič.** In a plenary presentation to the Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility in 1982,<sup>111</sup> Peter Kuzmič addresses the negative consequences that dispensational premillennialism has had on social attitudes and promotes a balanced view of the kingdom of God which leads to ethical responsibility. Kuzmič begins his study by pointing out that the purpose of the books of Daniel and Revelation were to provide comfort, hope, and strength to the people of God who faced opposition and persecution, and not to provide speculative end-time scenarios. After tracing the historical development of the three major millennial views, he notes that dispensational premillennialism has set up a dualism between the spiritual and the social and political, resulting in extreme pessimism regarding human society and an overemphasis on an escapist salvation of 'individual souls'. As an alternative, Kuzmič grounds eschatology in the perception that the kingdom of God was announced and inaugurated by the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus and the subsequent outpouring of the Spirit, and yet awaits final consummation and fullness at the parousia. Christian history, then, is existence in the tension of the 'already' and 'not yet' aspects of the kingdom of God. This view entails both expectation and participation, even as it navigates between apathetic escapism (detachment) and judgmental triumphalism (utopianism). Participation in the inaugurated kingdom calls the Church to 'anticipatory living that produces a proleptic lifestyle', exhibited in the 'eschatological values that are characteristic of the Kingdom'.<sup>112</sup>

**J.R. Williams.** In the third volume of his systematic theology, renewal theologian J. Rodman Williams presents a view of the Church, the kingdom of God, and last

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<sup>111</sup> Subsequently published as P. Kuzmič, 'History and Eschatology: Evangelical Views', in B. Nichols (ed.), *In Word and Deed: Evangelism and Social Responsibility* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), pp. 135-64. Because Kuzmič's presentation was written for a broad evangelical audience, there are few overt references to Pentecostal distinctives. He does, however, ground the inauguration of the kingdom of God in the incarnation of Jesus *and* the outpouring of the Spirit.

<sup>112</sup> Kuzmič, 'History and Eschatology', pp. 157-58.

things that draws from a biblically informed, charismatic perspective.<sup>113</sup> In Part 1 Williams describes the Church as the composite people of God, made up of both Jews and Gentiles.<sup>114</sup> He emphasizes that God's inclusion of the Gentiles into the covenant people does not constitute a rejection of the Israelite people. There are, however, no outstanding promises that apply exclusively to ethnic Israel. Ethnic Israel is included equally in the promises that are now open to everyone.<sup>115</sup>

Turning to a study of the kingdom of God and eschatology in Part 2, Williams frames his investigation within the large 'pattern of history' that stretches from creation—to Christ—to consummation. The return of Jesus is central to William's articulation of eschatology, making hope the essential Christian attitude. After providing a detailed explanation of the biblical terms related to Christ's return, Williams examines the signs that point to the consummation, including (1) the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, (2) the universal proclamation of the gospel—including the salvation of Israel, (3) the increase of evil, (4) the religious apostasy through deception, (5) the appearance of 'antichrist' in conjunction with apostasy,<sup>116</sup> (6) the disclosure (*parousia*) of the man of sin,<sup>117</sup> (7) the appearance of the eschatological 'beast out of the sea',<sup>118</sup> (8) the appearance of the eschatological 'beast out of the earth',<sup>119</sup> (9) the abomination of desolation,<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> J.R. Williams, *Renewal Theology*. III. *The Church, The Kingdom, and Last Things* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992).

<sup>114</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, III, p. 51. Williams cites several NT passages that take up OT texts that originally applied to Israel that are now applied to the Church. Cf. Rom. 9.24-26; 1 Pet. 2.9.

<sup>115</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, III, p. 54, n. 25; cf. p. 380.

<sup>116</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, III, p. 330, does not understand the 'antichrist' to refer to a particular person, but to 'anyone who denies the coming of Christ from the Father, that "the Word became flesh" (John 1:14)' (emphasis in original).

<sup>117</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, III, p. 335, n. 75, rejects a simple identification of the man of sin (2 Thess. 2.3) with the 'antichrist'. He does, however, understand the man of sin to be a particular individual, who will be revealed, possibly in conjunction with the apostasy, after the restraining power of God is removed and just prior to the return of Christ.

<sup>118</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, III, pp. 345-46, identifies the beast out of the sea (Rev. 13.1-10) with the man of sin in his secular aspect of blasphemous ruler.

<sup>119</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, III, pp. 346-51, identifies the beast out of the earth (Rev. 13.14-18) with the man of sin in his religious aspect of deceptive miracle-worker. The 'mark of the beast' is not a physical mark but is viewed as 'capitulation of self to be Satan's instrument', having particular reference to selfish greed in the world of commerce.

<sup>120</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, III, pp. 357-59, views 'the abomination of desolation' as an intense, demonic attack upon the Christian faith and witness. Thus, 'the holy place' (Mt. 25.15) is applied to the Church.

(10) great tribulation,<sup>121</sup> and finally, (11) extraordinary phenomena in the heavens and on earth.

After describing the manner of Christ's return, Williams explores its threefold purpose: to bring final redemption to believers,<sup>122</sup> to bring total destruction to all that is evil, and to execute the Last Judgment, thus ushering in the kingdom of righteousness. In his description of the eternal state of the lost, Williams takes 'darkness' and 'fire' as metaphors for 'terrible estrangement and isolation from God, [and] the pain and misery of unrelieved punishment'.<sup>123</sup>

Williams treats the thousand-year reign with Christ in Rev. 20.1-6 as 'another way of describing the present victorious living of Christian believers'.<sup>124</sup> Accordingly, the binding of Satan means that throughout the whole Christian era, Satan's power has been rendered essentially powerless, though not inactive. Satan's limitation has special reference to the gospel witness: it cannot be destroyed by him. The release of Satan at the end of the thousand years corresponds to the appearance of the eschatological signs *after* the gospel has been preached throughout the whole world. Satan is destroyed along with all of evil at the return of Christ. Williams is hesitant to use the term amillennialism to describe his own view, but prefers to speak of 'a *present* and historical millennium on earth and not in heaven' (emphasis in original).<sup>125</sup>

The concluding chapter in this work consists of William's comments concerning the consummation of all things, including the renovation or fulfillment of the present creation; the fulfillment of the kingdom of God that is characterized by God's immediate presence; and eternal life, exemplified by perfect blessedness, fullness of the worship of God, and eternal reign of the saints.

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<sup>121</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, III, pp. 363-69, understands the 'great tribulation' as God's judgment upon an unbelieving world. The Church, represented by the 144,000, will be protected by God from these calamities. Cf. William's critique of pretribulationism, pp. 376-81.

<sup>122</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, III, p. 410, understands 1Thess. 4.17 to refer to a gathering of all believers to 'a meeting' with the Lord as he descends to the earth. Instead of going into heaven with Christ, 'they will accompany Him in the final stage of His journey to the earth itself'.

<sup>123</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, III, p. 470.

<sup>124</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, III, p. 428. Following the order of the biblical text, his comments on the millennium come between the subjects of the destruction of evil at the return of Christ and the Last Judgment. As noted above, the Last Judgment is viewed as the third purpose of the second coming.

<sup>125</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, III, p. 444, distances himself both from those who ignore the millennium and from those who refer to the reign of departed saints in heaven as the millennium.

**S.J. Land.** The ground-breaking work of Steven J. Land provides an imaginative re-vision of Pentecostal spirituality that retains eschatology as its indispensable framework.<sup>126</sup> Indeed, eschatology runs through the entire argument of the book. First, Land explores the idea of Pentecostal spirituality as theology, concluding that the unique eschatological vision of early Pentecostals ‘gives coherence to the Pentecostal testimony, practice and affections’.<sup>127</sup> In contrast to the dispensationalism of fundamentalism, in which a sharp line exists between the kingdom age and the Church age, Pentecostals viewed the present activity of the Spirit as evidence that the kingdom of God is already present, but not yet consummated. This means that the Holy Spirit is ‘the bridge or bond between the ages’,<sup>128</sup> mediating spiritual experiences that transcend time, as both past and future events within the biblical narrative become present for the worshipper. Attention to this eschatological context and orientation is essential to understand Land’s argument.

Second, in sweeping language Land describes Pentecostal spirituality as it emerged in the early twentieth century as apocalyptic vision. Here, it is argued that the outpouring of the Spirit was experienced as an ‘apocalyptic revelatory experience’<sup>129</sup> by which the nearness of God’s presence was interpreted as the nearness of the end. In other words, apocalyptic expectation was inherent within Pentecostal spirituality because the (crisis-oriented) salvific experiences of the believer were understood as participation in the (crisis-oriented) biblical drama of redemption whose goal was the consummation of the kingdom. Salvation was both apocalyptic reality and proleptic anticipation of the life of the coming kingdom. Land notes that, in contrast to fundamentalist dispensationalism, many Pentecostals operated out of three dispensations (corresponding roughly to the history of Israel, the advent of Jesus, and the present age of the Spirit that began at Pentecost) which overlapped and interpenetrated one another, yet were held in continuity by a logical, progressive development.<sup>130</sup> The apocalyptic vision meant

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<sup>126</sup> S.J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (JPTSup, 1; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993; Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2010). Page numbers cited in this study follow the Sheffield edition.

<sup>127</sup> Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, p. 54.

<sup>128</sup> Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, p. 55.

<sup>129</sup> Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, p. 61.

<sup>130</sup> Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, pp. 70-71, criticizes the improper understanding of ‘prophecy as fate’ among some early Pentecostals who developed ‘speculative, individualized and fantastic concrete applications which thrilled but did not mobilize’. Furthermore, identification

living in paradox, where each side of the ‘already–not yet’ tension is continuously given equal weight.

Third, Land argues that Pentecostal beliefs and practices are integrated in apocalyptic affections that are centered in a passion for the kingdom of God. For Pentecostals, these are objective, relational, and dispositional characteristics that are given specific shape and direction by the apocalyptic vision. Land analyzes three: gratitude, compassion, and courage, which have their source in God’s righteousness, love, and power and are testified to as regeneration, sanctification, and Spirit baptism respectively.<sup>131</sup> Because the kingdom has not yet come in its fullness, attention to the cultivation of these affections is necessary in order to have assurance of final victory. If the kingdom of God is ‘God’s rule or reign’, and the Holy Spirit is ‘the reigning power who forms persons in accordance with the requirements of the kingdom’, then ‘all gifts of the Spirit are eschatological, proleptic signs of [the] kingdom’.<sup>132</sup> The apocalyptic affections are developed and the gifts of the Spirit operate within a community that is ‘on the way to the kingdom’.

Fourth and finally, Land develops a theological re-vision of Pentecostal spirituality around the key concept of the eschatological Trinity. First, a theological focus on God as eschatological trinitarian presence would shift the focus away from speculative end-time sequences and ground the God-salvation correlation in a perichoretic understanding of creation, redemption, and glorification. Second, a view of history as eschatological trinitarian process would lend greater credence to the tripartite dispensational perception of history in which the outpoured Spirit invites persons to join the ‘processional into the new heaven and new earth’.<sup>133</sup> In this way, restoration of apostolic faith in early Pentecostalism is expanded to include the restoration of all of creation until God is ‘all in all’. Third, an awareness of salvation as eschatological trinitarian passion would enable a kind of perichoretic unity among the three dimensions of salvation (justification, sanctification, and Spirit baptism) which are lived out in a crisis–development process that necessitates affective transformation. Fourth, the

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with fundamentalist conservatives hindered Pentecostals from engaging ‘the broader societal, global and cosmic dimensions of the kingdom’, with one exception: world-wide evangelism.

<sup>131</sup> Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, p. 139.

<sup>132</sup> Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, pp. 175, 177.

<sup>133</sup> Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, p. 199.

Church understood as eschatological trinitarian fellowship would reflect in its communion the diversity and unity of the divine persons, provide the milieu for the cultivation of the fruit of the Spirit, and receive the gifts of the Spirit for edification and witness. Fifth and finally, the mission of the Church seen as eschatological trinitarian transformation would move the Church toward an expansion of missionary zeal to include concerns to create just structures, to care for the environment, and to promote pacifism. Such a programmatic endeavor would also seek to address internal issues and external criticisms. Land calls for further exploration on how to maintain the ‘tensed dynamic of the already–not yet’, suggesting that Pentecostals nurture a postmillennial activism within the premillennial expectancy—all within a trinitarian perspective.<sup>134</sup>

**L.D. Hart.** In his ‘crossover’ volume of systematic theology, charismatic theologian Larry Hart explores eschatology within the threefold rubric of faith (soteriology), hope (eschatology), and love (ecclesiology).<sup>135</sup> Significantly, the doctrine of the Church, not eschatology, concludes this work. The question, ‘What is Christian hope?’ guides Hart’s explication of eschatology. Following the thought of Jürgen Moltmann, he proposes that the term *hope* reflects the all-encompassing nature of Christian theology. Thus, eschatology has to do both with ‘first things’ and ‘last things’, present and future, ‘already’ and ‘not yet’. Hart relates the notion of hope to the biblical concept of history as linear time; Israel’s faith was forward-looking. From a NT perspective, ‘Jesus fulfilled most of

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<sup>134</sup> Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, pp. 222-23. In a published review of Steven Land’s monograph, Harvey Cox, ‘A Review of *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* by Steven J. Land’, *JPT* 5 (1994), pp. 3-12, voices both his desire that a reconstruction of Pentecostal eschatology be undertaken as well as his concern that such a re-visioning might also alter the whole cluster of Pentecostal beliefs and practices. Specifically, Cox asks how a reconstructed eschatology would transform the Pentecostal affections, assuming that Pentecostal theology remains grounded in its spirituality. Cox wonders if something essential to Pentecostal spirituality will be lost if its eschatology is reformulated? In his brief reply, ‘Response to Professor Harvey Cox’, *JPT* 5 (1994), pp. 13-16, Land reiterates his concern to retain the eschatological character of Pentecostal spirituality, emphasizing the conformity of that character to the nature of God. The salvation-healing correlation within an eschatological context becomes the basis for environmental concerns. Affective transformation of individuals is extrapolated to transformation of the earth. Continuity and discontinuity in the resurrection of the body is also the model for the new creation of heaven and earth. This means that ‘premillennial pessimism about human engineering and technology bringing in the kingdom’ is ‘tempered by a hope which assures that no effort on behalf of the poor, the earth and the neighbor will be in vain’.

<sup>135</sup> L.D. Hart, *Truth Aflame: A Balanced Theology for Evangelicals and Charismatics* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999). Cf. esp. pp. 409-75. As the title implies, Hart writes from both an evangelical and a charismatic perspective.

[Israel's] expectations, and his second coming will be the culmination of these hopes in their entirety'.<sup>136</sup> Because the gospel of Jesus is the entry point into this hope, the mission of the Church is an obvious and necessary correlate of Christian hope. In this sense, eschatology serves to define ecclesiology.<sup>137</sup>

After exploring the topic of death and the life after, Hart posits the return of Jesus Christ as the central element of Christian hope. In Hart's view, Jesus' teachings about the end-time functioned to prepare the Church for its mission in the world. The return of Christ is not mere symbolism, however, but will be 'a cataclysmic, public culmination of human history and the full realization of God's kingdom'.<sup>138</sup> Hart understands the 'birth-pains' (Mt. 24.5-12) to be applicable to every generation of the Church, but, appealing to a pneumatic approach to Scripture, acknowledges their special application to the period immediately prior to Christ's return, noting a possible triple reference for the 'abomination of desolation' (Mt. 24.15).<sup>139</sup> Likewise, Hart applies Jesus' words about great tribulation both to the ongoing opposition to the Church and to the culminating years of history. Discerning the signs of the times entails that the Church must be watching, waiting, and working.

Turning to the culminating visions of the book of Revelation (19.11–22.7),<sup>140</sup> Hart again emphasizes the centrality of the bodily return of Jesus and enjoins the reader to be aware of the strong symbolism that engages the imagination in apocalyptic literature such as this. John's purpose was to communicate hope to his readers: good will triumph over evil, and God's kingdom will come. Opinions about the sequence of events surrounding Jesus' return, however, result in various viewpoints. Drawing from a host of evangelical theologians, he finds himself more convinced by the arguments for a premillennial, post-tribulation return of Christ. Drawing especially from Paul's epistles, Hart emphasizes a 'theology of

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<sup>136</sup> Hart, *Truth Aflame*, p. 417.

<sup>137</sup> This is reflected in Hart's placement of ecclesiology as the final chapter in his work. Hart notes that 'the Church is the continuation of all that God began to do through Abraham, calling out a people unto himself for the salvation of the world' (p. 481). Although he claims that the roles of Israel and the Church are distinct, Hart does not explicate this difference in a dispensational framework. He notes that the Church exists in historical and eschatological dimensions, reflecting the egalitarianism and unity of the Trinity.

<sup>138</sup> Hart, *Truth Aflame*, p. 439.

<sup>139</sup> Hart applies the 'abomination of desolation' first to the desecration of the Jewish temple by Antiochus Epiphanes in 168 BCE, second to the destruction of the temple by the Romans in 70 CE, and third to a future Antichrist.

<sup>140</sup> Hart cites Bruce Metzger, *Breaking the Code: Understanding the Book of Revelation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), throughout this section.

suffering' in relation to Christ's return.<sup>141</sup> In his concluding comments on resurrection, judgment, hell, and heaven, Hart is both open to dialogue with various opinions within the evangelical community and insistent that unity is grounded in the hope of Christ's return.

**P. Althouse.** In a recently published monograph, Peter Althouse takes up Walter Hollenweger's challenge<sup>142</sup> to bring Pentecostal eschatology into conversation with Jürgen Moltmann.<sup>143</sup> After examining the eschatology of early Pentecostalism and tracing the history of the doctrine of 'the latter rain',<sup>144</sup> Althouse summarizes the efforts of four theologians to re-envision Pentecostal eschatology: (1) Steven Land's emphasis on Pentecostal spirituality as a foretaste of the kingdom, (2) Eldin Villafañe's correlation of Pentecostal social ethics with the reign of God, (3) Miroslav Volf's eschatological basis for developing a theology of work and embrace, and (4) Frank Macchia's theophanic understanding of glossolalia as a sign of the kingdom.<sup>145</sup> Next, the eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann is examined and, in the subsequent chapter, brought into dialogue with the four Pentecostal scholars. The following comments represent a summary of these two chapters.

First, Althouse notes the centrality of eschatology for Moltmann and describes its contours as transformational, apocalyptic, and millenarian. Essentially, Moltmann perceives the kingdom of God moving towards humanity from the transcendent future, acting on present history to transform it. Its

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<sup>141</sup> Cf. 2 Thess. 1.3-10; Rom. 8.18; 2 Tim. 1.11, 12; 1 Cor. 1.4-9; 2 Pet. 4.12, 13.

<sup>142</sup> W.J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988), pp. 413-23. Hollenweger suggests that the book of Revelation should be re-examined in the light of modern exegetical methods, allowing it to become a source of courage to interpret contemporary apocalyptic images, as its author did in his day. Hollenweger also recommends that Pentecostals enter into dialogue with the eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann, noting that for Moltmann *and* Pentecostals, the Scriptures are oriented toward the end and orient the reader in the same direction. Hollenweger believes that Moltmann's vision is helpful for Pentecostals because it maintains faithfully the already-not yet tension of the kingdom. Belief in heaven does not betray the earth. Hope for the second coming of Jesus does not nullify work in society, but rather energizes believers 'to change the present world in the light of the future' (p. 421).

<sup>143</sup> P. Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days: Pentecostal Eschatology in Conversation with Jürgen Moltmann* (JPTSup, 25; London: T&T Clark International, 2003).

<sup>144</sup> Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days*, p. 60, concludes that the logic of the latter rain doctrine 'is not related to millennialism, but to the restoration of apostolic Christianity in connection to eschatological anticipation'.

<sup>145</sup> Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days*, p. 3, selects these four scholars in particular because 'they are all considered Pentecostal, they are all theologians (as opposed to historians or sociologists) and they all have at least one major scholarly publication related to Pentecostal eschatology'.

apocalyptic element does not refer to the cataclysmic destruction of the world but to ‘the destruction of sin and the powers of evil’,<sup>146</sup> in order to make way for the new creation. Millenarianism speaks of the goal of history within the larger eschatological termination of history, thus representing ‘a transitional stage between this world and the new creation’.<sup>147</sup> In terms of the centrality of eschatology, all four Pentecostal scholars are in agreement with Moltmann. Likewise, all four have shifted the emphasis from the apocalyptic cataclysmic destruction of the world to an eschatology that seeks the transformation of creation in anticipation of the kingdom of God. Thus, all agree basically that there is both continuity and discontinuity between the kingdom of God in the present and its ultimate consummation.

Second, the relationship of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit to the kingdom in Moltmann’s eschatology is examined. The dialectic of the death and resurrection of Christ is eschatologically significant because Christ has suffered in solidarity with the godforsaken world in his death, and his resurrection is the beginning of the new creation of all things. The Holy Spirit, as the eschatological history of Christ, is the ‘living energy of the new creation of all things’,<sup>148</sup> and is sent to empower the Church to serve the purposes of the coming kingdom. Concerning the eschatological significance of the death and resurrection of Christ, Villafañe and Volf express the most compatibility with Moltmann. All four exhibit affinities with Moltmann’s Spirit-Christology, but Macchia’s emphasis on the theophanic inbreaking of the Spirit leads to his conviction that the Spirit should be seen as ‘an independent eschatological force’ and should not be subordinated to Christology. Moltmann’s trinitarian perspective is most evident in Land and Volf, though Land diverges from Moltmann to argue that a tripartite dispensational understanding of history best describes God’s eschatological trinitarian presence.

Third, Althouse explores the political significance of Moltmann’s eschatology, which ‘takes its bearings from an eschatological understanding of the theology of the cross’,<sup>149</sup> and has implications for human rights and dignity, the feminist critique of patriarchy, the creation of a just society, and ecological

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<sup>146</sup> Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days*, p. 117.

<sup>147</sup> Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days*, p. 119. Althouse notes that Moltmann is criticized for retaining the millennium in his conception of eschatology. Cf. p. 111, n. 8.

<sup>148</sup> Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days*, p. 135.

<sup>149</sup> Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days*, p. 143.

concerns. Moltmann denies the possibility of an apolitical theology, but insists that the Church must become aware of the political dimensions inherent in faith and theology. The political significance of eschatology is carried forward most prominently in Volf and Villafañe. Though Land shows affinity with Moltmann's political theology and has developed the ethical implications of eschatology, he has not developed a strong political theology. Macchia's articulation of a social mission is similar to Moltmann's concerns, but is drawn from the Blumhardts and Barth, sources from which Moltmann also draws.

Fourth and finally, Moltmann's eschatology in its cosmological dimensions is examined. Althouse explains that Moltmann understands the future kingdom of glory as 'the eschatological consummation of creation as the new creation'.<sup>150</sup> As God withdrew from himself in order for creation to come into being, so in the eschaton God will 'de-restrict' himself to flood all of creation with the fullness of his glory. This cosmic eschatology also implies that redemption is holistic, and that the resurrection of the body requires the transformation of the material context of bodily existence. Moltmann's cosmic eschatology finds resonances in all four Pentecostal scholars, though Villafañe's focus is on the transformation of social structures. Land, Volf, and Macchia articulate the vision of a future transformation of the present world in the new creation. In conclusion, Land, Villafañe, Volf, and Macchia incorporate the transformational eschatology of Moltmann to varying degrees 'to recover the prophetic critique of the social world in early Pentecostalism and to critique the unfortunate infiltration of fundamentalist eschatology into mid-century Pentecostalism',<sup>151</sup> an effort that Althouse applauds.

**M. Tan.** In a PhD thesis submitted in 2004 to the University of Cambridge, Mayling Tan offers a reconceived pneumatological eschatology as a Pentecostal theological contribution to negotiating the multicultural and multifaith context of Singapore.<sup>152</sup> Tan's goal is to reconceive Pentecostal spirituality eschatologically in order to reinvigorate evangelism in multifaith Singapore.

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<sup>150</sup> Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days*, p. 151.

<sup>151</sup> Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days*, p. 191.

<sup>152</sup> M. Tan, 'Pneumatological Eschatology: A Pentecostal Theological Contribution to Negotiating the Multicultural and Multifaith Context of Singapore' (PhD thesis; University of Cambridge, 2004), subsequently published as M. Tan-Chow, *Pentecostal Theology for the Twenty-*

The solution proposed by Tan involves, first, a reconception of the Spirit in Pentecostalism. After an analysis of the pneumatologies of the biblical writings of John, Luke, and Paul, Tan concludes that Pentecostal pneumatology needs to be integrated with a theology of the cross in order to arrive at a more nuanced understanding of the power of the Spirit and to guard against an over-realized eschatology. This leads to an integration of love and power that is oriented toward reconciliation and embrace. Second, Tan develops a pneumatological eschatology around the key concepts of remembering and embodying. Remembering involves re-appropriation of the full significance of eschatology in the early church and in early Pentecostalism, including the orientation to otherness and openness which the presence of the eschatological Spirit brings.<sup>153</sup> Embodying flows out of transformative worship and consists of ‘living in the praxis of the Spirit’.<sup>154</sup> When believers embody the eschatological reality of ‘the all embracing sociality, hospitality and superabundance of God’s eternal kingdom’,<sup>155</sup> their lives are characterized by doxological joy. Tan concludes her study by applying the construct of pneumatological eschatology toward an ethic of negotiation.

**P. Althouse.** Peter Althouse offers another contribution to Pentecostal eschatology in a recently published article.<sup>156</sup> First Althouse critiques fundamentalist dispensationalism as it is represented in the *Left Behind* series of novels, both in terms of its ‘protest against hegemony’, and because of its basis in a literalistic hermeneutic.<sup>157</sup> Next, Althouse reviews several interpretations of early Pentecostal eschatology, concluding that the role of fundamentalism may not have been as influential as some claim. His own research of early Pentecostal literature supports this conclusion. The commonly used image of the latter rain is,

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*First Century: Engaging with Multi-Faith Singapore* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007). Page numbers cited in this study follow the original thesis.

<sup>153</sup> Tan, ‘Pneumatological Eschatology’, pp. 163-69, explores the implications of her proposal for gender and racial equality and inter-faith relationships.

<sup>154</sup> Tan, ‘Pneumatological Eschatology’, p. 177.

<sup>155</sup> Tan, ‘Pneumatological Eschatology’, p. 178.

<sup>156</sup> P. Althouse, “‘Left Behind’—Fact or Fiction: Ecumenical Dilemmas of the Fundamentalist Millenarian Tensions within Pentecostalism’, *JPT* 13.2 (2005), pp. 187-207.

<sup>157</sup> Althouse, “‘Left Behind’—Fact or Fiction’, pp. 191-94, distinguishes between a *literalistic* approach which disregards other literary dimensions, and a *literal* approach which appreciates less obvious uses of language such a metaphor, satire, and so forth. The literal sense is the ‘literary sense’.

for Althouse, the key to understanding early Pentecostal eschatology. The ‘inner logic’ of latter rain eschatology is more suggestive of covenantal eschatology than of fundamentalist dispensationalism. It links Pentecostalism to the covenant promises of Israel, the apostolic Church, and the present reign of God. Althouse also points out the tendency to see an overlapping of the ages in early Pentecostalism, an element lacking in fundamentalist dispensationalism. As fundamentalism became more influential in the Pentecostal movement and latter rain eschatology waned, little attention was given to the inconsistencies, especially in regard to the theology of Spirit baptism. Althouse contends that Pentecostals need to rethink their allegiance to fundamentalism, and suggests that a new construction of eschatology is needed which is compatible with the logic of the theology of tongues. To this end, Althouse offers the category of ‘proleptic anticipation’ around which a Pentecostal eschatology may be built. Drawing from the recent work of Hans Schwartz,<sup>158</sup> *proleptic anticipation* stands between the other options of *despairing resignation*, on the one hand, and *future activism*, on the other. Because the future has already begun in the present, our active participation for the kingdom is demanded, yet because the inability of humanity ultimately to overcome sin and death is acknowledged, the future in-breaking of the kingdom by God’s sovereign action is anticipated. Pentecostal experiences such as healing and Spirit baptism are viewed as ‘anticipations of the new creation that are not yet complete’.<sup>159</sup> Such an eschatology also could provide common ground for ecumenical dialogue as together the churches work toward the coming kingdom.

**M.K. Thompson.** In what is perhaps the most comprehensive construction of a consistent and thoroughgoing Pentecostal eschatology to date, Matthew Thompson both critiques fundamentalist dispensationalism and offers an eschatology that is ‘more consistent with the early years of the [Pentecostal] movement and more true to its historical roots in the Wesleyan tradition’.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Althouse, “‘Left Behind’—Fact or Fiction,” pp. 201-202, n. 38.

<sup>159</sup> Althouse, “‘Left Behind’—Fact or Fiction” p. 202. Althouse sketches briefly the contributions of three Pentecostal theologians, Miroslav Volf, Murray Dempster, and Frank Macchia, who are moving in this direction.

<sup>160</sup> M.K. Thompson, ‘Kingdom Come: Revisioning Pentecostal Eschatology’ (PhD dissertation; Luther Seminary, 2007), p. ii. Thompson’s study has been subsequently published as

Part 1 consists primarily of historical analysis, in which Thompson traces the rise of the Pentecostal movement to its Wesleyan-Holiness roots, describes and critiques fundamentalist dispensationalism, and examines the detrimental effect that the Pentecostal adoption of dispensationalism has had on the movement.

Part 2 of Thompson's study is devoted to the exploration of key figures in Christian history who offer theological concepts that are compatible with early Pentecostal emphases and may contribute to the development of a consistent Pentecostal eschatology. These include the social trinitarianism of Gregory of Nazianzus (b. 329/330), the process-oriented soteriology of John Wesley and John Fletcher, the advent eschatology of German theologian Jürgen Moltmann, and the transfigurationist eschatology of Russian Orthodox theologian Sergius Bulgakov.

In Part 3, Thompson draws from the Pentecostal tradition, as well as from the theologically compatible sources examined in Part 2, to construct 'a pneumatological cosmic soteriology, a thematic eschatology from the perspective of the Pentecostal Full Gospel'.<sup>161</sup> Based upon an *aeonic* philosophy of time,<sup>162</sup> the divine-human interaction, or salvation history, may be understood as a progressive revelation of Father, Son, and Spirit in three dispensations that are related perichoretically, yet with distinct characteristics appropriate to the mission of each person of the Trinity,<sup>163</sup> described by Thompson in both cosmic and microcosmic/personal terms. Thus, the microcosmic/personal experiences of justification, sanctification, Spirit baptism, and healing anticipate 'what will occur on the macrocosmic scale in the eschaton'.<sup>164</sup> The *parousia* of the Son and the Spirit ends the kenotic presence of God in the world as the fullness of the triune God fills creation in a cosmic Pentecost. As historical time is ended as well, the *parousia* cannot be said to occur *within* history, but brings with it the transformation of time (*chronos*) into the fullness of time (*kairos*). Thompson spells out the implications of this view for a premillennial position in terms of its

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M.K. Thompson, *Kingdom Come: Revisioning Pentecostal Eschatology* (JPTSup, 37; Blandford Forum: Deo Publishing, 2010). Pages numbers cited in this study follow the original thesis.

<sup>161</sup> Thompson, 'Kingdom Come', p. 152.

<sup>162</sup> Thompson, 'Kingdom Come', p. 161.

<sup>163</sup> Thompson, 'Kingdom Come', pp. 163-64, appeals more to Gregory of Nazianzus than to Joachim of Fiore to articulate his view of trinitarian dispensationalism because he sees greater theological continuity between John Fletcher and Gregory.

<sup>164</sup> Thompson, 'Kingdom Come', pp. 170-71, 227. This lies at the heart of Thompson's constructive work and reveals his two guiding principles: (1) the Eastern notion that the individual is a microcosm of the created order, and (2) the soteriological concept that salvation is a process that begins in this life and is completed in the new creation.

importance as a symbol of God's reign, the Kingdom of Glory, in the new creation.

Thompson fleshes out his proposal in the final two chapters by noting, first, the relationship between the personal experiences of Spirit baptism and entire sanctification and their analogous fulfillments on a cosmic scale, suggesting the transformation of the present world, not its replacement. The biblical symbol for this transfiguration is the millennium, which Thompson retains in order to ground eschatological hope in *this* world, *this* cosmos.<sup>165</sup> Second, the soteriological experiences of healing and justification may be seen as proleptic anticipations of their cosmic fulfillments. Resurrection of the body implies the renovation of the material creation as the body's natural context. Thus, present ecological concern is included in this expanded doctrine of healing. Initial justification is also expanded to include its social and cosmic dimensions in final justification, by means of which the results of God's declaration, effected through personal and cosmic sanctification, are eternalized.<sup>166</sup>

**A. Yong.** Amos Yong discusses Pentecostal eschatology in the final chapter of a recent monograph exploring a Pentecostal engagement with political theology.<sup>167</sup> In this context, Yong critiques the current propensity of Pentecostal eschatology toward 'its dispensational views regarding the end times', 'its escapist and futurist tendencies', 'and its [futurist] apocalyptic mentality'.<sup>168</sup> Judging these tendencies to be 'counterintuitive to pentecostal spirituality', Yong proposes a concentration on 'pneumatological apocalypticism', the apocalyptic outpouring of the Spirit in the *last* days to the *ends* of the earth, so that what is revealed about the kingdom concerns not only its *time*, but also its *place*. In keeping with the Pentecostal understanding of healing, embodiment, and holistic soteriology, Yong uses the

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<sup>165</sup> Thompson, 'Kingdom Come', pp. 197-201, interprets the Antichrist as symbolically representing any historical movement or personal characteristic 'that is not in conformity and subjection to Christ', both outside and inside the church. Likewise, tribulation refers to those conditions that are rooted in 'the antichristic parasitism that obtains in the present world'.

<sup>166</sup> Thompson, 'Kingdom Come', pp. 218-24, does not propose a universal salvation, but adopts the notion of non-being, defined as a 'contentless form of existence', to define 'hell'. This notion, following Gregory Boyd's use of Karl Barth's concept of *das Nichtige* ('the nothing'), corresponds to the choice of the rebellious in disallowing what God has chosen for existence in the eschaton.

<sup>167</sup> A. Yong, *In the Days of Caesar: Pentecostalism and Political Theology* (Sacra Doctrina; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), pp. 316-58.

<sup>168</sup> Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, pp. 317-18.

Day of Pentecost narrative to articulate a revised theology of Israel and the Church that includes the full restoration of Israel within a pneumatologically defined ecclesiology. In this view, the Church is a multicultural, eschatological community in which Gentiles are being redeemed even as diasporic Israel is being restored, all within the eschatological tension of an already-but-not-yet fulfillment. Politically, this calls for the Church to embody an eschatological vision that opposes the false eschatologies of secular society (e.g. communism, Marxism, socialism, and capitalism) without succumbing to a wholly futurist and escapist mentality. Participation in the apocalyptic (revelatory) in-breaking of the Spirit also entails an alignment with the Spirit's goal to transform the cosmos and a rejection of an end-time, apocalyptic annihilation. Pertinent to Yong's engagement with political theology is his conclusion that 'eschatological doctrines are not merely beliefs about what will happen in the future, but are also orientations for Christian practice in the present'.<sup>169</sup> Yong highlights the congruence between the holistic soteriology of Pentecostalism and a pneumatological eschatology that views the outpouring of the Spirit in the last days as transformative of individuals and social structures alike, in anticipation of the full revelation (apocalypse) of God's coming kingdom.

## **V. Summary and Conclusion**

Having reviewed the scholarly historical, biblical, and theological contributions to the subject of Pentecostal eschatology, several issues emerge that call for further comment.

### **A. The Role of Classical Dispensationalism**

The majority of historians that were reviewed acknowledge that eschatology played a major role in the formation and development of early Pentecostal thought. Most agree that many Pentecostals adopted (with modifications) the eschatology of classical dispensationalism to varying degrees. Those scholars who examine the eschatology of early Pentecostalism often point out how Pentecostals modified the dispensational script in order to maintain their understanding of the work of Holy Spirit. A number of scholars point out the

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<sup>169</sup> Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, p. 352.

theological tension that has existed between the spirituality of Pentecostalism and the dispensational eschatology it has embraced. This tension is most often articulated as having emerged because the ecclesiology upon which the eschatology of classical dispensationalism is built became the basis for a denial of spiritual gifts in the Church today, which is, in essence, a denial of one of the core components of Pentecostal spirituality. The question remains, however, as to how influential classical dispensationalism was during the *earliest* period of the movement. Dayton's suggestive comment that Pentecostal eschatology may have developed alongside of classical dispensationalism merits further research.

### **B. Multiple Trajectories**

When the biblical and theological contributions to Pentecostal eschatology are examined it may be observed that the flow of thought from early Pentecostalism to the present exists in multiple trajectories. These trajectories may be distinguished by making the following four inquiries of each articulation of eschatology. (1) What ecclesiology is represented? (2) What methodology is used to interpret Scripture? (3) What sequence of future events is presented? (4) To what extent is consideration given to Pentecostal categories of thought? Viewed broadly, the following three trajectories may be identified.

In one stream of thought, the eschatology articulated has become indistinguishable from classical dispensationalism. Israel and the Church are strictly separated, with distinct promises and fulfillments; Scripture is interpreted as literally as possible; the future is scripted to follow the dispensational sequence of events without variation; and no consideration is given to Pentecostal distinctives.

A second 'middle' trajectory is characterized by the theological tension that results from an embrace of the eschatology of classical dispensationalism while also promoting distinct Pentecostal beliefs. The future script of dispensationalism may be either controlling or merely influential. While Israel may still have a distinct role to play in the future, the Church is understood to be a fulfillment of OT prophecy. Primacy may be given to a literal interpretation of Scripture, but other methods are also employed.

Finally, a stream of thought may be identified in which classical dispensationalism has not influenced the articulation of eschatology. Here,

primacy is given to Pentecostal understandings of the Church and its mission, a view of Scripture that employs hermeneutical methods consistent with Pentecostal spirituality, and visions of the future that are grounded in Pentecostal soteriology. Overall, the more a given work takes Pentecostal theology and spirituality into account, the less dispensational it appears to be.

### **C. The Implications of Revision**

At first glance, the second or ‘middle’ trajectory would appear to be the most faithful to the early Pentecostal situation, at least according to several of the authors who comment on eschatology in early Pentecostalism. A different conclusion may be reached, however, when one considers the implications of the biblical and constructive theological contributions more closely. If the trajectory that has led to the comprehensive acceptance of dispensational ecclesiology and eschatology is seen as *one* way that Pentecostals have relieved the theological tension between dispensationalism and Pentecostalism, then the constructive contributions that have moved in the opposite direction toward ‘revision’ may be seen as *another* way this tension has been relieved. Indeed, the authors who offer their works as ‘revisions’ have moved intentionally *away* from classical dispensationalism. Perhaps this move toward an eschatology that is more consistent with Pentecostal ecclesiology and spirituality is also more faithful to the earliest vision of Pentecostalism than the tension-filled ‘middle’ trajectory. Furthermore, the majority of the exegetical work by Pentecostal scholars on specific biblical texts related to eschatology does not appear to be influenced by classical dispensationalism at all. Additional research is needed to discover if a similar biblical hermeneutic was operative in the earliest period of the Pentecostal movement.

### **D. A Way Forward**

From this summary, it may be concluded that additional research into the eschatological landscape of the earliest period of Pentecostalism is needed. The results of such research will help clarify from an historical perspective the level of influence classical dispensationalism had at the outset of the movement, which will, in turn, help assess the validity of current contributions. This task is taken up in the next two chapters.

## Chapter 3

### Early Pentecostal Eschatology: The Wesleyan Holiness Stream

#### Introduction

As others have demonstrated, the initial stream of North American Pentecostalism flowed from the waters of the nineteenth-century American Holiness movement, which itself had been fed by tributaries from both the Wesleyan and Reformed traditions.<sup>1</sup> Though pockets of revival characterized by speaking in tongues had broken out in various places in North America prior to 1906, the Azusa Street meetings in Los Angeles quickly became a major center from which the Pentecostal movement spread across the nation and around the world.<sup>2</sup> Many leaders in the Holiness movement came to Azusa Street to ‘receive their Pentecost’, then took the message home to share with their churches and fellow ministers. In this way, several Holiness groups were swept into the emerging Pentecostal movement.

The core doctrinal commitment that emerged from this initial stream of Pentecostalism has been identified as ‘the fivefold gospel’, according to which sanctification is viewed as a ‘second definite work of grace’.<sup>3</sup> Although this stream was split by the Finished Work soteriology of William Durham in 1910, several Pentecostal groups, particularly in the Southeastern United States, remained solidly Wesleyan in their understanding of salvation. The periodical literature that these groups produced contains a wealth of data about the early Pentecostal movement, not only in terms of historical information but also about their practices and theological commitments.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the perspectives about eschatology contained within five major periodicals produced from the Wesleyan Holiness stream of early Pentecostalism, presented roughly in chronological order of initial publication date. The first ten years of the movement has been identified by

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dayton, *Theological Roots*, pp. 35-84; Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel*, pp. 44-76.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of other significant centers of origin for the early Pentecostal movement, see A. Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, pp. 66-143, 166-83.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, p. 18; Dayton, *Theological Roots*, pp. 19-21; Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel*, pp. 28-30; Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing*, pp. 65-66.

several scholars as the ‘heart’ of the movement, rather than its ‘infancy’.<sup>4</sup> The inductive analysis that follows includes this period but moves somewhat beyond it so that the responses to the major events of the Great War (1914-1918) and the influenza epidemic of 1918 may be included, as these events were taken up in the discussions about eschatology. Generally, my research falls within the boundaries of 1906 through 1920, with the exception of *The Church of God Evangel*, which was extended through 1923 for reasons specific to that periodical.

With the emergence of digital technology, the periodical literature of early Pentecostalism is becoming more readily available. For my research, I accessed the issues of *The Apostolic Faith* (1906-1908) that have been reprinted in one volume under the title, *Like as of Fire*, by Middle Atlantic Regional Press (1991), edited by E. Myron Noble. Copies of *The Bridegroom’s Messenger* (1908-1920) were made available for reading on microfilm at the Hal Bernard Dixon, Jr Pentecostal Research Center in Cleveland, Tennessee. Digitized copies of *The Church of God Evangel* (1910-1923) were also made available from the Dixon Pentecostal Research Center. A copy of the one extant issue of *The Whole Truth* (1911) was accessed through the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center in Springfield, Missouri. Finally, the issues of *The Holiness Advocate* (1907-1908), *The Apostolic Evangel* (1907-1912), and *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* (1917-1920) were made available in digitized format from the International Pentecostal Holiness Church Archives and Research Center in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

## **I. The Earliest Witnesses: *The Apostolic Faith***

### **Introduction**

*The Apostolic Faith* is my starting point for research into early Pentecostal eschatology because it represents the earliest published articulation of Pentecostal theologizing. Produced by The Apostolic Faith Mission at Azusa Street in Los Angeles from 1906 through 1908, the periodical quickly became a primary means of spreading the ‘full gospel’ message, both nationally and internationally. Thus,

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Hollenweger, ‘Pentecostals and the Charismatic Movement’, p. 551; Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, p. 26; Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing*, p. 66.

it contains a broad representation of thought both from the grassroots level as well as from those who would later become recognized leaders of the movement.

### **A. The Dynamics of Discernment**

With the advent of the Pentecostal outpouring in 1906, a multitude of theological issues was forced into a period of re-examination. Spiritual discernment became a necessity. The primary issue to be rethought was, of course, the meaning of baptism in the Spirit, especially in relation to sanctification. Many other issues, however, were brought into this process,<sup>5</sup> including eschatology. The discerning process in relation to eschatology follows the same pattern as with many other issues. At Azusa Street, the discerning process centered on submitting experience to the Word of God understood as a dialectical relationship of Scripture and the Spirit, resulting in a distinct Pentecostal hermeneutic. William Seymour wrote, 'If we remain in the Scriptures and follow the blessed Holy Spirit all the way, we will be able to measure up to the Word of God in all its fullness.'<sup>6</sup> Experience was always measured against Scripture, resulting in either the denial or affirmation of its validity. For example, the practice of writing in 'tongues' was judged to be unscriptural and was not encouraged in the meetings,<sup>7</sup> whereas, various biblical texts and the perceived anointing of the Spirit were sufficient to validate women in ministry.<sup>8</sup> At times the discerning process resulted in a shift of understanding, as in the issue of what constituted the 'Bible evidence' of baptism in the Spirit. Speaking in tongues was eventually viewed to be deficient in itself, requiring the larger context of love to be a convincing confirmation of Spirit baptism.<sup>9</sup> In similar ways, what was valid for eschatology was formed by bringing relevant biblical passages into conversation with present spiritual experiences, all

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<sup>5</sup> Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing*, pp. 78-79, notes that a similar process was occurring in relation to healing.

<sup>6</sup> *AF* 1.5 (Jan, 1907), p. 2. The Holy Spirit was deemed crucial in the interpretive process. A brief exhortation in *AF* 1.1 (Sep, 1906), p. 2, encourages, 'Dear ones, do not puzzle yourselves by theorizing, but tarry in Jerusalem, and the Spirit will throw light upon God's word and you will see it just as it is. He will reveal the whole word from Genesis to Revelations [*sic*].'

<sup>7</sup> *AF* 1.10 (Sep, 1907), p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> *AF* 1.9 (Jun-Sep, 1907), p. 3, references Joel 2.28; 1.10 (Sep, 1907), p. 2, references Gal. 3.28; 1.12 (Jan, 1908), p. 2, references Acts 2.17-8; 21.9 and notes, 'Before Pentecost, the woman could only go into the "court of women" and not into the inner court'. But now, 'It is the same Holy Spirit in the woman as in the man'.

<sup>9</sup> *AF* 1.1 (Sep, 1906), p. 2; 1.9 (Jun-Sep, 1907), p. 2; 1.11 (Oct, 1907), p. 3.

understood as obedience to the Spirit.<sup>10</sup> How compatible a particular understanding of eschatology was with the overall spiritual experiences of the believer became a primary factor, those experiences themselves being subject to the same process of discernment. The results of this discerning process will be elaborated in the following paragraphs.

## **B. Holistic Spirituality**

The eschatology of Azusa Street was embedded in a holistic spirituality. The sense that eschatology was not so much a formulated doctrine as it was a lived reality is immediately evident in the pages of *The Apostolic Faith*. This is demonstrated by the fact that, on the one hand, eschatology was never made part of the statement of faith published in almost every issue,<sup>11</sup> and yet, on the other hand, it permeates the personal testimonies, poems, letters, reports of tongues-speech, and articles as a constant reminder that ‘Jesus is coming soon’. The sense of Jesus’ imminent return was woven tightly into the spiritual experience of the participants.

Within the holistic worldview presented in *The Apostolic Faith*, the new understanding of and experience in the Holy Spirit was linked closely with eschatology. The present work of the Spirit was understood to be the fulfillment of the ‘latter rain’, characterized as ‘the last days when He is pouring out His Spirit upon all flesh’.<sup>12</sup> Historically, then, participants at Azusa Street located themselves ‘in the evening of the dispensation of the Holy Ghost’ (the day of

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<sup>10</sup> A brief exhortation, *AF* 1.12 (Jan, 1908), p. 3, enjoins, ‘If there is too much reading the word without prayer, you get too argumentative, and if you pray too much without reading you get fanatical.’ The entirety of Scripture was brought into this process. In an article dealing with whether married persons could be part of the bride of Christ, Seymour, *AF* 1.12 (Jan, 1908), p. 3, wrote, ‘We must rightly divide the Scriptures and compare scripture with scripture so that there be no confusion and no deceptive spirit or wrong teaching may creep in.’

<sup>11</sup> The repeated statement includes ‘repentance, godly sorrow for sin, confession of sin, forsaking sinful ways, restitution, justification, sanctification, baptism with the Holy Ghost, and healing’. C.M. Robeck, Jr, *The Azusa Street Mission and Revival: The Birth of the Global Pentecostal Movement* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007), pp. 119-23, notes that Seymour made the statement of faith at the mission available as a one-sided flyer (date unknown; cf. reprint p. 120). The flyer contained an additional section than that printed in *The Apostolic Faith* which included a list of ‘Steps into Heaven’, the final ones being: ‘Redemption—Dead Raised; Living Changed in a moment; the one, true Glorious Church set in order; Adoption; Perfect Bodies; Glorification’. In 1915, Seymour published *The Doctrines and Discipline of the Azusa Street Apostolic Faith Mission*, in which brief statements of belief concerning eschatology are included, but within *The Apostolic Faith* papers, this was not done. Even in *Doctrines and Discipline*, the statements are not comprehensive, as they are focused on the immortality of the soul and the final state.

<sup>12</sup> *AF* 1.3 (Nov, 1906), p. 2.

Pentecost being ‘the morning’). As John the Baptist warned people to prepare the way of the Lord, so one contributor exhorted, ‘the voice of warning is going out to the world today to prepare for the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ’.<sup>13</sup>

Thomas Hezmalhalch wrote:

How we rejoice at the hope, each day bringing to us a deeper experience and a brighter assurance that we, ourselves, will never see the grave! His approach is so nigh at hand, one almost thinks they can hear the songs of the angels who are to accompany Him in His coming. Without a shadow of a doubt, we are living in the latter days and that “Latter Rain” is being poured upon us...<sup>14</sup>

The primary message or ‘burden’ that the Holy Spirit was understood to be bringing to the Church was ‘that Jesus is coming soon and we must prepare to meet Him’.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, it was frequently reported that messages in tongues from around the world were being interpreted as ‘Jesus is coming soon’.<sup>16</sup> The very fact that people all across the world were seeking God for the baptism of the Holy Spirit indicated that ‘the Lord is preparing His people for His soon coming’.<sup>17</sup>

The testimony of A.H. Post concludes with these remarks:

Surely the glorious coming of our blessed Lord is very near, and all this supernatural work of God is needed for the work to be completed. This is only the beginning of the gracious latter rain, which our risen Lord will pour out upon all flesh, and as the Holy Spirit shall temper each vessel meet for service, He will fully restore all the gifts, or rather manifest each as needed. For all is inherent in Himself, and all thus baptized will indeed be one. The Holy Spirit is now leading us into much prayerful study of His Word. He makes Christ increasingly all in all, the flesh nothing, God’s children one, and the coming of the Lord increasingly real. Beloved, don’t criticize, but join us in prayer.<sup>18</sup>

The holistic spirituality at the Azusa Street mission had a christological foundation and focus. According to Seymour, the benefits of the atonement included ‘justification, sanctification, healing, and baptism with the Holy Ghost’.<sup>19</sup> Eschatological concerns were also brought under the umbrella of Christology. Significantly, the only inclusion of eschatological concerns within a

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<sup>13</sup> *AF* 1.2 (Oct, 1906), p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> *AF* 1.9 (Jun-Sep, 1907), p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> *AF* 2.13 (May, 1908), p. 4. Cf. the testimony of E.C. Ladd, *AF* 1.6 (Feb-Mar, 1907), p. 3: ‘The burden of the Spirit seems to be the blindness of the people, the soon coming of the Lord, the awful judgments that are coming, and to prepare messengers and a bride for His coming.’

<sup>16</sup> *AF* 1.1 (Sep, 1906), p. 1; 1.7 (Apr, 1907), p. 1; 1.8 (May, 1907), p. 3; 1.11 (Oct, 1907), p. 3; 2.13 (May, 1908), p. 4.

<sup>17</sup> *AF* 1.4 (Dec, 1906), p. 1.

<sup>18</sup> *AF* 1.5 (Jan, 1907), p. 2.

<sup>19</sup> *AF* 1.1 (Sep, 1906), p. 2.

list of beliefs in *The Apostolic Faith* appears under the heading: ‘The principles of the doctrine of Christ’. The list includes:

1. Repentance
2. Faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ
3. Water baptism
4. Sanctification
5. The baptism with the Holy Spirit
6. Second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ
7. Final white throne judgment<sup>20</sup>

The preaching of Christ’s birth, death, resurrection, and second coming was extended naturally to include

His reigning in His millennial kingdom, and His white throne judgment, and then the new heavens and earth and the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, when He shall have put all enemies under His feet and He shall reign eternally, and we shall abide with Him forever and ever.<sup>21</sup>

The following testimony of a reader from England reveals a similar integration of eschatology within Christology, expressed in a holistic spirituality:

On the evening of our next united gathering for prayer and waiting, revelation after revelation was given of the Lamb; the glory of the Lamb, the power of the Lamb, the victory of the Lamb, the marriage supper of the Lamb, and the reign of the Lamb with His glorified bride. I knew from that moment that Christ Jesus was on the throne of my heart as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and that His purpose was to demonstrate the Lamb life through me.<sup>22</sup>

### **C. The Bride of Christ and the Marriage Supper**

The most frequent and consistently applied biblical metaphor used in reference to the coming of Jesus in *The Apostolic Faith* is that of the bride of Christ viewed in the contexts of the parable of the ten virgins (Mt. 25.1-13) and the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19.9). This complex of images provided a comprehensive framework within which to connect the new understanding of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, the spiritual experiences of the believer, and anticipated future fulfillment. In the eschatology of Azusa Street, the baptism in the Holy Spirit was ‘the real type’ of the ‘double portion’ of oil obtained by the wise virgins in the parable of the ten virgins. Thus, only those who were baptized in the Spirit were thought to be prepared to meet the coming Bridegroom and

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<sup>20</sup> *AF* 1.11 (Oct, 1907), p. 4.

<sup>21</sup> *AF* 1.6 (Oct, 1907), p. 7.

<sup>22</sup> *AF* 1.11 (Oct, 1907), p. 2. Cf. also *AF* 1.6 (Feb-Mar, 1907), p. 7.

attend the marriage supper.<sup>23</sup> A.G. Johnson wrote: ‘Please tell the saints of the Lord that Christ is coming soon and that the time is very short. Jesus is looking for His bride, a few out from the body, the church, the chosen ones, the first fruits to God and unto the Lamb, the wise virgins who have oil in their vessels with their lamps’.<sup>24</sup> Mrs T.M. Rist reported a vision in which she was handed a dazzling garment and understood it to be ‘the wedding garment’. She noted, ‘It was revealed to me that this “latter rain” was getting people ready for the “Marriage Supper of the Lamb,” and this is the time when the wise virgins are getting the oil in their vessels with their lamps’.<sup>25</sup> Membership in the bride of Christ and participation in the marriage supper were not merely theological labels, but were integral to the lived reality of those who professed Spirit baptism. Lillian Garr noted, ‘He longs for a bride who shares both His sufferings and joy. I want to enter into His own heart and feel as He felt, letting His joy be my joy, His sorrow my sorrow.’<sup>26</sup> Similarly, G.B. Cashwell closed a letter to the readers of *The Apostolic Faith* with the words, ‘I long to see you all in life, but if not I will meet you at the marriage supper of the Lamb’.<sup>27</sup>

In an article entitled, ‘Behold the Bridegroom Cometh!’ based upon Mt. 25.1-13, the bride of Christ metaphor (wise virgins—oil—marriage supper) is central in William Seymour’s explanation of the sequence of future events. I quote at length:

Christ is speaking in this parable about the church and its condition at His coming. Many precious souls today are not looking for the return of their Lord, and they will be found in the same condition as the five foolish virgins... They think they have enough [oil]. They have some of God’s love in their souls, but they have not the double portion of it. The thing they need is oil in their vessels with their lamps. It is just as plain as can be. Dearly beloved, the Scripture says, ‘Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ Rev. 19, 9. So they are blessed that have the call. Those that will be permitted to enter in are those who are justified, sanctified, and filled with the Holy Ghost—sealed unto the day of redemption. O may God stir up His waiting bride everywhere to get oil

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<sup>23</sup> Seymour makes this clear in *AF* 1.5 (Jan, 1907), p. 2: ‘Dearly beloved, the only people that will meet our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and go with Him into the marriage supper of the Lamb, are the wise virgins—not only saved and sanctified, with pure and clean hearts, but having the baptism with the Holy Ghost. The others we find will not be prepared. They have some oil in their lamps but they have not the double portion of His Holy Spirit.’ Cf. also *AF* 1.3 (Nov, 1906), p. 4; 1.6 (Feb-Mar, 1907), p. 6.

<sup>24</sup> *AF* 1.5 (Jan, 1907), p. 3.

<sup>25</sup> *AF* 1.10 (Sep, 1907), p. 4.

<sup>26</sup> *AF* 1.9 (Jun-Sep, 1907), p. 4.

<sup>27</sup> *AF* 1.8 (May, 1907), p. 1.

in their vessels with their lamps that they may enter into the marriage supper... Those that are not ready at the rapture will be left to go through the awful tribulation that is coming upon the earth. The wise virgins will be at the marriage supper and spend the time of the great tribulation with the Lord Jesus... It seems that people will be able to buy oil during the rapture. It seems that the Spirit will still be here on earth and that they could get it, but it will be too late for the marriage supper... Those that get left in the rapture and still prove faithful to God and do not receive the mark of the beast, though they will have to suffer martyrdom, will be raised to reign with Christ... But we that are caught up to the marriage supper of the Lamb will escape the plagues that are coming on the earth.<sup>28</sup>

An unsigned article that shares many characteristics with Seymour's signed contributions continues these thoughts,<sup>29</sup> adding that 'nothing but holy people will meet the Lord Jesus in the skies, when He comes in the rapture'.<sup>30</sup>

If the baptism of the Holy Spirit was discerned to be the identifying mark of the bride of Christ, this means that sanctification, Spirit baptism, and the anticipation of attending the bridal supper were integrated within a continuum of spiritual experience. This integration was supported by means of language used consistently within the periodical that denotes spiritual experience in terms of direction: sanctification required '*going down*' into spiritual humility, forsaking all claims of self-identity; Spirit baptism resulted from '*coming through*' into a new spiritual identity, thus becoming a member of the bride of Christ; and future hope entailed the anticipation of '*rising up*' into spiritual fulfillment to meet the Lord in the air to go to the marriage supper.

#### **D. Baptism in the Spirit as the Seal of God in the Forehead**

Another prominent image used in *The Apostolic Faith* to refer to the baptism in the Holy Spirit is that of the seal of God in the forehead.<sup>31</sup> In a clear reference to Rev. 7.1-3, Seymour wrote, 'I am so glad that the Lord is holding back the winds until the angel has sealed all of the saints of the living God in their foreheads, the

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<sup>28</sup> *AF* 1.5 (Jan, 1907), p. 2.

<sup>29</sup> Robeck, *The Azusa Street Mission and Revival*, p. 116-19, notes that several unsigned contributions to *The Apostolic Faith* may indeed have originated from the hand of Seymour.

<sup>30</sup> *AF* 1.10 (Sep, 1907), p. 4. In a clear example of the discerning process, the author notes, 'Those that have no light on the baptism with the Holy Ghost but were sanctified will have part in the first resurrection.' This implies that once a person knows about Spirit baptism, he or she is responsible to receive it in order to attend the marriage supper.

<sup>31</sup> *AF* 1.4 (Dec, 1906), p. 2; 1.5 (Jan, 1907), p. 2; 1.6 (Feb-Mar 1907), pp. 1, 6; 1.9 (Jun-Sep, 1907), pp. 1, 4; 2.13 (Jan, 1908), p. 2.

baptism of the Holy Ghost'.<sup>32</sup> Likening Spirit baptism to the writing of God upon the stone tablets stored in the holy of holies, one unidentified writer commented, 'When we are baptized with the Holy Spirit we are sealed in the forehead until His coming'.<sup>33</sup> Consistent with other aspects of spirituality at Azusa Street, this sealing was not understood positionally (as a kind of eternal security), but experientially (as a mark of character): 'This oil keeps us pure and sweet and preserved. He also seals you with the Holy Spirit of God unto the day of redemption. Eph. 4:30. He seals you to keep anything from getting in that would sour or embitter'.<sup>34</sup> Another writer added, 'God wants you to wear this seal, and not the badges of men and devils'.<sup>35</sup> Having been sealed, the waiting bride will be snatched away to the marriage supper. Then, 'the awful black night of tribulation as the black night of Egypt will come upon all the world'.<sup>36</sup>

The writer of an unsigned article entitled, 'Full Overcomers—Rev. 14',<sup>37</sup> expanded this complex of images to include the 'man child' of Revelation 12 and the 144,000 of Revelation 14. In an apparent symbolic treatment of the number, the 144,000 that appear with the Lamb on Mount Zion (Rev 14.1) are identified as 'full overcomers' who were ready to go in the rapture with Christ to the marriage supper. As the bride of Christ, they are 'represented' as the 'man child' who came from the Church and is 'caught up' to the throne of God (Rev. 12.5).<sup>38</sup> Continuing in Revelation 14, the writer concludes that this group is sanctified, for 'they are virgins'; they are filled with the Holy Spirit, for 'they follow the Lamb' (v.4); and they are kept from evil, for they 'are without fault before the throne of God' (v. 5). Only the 'full overcomers', that is 'those that are washed in the Blood, made holy and sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise' will be 'ready for the rapture'. The time of tribulation following the 'catching away of the bride,' will be

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<sup>32</sup> *AF* 1.9 (Jun-Sep, 1907), p. 4; Cf. also *AF* 1.5 (Jan, 1907), p. 2: 'The Holy Ghost is sifting out a people that are getting on the robes of righteousness and the seal in their foreheads. The angel is holding the winds now till all the children of God are sealed in their foreheads with the Father's name. Then the wrath of God is going to be poured out.'

<sup>33</sup> *AF* 1.4 (Dec, 1906), p. 2.

<sup>34</sup> *AF* 1.6 (Feb-Mar, 1907), p. 7.

<sup>35</sup> *AF* 1.9 (Jun-Sep, 1907), p. 1. The writer identifies 'badges of men and devils' with 'man-made creeds' and worldly associations.

<sup>36</sup> *AF* 1.9 (Jun-Sep, 1907), p. 4.

<sup>37</sup> *AF* 1.12 (Jan, 1908), p. 2. Although it is unsigned, this article shares many stylistic characteristics with other articles attributed to William Seymour.

<sup>38</sup> Another reference to the church bringing forth the 'man child' also appears in *AF* 1.11 (Oct, 1907), p. 4.

characterized by the preaching of the gospel to all nations (v. 6).<sup>39</sup> Although not present at the marriage supper of the Lamb, those who are faithful to Jesus and do not bow down to the Antichrist during the tribulation will receive spiritual protection. The writer draws from Rev. 12.6 to conclude that during the tribulation, ‘the Lord will feed the church and protect her from the face of the serpent’. The Church is warned in Rev. 14.9-11 that those who worship the beast will be ‘tormented day and night’; but it is encouraged in vv. 12-13 that those who keep the faith unto death will be blessed.

### **E. Suffering and Reigning**

Azusa Street believers used another broad stroke of thought to connect present reality with the anticipated future beyond the marriage supper and tribulation: suffering in the present is prerequisite to reigning with Christ in the future. To suffer with Christ means to ‘bear all things and keep the faith of Jesus in our hearts.’<sup>40</sup> According to a written prophecy by Mary Galmond, Christians are to prepare for wars, pestilences, floods, and earthquakes, and to be ready for the coming of the Lord. She wrote, ‘The time is coming when the poor will be oppressed and the Christians can neither buy nor sell unless they have “the mark of the beast”,’ which mark she associated with labor unions.<sup>41</sup> Seymour believed that only the faithful who overcome ‘the world, the flesh, and the devil’ would be worthy to reign ‘on this earth with our Lord’.<sup>42</sup> One exhortation enjoins, ‘Our reigning time will come when Jesus comes in great power from the throne. Until then we are to be beaten, to be spit upon, and mocked. We are to be like His son.’<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> In an apparent effort to discern the meaning of Rev. 14.6, the writer commented, ‘It *seems* that after the rapture, or catching away of the bride, that the Gospel will still be preached on the earth to the people that will be left and were not ready to go in to the marriage supper’ (emphasis added).

<sup>40</sup> *AF* 1.11 (Oct, 1907), p. 3.

<sup>41</sup> *AF* 1.2 (Oct, 1906), p. 2. Galmond predicted that the lack of food for the poor will cause rioting and bloodshed. The imagery in her prophecy echoes that of Rev. 14.17-20. Seymour, *AF* 1.12 (Jan, 1908), p. 2, mentions the mark of the beast in reference to the time of tribulation after the rapture, at which time many Christians that are not taken to the marriage supper will be martyred for resisting the Antichrist. In an article concerning the spiritual condition of married persons and parents, Seymour, *AF* 1.12 (Jan, 1908), p. 3, treats the tribulation of Mt. 24.19-21 as a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE, and Christ’s concern for mothers during that event.

<sup>42</sup> *AF* 1.11 (Oct, 1907), p. 3.

<sup>43</sup> *AF* 1.9 (Jun-Sep, 1907), p. 2.

The metaphor of reigning with Christ dominates the descriptions of the millennium and beyond. Those who are ready at the rapture will come back with Christ on white horses to help him execute judgment on the earth and make way for the millennial kingdom. The millennium will be a time of reigning with Christ ‘over unglorified humanity’ for ‘a thousand years in a jubilee of peace’.<sup>44</sup> In the millennium, the bride will ‘sit with the glorified Christ in His throne as His queen, the Lamb’s wife,’ helping him rule

this old world ... when righteousness shall cover the earth as waters cover the sea. Then afterwards at the white throne judgment, we shall sit with Him and judge the world. Then after the new heavens and new earth, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom into the Father’s hands, we shall reign with Him throughout eternity. O beloved, are you ready?<sup>45</sup>

## **F. Old Testament Typology**

Several passages from the OT were treated in *The Apostolic Faith* as ‘types’ or prefigures of the full salvation of the bride of Christ and of Christ’s coming. In an article by William Seymour entitled, ‘Rebecca, Type of the Bride of Christ—Gen. 24’, the search of Eliezer to find a bride for Isaac among Abraham’s kindred typifies the search of the Holy Spirit for a bride for Christ ‘among His brethren, the sanctified’.<sup>46</sup> Seymour concludes, ‘Now we are living in the eventide of this dispensation, when the Holy Spirit is leading us, Christ’s bride, to meet Him in the clouds’.

An unsigned article, ‘Old Testament Feasts Fulfilled in Our Souls Today’, explains that the four feasts of the OT ‘typify complete salvation’.<sup>47</sup> Passover, First Fruits, and Pentecost are types of justification, sanctification, and Spirit baptism, respectively. The Feast of Trumpets, as the ‘feast of the full harvest’ ‘typifies the coming and reigning of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, when He shall spread the tabernacle and feed us’.

Noah’s ark is viewed as ‘a type of the coming of Jesus’. One writer explained:

Just as when the flood arose, the people of God were lifted by the ark toward the sky, so when Jesus Christ, who is our Ark, shall appear, we

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<sup>44</sup> *AF* 1.5 (Jan, 1907), p. 2.

<sup>45</sup> *AF* 1.10 (Sep, 1907), p. 4. Note that the focus here is on the future experiences of the bride of Christ.

<sup>46</sup> *AF* 1.6 (Feb-Mar, 1907), p. 2.

<sup>47</sup> *AF* 1.9 (Jun-Sep, 1907), p. 2.

shall also appear with Him in glory. Then as the ark came back and rested on Mt. Ararat, so when the Lord Jesus comes back, we shall stand with Him on Mt. Olivet. Christ comes and gets His saints before the great tribulation, which corresponds with the flood. The same conditions are prevailing now as in the days of Noah. (Matt 24:37)<sup>48</sup>

### **G. Apocalyptic Spirituality and the Foretaste of the Future**

The holistic worldview of the Azusa Street participants may be called apocalyptic in that the realms of heaven and earth were often perceived to be intermingled.

While they certainly believed in heaven as a future state, they also experienced an immediate sense of ‘heaven below’.<sup>49</sup> Nellie Burnwell wrote, ‘It is heaven to go to heaven in’.<sup>50</sup> G.B. Cashwell testified, ‘Heaven seems to be nearer every day. I hear the music. I see the city.’<sup>51</sup> Another participant testified, ‘These great blessings have come upon the lowly and humble. Many have seen visions of Jesus and of heavenly fire and the interpretations speak of the soon coming of Jesus’.<sup>52</sup> Maggie Geddis reported a vision of ‘the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven, and the rainbow-encircled throne, just a portion of that given in Revelation’.<sup>53</sup> A vision of hell convinced Thomas Junk that hell is a literal place, and that he should preach it that way.<sup>54</sup> Two believers in Minneapolis reported receiving identical visions of ‘the New Jerusalem, the table spread, and many of the saints there’.<sup>55</sup> Such visions were usually accompanied by exhortations to be prepared for Jesus’ coming. Visions and dreams were also subject to the discerning process of being ‘tried’ or ‘proven’ by Scripture.<sup>56</sup>

Within such apocalyptic spirituality, images in the book of Revelation, such as the river of life and leaves for healing in Rev. 22.1-2, were sometimes used to

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<sup>48</sup> *AF* 1.9 (Jun-Sep, 1907), p. 4. Noah’s ark is also treated as a type of the rapture in the article, ‘Full Overcomers’, noted above, that appeared in *AF* 1.12 (Jan, 1908), p. 2.

<sup>49</sup> *AF* 1.4 (Dec, 1906), p. 2. Another writer commented that ‘heaven and earth came together’ in a recent baptismal service. *AF* 1.2 (Oct, 1906), p. 4.

<sup>50</sup> *AF* 1.6 (Feb-Mar, 1907), p. 8.

<sup>51</sup> *AF* 1.7 (Apr, 1907), p. 4.

<sup>52</sup> *AF* 2.13 (May, 1908), p. 1.

<sup>53</sup> *AF* 1.6 (Feb-Mar, 1907), p. 4.

<sup>54</sup> *AF* 1.3 (Nov, 1906), p. 4. Junk spoke of hell as a warning to ‘those who scorn this holiness and baptism’, including religious people. Annihilation was repudiated because in the story of Lazarus and the rich man, the rich man was not burned up in hell, but was ‘tormented by this flame’. Cf. *AF* 1.4 (Dec, 1906), p. 1; 1.6 (Feb-Mar, 1907), p. 2.

<sup>55</sup> *AF* 1.11 (Oct, 1907), p. 4.

<sup>56</sup> *AF* 1.6 (Feb-Mar, 1907), p. 1.

describe present spiritual experiences.<sup>57</sup> The terminology found in Alberta Hall's testimony is commonplace in *The Apostolic Faith*: 'The third night I lay under the power of God for about three hours. I was drunk on *the wine of the kingdom*' (emphasis added).<sup>58</sup> Such present kingdom language is most often associated with the baptism of the Holy Spirit as 'the earnest of our inheritance' or as 'a foretaste of heaven'. Concerning Spirit baptism, one writer commented, 'People do not have to travail and agonize for the baptism, for when our work ceases then God comes. We cease from our own works, which is the very type of the millennium.'<sup>59</sup> Joseph Grainger looked back to the time he spent at Azusa Street as 'a foretaste of the glad millennial day'.<sup>60</sup>

## H. Power for the Present Mission

This apocalyptic vision impelled the recipients on a world-wide mission to spread the 'full gospel' message because 'the time is short'.<sup>61</sup> The global aspect of the mission was captured in the following announcement: 'One token of the Lord's coming is that He is melting all races and nations together, and they are filled with the power and glory of God. He is baptizing by one spirit into one body and making up a people that will be ready to meet Him when He comes.'<sup>62</sup> *The Apostolic Faith* soon became an international paper as reports of revival from across the nation and from other countries such as England, Sweden, India, Norway, and Africa were published.<sup>63</sup> In an interesting reference to Rev. 10.1-7, the commission of those who were Spirit-baptized to evangelize the world would not cease 'till the angel stands with one foot on the land and one on the sea and

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<sup>57</sup> *AF* 1.4 (Dec, 1906), p. 1. To partake of the fruit of the tree of life, the believer is encouraged to 'launch out by faith into the river'.

<sup>58</sup> *AF* 1.6 (Feb-Mar, 1907), p. 8.

<sup>59</sup> *AF* 1.11 (Oct, 1907), p. 1.

<sup>60</sup> *AF* 1.12 (Jan, 1908), p. 4.

<sup>61</sup> *AF* 1.1 (Sep, 1906), p. 1.

<sup>62</sup> *AF* 1.6 (Feb-Mar, 1907), p. 7.

<sup>63</sup> The staff of *The Apostolic Faith* viewed the paper itself as an evangelistic tool. See *AF* 1.3 (Nov, 1906), p. 3: 'This Gospel must go, for the time is short... As workers cannot get to the fields fast enough, the Lord is using the paper.' Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing*, pp. 70-72, describes the importance of publishing in early Pentecostalism, especially as a means of spiritual formation. Cf. also R.J. Stephens, "'There is Magic in Print': The Holiness-Pentecostal Press and the Origins of Southern Pentecostalism", [Internet], <<http://jsr.as.wvu.edu/fsu/2002/fsu/stephens.htm>>. [Accessed August 2010]

declares that time shall no longer be'.<sup>64</sup> In a paraphrase of Mt. 24.14, the editor of *The Apostolic Faith* summarized it best: 'This Gospel, the full Gospel of Jesus must be preached in all the earth for a witness then shall the end come.'<sup>65</sup>

## **I. Summary and Conclusion**

This brief overview of *The Apostolic Faith* has highlighted the holistic nature of Pentecostal spirituality as the starting point of the study of eschatology within early Pentecostalism. Eschatology, along with many other issues, was caught up into an intense discerning process in the light of the outpouring of the Spirit. Eschatology became essential to their philosophy of history as adherents viewed the early twentieth-century outpouring as 'the latter rain', creating time boundaries for a 'Holy Ghost dispensation'. More than anything, the outpouring at Azusa Street signaled the soon return of Jesus. Within this large framework, baptism in the Holy Spirit was discerned to be the defining mark of membership in the bride of Christ. Using the parable of the ten virgins (Mt. 25.1-13) and the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19.9) as controlling metaphors, the earliest Pentecostal witnesses weaved eschatology into their daily experience of the Spirit by envisioning a continuum of spiritual advancement: justification, sanctification, Spirit baptism, marriage supper of the Lamb, reigning with Christ in the millennium and afterward for eternity. The secondary metaphor of Spirit baptism as the seal of God in the forehead (Rev. 7.1-3) and the consequent identification of the bride of Christ with the sealing of the 144,000 (Rev. 14.1-5) supported the primary vision by providing a complementary image consistent with the first: the experience of baptism in the Spirit had personal eschatological significance. Moreover, the apocalyptic nature of Spirit baptism had multiple ramifications. Being viewed as a foretaste of the future, it also meant that the future was near. Thus, the time was short to do the work of global evangelism.

This assessment of eschatology in the earliest of the Pentecostal written sources calls into question previous historical analyses which posit that early Pentecostal eschatology was merely a modification of classical dispensationalism. In the light of *The Apostolic Faith*, this clearly is not the case. Rather, the

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<sup>64</sup> *AF* 1.9 (Jun-Sep, 1907), p. 2. The writer does not comment further, leaving the question open as to whether this was a general reference to 'the end of time', or whether the angel's appearance will signal the rapture of the bride.

<sup>65</sup> *AF* 1.10 (Sep, 1907), p. 1.

eschatology presented here is shaped more by the holistic and apocalyptic nature of early Pentecostal spirituality than by classical dispensational categories.<sup>66</sup> First, the OT was not compartmentalized but was viewed as a rich source of texts that ‘typified’ early Pentecostal soteriology and eschatology. Second, texts from the book of Revelation assigned to the future by classical dispensationalists were read at Azusa Street with present-day applicability. Third, the teaching of the rapture was not primary but was molded by the bride of Christ complex of metaphors mentioned above, becoming supplementary to the event of the marriage supper. Fourth, the Church was not defined in terms of its distinction from Israel but was seen as the group from which the bride of Christ would emerge. Though excluded from the marriage supper, the Church would continue in the care of Jesus during the tribulation. Fifth, the millennium was not viewed as a fulfillment of promises to the Jews but was characterized as a time when faithful Christians who suffered now would reign with Christ and help judge the world. Immersed within a different worldview, the Pentecostals of Azusa Street did not merely modify the script of classical dispensationalism, but departed from it significantly.

## II. Early Southern Voices: *The Bridegroom’s Messenger*

### Introduction

With its first issue appearing in October 1907, *The Bridegroom’s Messenger* became a major voice of early Pentecostalism in the Southern United States. Published in Atlanta, Georgia, G.B. Cashwell served as editor until June 1908, when Elizabeth A. Sexton, a prominent member of the Pentecostal Mission in Atlanta, became editor and proprietor, allowing Cashwell to devote more time to evangelism. Cashwell had attended the Azusa Street revival and brought the Pentecostal message to the South. Through his influence, many Holiness groups became Pentecostal.<sup>67</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, that the early issues of *The Bridegroom’s Messenger* reflect the themes and interests of *The Apostolic Faith*. Under the leadership of Elizabeth Sexton, however, the paper began taking on a distinctive character, especially as the Wesleyan Holiness stream of the Pentecostal movement dealt with the Finished Work controversy, the New Issue

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<sup>66</sup> My conclusions here support those of Dayton, *Theological Roots*, pp. 146-47.

<sup>67</sup> H.V. Synan, ‘Gaston Barnabas Cashwell,’ *NIDPCM*, pp. 457-58.

(Oneness doctrine), and the Great War. Like *The Apostolic Faith*, the periodical contains a broad representation of thought, both nationally (focused on the South) and internationally. The survey that follows gives a panoramic view of early Pentecostal eschatology as it developed from 1907 through 1920.

### A. Discernment and Pentecostal Hermeneutics

As the Pentecostal movement evolved and various doctrinal and political issues arose, the process of discernment that was evident in the pages of *The Apostolic Faith* continued unabated in *The Bridegroom's Messenger*. Of course as the years advanced, the issues, as well as the process of discernment itself, became more complicated. Along with eschatology, these issues included missionary tongues,<sup>68</sup> unity and organization among Pentecostals,<sup>69</sup> discernment of false teachings,<sup>70</sup> how to 'think right concerning the war problem',<sup>71</sup> and the handling of serpents and fire.<sup>72</sup>

At Azusa Street the process of discerning a legitimate eschatology consisted of bringing relevant Biblical passages into conversation with spiritual experiences that flowed from a holistic spirituality (as noted above). This distinct Pentecostal hermeneutic is also evident in *The Bridegroom's Messenger*. For example, Mrs E.S. Hubbell views the Lamb in Rev. 5.1-9 as a model for the spiritual experience of believers. She writes,

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<sup>68</sup> Although the missionaries of Azusa Street were confident that the tongues-speech that accompanied Spirit baptism would allow them to speak the native languages among foreign nations, the question of 'missionary tongues' rapidly became an issue requiring discernment. G.B. Cashwell concluded that the tongues that accompanied Spirit baptism was not the same as the gift of tongues, which he equated with missionary tongues. He encouraged Pentecostals to pray for the 'gifts of tongues', *TBM* 1.8 (Feb 15, 1908), p. 1. Others admitted that they may have been mistaken and had learned their lesson, and yet 'the good outweighed any blunders', and 'the work was still being done', *TBM* 1.9 (Mar 1, 1908) p. 1; 1.11 (Apr 1, 1908) p. 2. The idea of missionary tongues soon disappeared, and the philosophy of missions that eventually developed coincided with a developing premillennial eschatology: the purpose of missions was to gather a remnant 'out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation', for 'a witness unto (not conversion of) all nations', *TBM* 7.162 (Sep 15, 1914), p. 1.

<sup>69</sup> Most argued against forming new Pentecostal denominations, *TBM* 2.44 (Aug 15, 1909), p. 1, 4; 5.103 (Feb 1, 1912) p. 1; 5.110 (May 15, 1912), p. 3, and some saw unity among the movement as an integral element in their eschatological vision, *TBM* 4.83 (Apr 1, 1911), p. 1; 4.90 (Jul 15, 1911), p. 4. In spite of this majority voice, new denominations did arise mostly as a result of doctrinal differences.

<sup>70</sup> False doctrine hindered unity among Pentecostals, *TBM* 4.83 (Apr 1, 1911), p. 1, and was considered a primary sign of the last days, *TBM* 7.144 (Nov 15, 1913), p. 4.

<sup>71</sup> *TBM* 7.162 (Sep 15, 1914), p. 1. The Great War seemed to solidify previous understandings rather than to define new ones, on which see below.

<sup>72</sup> *TBM* 12.212 (Apr, 1919), p. 1.

There is such a mighty lesson here, that only the Spirit can make it plain... May we, having the seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, look to receive the seven horns or power, because like the blessed Lamb, we have become worthy of power, we shall then be where God will dare to trust us with power, the 'all power'. God ... will, as we decrease in self, give us one eye after another with which to see. He will give us, one by one, the horns of power, and in meekness and humility we should accept and use what he gives us...<sup>73</sup>

Max Wood Moorhead, missionary to India, testifies to the current relevance of the proclamation that believers overcame the great dragon in Rev. 12.11: 'Over and over and over again, the Spirit of God has illuminated this Word in reference to the situation here in India.'<sup>74</sup>

In *The Bridegroom's Messenger* current social and political events were brought increasingly into the hermeneutical conversation, though without supplanting spiritual experience. Primary among current events considered were the return of the Jews to Palestine and the Great War (July 1914 through November 1918). Visions and dreams also continued to be a significant factor in the discerning process, sometimes reflecting—sometimes shaping—current beliefs.

The editorial policy of Elizabeth Sexton indicates clearly that eschatology was a major issue that continued to remain open for discernment. Her inclusion of articles reprinted from various Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal papers,<sup>75</sup> as well as articles with which she did not agree fully (prefaced by statements to the reader to weigh the contents for themselves),<sup>76</sup> shows that a wide range of sources were intentionally placed on the table in the discerning process. The resulting variety of views presented supports the conclusion that no single view had become solidified by the end of 1920. Sexton's inclusive editorial practice, along with the sustained reflection on political events, were the predominant factors that both

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<sup>73</sup> *TBM* 6.133 (May 15, 1913), p. 4.

<sup>74</sup> *TBM* 5.100 (Dec 15, 1911), p. 1. Note the struggle between a contemporary and a futurist hermeneutical model within Moorhead as he continues, 'I do not lose sight of the primary application of Rev. 12:11, that is to say, primarily, this specific promise of overcoming by the blood of the Lamb is for the time of the last great conflict in the heavenlies and when the Devil is seeking to prevent the birth of the Man-Child, that company of overcomers who, by the power of the Holy Ghost, will be caught up unto God in His throne—caught up to meet the Lord in the air at His second coming. But should we be surprised if the Devil's last assault is on man's mortal bodies?'

<sup>75</sup> Many articles appear from *Our Hope*, published by A.C. Gaebelein, a noted classical dispensationalist of the day. Joseph A. Seiss, dispensationalist Lutheran pastor and author, is also referenced frequently.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. e.g. *TBM* 6.137 (Aug 1, 1913), p. 4.

illuminated and generated this variety in early Pentecostal eschatology presented in *The Bridegroom's Messenger*.

## **B. The Bride of Christ as Overcomer**

The very name of this periodical orients the reader within the framework of its predominant eschatological metaphor: the bride of Christ. While the Scripture printed under the masthead (Mt. 25.5-6) references the parable of the ten virgins, the most frequent identification of the bride of Christ in *The Bridegroom's Messenger* is that of 'overcomer'. As early as March 1908, Cashwell reprinted portions of a tract by A.S. Worrell in which this idea is introduced. Worrell makes clear his belief that Spirit baptism in itself is not sufficient for one to belong to 'the bride of Christ, or to the full overcomer'.<sup>77</sup> He equates becoming an overcomer with 'passing through the crucifixion'. These saints alone will compose 'the ruling force with Christ in the age to come'.<sup>78</sup>

The bride as overcomer became a common and consistent theme in numerous articles through 1920,<sup>79</sup> but especially in Sexton's editorials. Sexton focuses her articulation around Rev. 3.21, the promise made to the overcomers at the church of Laodicea to 'sit with Christ on His throne'. The importance of this passage for Sexton was twofold. First, having accepted that the letters to the seven churches represent 'different divisions of the gospel age down to the present time', Sexton believed that this promise is uniquely given to the bride of Christ because it is the

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<sup>77</sup> This understanding stands in contrast to that found in *The Apostolic Faith*, where the definition of an overcomer is limited to someone who is justified, sanctified, and baptized in the Spirit. Cf. *AF* 1.12 (Jan, 1908), p. 2, and the comments of Sexton, *TBM* 2.42 (Jul 15, 1909), p. 1: 'To receive the Pentecostal baptism means much in these preparation days, but only those who will "press on" and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints shall reach the required readiness for the rapture. Deeper and deeper, richer and fuller will be the experience of those who will make up the bride.' E.T. Slaybaugh, *TBM* 6.129 (Mar 15, 1913), p. 4; 6.130 (Apr 1, 1913), p. 4, contends that the bride will be distinguished as those who are 'conformed to the image of His son' by sharing in the sufferings of Christ.

<sup>78</sup> *TBM* 1.9 (Mar 1, 1908), p. 4. This issue also includes a guest editorial by Elizabeth Sexton in which she discusses the inadequacy of the idea of missionary tongues. The process of discernment concerning the limitations of tongues-speech seems to correspond to the conclusion that Spirit baptism in itself does not ensure membership in the bride of Christ, though this connection is never explicitly made.

<sup>79</sup> Mrs E.A. Kirby, *TBM* 2.26 (Nov 15, 1908), p. 1, exhorts, 'Let us ever watch and pray that we may be full overcomers, and be ready when Jesus comes.' Cf. also *TBM* 3.61 (May 1, 1910), p. 1; 5.100 (Dec 15, 1911), p. 1; 5.116 (Aug 15, 1912), p. 3; 7.141 (Oct 1, 1913), p. 4; 8.172 (Jul 1, 1915), p. 1; 12.212 (Apr, 1919), p. 1; 13.222 (Apr-May, 1920), p. 4, *et al.*

‘promise to the overcomers of this [Laodicean] age!’<sup>80</sup> Second, Sexton reasoned from the wording of this passage, that for believers to overcome ‘even as [Christ] also overcame’, they must go beyond mere sanctification, and overcome ‘the natural man’, even as Christ had only ‘the pure good humanity which He put on for our sakes, to overcome’.<sup>81</sup> She states, ‘While God has freely given us all things richly to enjoy as blessings from His loving hand, the Bride of Christ will receive none of these temporal blessings as a satisfying portion.’<sup>82</sup> Many believed, ultimately, that the overcomers would ‘overcome’ death by means of the rapture.<sup>83</sup>

That the bride of Christ awaited ‘completion’ of some kind before being translated to heaven was an idea found in several articles. Miss E. Sisson notes, ‘The advent of our Lord is not a time question but a character question, fixed by the full maturity of the first fruits to God. It is when it can be announced throughout creation, the Bride hath made herself ready, that the Marriage of the Lamb will come.’<sup>84</sup> Max Wood Moorhead writes, ‘Surely when a company of overcomers have been brought into the unity of the faith, the manchild of Rev. 12 will be born and caught up to God in His throne.’<sup>85</sup> Another writer claimed that the bride ‘shall consist of an elect number, and when the last number is added, which may be at any moment, he will call her to meet Him in the air’.<sup>86</sup> Mrs E.V. Baker explains, ‘That is why God wants the evangelization of the world before the end, to perfect the number of this company. He wants to bring up representatives of the whole race.’<sup>87</sup> George Montgomery adds, ‘He can not come because He is waiting to have some members of His bride out of these heathen countries.’<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> *TBM* 2.34 (Mar 15, 1909), p. 1. Here, Sexton follows Joseph A. Seiss (d. 1904) in his commentary on the Apocalypse, a work that first appeared in 1865, went through multiple editions, and is still available as a reprinted classic. Seiss’ argument is more nuanced than Sexton’s representation in that he emphasizes the application of the seven letters to the universal church more than their representation of seven church ages. Cf. J.A. Seiss, *The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation* (1900; New York: Cosimo Classics, 2007), pp. 76-86. ‘This Laodicean age’ became a phrase commonly used by Sexton to refer to the final age of the church. Sexton’s emphasis on the bride of Christ as overcomer seems to be her own construction. Cf. *TBM* 5.107 (Apr 1, 1912), p. 1.

<sup>81</sup> *TBM* 8.167 (Feb 1, 1915), p. 1.

<sup>82</sup> *TBM* 9.180 (Mar 1, 1916), p. 1.

<sup>83</sup> *TBM* 5.115 (Aug 1, 1912), p. 4; 6.132 (May 1, 1913), p. 1.

<sup>84</sup> *TBM* 5.116 (Aug 15, 1912), p. 3.

<sup>85</sup> *TBM* 5.120 (Nov 1, 1912), p. 4. Moorhead equates the manchild of Revelation 12 with the bride of Christ, who are the full overcomers.

<sup>86</sup> *TBM* 5.109 (May 1, 1912), p. 3.

<sup>87</sup> *TBM* 3.61 (May 1, 1910), p. 1.

<sup>88</sup> *TBM* 8.163 (Oct 1, 1914), p. 3.

A message that remained consistent throughout the timeframe of this investigation was that, along with restoring the gifts of the Spirit to the Church, a primary role of the Holy Spirit is that of preparing the bride for the return of the Bridegroom.<sup>89</sup> An unnamed writer testifies, ‘In my mind this is the key to the present revival, with its “speaking in tongues” and other signs and wonders, that the coming of our blessed Lord is very near, and the Holy Spirit is here working in apostolic fashion to get the bride ready for meeting the Bridegroom.’<sup>90</sup> This understanding is consistent with the scriptural metaphors of the latter rain ripening the harvest<sup>91</sup> and the requirement of oil (as a type of the Holy Spirit) to enter into the marriage supper.<sup>92</sup> Sexton argued that the Holy Spirit prepares both the Body corporately and bodies individually for Christ’s return:

The gifts of the Spirit ... are instruments in the edifying of the Body and in preparing the Body for the rapture at the coming of the Lord... This baptism, or gift of the Spirit has much to do with our physical being. Perhaps with His coming into these temples of clay there has always been a purpose of speedy preparation of the body for the change before the rapture at the coming of the Lord; as He by being already in our spirit prepares us for the Pentecostal baptism.<sup>93</sup>

It should be noted that, alongside this view, the primary role of the Holy Spirit for some was to bring the kingdom of God to the earth now. J.D. Sawders argues that the kingdom of God is present now, especially through the Pentecostal movement.<sup>94</sup> M.W. Plummer situates the latter rain movement within the larger purpose of a reformation of the Church.<sup>95</sup>

Another theme that emerged in *The Bridegroom’s Messenger* with regard to the bride of Christ is that the bride is to be accompanied by ‘a bridal party’ at the marriage supper.<sup>96</sup> Sexton is the first to hint at this view,<sup>97</sup> but it is made explicit by E.H. Blake, who identifies the four living creatures and twenty-four elders of Revelation 5 with the bride of Christ and her attendants respectively, these being

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<sup>89</sup> *TBM* 1.1 (Oct 1, 1907), p. 3; 4.94 (Sep 15, 1911), p. 1; 5.103 (Feb 1, 1912), p. 1; 5.120 (Nov 1, 1912), p. 4; 6.126 (Feb 1, 1913), p. 1; 8.170 (May 1, 1915), p. 1; 13.218 (Nov-Dec 1919), p. 1; 13.219 (Jan, 1920), p. 1.

<sup>90</sup> *TBM* 1.12 (Apr 15, 1908), p. 4.

<sup>91</sup> *TBM* 4.83 (Apr 1, 1911), p. 1; 5.110 (May 15, 1912), p. 3.

<sup>92</sup> *TBM* 1.12 (Apr 15, 1908), p. 3; 2.25 (Nov 1, 1908), p. 2; 3.70 (Sep 15, 1910), p. 1.

<sup>93</sup> *TBM* 7.148 (Jan 15, 1914), p. 1.

<sup>94</sup> *TBM* 5.107 (Apr 1, 1912), p. 4.

<sup>95</sup> *TBM* 5.111 (Jun 1, 1912), p. 3.

<sup>96</sup> Before 1912, the marriage supper is understood to occur at the beginning of the tribulation. Cf. *TBM* 5.99 (Dec 1, 1911), p. 4. After the development of the idea of several companies accompanying the bride, the marriage supper is moved to the end of the tribulation.

<sup>97</sup> *TBM* 4.88 (Jun 15, 1911), p. 1; 5.95 (Oct 1, 1911), p. 1.

the only two groups who escape the tribulation. Various ‘other companies’ are ‘caught up’ throughout the tribulation, ‘till all get there, and then in chapter 19:7, the marriage is announced...’<sup>98</sup> From January 1913 through April 1916, E.T. Slaybaugh contributed a series of articles in which he walks the reader through the meticulous details of seven companies that ultimately will attend the marriage supper.<sup>99</sup> Based on her reading of Ps. 45.13-15, Sexton came to believe that ‘Not all who will be in the rapture will be of the Bride of Christ. Many companions and virgins and friends of the Bridegroom will be in the rapture, both of those who are alive and remain till His coming and those who are asleep.’<sup>100</sup>

### C. Rapture, Tribulation, and the Great War

In the early years of *The Bridegroom’s Messenger*, there is continuity of thought with *The Apostolic Faith* concerning the idea of the rapture: it finds meaning only within the dominant metaphor of the bride of Christ and the marriage supper.

After 1912, however, as references to the marriage supper become rare, comments about the rapture increase, especially in conjunction with the tribulation. The rapture becomes assumed as ‘the next greatest event’<sup>101</sup> in history and apparently needed little additional explanation. Scriptural references such as 1 Thess. 4.16-18; Lk. 17.34-35; 21.36; Rev. 3.10; 4.1; and Isa. 26.20 were often quoted but with little exegetical comment. What *was* needed was to be *prepared* for the rapture, as it was the only means of escaping the tribulation. Thus, there appears to be a

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<sup>98</sup> *TBM* 6.121 (Nov 15, 1912), p. 4. The idea that the four living creatures represent the bride of Christ appears several times in *The Bridegroom’s Messenger*. Cf. 3.61 (May 1, 1910), p. 1; 6.121 (Nov 15, 1912), p. 4; 6.122 (Dec 1, 1912), p. 4; 6.126 (Feb 1, 1913), p. 4; 10.188 (Nov 1, 1916), p. 4.

<sup>99</sup> Slaybaugh followed the thought of J.A. Seiss closely throughout the series, quoting verbatim large portions of Seiss’ commentary on the Apocalypse. Slaybaugh reasoned, ‘If all the church were the bride, who would be her “companions?” who would be the “friends?” who would be the “guests?” It is not until “after” (Rev. 19:1) the seventh and last company has been called up into heaven in Rev. 18:4 that “the marriage of the Lamb is come” in Rev. 19:1-3. Though only the first company becomes “the bride, the Lamb’s wife,” yet all seven companies of the church of the firstborn, the entire body of Christ, shall be gathered into heaven before the “marriage,” and shall have the privilege of enjoying “the marriage supper of the Lamb”’ (*TBM* 6.125 [Jan 15, 1913], p. 4). As part of her editorial for 9.184 (Jul 1, 1916), p. 1, Sexton included a portion of a tract by D.M. Pantou in which he explains, ‘All rapture is one in principle, and must ultimately embrace all believers (2 Cor. v. 10)... For rapture, though one in principle and comprehension, is effected in separate and graded installments... The garnering (according to type) is accomplished in a first sheaf (Christ), then in firstfruits, then in harvest, and finally in the “corners of the field,” thus reaped according to ripeness (Lev. 23:10, 17, 22); for all immature grain ripens, sooner or later, in the violent heat ... of the tribulation.’

<sup>100</sup> *TBM* 7.150 (Feb 15, 1914), p. 1. Cf. also *TBM* 6.135 (Jun 15, 1913), p. 1; 8.167 (Feb 1, 1915), p. 1, *et al.*

<sup>101</sup> *TBM* 10.188 (Nov 1, 1916), p. 1.

shift from viewing the rapture as the means to go to the marriage supper to viewing it as the means to escape the tribulation.

The consistent perspective of *The Bridegroom's Messenger* is that not all Christians will be raptured. Generally, only the bride of Christ defined as a full overcomer was thought to be prepared for the rapture. Thus, the same narrowing of criteria to become a member of the bride was applied equally to participants in the rapture.<sup>102</sup> Sanctification and Spirit baptism were minimal requirements.<sup>103</sup> A.S. Copley states, 'We need the Holy Spirit to fit us for the rapture. Power for service is not the primary purpose of the baptism. He seeks to get us in the center of His will. He has a purpose and a place for His own in the ages to come. Our place in the body here determines our place in the body yonder.'<sup>104</sup> Various admonitions for additional preparation include contending earnestly for the faith,<sup>105</sup> doing 'greater works' in order to overcome death,<sup>106</sup> having 'the power of His resurrection life in us,'<sup>107</sup> and being 'conformed to the image of His son'.<sup>108</sup>

All agreed that those who were not prepared would 'miss the rapture'<sup>109</sup> and enter the great tribulation. That a future period of worldwide tribulation was coming was not questioned. A variety of reasons, however, were put forward to explain it.<sup>110</sup> Frank Bartleman, who was in Europe at the beginning of the Great War, believed that 'the church may go half way through the Tribulation' in order that it may be 'purged by the fires of tribulation, to separate it completely unto

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<sup>102</sup> Mary Norton, *TBM* 5.115 (Aug 1, 1912), p. 4, writes, 'Many are saying that only the overcomers will be in the Rapture.'

<sup>103</sup> Miss E. Sisson, *TBM* 5.116 (Aug 15, 1912), p. 3, states, 'For some years I had seen that those who would meet the Lord in the air at His coming were a select company... It followed that those from among the dead could not be released, neither could Christ come, till from among the living there was a company who fulfilled the conditions connected with translation.' She concludes that sanctification and Spirit baptism are required to be prepared. Drawing from the feasts described in Leviticus 23, Sisson notes that the two wave-loaves (vv. 15-17) represent the two companies, one from among the dead and one from among the living, that will be 'Christ's at His coming'.

<sup>104</sup> *TBM* 2.31 (Feb 1, 1909), p. 2. Cf. the comments of A.S. Booth, *TBM* 5.98 (Nov 15, 1911), p. 4: 'We see also that one essential condition to that readiness ... is that every vestige of the righteousness of the flesh, namely of the Old Adam, otherwise expressed of the Cain life, has to be eliminated.'

<sup>105</sup> *TBM* 2.42 (Jul 15, 1909), p.1.

<sup>106</sup> *TBM* 5.115 (Aug 1, 1912), p. 4.

<sup>107</sup> *TBM* 6.129 (Mar 15, 1913), p. 1.

<sup>108</sup> *TBM* 6.129 (Mar 15, 1913), p. 4; 6.170 (Apr 1, 1913), p. 4.

<sup>109</sup> *TBM* 12.215 (Aug, 1919), p. 1.

<sup>110</sup> Neither was the duration of the tribulation a settled issue. Suggestions included three and one-half years, seven years, or an entire generation. A.W. Orwig, *TBM* 9.182 (May 1, 1916), p. 3, notes, 'And while the saints are with Christ in the air for a period of perhaps several years—variously estimated by different writers—there will be a season of unparalleled horror on the earth which the holy Scriptures denote as the "great tribulation".'

God for the “rapture”.”<sup>111</sup> Mary Baker reasoned that because they ‘reject the Holy Spirit’, the majority of the Church ‘will have to take their discipline under the Antichrist’.<sup>112</sup> Sexton argued that the ‘sleeping church’ that enters the tribulation ‘will be awakened’, and ‘go forth as God’s Spirit-filled messengers to preach the Word, conquering and to conquer’, resulting in ‘the greatest revival the world has ever known’.<sup>113</sup> Drawing from many OT Scriptures, G.S. Breisford focused on the theme of the coming judgment of God upon the unbelieving world.<sup>114</sup> E.T. Slaybaugh emphasized the restoration of the children of Israel, first with the sealing of the 144,000 as a Jewish remnant, then as a nation at the end of the tribulation.<sup>115</sup> Hattie Barth viewed the tribulation in terms of the consummation of redemption, based upon a futurist interpretation of Revelation 6. For Barth, the opening of the sealed scroll unlocks the larger theological meaning of the tribulation. She explains that the sealed scroll is like a Jewish mortgage deed, according to which the next of kin could pay the price, unloose the seals of the scroll, rid the property of tenants and take possession of it. She writes,

This book, then, no doubt represents our lost inheritance, which we lost in Adam through the fall. And there is no one in heaven or earth who is able or worthy to redeem it for us, except Jesus, our near kinsman (through the incarnation), who has paid the price with His blood. He is the lamb, also the lion, the strong One. [The great cry of praise in Rev. 5.9-14 meant that] our mighty Redeemer had at last taken unto Himself His great power, and authority, and was about to undo the seals, rid our inheritance of our old adversary and his hosts and restore all things unto us that had been forfeited.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> *TBM* 9.180 (Mar 1, 1916), p. 4. Commenting on 2 Thess. 2.3, Bartleman states, ‘Hence this “man of sin” must be “revealed” before the church is caught away. And that looks like the middle of the Tribulation.’

<sup>112</sup> *TBM* 3.61 (May 1, 1910), 1. Baker, editor of the Pentecostal paper, *Trust*, comments, ‘We do not dream how much this Pentecost means in the direction of judgment. If you have let the Holy Spirit displace the old flesh-life and put on the life of Jesus, you are living in the new creation life and there will be no trouble about translation. We are experiencing our tribulation now and will escape the awful night coming on the world.’

<sup>113</sup> *TBM* 13.219 (Jan, 1920), p. 1. Following J.A. Seiss, Sexton interprets the rider of the white horse in Rev. 6.2 as the Word of God. She also points to Isa. 26.9 and Rev. 7.13-17 to support her claim of revival during the tribulation. Commenting on Rev. 7.13-14, she writes, ‘We learn that this is a vision of a large company of saints who had missed the rapture and who were tried and purified in the fires of the great tribulation’ (*TBM* 8.167 [Feb 1, 1915], p. 1).

<sup>114</sup> *TBM* 5.110 (May 1, 1912), p. 4.

<sup>115</sup> *TBM* 7.154 (May 1, 1914), p. 4. Slaybaugh follows J.A. Seiss closely here. Cf. also *TBM* 2.33 (Mar 1, 1909), p. 1, an article reprinted from *Jewish Era* in which similar ideas are proposed.

<sup>116</sup> *TBM* 10.188 (Nov 1, 1916), p. 4.

The Great War (1914-1918) figured most prominently in association with the anticipated period of tribulation.<sup>117</sup> That the rapture would occur before a time of great tribulation was already established prior to 1914. The war functioned more to illustrate or confirm this understanding than to define it.<sup>118</sup> Thus, the first and most often repeated comment about the Great War in *The Bridegroom's Messenger* was that the war is an 'earnest of the great tribulation'.<sup>119</sup> Sexton expressed the significance that the war had in this regard:

With more than one-half of the world engaged in a most cruel and unprecedented warfare with its accompanying horrible atrocities, and with conditions of famine and pestilence in many places, and still worse conditions of millions of helpless and homeless wanderers made desolate by the edict of banishment or of extermination made by military authorities, and the horrible massacre of thousands of Christians who dared to face torture and martyrdom rather than deny their faith, and with the relentless persecution of the Jews, surely we are bordering on the black days of the tribulation and getting an earnest of their sorrows and terrors.<sup>120</sup>

E.T. Slaybaugh expressed the sense of urgency the war brought: 'Of all the signs and fulfillment of prophecy concerning the return of our Lord there has never come to our notice a more sure sign and "a more sure word of prophecy" indicating the immediate return of our Savior than the present European war; a direct fulfillment of I Thess. 5:3.'<sup>121</sup>

Some believed that the war would bring about the political conditions necessary for the rule of the Antichrist. Mary Norton notes that, at the time her article was published, the alliance of three nations against seven in the war 'is quite in line with Scripture'. She summarizes, 'So the Antichrist's kingdom is rapidly being got ready for him.'<sup>122</sup> W.W. Simpson describes a vision in which he

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<sup>117</sup> Unfortunately, only three issues were printed between September 1, 1917 and October 1, 1918, the period during which the United States was most heavily involved in the war. Two of these issues are not dated (numbers 204 and 205) and one, to my knowledge, is not extant (number 203).

<sup>118</sup> Cf. the comments of Sexton, *TBM* 8.169 (Apr 1, 1915), p. 1: 'Many are saying that the tribulation days are upon us; and well might we judge so but for the fact that the waiting saints have not yet been taken up in the rapture, the antichrist has not yet been revealed and the world powers are not yet in condition to welcome him as world ruler.'

<sup>119</sup> *TBM* 7.161 (Sep 1, 1914), p. 1; 8.174 (Sep 1, 1916), p. 1; 10.201 (Jul 1, 1917), p. 1, *et al.*

<sup>120</sup> *TBM* 9.177 (Dec 1, 1915), p. 1. Sexton often made reference to 'the beginning of sorrows' (Mt. 24.7) when writing about the war. When the war had ended, she continued to look back on it with similar regard, still expecting the coming tribulation 'in the closing days of this dispensation'. Cf. *TBM* 12.212 (Apr, 1919), p. 1.

<sup>121</sup> *TBM* 8.167 (Feb 1, 1915), p. 4.

<sup>122</sup> *TBM* 8.166 (Jan 1, 1915), p. 2. Cf. the remarks in an article copied from *The Prophetic News*, which shares similar ideas, *TBM* 8.183 (Oct 1, 1914), p. 2. E.T. Slaybaugh, *TBM* 8.168

saw the rapture, the defeat of the Allied powers, and the formation of a League of Nations with the Antichrist at its head. He exhorts his readers to watch and pray to 'be accounted worthy (may be able) to escape these things that shall come to pass'.<sup>123</sup>

Alongside the majority view, however, Sexton did include some voices that described the war in ways that call into question the wholly futurist view of the Apocalypse. Mrs W.F.E. Story relates a vision that she had of the war 'several months' before it occurred:

In another cloud picture, I saw a mighty angel with a trumpet in his hand in position as if raising it to his mouth to blow it; by which—signs in the skies—I infer that we have now come to the place of the sounding of the trumpets spoken of in Revelations 8. The burning mountain and burning star are pictures, I believe, of the war aeroplanes with their destructive bombs and trails of fiery explosives.<sup>124</sup>

Most significant are the comments of Frank Bartleman:

A 'red horse' has gone forth, with a 'great sword' and 'peace is taken from the earth.'—Rev. 6:4. But 'in the midst of the wrath' God will 'remember mercy.' 'The oil and wine hurt thou not.'—Rev. 6:6. Famine follows war. But the 'wine that maketh glad the heart of man' (spiritual joy), and 'the oil that maketh his face to shine' (the Holy Spirit, or anointing) God will preserve to us until He catches us away to Himself. 'Babylon is falling' both political and spiritual, and what the Christian needs to find is the way out. The 'kingdoms of this world' are being shaken.—Rev. 18:2; Heb. 12:25-29. They must become 'the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.'—Rev. 11:15.<sup>125</sup>

For Bartleman the war was also a 'proving time' for the Church concerning pacifism. Concerning this matter, he brings the symbols of Antichrist into the present situation. He writes,

Nationalism forces men to a spirit of patriotism and militarism. It is the 'mark of the beast.' The command is to murder, to destroy our fellowmen... What will the church do about it? Will she side with the world, or with heaven? The False Prophet is rearing his head again, along with the Beast (Rome). A Christian in war or politics is pretty much in the position of old Lot in Sodom in the final analysis. They will throw him out. He must ultimately take the 'mark of the Beast' (Anti-Christ), or that of Christ.<sup>126</sup>

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(Mar 1, 1915), p. 4, anticipated a future 'western' alliance between the Americas and an 'eastern' alliance of England, Europe, and Africa, leading to a war surpassing the Great War.

<sup>123</sup> *TBM* 10.200 (Jun 1, 1917), p. 4.

<sup>124</sup> *TBM* 7.162 (Sep 15, 1914), p. 2.

<sup>125</sup> *TBM* 8.168 (Mar 1, 1915), p. 2.

<sup>126</sup> *TBM* 9.180 (Mar 1, 1916), p. 4. Cf. his similar comments in *TBM* 9.179 (Feb 1, 1916), p. 4: 'The church must ultimately take the "mark of the beast," the anti-Christ, or that of Christ fully.

#### D. The Jews and the Times of the Gentiles

The return of the Jews to Palestine was viewed consistently in *The Bridegroom's Messenger* as the fulfillment of prophecy that heralded the coming of Jesus. From the decree of the Sultan of Turkey to allow Jews to return to Palestine,<sup>127</sup> to the British Mandate of 1920,<sup>128</sup> the Zionist movement was a constant theme of the periodical.<sup>129</sup> Owing to its political nature, Sexton often reprinted articles concerning 'the Jewish problem' from other sources, most of which were non-Pentecostal with a decidedly dispensational viewpoint. From these articles, readers became acquainted with several ideas, including: (1) the return of the Jews to the land in unbelief is a fulfillment of prophecy;<sup>130</sup> (2) the Jewish temple may be rebuilt;<sup>131</sup> (3) God's promise of land to Abram in Gen. 15.18 was never entirely fulfilled;<sup>132</sup> (4) OT prophecy deals only with the Jewish people and the Church's calling is heavenly, while Israel's is earthly;<sup>133</sup> and (5) the Jew is God's key to human history.<sup>134</sup>

While some of these ideas were echoed by Pentecostal authors, the theme repeated most often concerning the Jews by Pentecostals was the parable of the fig tree. For these writers, the return of the Jews to Palestine served as a sign of Jesus' soon coming and as a warning to be ready. Sexton explains, 'Since our Lord has shown us by His Word that by the sign of the fig tree we may know that our redemption draweth nigh, we are watching this tree (the Jews) with increasing interest...'<sup>135</sup>

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There must be complete separation to one or the other. She cannot "serve two masters." The national promises are to the Jews. The "heavenly" promises are to the church. Ours is a parenthetical dispensation. The Jews who reject Christ will receive the anti-Christ, and so with the church. The early church occupied a position of separation from nationalism completely, separated unto God. And so must the church of the end.' It is unclear whether Bartleman based his pacifism on the separation of the church from national Israel, or whether his commitment to pacifism led to the idea of separation.

<sup>127</sup> *TBM* 1.1 (Oct 1, 1907), p. 1.

<sup>128</sup> *TBM* 14.224 (Oct-Nov, 1920), p. 2.

<sup>129</sup> *TBM* 3.55 (Feb 1, 1910), p. 1. Sexton writes, 'Knowing that, according to prophecy, the Jews are to become a nation, and the scattered wanderers are to have a home again in Palestine, every item of information pertaining to the consummation of God's plan for this people is valuable to the watchers and intensely interesting to students of prophecy.'

<sup>130</sup> *TBM* 2.33 (Mar 1, 1909), p. 1.

<sup>131</sup> *TBM* 3.53 (Jan 1, 1910), p. 4.

<sup>132</sup> *TBM* 5.113 (Jul 1, 1912), p. 4.

<sup>133</sup> *TBM* 6.125 (Jan 15, 1913), p. 1.

<sup>134</sup> *TBM* 13.224 (Jul-Aug, 1920), p. 4.

<sup>135</sup> *TBM* 6.122 (Dec 1, 1912), p. 1.

Based on Lk. 21.24, the budding of the fig tree was understood to occur in conjunction with the closing of ‘the Gentile age’ or ‘the times of the Gentiles’.<sup>136</sup> Notably, this is the only subject about which some contributors to *The Bridegroom’s Messenger* engaged in speculative calculations. Generally, the ‘times of the Gentiles’ was understood to comprise 2,520 years beginning with the captivity in Babylon. The calculation is based on a reading of Lev. 26.18, 24 (or Dan. 4.16). The reference to ‘seven times’ is expanded to seven ‘prophetic years’ so that each day is a year (of 360 days) multiplied by seven (360 x 7) giving 2,520 years. Of course, the closing year varied depending on exactly what year constituted the beginning of the captivity, as well as whether one used calendar, solar, or lunar years in the calculation. The year 1917 was a favorite choice until that year passed without special incident. By 1919, the calculation had been reconfigured to 1935.<sup>137</sup> Sexton wisely advised, ‘The Gentile age closes with an era and not with a date. God has not intended that we should know accurately, but we may know by the signs of the times that the day is at hand, and be encouraged to keep watching for Him, our heavenly Bridegroom. It is enough that we may know that His coming draweth nigh.’<sup>138</sup>

### **E. Millennial Visions and the New Creation**

That the coming of Christ is premillennial was a consistent theme in *The Bridegroom’s Messenger*.<sup>139</sup> Indeed, Sexton criticizes the postmillennial view. She states, ‘If the misleading doctrine of post-millennialism had not side-tracked the church we might have already entered that “golden age,” but in spite of her blunders God will accomplish His purpose, and Jesus will come to give us our heart’s desires.’<sup>140</sup> She laments, ‘We cannot expect many Christians of the different evangelical churches to be ready and watching for the return of our Lord Jesus... Post-millennialists have no hope of His soon coming.’<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Cf. e.g. *TBM* 10.191 (Feb 1, 1917), p. 2. The unnamed author of this article comments on Jer. 23.6-8; Amos 9.14-15; and Isa. 14. 1: ‘These are but a few of the many words of prophecy concerning the restoration of the Jews at the time of the closing of the age of the Gentiles.’

<sup>137</sup> Cf. *TBM* 5.108 (Apr 15, 1912), p. 1; 7.144 (Nov 15, 1913), p. 4; 8.175 (Oct 1, 1915), p. 1; 10.191 (Feb 1, 1917), p. 2; 12.207 (Nov, 1918), p. 4; 12.214 (Jun, 1919), p. 1.

<sup>138</sup> *TBM* 10.190 (Jan 1, 1917), p. 1.

<sup>139</sup> Cf. e.g. *TBM* 4.90 (Jul 15, 1911), p. 1. Sexton writes, ‘That His coming is to be premillennial ... is apparent.’

<sup>140</sup> *TBM* 7.162 (Sep 15, 1914), p. 1.

<sup>141</sup> *TBM* 9.185 (Aug 1, 1916), p. 1.

A.W. Orwig highlights the pessimism for the world that the premillennial view engendered. His article points to all the Scriptures that indicate the worsening condition of the world before the second coming: wickedness will greatly abound; false doctrine will increase; people will scoff at the gospel message; increased technological advances will not contribute to the advancement of godly living. Orwig concludes, ‘The conviction seems irresistible that we are not warranted in expecting the myriads to be converted before the millennium.’<sup>142</sup>

A composite sketch of the millennium drawn by various authors in *The Bridegroom’s Messenger* includes the following contours: (1) a literal one-thousand year reign of Christ begins when he returns to the earth with the saints;<sup>143</sup> (2) Satan will be bound for one-thousand years;<sup>144</sup> (3) Christ’s reign will be effected through either the full overcomers,<sup>145</sup> the nation of Israel,<sup>146</sup> or both the Church and Israel;<sup>147</sup> (4) the curse of sin will be lifted,<sup>148</sup> (5) righteousness will prevail;<sup>149</sup> and (6) the earth will be restored and be fruitful.<sup>150</sup>

Some referred to the millennium as ‘the seventh thousand years’, mapping a philosophy of history in which time is viewed in one-thousand year periods corresponding to the seven days of original creation. In this scheme, the new creation represents the ‘eighth thousand years’. Sexton explains,

In the seventh thousand years, the millennium, in which Christ ‘reigns till He has put all enemies under His feet,’ He is still working, reigning, during those years, there are still enemies, God is working, it is not His day of rest, but after the seventh thousand years, when all enemies shall

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<sup>142</sup> *TBM* 10.188 (Nov 1, 1916), p. 1. D.M. Patton, *TBM* 9.187 (Oct 1, 1916), p. 1, presents a more balanced approach. He states, ‘Prophecy is the profoundest pessimism and profoundest optimism: it is profoundly pessimistic of all that a Christ-rejecting generation is about to do; it is profoundly optimistic of all that an all-gracious God will effect in the imminent establishment of His Kingdom.’

<sup>143</sup> Cf. e.g. *TBM* 6.132 (May 1, 1913), p. 1.

<sup>144</sup> Cf. e.g. *TBM* 1.17 (Jul 1, 1908), p. 3.

<sup>145</sup> *TBM* 1.9 (Mar 1, 1908), p. 4.

<sup>146</sup> *TBM* 13.225 (Sep, 1920), p. 1.

<sup>147</sup> *TBM* 5.106 (Mar 15, 1912), p. 3.

<sup>148</sup> Cf. e.g. *TBM* 1.19 (Aug 1, 1910), p. 1.

<sup>149</sup> *TBM* 10.189 (Aug, 1919), p. 1. Sexton here expresses a passionate desire for the coming Kingdom: ‘Our hearts may yearn over suffering humanity, and long for surcease from all the horrors of wars and pestilences and famines and distress of nations and pain and poverty. But there is only One, great and righteous, who can take the kingdoms of the earth and cause peace to reign forever. There is only One who can quiet the raging of the boisterous waves of discontent and confusion. There is only One who can cause righteousness to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. There is only One who can cause nations to learn war no more and only One who can lift the curse that is upon the whole world because of sin; It is Jesus, the Holy One; Lord of Lords and King of kings. Why should we not desire Him to come and set up His righteous kingdom and reign forever?’

<sup>150</sup> Cf. e.g. *TBM* 5.105 (Mar 1, 1912), p. 4.

have been destroyed and Satan and his angels cast into the lake of fire, and there is a new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, in the eighth thousand years there is rest, this is a new rest day for God.<sup>151</sup>

In the few articles that describe it, the new creation is characterized as an ‘eternal state of glory, when God will walk with men on the restored, purified earth, as He formerly did in the Garden of Eden’.<sup>152</sup> As Jesus was the tree of life in the Garden of Eden, so he will be the tree of life in the New Jerusalem.<sup>153</sup> Above the earth will rest the holy city, in which the bridal party will reside, and from which Christ shall reign, with his heavenly bride, forever. The new earth will be inherited by ‘His earthly bride’, a holy people who will serve their King and prosper in righteousness.<sup>154</sup>

For one author, the millennium is ‘only the portal and introduction’ to ‘the establishment on earth of the kingdom of the Son of Man—that eternal reign of peace and righteousness.’<sup>155</sup> In a similar, all-inclusive vision, J.H. King describes the future reign of Christ: ‘The new creation through Calvary’s ransom embracing the millennium and the eternal ages, and extending to the entire universe will cause hallelujahs like an infinite sea to roll heavenward, crowning the Christ with glories unceasingly through everlasting ages.’<sup>156</sup>

## **F. Pentecostal Dispensations?**

When examining the philosophy of history exhibited in *The Bridegroom’s Messenger*, one discovers that the most frequent time category employed is that of ‘dispensation’. That the term is used in a variety of ways in the periodical is essential to note. No single, monolithic system of dispensations is evident, but rather a number of organizational schemes for history are revealed, some more comprehensive than others.

The term ‘dispensation’ is most frequently used to identify the present age as ‘the Holy Ghost dispensation’ or ‘the Pentecostal dispensation’. Very often this

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<sup>151</sup> *TBM* 3.54 (Jan 15, 1910), p. 1. In response to ‘the Sunday question’, Sexton argues that the first day of the week (eighth day) is the anti-type of the eternal rest of God after the millennium. As the Sabbath is the first rest day in creation under the old covenant, so the eighth day is the second rest day in eternity under the new covenant. J.M. Waters, *TBM* 10.188 (Nov 1, 1916), p. 1, develops a system of four dispensations based on this idea.

<sup>152</sup> *TBM* 5.109 (May 1, 1912), p. 3.

<sup>153</sup> *TBM* 11.204 (no date), p. 1.

<sup>154</sup> *TBM* 9.183 (Jun 1, 1916), p. 1.

<sup>155</sup> *TBM* 9.185 (Aug 1, 1916), p. 1.

<sup>156</sup> *TBM* 7.159 (Aug 1, 1914), p. 1.

term is used without reference to any larger system of chronology and seems simply to mean ‘the period of time during which the Holy Spirit is being poured out’. The testimony of Charlie Noble is typical: ‘Thank God we are living in the Holy Ghost dispensation.’<sup>157</sup> G. Krieger explains the time boundaries of this dispensation by appealing to Joel 2.23, “‘The former and latter rain in the first month” [refer to] two outpourings of the Holy Spirit in one or the same dispensation.’<sup>158</sup>

Some writers situated ‘the Holy Ghost dispensation’ within a comprehensive scheme of history corresponding to the persons of the Trinity. J.A. Culbreth described the distinguishing traits of the dispensations of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost respectively in terms of (1) Jewish types and shadows foreshadowing the real, (2) mediatorial action providing regeneration and sanctification, and (3) witness of Jesus through the manifestation of tongues and power. Because personal spiritual experience was understood to correspond to a particular dispensation, Culbreth believed that Spirit baptism was required to participate in the rapture and marriage supper, since it corresponds to the present dispensation of the Holy Ghost.<sup>159</sup> R.M. Evans appeals to the ‘types’ of Abraham (who gives his son), Isaac (who is the willing sacrifice), and Jacob (who founds the Jewish nation and church) to explain the dispensations of the Father, Son, and Spirit respectively.<sup>160</sup> For Evans, the Spirit is the unifying agent of the dispensations. He writes, ‘The three symbols of water in the three dispensations illustrate the operations of the Spirit. Under the Father’s was an overflowing cup (Psa. 23:5); under the Son’s an artesian well (John 4:14), but under the Holy Ghost’s dispensation it became rivers of living water (John 7:37-39).’<sup>161</sup>

On the one hand, several references to the ‘closing of this dispensation’ (rather than, for instance, the ‘ending’ of it) seem to indicate that the particular period of time in question was understood to have unique characteristics not shared by other ‘dispensations’, as the image of ‘closing’ tends toward containment and compartmentalization. Many of these references are associated

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<sup>157</sup> *TBM* 2.23 (Oct 1, 1908), p. 3.

<sup>158</sup> *TBM* 2.41 (Jul 1, 1909), p. 4.

<sup>159</sup> *TBM* 1.8 (Feb 15, 1908), p. 2. Culbreth also appeals to this Trinitarian dispensational scheme to argue that Spirit baptism is subsequent to sanctification.

<sup>160</sup> *TBM* 8.166 (Jan 1, 1915), p. 4.

<sup>161</sup> *TBM* 8.167 (Feb 1, 1915), p. 4.

with the ‘closing of the times of the Gentiles’.<sup>162</sup> Others note events that mark the ‘close’ of this present age, such as ‘the latter rain’,<sup>163</sup> ‘distress of nations’,<sup>164</sup> or the ‘coming crisis’ of tribulation.<sup>165</sup>

On the other hand, some writers speak about the ‘overlapping’ of the ages or dispensations. Instead of containment, this image tends toward transition. Sexton notes that believers will be kept from despair ‘as the signs increase in violence in the overlapping of the dispensation into the time and terrors of the great tribulation...’<sup>166</sup> Max Wood Moorhead agrees, ‘We are dispensationally in a transition period when we can hear the thunder of the coming Tribulation storm and tempest—a period where both lights and shadows of an approaching age on the one hand illuminate our horizon and on the other hand darken it in warnings of coming judgments.’<sup>167</sup>

But foretastes of tribulation<sup>168</sup> were accompanied by foretastes of glory. Hattie Barth develops this idea in relation to the Kingdom of God. In Barth’s view, all the miracles occurring in the Pentecostal movement are signs that foreshadow the coming kingdom. She writes,

The ages overlap like links in a chain. From the time of Pentecost till now, there have been some living by faith a few thousands, or hundreds, of years ahead. Pentecost itself really belongs to the next dispensation. The prophecy in Joel 2:23, ‘I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh,’ only began to be fulfilled on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17), the complete fulfillment, as the context shows, is in the next dispensation. Every sign following Pentecost is only a foretaste of that coming age. Are we to cast out Devils in His name? Satan will be bound the thousand years. Are we to drink deadly poison without hurt? Thorns, weeds, poisonous plants shall no more infest the ground. Are we to take up serpents? The sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp and weaning child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den. Are we to heal the sick? When Jesus comes, ‘The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick.’ Are we to overcome in this age, all sin, sickness, death, and be called up to meet the Lord in the air without dying? He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Do we begin now to speak with other tongues of men and of angels, and have gifts of interpretation? The time is coming when that old curse given at Babel shall be lifted, and the inhabitants of the earth shall be no more divided, but shall have knowledge

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<sup>162</sup> *TBM* 3.55 (Feb 1, 1910), p. 1; 5.108 (Apr 15, 1912), p. 1; 9.185 (Aug 1, 1916), p. 1; *et al.*

<sup>163</sup> *TBM* 4.83 (Apr 1, 1911), p. 1.

<sup>164</sup> *TBM* 5.105 (Mar 1, 1912), p. 1.

<sup>165</sup> *TBM* 12.212 (Apr, 1919), p. 1.

<sup>166</sup> *TBM* 6.131 (Apr 15, 1913), 1. Cf. *TBM* 2.49 (Nov 1, 1909), p. 1.

<sup>167</sup> *TBM* 5.119 (Oct 15, 1912), p. 4.

<sup>168</sup> Cf. Sexton’s view of the Great War as an earnest of the tribulation noted above.

of His power, and be one people with one God. Do we have the knowledge of His power and taste of the glories of the age to come? ‘The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.’ Yes it all belongs to the next age—let’s live in advance of our time, even though it means to be misunderstood and persecuted by the world—yes, for the world’s sake, let’s do it.<sup>169</sup>

Sexton explains that sanctification anticipates the millennial reign, healing anticipates bodily resurrection, and Spirit baptism flows into immortality and anticipates the translation of the body.<sup>170</sup> Mrs C.G. Bayless wrote, ‘Praise our God, the Holy Spirit Himself, the third person in the Trinity, is the SEAL and His coming in and taking possession of these bodies, thereby making them spiritual temples for God to dwell in, is but the beginning of the Glory that shall be revealed.’<sup>171</sup> For these writers, the dispensations were not closed rooms, but more like open courtyards leading one into the other.

That classical dispensationalism was one resource from which Sexton and others were drawing is evident in some articles. In 1913, Sexton quotes from what she calls ‘a very helpful article’ that first appeared in *Our Hope*, a magazine edited by classical dispensationalist A.C. Gaebelein. The following quotation clearly stands in tension with other articles in *The Bridegroom’s Messenger*, including some that Sexton herself wrote!

Old Testament prophecy deals with the earth and Israel, or the Jew and it only touches the Gentiles as they touch the Jew. So apart from the Jew, we certainly cannot expect to see Old Testament prophecy being fulfilled at all today. We must remember, too most carefully, that our calling is in distinct contrast to that of Israel—for it is a heavenly, not an earthly calling. But events are so shaping as to bring Israel again in the fore, and they show that soon shall she be the center of God’s ways, and again shall prophecy be fulfilled.<sup>172</sup>

Although he believed that the Church may participate in the first half of the tribulation, Frank Bartleman echoes this view. He states, ‘The national promises are to the Jews. The “heavenly” promises are to the church. Ours is a parenthetical dispensation.’<sup>173</sup> A.W. Orwig notes that one must recognize ‘God’s special attitude toward men under different dispensations’ in order to ‘rightly

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<sup>169</sup> *TBM* 2.34 (Mar 15, 1909), p. 4. Cf. also Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing*, pp. 91-93.

<sup>170</sup> *TBM* 1.16 (Jun 15, 1908), p. 1.

<sup>171</sup> *TBM* 13.222 (Apr-May, 1920), p. 4.

<sup>172</sup> *TBM* 6.125 (Jan 15, 1913), p. 1. Cf. also a reprinted article by Rev. Dr J.H. Payran, *TBM* 6.130 (Apr 1, 1913), p. 4, who notes that ‘Christ is coming at the close of the sixth dispensation, that is at the end of the Gospel age, which is the present age.’

<sup>173</sup> *TBM* 9.179 (Feb 1, 1916), p. 4.

divide the word of truth'.<sup>174</sup> E.P. Marvin observes that the millennium will follow the 'analogy of former dispensations', ending in a rebellion.<sup>175</sup>

Examples of other 'dispensational schemes' also appear in *The Bridegroom's Messenger*. J.M. Waters devised a system of four dispensations based on the weekdays of creation. He writes:

Isn't it plain that according to this Scripture [2 Pet. 3.8] that the first two days of the creation of the world, Sunday and Monday, have corresponded to the first two thousand years, or the age winding up with the flood; Tuesday and Wednesday corresponded to the second age, or dispensation from the flood to the Christian Era which dealt with the Jews, their sacrifices, and ceremonial laws; Thursday and Friday the third dispensation, and the present age, the age of grace and mercy which has been in progress now nineteen hundred and sixteen years according to chronology? Who can doubt that we are living in the Friday evening of time? We are now in the last days of the third dispensation. We are standing at the border of a new era, the thousand year reign, the shortest dispensation. Then shall be fulfilled [Mic. 4.1-9 and Zech. 14.1-9, 20].<sup>176</sup>

In contrast, S.A. Bishop notes, 'The dispensation of grace began with Abraham. The law was added because of sin.'<sup>177</sup> E.M. Stanton speaks of two dispensations. He comments, 'Here is the important distinction between the Old and the New Dispensations. In the Old Dispensation, the Saints had the Holy Spirit with them and upon them, but in the New Dispensation it is the heritage of every child of God to have the Holy Spirit as conscious indwelling presence.'<sup>178</sup> It is clear from these examples that no single system of dispensations held a monopoly on the thought of the early Pentecostals.

## G. Eschatological Prayer

Faithful prayer was considered to play a significant role in the fulfillment of eschatology as it is presented in *The Bridegroom's Messenger*. In a number of appeals, readers were instructed to pray for several specific matters. These included prayer for the gifts of the Spirit to further missionary efforts,<sup>179</sup> for the

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<sup>174</sup> *TBM* 7.155 (May 15, 1914), p. 4. Orwig does not comment further on the dispensations, but explains that 'rightly dividing' means 'giving the true meaning of the words'. He then gives a sound, contextual interpretation of Paul's words, 'I die daily.'

<sup>175</sup> *TBM* 5.105 (Mar 1, 1912), p. 4. Marvin bases his view upon a consensus of 'the best students of prophecy'.

<sup>176</sup> *TBM* 10.188 (Nov 1, 1916), p. 4.

<sup>177</sup> *TBM* 8.175 (Oct 1, 1915), p. 2.

<sup>178</sup> *TBM* 10.222 (Apr-May, 1920), p. 4.

<sup>179</sup> *TBM* 1.12 (Apr 15, 1908), p. 1.

health and protection of mission workers,<sup>180</sup> for the soon return of the Lord,<sup>181</sup> to shorten the duration of the war and of the great tribulation,<sup>182</sup> for the deliverance of the ‘manchild company’ during the tribulation,<sup>183</sup> and for the overthrow of Satan at the conclusion of the tribulation.<sup>184</sup>

According to Hattie Barth, the plan of God for the future and the role of human responsibility are in dialectical relationship. She states,

His plans for our redemption were laid before the foundation of the world; He knoweth the end of all things from the beginning; He has a set time for all things... These things are very marvelous in our eyes, but more marvelous still is the fact that although these things are true, He yet so completely takes His servants into copartnership with Himself, that He doth nothing but He first showeth it unto His servants, Amos 3:7, and everything done is in answer to their prayers, and by the working of their faith... Are you believing for these things [the outpouring of the Spirit to bring the harvest to maturity]? They are in the plan and purpose of God, yet there is a responsibility resting on us. It is necessary that we ask and believe God before He will bring them to pass. If you will not rise to meet this responsibility, God will find someone who will.<sup>185</sup>

A similar conviction is expressed by an unknown author:

The co-operation of prayer is the expression of spiritual burden given by the Holy Spirit... What is the present relation of prayer to the coming age? Is there not an insistent call to men of God for prayer co-operation? Shall there not be direct prayer warfare against principalities and powers, and the rulers of this world’s darkness? Are we not losing infinitely more than we gain by circumscribing our prayers to the narrow limits of individualism? In the order of revelation the new heaven and the new earth follows the overthrow of Satan and his hosts. Has the Church Universal no part in the dethroning of the god of this world, that the rightful Heir of all things may come into His kingdom?<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> *TBM* 2.32 (Feb 15, 1909), p. 1. Prayers for missionaries are set in the context of preparation for the Lord’s return.

<sup>181</sup> *TBM* 5.116 (Aug 15, 1912), p. 1. Sexton, *TBM* 5.117, (Sep 1, 1912), p. 1, reprinted a circular published by *The Morning Star* in London to invite the church to pray for Christ’s return on October 6-7, 1912. E.T. Slaybaugh, *TBM* 6.123 (Dec 15, 1912), p. 4, is adamant: ‘And may we not expect that Jesus will remain at the right hand of the Father until there goes up from those who will compose the Bride, a real cry of the soul to the Father to send back Jesus... May it increase to the full, and He shall come. Let us bear in mind that ... such praying and pleading shall not be merely something put on, or an excitement of the human, but a work wrought by the Holy Spirit in the innermost being.’ Cf. also *TBM* 8.183 (Oct 1, 1914), p. 3.

<sup>182</sup> *TBM* 8.163 (Oct 1, 1914), p. 1; 8.174 (Sep 1, 1916), p. 1. Sexton bases her appeals on Mt. 24.21-22.

<sup>183</sup> *TBM* 7.159 (Aug 1, 1914), p. 4. This view is unique to E.T. Slaybaugh who understands ‘the travailing and agonizing’ of the woman in Revelation 12 ‘to be a sign of the saints prevailing with God in agonizing prayer for the deliverance of their brethren.’

<sup>184</sup> *TBM* 8.174 (Sep 1, 1916), p. 1.

<sup>185</sup> *TBM* 1.3 (Dec 1, 1907), p. 4.

<sup>186</sup> *TBM* 7.160 (Aug 15, 1914), p. 3.

W.F.E. Story relates a vision in which he saw ‘the whole number of the Bride as one voice’ interceding for ‘a lost world’. He exhorts, ‘Oh beloved, let us heed this promise, be united into one ... inspiring us to pray down the blessing from on high which shall speedily perfect that which has been prophesied and will bring in our redemption with the returning of our King!’<sup>187</sup> A similar exhortation reprinted from *Confidence* urges, ‘Let us remember our chief ministry is believing prayer. Let us forget our petty needs and troubles in bearing the burdens of the world and sharing with our Master in His priestly intercession.’<sup>188</sup> A.S. Copley explains the nature of this prayer, ‘The Spirit Himself does the praying in us. It is the Christ enthroned on a surrendered life groaning out the agonies of the great intercessor at God’s right hand. It is God in the earth pleading with God in the heavens in behalf of God and man.’<sup>189</sup>

## H. Summary and Conclusion

A summary of the eschatology presented in *The Bridegroom’s Messenger* may now be offered. This eschatology was characterized primarily by the lived reality of the immanent, premillennial coming of Jesus. The process of discernment begun at Azusa Street continued, though it was expanded to include current political events and, through Sexton’s editorial policy, voices beyond the Pentecostal movement. These changes broadened the conversation so that a variety of views on eschatology were presented. Sanctification and Spirit baptism, previously central in eschatological thought, came to be held more loosely within the evolving logic as the definition of the bride of Christ was narrowed to that of ‘overcomer’ and groups other than the bride were admitted entrance to the marriage supper. For many, the role of the Holy Spirit was also narrowed to the preparation of the bride of Christ. As marriage supper imagery gave way to a focus on the tribulation, the understanding of the rapture also shifted to become the means of escape (albeit only for a select few), thereby becoming a primary event. The Great War was viewed as confirmation of this understanding, being added to the growing list of ‘sorrows’ that precede the tribulation. That a tribulation was coming was not questioned. No consensus was

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<sup>187</sup> *TBM* 5.111 (Jun 1, 1912), p. 2.

<sup>188</sup> *TBM* 2.32 (Feb 15, 1909), p. 4.

<sup>189</sup> *TBM* 2.35 (Apr 1, 1909), p. 2.

reached, however, for its purpose. The return of the Jews to Palestine served largely as a sign of Jesus' soon coming, but also became the primary issue because of which Sexton introduced classical dispensational ideas to her readers. Classical dispensationalism, however, did not monopolize the variety of systems of 'dispensations' presented in this periodical. Variety was also evident as the ages were described as both 'closing' and 'overlapping'. Whatever script the Pentecostal writers chose, faithful prayer was essential to bring about that which God intended for the future.

Several implications of this investigation may be enumerated. First, Pentecostal eschatology from 1907 through 1920 did not experience a uniform or linear development. Though some aspects of eschatology were not questioned, others were far from a commonly held position. Specifically, while the event sequence of rapture–tribulation–millennium–new creation was becoming solidified, the logic and purposes feeding this script remained in flux. This is evident in the variety of ways an 'overcomer' was defined, the diverse purposes given for the tribulation, the lack of consensus about who would rule with Christ in the millennium, and the variety of schemes concerning the 'dispensations'. Second, multiple trajectories of thought may be detected during this period. Though spiritual experience continued to be primary to the Pentecostal believer, some trajectories of thought seem to indicate a disconnection between Pentecostal spirituality and eschatology. This was most evident in the unquestioned applause given to the Zionist movement of the early twentieth century, with no accompanying reflection on Pentecostal distinctives. Other trajectories brought a modified understanding of the Pentecostal outpouring into conversation with the rapture-tribulation script, resulting in tension between the original spirituality and eschatology. This occurred when the role of the Holy Spirit was shifted from empowerment for mission to preparation of the bride of Christ. Some trajectories of thought remained focused on a Spirit-Word-experience dialectic that led to contemporary application of some eschatological passages of Scripture and moved away from a futurist view of the book of Revelation. It may be noted here that the same three trajectories are present among contemporary contributions to Pentecostal eschatology reviewed in Chapter 2. Third, Pentecostal believers were expected to participate in the fulfillment of prophecy through prayer. Fourth, though classical dispensational ideas are utilized on occasion, no single

overarching scheme of historical ages dominated early Pentecostal thought. The classical dispensational ideas that do get picked up are integrated into a multifaceted script in a variety of ways.

### **III. The Church of God in Christ: *The Whole Truth***

#### **Introduction**

The Church of God in Christ was organized as a holiness denomination in 1897. Shortly after Elder C.H. Mason received Spirit baptism at the Azusa Street Mission in 1907, the group was reorganized as a Pentecostal body and began publishing its official periodical, *The Whole Truth*. Only one issue, however, dated October 1911 and edited by Justus Bowe, is presently available. The following brief analysis is based on this issue.

#### **A. Discernment in the Spirit**

It is readily evident from the pages of *The Whole Truth* that discernment was understood to originate from the activity of the Holy Spirit in the Church. In the reports of meetings and conventions, actions that were attributed directly to the Spirit included guiding, directing, speaking, singing, praying, calling, working, and convincing. In different instances, the Spirit is said to act through the pastor, elder, or the saints. Conversely, worship, singing, prayer, and preaching took place ‘in the Spirit’, or ‘in the Holy Ghost’.

These activities in the Spirit took place after a time of ‘waiting on the Lord’. One article instructed the readers to ‘tarry for the power’.<sup>190</sup> It was noted, ‘Our souls are delighted to wait for his coming’; and, ‘We are glad to come before him and wait for his coming’.<sup>191</sup> That these phrases could have referred to the *parousia* of Jesus is striking; yet it was reported, ‘The Lord is coming to us in power and great glory’,<sup>192</sup> a reference to present spiritual experience. Thus, the Lord is said to come to instruct, teach, and impart wisdom.

The Scriptures also played an important role in discernment. ‘Searching the Scriptures’ was a daily exercise reported at the 1911 Annual Convocation held at

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<sup>190</sup> *TWT* 4.4 (Oct 1911), p. 4.

<sup>191</sup> *TWT* 4.4 (Oct 1911), p. 1.

<sup>192</sup> *TWT* 4.4 (Oct 1911), p. 3.

Lexington, Mississippi. Accordingly, it was reported that the Lord ‘opens the scriptures’ and that he ‘taught us many deep things in his Spirit’.<sup>193</sup> The words and phrases of Scripture were woven into the testimonies so that present experiences were defined using biblical terminology. In a testimony of spiritual victory, L.A. Sledger wrote, ‘The saints here at this place are shouting, for the walls have fallen down.’<sup>194</sup> Conversions in a children’s meeting were described with these words: ‘Yes, many of the prodigals came home from crying and feeding the swine.’<sup>195</sup> Blessings received in a revival meeting were expressed this way: ‘We have all been made to drink of that spiritual rock which is Christ Jesus, bless God! and to eat of the hidden manna.’ Such use of Scripture shaped daily life in biblical categories and made passages of Scripture from a variety of canonical contexts and genres presently applicable. To hear a ‘Scripture lesson’ was ‘to hear what the Spirit said to the church’.<sup>196</sup>

Passages of Scripture used in the 1911 Convocation, which could have been interpreted within a futurist eschatological script, were applied to the present spiritual experiences of the believers. Isaiah 35.5-6 became ‘strength to the weak and many were made to receive the light’.<sup>197</sup> After a sermon from Isa. 43.19, it was reported that ‘the Lord came in power and souls were convinced that the Lord only was our deliverer’.<sup>198</sup> A sermon about the Day of the Lord (Joel 2.1, 15, 17) brought ‘a great shout in the camp, for the power of God was greatly in our midst’.<sup>199</sup> The final sermon by C.H. Mason brought together the texts of Mt. 11.4-5 with Rev. 21.1-4, joining present ministry with anticipated fulfillment in the new heaven and new earth.<sup>200</sup>

## **B. Living in the Last Days**

Like those at Azusa Street, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was understood by the readers of *The Whole Truth* to be the falling of the ‘latter rain’. In a commentary on his evangelistic ministry in Westminster, North Carolina, C.H.

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<sup>193</sup> *TWT* 4.4 (Oct 1911), p. 1.

<sup>194</sup> *TWT* 4.4 (Oct 1911), p. 4.

<sup>195</sup> *TWT* 4.4 (Oct 1911), p. 4.

<sup>196</sup> *TWT* 4.4 (Oct 1911), p. 4.

<sup>197</sup> *TWT* 4.4 (Oct 1911), p. 1.

<sup>198</sup> *TWT* 4.4 (Oct 1911), p. 1.

<sup>199</sup> *TWT* 4.4 (Oct 1911), p. 3.

<sup>200</sup> *TWT* 4.4 (Oct 1911), p. 3.

Mason reported, ‘The latter rain was falling on white and colored there.’<sup>201</sup> Spirit baptism was being experienced across ethnic and racial boundaries, the primary evidence that the latter rain had come.

Supplemented by warnings from the Spirit, discernment that the last days had come also included present-day ‘wonders and signs’. The reports for the 1911 Annual Convocation included the following three-day sequence:

August 10—At the hour of 9:00 today the Spirit began to pray as usual... When the Lord loosed us the Spirit, through Elder C.H. Mason, began to cry ‘Destructions, and great distress!’ We all, not knowing, began to wonder in what way and how would it come.

August 11—The power of the Lord is intreating [*sic*] the sinful kingdoms of the whole earth. Through the people of the Lord each day the Lord would warn the people, always through the pastor, that this year would be a year of great distress, with much death. Lesson from Amos 9. Text from the 8th verse of the same chapter. Truly these are the last days, for God is showing forth his wonders and signs. Amen.

August 12—Today the rain began to pour. The clouds of the heavens were so dark we could scarcely see... About a 20-foot wall of water went through the place and great was the loss. Many souls were groaning in their distress. Right here the prophecy was fulfilled.<sup>202</sup>

These reports show that eschatology was more a lived reality than a written doctrine. A sense of urgency arose from hearing the Scripture in the context of the activity of the Spirit to call the Church to become a warning beacon to the world of nations. In this example, ‘destruction and distress’ were associated, not with a future tribulation, but with imminent danger and the need for repentance. The August 14 entry concluded, ‘Let the people of the Lord be faithful, for the end is near at hand.’<sup>203</sup>

The unnamed author of a sermon based on Heb. 10.22 noted that hiding from God is typical of the disobedient. Among his many examples from Scripture, he wrote, ‘In the first sin man fled from God and attempted to hide behind the bushes and cover with leaves, and the Revelations [*sic*] tell us that in the great day of his wrath the wicked will run to the rocks and mountains and desire them to fall on them to hide them from the face of God.’<sup>204</sup> Here, a future day of wrath is acknowledged almost anecdotally within a present warning to repent of sin in

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<sup>201</sup> *TWT* 4.4 (Oct 1911), p. 2.

<sup>202</sup> *TWT* 4.4 (Oct 1911), p. 1.

<sup>203</sup> *TWT* 4.4 (Oct 1911), p. 3.

<sup>204</sup> *TWT* 4.4 (Oct 1911), p. 2.

order to draw near to God. He concludes, 'By being dishonest and untrue to each other we rob ourselves and homes of all sweetness and happiness and let in bitterness, confusion and shame in this life and eternal misery in the world to come. Why not be true?' A similar connection between one's future state and present lifestyle was made by Justus Bowe in his editorial based on Ps. 9.17. While arguing for a literal place of future torment, he answered his critics with this appeal:

If we cannot locate it as a place we can certainly see there is a state of torment as well as a state of happiness. There are persons in this world whose faith and unshaken confidence in God relieves them of guilt and fear and brings them into this state of happiness and joyful hope in God. [There are o]thers whose life of sin and unbelief bring them into the state of torment of fear and dread.<sup>205</sup>

These examples show that the present was constantly being viewed in the light of the future. A life of faith in God brings happiness, while sin and unbelief brings torment, each leading eventually to their respective eternal states. The future begins now.

### **C. Conclusion**

This brief survey of the views of eschatology gleaned from the October 1911 issue of *The Whole Truth* reveals that for early Church of God in Christ members, eschatology functioned as a lived reality, much like it did at Azusa Street. Though they certainly believed in the future states of happiness or torment, the focus was on present experience. Their dynamic hermeneutic, which included reading the texts of Scripture through the lens of the Spirit's activity among them, allowed all of Scripture to have present applicability. They testified to living in an eschatological community, as OT texts were fulfilled through present spiritual experience, which in turn served as anticipations for ultimate fulfillment in the new creation. Thus, their mission was to warn the nations of impending judgment and to invite others to join them on the journey to final salvation.

This 'snapshot' of the Church of God in Christ in 1911 serves as an example of an eschatology that is grounded in the originating spirituality of the Pentecostal movement. Clearly, it is a radical departure from classical dispensationalism.

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<sup>205</sup> *TWT* 4.4 (Oct 1911), p. 2.

## IV. Opposing Visions: *The Church of God Evangel*

### Introduction

Edited by A.J. Tomlinson, the first issue of *The Evening Light and Church of God Evangel* was published in Cleveland, Tennessee on March 1, 1910. It was renamed *The Church of God Evangel* in 1911. Tomlinson had previously served as an associate editor for *The Bridegroom's Messenger*, and the articles that he contributed to that periodical show that his appeals for visible organization and church government went beyond the mere 'spiritual' unity among Pentecostals espoused there.<sup>206</sup> As will be seen in the following analysis, Tomlinson's ecclesiology profoundly influenced the early articulations of eschatology in the Church of God. Tomlinson's role as editor ended in November 1922, several months prior to his impeachment from the office of General Overseer in 1923, at which time F.J. Lee was elected as General Overseer. Lee's influence proved just as profound for the development of eschatology in the denomination, an influence that escalated in the years immediately prior to his appointment as Overseer. For this reason, the survey that follows traces the articulation of eschatology in *The Church of God Evangel* from 1910 through 1923.

### A. Discerning Eschatology and the Restored Church

Through a close reading of this periodical, it becomes apparent that the eschatology articulated here cannot be understood apart from the distinct ecclesiology that developed during the early years of the group. The Church of God understood itself to be a restorationist movement.<sup>207</sup> Along with other Pentecostals, they celebrated the restoration of justification by faith, sanctification, divine healing, and the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Additionally and integral to its identity, however, the Church of God also understood itself to be the restoration of the apostolic church established by Jesus. Sam C. Perry, field editor for the publication, reasoned,

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<sup>206</sup> Cf. especially *TBM* 2.23 (Mar 1, 1909), p. 4; 2.37 (May 1, 1909), p. 2.

<sup>207</sup> Cf. the remarks of M.R. Whidden, *COGE* 1.1 (Mar 15, 1910), p. 3, 'Beloved, we are on the verge of a climax. The golden chain of truth that links together time; which has been smoked and cankered by the darkness of age, is being washed and garnished by the environment of the Holy Spirit till it is almost as bright as it was when Jesus was on earth.'

If it be argued that the Church of the Apostolic times is lost, then we answer, was not the true salvation of Jesus lost in the dark ages, as also sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost, but all over the Christian world men are claiming to be sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost, and that the apostolic experiences are restored to God's children again, as on the day of Pentecost; all this they have in the Bible. Then why can't we go to the Bible, search the apostles' record, and find the Church which they had also?<sup>208</sup>

The vision of the Church of God as the visible, restored church of the NT was promoted by founding elder R.G. Spurling, who exhorted:

It takes more than merely being a saint, or a child of God, to be the church of God, and yet there are thousands of holiness people who are claiming to be the church of God, and yet have never taken the covenant of visible unity and fellowship. O, beloved saints, do not claim to be the church of God until you are joined together in the gospel fellowship and agreement. O ye saints, when you are called out of spiritual Babylon, do not go into the wilderness of Judea, but stop in Jerusalem and get your Pentecost, and help us rebuild the temple of God and the walls of Jerusalem out of Apostolic stones. Take God's law and government, put away creeds and false systems, separate yourselves to the New Testament, and be fitly framed together, growing unto a holy temple in the Lord. Eph. 2:21.<sup>209</sup>

An anonymous notice, possibly written by Tomlinson, explained to the readers that the name Church of God does 'not refer to a new organization', a 'new sect or order', but to the church that 'Jesus said he would build'.<sup>210</sup> A similar notice enjoined, 'It remains for us to acknowledge [His church], and set it in order according to the Bible rules, that's all. Please do not confuse His Church with the common churches of the day.'<sup>211</sup> As such, according to Tomlinson, the restoration of the Church of God was just as necessary in preparing people for the coming of Christ as justification, sanctification, Spirit baptism, and healing.<sup>212</sup>

Spiritual discernment continued to follow the same pattern that was evident in *The Apostolic Faith* and *The Bridegroom's Messenger*, but was understood to take place within the fellowship of the restored Church. The elements of Spirit, Scripture, and Church were interlocked in the process of discernment. God was

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<sup>208</sup> *COGE* 3.14 (Sep 15, 1912), p. 6.

<sup>209</sup> *COGE* 1.2 (Mar 15, 1910), p. 4. Several themes introduced by Spurling here are found repeatedly throughout the early years of *The Evangel*. Though Spurling's view of eschatology is not articulated in this periodical, there is evidence in his booklet, *The Lost Link*, that he held to an historicist view of the book of Revelation. Spurling claimed that the 'horned beast' arose with the merging of church and state at the time of Constantine. With the return of the 'law of love', the Church is now being restored, i.e. called out of spiritual Babylon, to fulfill its original purpose. Cf. R.G. Spurling, *The Lost Link* (Turtletown, TN: R.G. Spurling, 1920), pp. 23-28.

<sup>210</sup> *COGE* 1.3 (Apr 1, 1910), p. 4.

<sup>211</sup> *COGE* 1.14 (Sep 15, 1910), p. 4.

<sup>212</sup> *COGE* 6.29 (Jul 17, 1915), p. 1.

restoring the Church through the gifts of the Holy Spirit;<sup>213</sup> the Holy Spirit was leading into all truth and revealing particular passages of Scripture more clearly;<sup>214</sup> and Scripture was taken to be the only rule of faith and practice for the restored Church<sup>215</sup> by which the members were bound together.<sup>216</sup>

Tomlinson's editorial policy was not nearly as inclusive as Elizabeth Sexton's. While he did include articles that contradicted his views on eschatology, these appear to be predominantly 'in-house', that is, written by Church of God authors. Although he acknowledged current political events (the return of the Jews to Palestine and the Great War), his concerns were focused mostly on how these events affected the members of the Church of God.

## **B. Tomlinson and Lee Compared**

The eschatologies articulated by A.J. Tomlinson and F.J. Lee were important not only because these men were, respectively, the first and second General Overseers of the Church of God, but also because in many respects their views represent two different models around which the other contributions from *The Evangel* are clustered. Thus, a brief synopsis of their positions is offered here.

Tomlinson's eschatological outlook was grounded in his belief that the Church of God was a fulfillment of the prophecies of Isaiah concerning the restoration of Zion.<sup>217</sup> This belief infused his eschatology with an unrelenting optimism for the future of the Church.<sup>218</sup> For him, the Church of God was more than just the restoration of 'the Bible Church'. It was the beginning of the rule and reign of Christ that would become universal in the millennium.<sup>219</sup> Though he never equated the Church of God with the bride of Christ, Tomlinson urged the members not to slumber as the foolish virgins and miss out on the marriage supper.<sup>220</sup> But even he expressed concern to measure up to the requirements.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> *COGE* 13.30 (Jun 29, 1922), p. 2.

<sup>214</sup> *COGE* 10.25 (Jun 21, 1919), p. 4.

<sup>215</sup> *COGE* 8.27 (Jul 14, 1917), p. 1. The earliest statement of faith of the Church of God, published August 15, 1910, began: 'The Church of God stands for the whole Bible rightly divided. The New Testament as the only rule for government and discipline.' Adherents were adamant that this was not a creed, but simply 'some of the teaching that is made prominent'.

<sup>216</sup> *COGE* 11.18 (May 1, 1920), p. 3.

<sup>217</sup> Cf. e.g. *COGE* 5.12 (Mar 12, 1914), p. 1.

<sup>218</sup> *COGE* 10.9 (Mar 1, 1919), p. 1; 13.15 (Apr 15, 1922), p. 1; 13.41 (Oct 14, 1922), p. 1.

<sup>219</sup> *COGE* 1.17 (Nov 1, 1910), p. 1.

<sup>220</sup> Tomlinson believed that the Holy Spirit is 'now seeking for a bride for Jesus' who will 'measure up to the requirements'. He described the bride in terms of 'the sunburnt woman' in

He believed that it was equally important to ‘be ready for the rapture, ready to die or ready to live’.<sup>222</sup> Indeed, Tomlinson envisioned ‘a great crowd [that] will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air’, as well as ‘multitudes that will give their lives as martyrs for the truth’. Strikingly, he exclaimed, ‘I can hardly make up my mind which crowd I want to join.’<sup>223</sup> Thus, he could speak of the rapture as ‘ascension’ in the progression of spirituality,<sup>224</sup> and of martyrdom as a beneficial experience based in ‘deep spirituality’.<sup>225</sup>

For Tomlinson, the images in the book of Revelation could have contemporary application.<sup>226</sup> Thus, the ‘four horsemen’ in Revelation 6 represented current events associated with the Great War.<sup>227</sup> The last days had come, and the Church would face ‘awful tribulation days’<sup>228</sup> but would be protected in order to spread ‘the gospel of the kingdom to the ends of the world’,<sup>229</sup> receiving an ‘extra supply’ of grace from ‘the seven Spirits of God’.<sup>230</sup>

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Song 1.6, those who toil for others, having submitted to God’s discipline and training, and not ‘sleeping and slumbering’ like the ‘crowd of virgins’ in Matthew 25. He exhorted his readers to enter into a ‘deeper and more thorough consecration’. *COGE* 5.33 (Aug 15, 1914), p. 2; 6.50 (Dec 11, 1915), p. 1; 7.6 (Feb 5, 1916), p. 1; 8.30 (Aug 1, 1917), p. 1; 8.40 (Oct 13, 1917), p. 1.

<sup>221</sup> *COGE* 10.7 (Feb 15, 1919), p. 1.

<sup>222</sup> *COGE* 1.20 (Dec 15, 1910), p. 1.

<sup>223</sup> *COGE* 9.11 (Mar 16, 1918), p. 1.

<sup>224</sup> *COGE* 9.42 (Oct 19, 1918), p. 1. Tomlinson wrote, ‘As truly and serenely as the planets move on in their orbits and have not need of care, for “He careth,” so a soul that is truly abandoned to God to live and act by the moment in His will, will move on, step by step, from point to point, from justification through sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost to the ascension, where all is lost in God.’ In a report of a sermon delivered by Tomlinson at the Mississippi Convention in 1923, the author noted how Tomlinson ‘showed very plainly that the change from mortality to immortality was a fourth experience to be received at the time of the rapture’. *COGE* 14.24 (Jun 16, 1923), p. 2.

<sup>225</sup> *COGE* 9.11 (Mar 16, 1918), p. 1. Cf. also his comments in 1.12 (Aug 15, 1910), p. 1: ‘Some saints are going to be taken up soon to meet Jesus in the air, and if I am not one that goes like Elijah I want to be like Elisha, so close to some that do go that I can receive a double portion of their spirit to enable me to endure successfully the awful persecution, trials and afflictions that will be poured out during the tribulation days.’

<sup>226</sup> *COGE* 9.6 (Feb 9, 1918), p. 1. Tomlinson acknowledged three interpretive models for the book of Revelation: ‘One class wants to make it all figurative and apply it according to their knowledge of things. Another class wants to make it literal and apply it to a time they will never see. A third class claims it is both figurative and literal and that it is its own interpreter as to what is figurative and what is literal.’ In my reading, Tomlinson leaned toward the third view.

<sup>227</sup> *COGE* 9.8 (Feb 23, 1918), p. 1; 9.11 (Mar 16, 1918), p. 1.

<sup>228</sup> *COGE* 10.26 (Jun 24, 1919), p. 1.

<sup>229</sup> *COGE* 9.8 (Feb 23, 1918), p. 1. Tomlinson interpreted the injunction in Rev. 6.6 to ‘hurt not the oil and the wine’ as a reference to those who had received sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Commenting on Isa. 26.20, Tomlinson noted, ‘The time of the pouring out of God’s wrath has come, but if we will only seek Him earnestly, and meet the required conditions, He will deal tenderly with us although we may have to suffer while the world is suffering. But grace will be given those who have set themselves to obtain the deep experience of spirituality offered all who will come for protection.’

<sup>230</sup> *COGE* 9.9 (Mar 2, 1918), p. 1.

Although Tomlinson viewed the beast as a future world leader, he sensed that the ‘authority of the beast’ was present in compulsory military service and food rationing. He exhorted the Church of God members to be on their guard concerning the mark of the beast.<sup>231</sup>

Tomlinson believed that those who were ‘caught up to meet the Lord in the air’ could expect to attend the marriage supper, either as the bride or as guests, and then return on ‘prancing white horses’<sup>232</sup> to assist Christ in his millennial rule.<sup>233</sup> The millennium would be a time of peace and worldwide increase, during which time the Christian religion would ‘sweep the world’ with ‘no devil to oppose’.<sup>234</sup> Christ, ‘the rightful King’ will reign.<sup>235</sup>

Tomlinson wrote harsh words against ‘speculative’ dispensational interpretations of the books of Daniel and Revelation.<sup>236</sup> He defined ‘dispensational truths’ in terms of the promise and fulfillment of prophecies concerning the last days. For him, this ‘gospel dispensation’ in which Jesus is building his Church stood in contrast to the old dispensation of Moses and the tabernacle.<sup>237</sup> While others viewed the return of the Jews to Palestine as the greatest sign of Jesus’ return, for Tomlinson, the bringing of all nations (including

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<sup>231</sup> Before the Great War, Tomlinson (*COGE* 5.15 [Apr 11, 1914], pp. 1-3) associated the mark of the beast with the ‘compulsion’ to join labor unions or lodges. During the war (*COGE* 9.6 [Feb 9, 1918], p. 1), he wrote, ‘If this is not the exact time for the mark to be placed on the people it is surely nearing the time. The only place of safety that I see is to be in close touch with the Lord and obtain from Him knowledge and understanding, and revelations if needs be for protection. The very fact that so many of our people are stirred up about this matter of the mark of the beast is proof that we are nearing the time and God wants us to keep our eyes open and not be deceived. To the Church of God belongs knowledge and wisdom. We must know. God will let us know.’

<sup>232</sup> *COGE* 11.41 (Oct 9, 1920), p. 1.

<sup>233</sup> *COGE* 1.17 (Nov 1, 1910), p. 1.

<sup>234</sup> *COGE* 10.28 (Jul 12, 1919), p. 1.

<sup>235</sup> *COGE* 11.32 (Aug 1, 1920), p. 1.

<sup>236</sup> *COGE* 9.9 (Mar 2, 1918), p. 1. Tomlinson wrote, ‘After all these expositions and interpretations of the hidden mystery have been written, Daniel still slumbers. They take his figures, measurements and make charts and paint them in glaring colors and draw long and short curved lines to represent certain periods or certain dispensations and after this is all done and their measurements and time falls at a certain time and place Daniel still rests as silently as the grave, and the authors are afraid of their own drawings and interpretations, judging from their continuous labors to try to discover something better and more sure. To my mind their time would have been better spent in going out in the streets and lanes of the city, or in the country to the school houses or under brush harbors working for the salvation of souls, because when they have had their books written, and their drawings made, and have had a large sale, often they have been humiliated by the time running past their marks and still the thing did not happen. We the saints of God are tired of all such foolishness and have decided to give Daniel a chance to “rest and stand in” his “lot at the end of the days.” These writers and Bible expositors are so different in their views that we are afraid of all of them, so we have decided to watch for the season and accept the knowledge and reality when the time comes for its revelation.’

<sup>237</sup> *COGE* 10.15 (Apr 12, 1919), p. 1.

Jews and Gentiles) into one body by the blood of Christ was the ultimate sign of the last days.<sup>238</sup>

The eschatological outlook of F.J. Lee may be gleaned especially from a weekly series of lessons on the Apocalypse that he wrote for *The Church of God Evangel* from November 12, 1921 through September 9, 1922.<sup>239</sup> Lee was the first in *The Evangel* to mention ‘Scofield’s Bible’,<sup>240</sup> and his views on eschatology reveal a dependence on Scofield’s dispensational outlook, with some notable exceptions. A summary of Lee’s eschatology easily takes on the characteristics of a grand play with many actors, each described in relation to the others, with chronological outlines and events scheduled as entrance and exit cues for the various characters in the drama.<sup>241</sup> Indeed, Lee illustrated his perspective on a two-by-ten-foot prophecy chart that was offered for sale to *Evangel* readers.<sup>242</sup>

According to Lee, the Jews, or *national Israel*, would return to the land of Palestine, rebuild the temple, and make a seven-year covenant with the Antichrist. After three and one-half years of peace, the Antichrist would break the covenant and his armies would attack the Jews who would be rescued at the second coming of Jesus, whom they would then accept as the true Messiah.<sup>243</sup> *Spiritual Israel*,<sup>244</sup> or the Church composed of both Jews and Gentiles, would bring forth the bride,

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<sup>238</sup> *COGE* 9.22 (Jun 1, 1918), p. 1; 7.17 (Apr 22, 1916), p. 1. For Tomlinson, the return of the Jews after captivity was a type of ‘the return of the Church of God in our day’ (*COGE* 8.31 [Sep 1, 1917], p. 1).

<sup>239</sup> Lee also contributed a weekly column from December 1922 through June 1923 as ‘editor’ for the Education Department.

<sup>240</sup> *COGE* 12.45 (Nov 12, 1921), p. 2. No advertisements for Scofield’s Bible appear in *The Evangel* through 1923. Some do appear, however, in Tomlinson’s short-lived sister publication, *The Faithful Standard*, beginning in June, 1922.

<sup>241</sup> Almost everything Lee contributed to *The Evangel* on the topic of eschatology was written in a question and answer format, which gave a sense of both precision and fragmentation to his perspective. His series of lessons on the Apocalypse were collected and published as *Book of Prophecy* (Cleveland, TN: Church of God Publishing House, 1923).

<sup>242</sup> *COGE* 14.40 (Sep 29, 1923), p. 4. Lee’s ‘Big Chart’ was advertised as ‘The Key to the Bible’. An undated, loose-leaf flyer announcing a special sales offer for the chart, together with Lee’s *Book of Prophecy*, explained, ‘...the entire Book of Revelation is no more a mystery. Anyone who has any tact for talking in public can take this simple arranged book and chart and make a lecture on Revelation.’

<sup>243</sup> *COGE* 11.16 (Apr 17, 1920), p. 3; 12.48 (Dec 3, 1921), p. 3; 13.1 (Jan 7, 1922), p. 3; 13.6 (Feb 11, 1922), p. 3; 13.12 (Mar 25, 1922), p. 3.

<sup>244</sup> Lee maintained a separation between Israel and the church, but refined this view by defining the church as ‘spiritual Israel’ in distinction from ‘national Israel’. This distinction becomes prominent in his understanding of the tribulation and millennium. Lee appealed to Lev. 26.21 to support his view that the plagues of the tribulation would be sent to bring Israel to repentance (*COGE* 13.6 [Feb 11, 1922], p. 3). He commented that the opening of the sealed book (Revelation 5) ‘would be the means of turning back to the rightful owners their rightful possession. The Jews had lost the kingdom, therefore, there was no peaceful millennial reign in sight to the saints of God’ (*COGE* 12.51 [Dec 24, 1921], p. 4).

enter the tribulation as the ‘Laodicean church’, be ‘hidden’ from the Antichrist in a ‘wilderness’ of apostasy, and then be destroyed as ‘spiritual Babylon’ (Rev. 18).<sup>245</sup> The *bride*, also called the ‘manchild’<sup>246</sup> and the ‘overcomers’, who ‘are really sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost’, would come forth from the body of Christ<sup>247</sup> and be raptured in what Lee referred to as the ‘harvest’ portion of the first resurrection.<sup>248</sup> They are represented by the twenty-four elders in Revelation 4 and play key roles in the judgments of the tribulation period.<sup>249</sup> This group would rule the earth with Christ during the millennium, having access to New Jerusalem.<sup>250</sup> The *144,000* (Revelation 7 and 14) would be a Jewish remnant who would receive Spirit baptism (the seal of God in their foreheads) ‘out in the tribulation’ and preach to the Gentiles. This group would be neither martyred nor raptured, but would survive the onslaught of the Antichrist finally to appear with Jesus on earthly Mt. Zion where Jesus will set up his throne.<sup>251</sup> The *tribulation*

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<sup>245</sup> *COGE* 12.47 (Nov 26, 1921), p. 2; 13.14 (Apr 8, 1922), p. 3; 13.15 (Apr 15, 1922), p. 3; 13.25 (Jun 24, 1922), p. 3. Although Lee was silent about applying prophecies concerning Zion to the Church of God, he did identify the sun-clad woman of Revelation 12 with Zion, or ‘spiritual Israel’.

<sup>246</sup> In his series on the Apocalypse, *COGE* 13.14 (Apr 8, 1922), p. 3, Lee described the ‘manchild’ as a multinational group that included both Jews and Gentiles. In a subsequent article, however, he envisioned the ‘bride’ as being only Gentile. He noted that, following the example of Solomon and Moses, who had Gentile brides, ‘Jesus came to His own and His own received Him not. Jesus left them and began to seek a bride among the Gentiles’ (*COGE* 14.4 [Jan 27, 1923], p. 3).

<sup>247</sup> *COGE* 14.3 (Jan 20, 1923), p. 3. Here, Lee spoke of the church as ‘His body (the Church of God)’, one of the few references he made to the Church of God. In contrast to the ‘shadow’ of the Sabbath, Lee argued, the Church of God was Christ’s ‘real Body’ (*COGE* 5.26 [Jun 27, 1914], p. 7).

<sup>248</sup> *COGE* 12.50 (Dec 17, 1921), p. 4; 14.13 (Mar 31, 1923), p. 3. It is difficult to ascertain whom Lee believed would be in the rapture. His frequent use of the term ‘saints’ in various contexts might have led his readers to think that he included all saved persons. In a discussion of the marriage supper, however, Lee was clear that only those who have on ‘the full Pentecostal garment’ would be sufficiently clothed to enter. All others would ‘find themselves in the tribulation’ (*COGE* 14.12 [Mar 24, 1923], p. 3). In his comments on the fall of Babylon (Revelation 18), Lee wrote, ‘The real spiritual people from all denominations will have gone in the rapture so at the time of the destruction of the Mystery, Babylon woman, the tribulation saints will have been called out of her in the finishing up of the first resurrection and rapture and now there will be left a form of backslidden churches associated with lodges and orders of all descriptions. Those who have depended on them will go down with them’ (*COGE* 13.25 [Jun 24, 1922], p. 3).

<sup>249</sup> Lee maintained that everything after Revelation 3 is ‘for the future’, except where the narrative is referred to as a sign or mystery. Cf. *COGE* 11.12 (Mar 20, 1920), p. 3; 12.49 (Dec 10, 1921), p. 4; 13.14 (Apr 8, 1922), p. 3.

<sup>250</sup> *COGE* 13.32 (Aug 12, 1922), p. 3. Although the New Jerusalem does not appear in the text of Revelation until 21.2, Lee believed that the city would hover over the earth during the millennium.

<sup>251</sup> *COGE* 13.5 (Feb 4, 1922), p. 2. Lee wrote, ‘Paul says we are sealed by the Spirit. It would do no violence to Scripture to say that this angel (who sealed the remnant) is the Holy Ghost already here, not descending. John said, He sent His angel and signified these things in the churches. The angel (messenger) in the churches is the Holy Ghost. Ch. 14:16.’ Cf. also *COGE* 13.11 (Mar 18, 1922), p. 3; 13.19 (May 13, 1922), p. 3.

*saints* would be Gentiles who are converted during the tribulation, especially by the evangelistic efforts of the 144,000, having been called out of Babylon, apostate spiritual Israel. This group would also include the *five foolish virgins* (Matthew 25),<sup>252</sup> symbolized by ‘the remnant of the woman’s seed’ (Revelation 12), who would receive Spirit baptism after the rapture. Many would be put to death by the Antichrist (hence, the ‘souls under the altar’, Rev. 6.7-12)<sup>253</sup> and be resurrected and raptured up to heaven in what Lee referred to as the ‘gleanings’ portion of the first resurrection (Rev. 14.14-20).<sup>254</sup>

Lee believed that the *Antichrist* would first appear after the rapture as the rider of the white horse (Rev. 6.1-2),<sup>255</sup> keeping peace with Israel for three and one-half years, after which, as the ‘beast out of the sea’ (Revelation 13), he would force everyone to worship him and receive his mark, or suffer death.<sup>256</sup> The *false prophet*, or ‘beast from the earth’, possibly Judas come back to life, would cause everyone to worship the image of the Antichrist and receive ‘the mark of the beast’, a literal mark that would identify the recipient as a follower of the beast, giving them special privileges.<sup>257</sup> Both the Antichrist and the false prophet would be cast into the (literal) lake of fire at the return of Jesus. The *goat nations*, which are the nations that have been cruel to the Lord’s brethren, the Jews, would be destroyed at the judgment of the nations at the second coming of Jesus. They would be called forth by Satan at the end of the millennium as ‘Gog’ to fight against God. The *sheep nations*, which are the nations that have been favorable to the Jews, would be allowed to enter into the millennium to be ruled over by a rod of iron. They would be deceived by Satan at the end of the millennium and become ‘Magog’. Both Gog and Magog would be destroyed by God.<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>252</sup> The five wise virgins, by implication, would be composed of those who were not part of the bride, but would receive Spirit baptism, be raptured, and admitted entrance to the marriage supper as attendants of the bride. Cf. *COGE* 14.3 (Jan 20, 1923), p. 3.

<sup>253</sup> Unlike Tomlinson, Lee portrayed martyrdom in a negative light. He wrote, ‘Doubtless, it is better to be ready for the rapture and go to meet the Lord and thereby miss the terrible things coming—martyr’s death, etc.’ (*COGE* 13.3 [Jan 21, 1922], p. 4).

<sup>254</sup> *COGE* 13.21 (May 27, 1922), p. 3.

<sup>255</sup> Rather than signifying current events, as Tomlinson believed, the ‘four horsemen’ represented actions that would span the entire seven-year tribulation period. The ‘red horse’, symbolizing war, would not appear until the middle of the tribulation period. Famine and death would then characterize the remaining three and one-half years.

<sup>256</sup> *COGE* 12.52 (Dec 31, 1921), p. 3; 13.17 (Apr 29, 1922), p. 3; 13.18 (May 6, 1922), p. 3.

<sup>257</sup> *COGE* 13.18 (May 6, 1922), p. 3.

<sup>258</sup> *COGE* 13.27 (Jul 8, 1922), p. 3; 13.28 (Jul 15, 1922), p. 3; 13.29 (Jul 22, 1922), p. 3.

Lee's concept of history was multifaceted. For Lee, the ages were clearly distinct from one another.<sup>259</sup> He proposed that 'there are really just two dispensations', characterized as 'first Adam and second Adam' or 'law and grace', and symbolized by 'moon and sun'.<sup>260</sup> The present 'gospel dispensation' was further divided into seven ages, each taking on the characteristics of the seven churches of Revelation 2–3. The current 'Philadelphia church age' would end with the rapture, and the 'Laodicean church' would 'enter the tribulations'.<sup>261</sup> Lee divided the seven-year tribulation into two, three and one-half year periods, the first characterized by peace brought by the Antichrist, and the last, called 'the great tribulation' or 'Jacob's trouble', filled with war, death, and plagues from God, all designed to judge the ungodly and bring Israel to repentance.<sup>262</sup> The millennium, or 'kingdom age', would be a literal thousand-year period of Christ's personal reign on the earth, during which the Jews will possess the earth and the overcoming saints will oversee the work.<sup>263</sup> After the final 'great white throne judgment', the earth would be renovated by fire, making it a fit place for God's throne, the New Jerusalem.<sup>264</sup> The final state would be characterized by the complete removal of the curse (no sickness or death), and God himself will have reached the teleological goal of unity.<sup>265</sup>

The disparity between the perspectives of Tomlinson and Lee may be attributed to their differing hermeneutical presuppositions. Tomlinson approached

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<sup>259</sup> In a telling comment on Heb. 6.4, Lee, *COGE* 14.12 (Mar 24, 1923), p. 3, reasoned, 'Some of this applies to us now, but have we tasted of the powers of the world to come? These are still more wonderful experiences. If after one experiences this, then to fall would be a hopeless case. This experience takes us to a realm not hitherto experienced. This belongs to the other world, [not] yet experienced in this.'

<sup>260</sup> *COGE* 13.15 (Apr 15, 1922), p. 3. Cf. Lee's article, 'At the End of the World,' *The Faithful Standard* (June, 1922), pp. 8, 17-22. Here, Lee enumerated four historical ages: (1) Adam to Noah, (2) Noah to John the Baptist, (3) John the Baptist to the Millennium, and (4) the Millennium to the New Creation. Significantly, this scheme corresponds to neither Darby nor Scofield.

<sup>261</sup> *COGE* 12.45 (Nov 12, 1921), p. 2; 12.47 (Nov 26, 1921), p. 2. This differs with *The Bridegroom's Messenger*, where the church was understood to be already in 'the Laodicean age'.

<sup>262</sup> *COGE* 12.52 (Dec 31, 1921), p. 3. Lee accepted the interpretation that Daniel's seventieth week (Dan. 9.24-27) refers to a seven-year period 'on the other side of the Gentile dispensation', which 'belongs to the Jews alone'. Lee, *COGE* 12.48 (Dec 3, 1921), p. 3, wrote, 'The Gentile dispensation ... is a parenthesis in the seventy weeks prophecy. The prophecy let down at the crucifixion, but will be in force after the rapture of the saints and the return of the Jews to be a nation.'

<sup>263</sup> *COGE* 13.32 (Aug 12, 1922), p. 3.

<sup>264</sup> *COGE* 13.33 (Aug 19, 1922), p. 3.

<sup>265</sup> In his final article in the series, 'The Trinity Finally in One,' *COGE* 13.36 (Sep 9, 1922), p. 2, Lee hinted at subordinationism within the Trinity as he refers to Jesus as 'God's angel' and the Holy Spirit as 'Jesus' angel'. He concluded that in the eternal state, 'all [will] culminate in God the Father in the new heaven.'

the biblical text with a dynamic understanding of the relationship between the Spirit, the text, and contemporary experience, allowing all Scripture to have contemporary applicability. Lee approached the text with a much more static and reasoned conception of textual meaning,<sup>266</sup> limiting each text to fit within a rationally defined historical framework. While both men valued Spirit baptism, Tomlinson brought the experience into a dynamic dialogue with Scripture and contemporary experience, allowing his Pentecostal spirituality to become a major reference point for the meaning of the text. Thus, the passages about Zion that Lee read as a reference to Israel and the millennium,<sup>267</sup> Tomlinson applied to the Church of God.<sup>268</sup> Lee assured members that the mark of the beast would not appear until after the rapture;<sup>269</sup> Tomlinson warned members to guard themselves against it.<sup>270</sup> Lee was adamant that the four horsemen were reserved for the tribulation period;<sup>271</sup> Tomlinson saw evidence in his day that they had already been sent forth.<sup>272</sup> As a result, while Lee had solved the ‘mystery’ of the book of Revelation and even provided the tools for anyone to teach it, Tomlinson urged his readers to get deeper into God, so that at the appropriate time, God would make the mystery known. With the perspectives of Tomlinson and Lee serving as reference points, the other contributions to the periodical may now be examined.

### **C. Zion, the Church of God, and the Bride of Christ**

The majority of regular contributors to the *Church of God Evangel* from 1910 through 1923 understood the Church of God to be a fulfillment of OT prophecies concerning ‘Zion’. This idea, espoused by Tomlinson, was promoted by other prominent leaders such as M.S. Lemons, T.S. Payne, J.C. Jernigan, S.C. Perry, J.B. Ellis, and J.S. Llewellyn, as well as by many lesser-known contributors. By applying passages in Isaiah that speak of the restoration of Zion to the restoration

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<sup>266</sup> Lee, *COGE* 13.36 (Sep 9, 1922), p. 3, concluded his series on the Apocalypse with these words: ‘With this article ends the series of articles on Revelation. I have enjoyed writing them. I feel that this has been a help to me to get these things fixed in my mind. I have consulted many authors, while I have had my mind made up for several years, it did me good to find some agreeing with me on the subject, however there are many things brought out that I have never seen in print before for instance the 10th and 12th chapters. I submit the entire work to the public with that degree of satisfaction that one has when he knows he is right.’

<sup>267</sup> *COGE* 14.10 (Mar 10, 1923), p. 3.

<sup>268</sup> *COGE* 7.20 (May 13, 1916), p. 1.

<sup>269</sup> *COGE* 11.22 (May 22, 1920), p. 3.

<sup>270</sup> *COGE* 9.6 (Feb 9, 1918), p. 1.

<sup>271</sup> *COGE* 11.12 (Mar 20, 1920), p. 3; 14.18 (May 5, 1923), p. 3.

<sup>272</sup> *COGE* 9.8 (Feb 23, 1918), p. 1; 9.11 (Mar 16, 1918), p. 1.

of the Church of God,<sup>273</sup> the eschatological purpose and identity already inherent in the group was encouraged even further. J.B. Ellis articulated a common view:

The Methodist wanted to build the Church of God, but their hands were not clean, and they did not see the light on baptism of the Holy Ghost. The Methodist and Baptist quarried out the material, but it takes the Solomons to put it together, and when it is finished and the gifts added, then will Zion be established on top of the mountain and all nations will flow into her.<sup>274</sup>

In an article in which images of Zion, the New Jerusalem, and the Church of God coalesce into a single prophetic and proleptic vision, E.W. Simpson enjoined:

We now look at these who believe and accept His government, which is 'Theocratic in form,' who are known as the 'Church of God' or 'Body of Jesus Christ.' Let us walk about Zion, mark well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; the great City of our God. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth. The City of the great King; the New Jerusalem with her streets of gold and sparkling walls of Jasper and her foundations furnished with select material and adorned in raiment of needle work to the value of all manner of precious stones. The habitation of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost forever and forever. Alpha and Omega the beginning and the ending. Of His government and peace there shall be no end. God's government is the only one that ever was or ever will be, that brings perfect peace and satisfaction to the good. But the government of God ... hoisting an ensign for the weary pilgrims to find their way to Mt. Zion, is what the people need today.<sup>275</sup>

The identification of the Church of God with Zion was also expressed by many in terms of 'the old ship of Zion' and the progression of the gospel message as 'the wheels of Zion'.<sup>276</sup> In 1923, C.A. James could rejoice: 'Isaiah said, When God shall bring again Zion we shall see eye to eye. Isa. 52:8. We all know that Zion is the Church of God. I thank God that all true Church of God people are seeing eye to eye at this time. Hallelujah!'<sup>277</sup>

The vision of the Church of God as Zion was not shared by every contributor to *The Evangel*. J.P. Hughes warned against applying passages of Scripture (e.g.

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<sup>273</sup> Cf. e.g. Isa. 1.27; 2.2-3; 4.3-5; 28.16-7; 41.15-6; 52.8-11; 60.18.

<sup>274</sup> *COGE* 7.24 (Jun 19, 1916), p. 3.

<sup>275</sup> *COGE* 7.4 (Jan 22, 1916), p. 4. Cf. the comments of T. Brogdon, *COGE* 12.37 (Sep 10, 1921), p. 2: 'Many years ago there was a beautiful city by the name of Zion that sat in the tops of the mountains and sent rays of her beautiful light into many dark corners of this earth. There was also a great volcano whose name was sin and dissipation. The same had a terrible eruption of lava and ashes of creeds and man made institutions and completely covered this beautiful city, Zion (Church of God) all through the dark ages. Since that time, brave Nehemiah (overseer of Church of God) with the elders of Israel and many brave soldiers of the cross have gone out to unearth the beautiful city (Church of God) ... that she might send forth her silver rays of light to the lost and dying and to restore the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek...'

<sup>276</sup> Cf. e.g. *COGE* 12.46 (Nov 19, 1921), p. 1; 14.43 (Oct 20, 1923), p. 4.

<sup>277</sup> *COGE* 14.33 (Aug 18, 1923), p. 3.

Dan. 2.44; Isa. 2.2) to the Church of God that in his estimation have ‘direct reference to the millennial kingdom of God’.<sup>278</sup> Apparently, Tomlinson was sensitive to such alternative interpretations. Commenting on Jer. 31.3-7, Tomlinson also revealed something of his hermeneutical method:

The above passages may be taken to mean the restoration of the Jews to their country in the last days, or their return from their long ago captivity, but since no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation (2 Pet. 1:20.) I can also get something out of it for the Church of God. And truly the things happened unto Israel as ensamples and are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come. (1 Cor. 10:11.) This being the case we can get some good admonition from the above prophecy. Here is an exhortation to enthusiasm in service. This is for the Church of God. Here is a distinct statement that somebody shall go forth in the dances of them that make merry. Just as well be us as anybody. We have come back to Zion (the Church), and who has a better right to sing and shout than we?<sup>279</sup>

The perception of the Church of God as the fulfillment of Zion is intertwined with the metaphor of the bride of Christ. Indeed, some identified the Church of God with the bride. W.G. Anderson explained, ‘What is the Church of God? She is the bride of Christ, and the complete body is made up of all her truly born little ones, her sanctified saints and Holy Ghost filled and commissioned ones, who have promised to obey the bridegroom in everything...’<sup>280</sup> J.B. Ellis commended a fellow minister ‘for the sake of Jesus, [and] for the sake of the Church of God, His Bride...’<sup>281</sup> Sam C. Perry argued that ‘the bride, the Church of God, as set forth in the Scriptures, has life and activity, and is awake to spiritual things.’<sup>282</sup> In some instances, the Church of God is described in ways that are similar to how the bride of Christ is described in *The Bridegroom’s Messenger*. Thus, the Church of God is ‘getting on her beautiful [wedding] garments’<sup>283</sup> and is ‘getting ready to meet the Bridegroom in the air’.<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>278</sup> *COGE* 12.1 (Jan 1, 1921), p. 4.

<sup>279</sup> *COGE* 11.18 (May 1, 1920), p. 1.

<sup>280</sup> *COGE* 5.13 (Mar 28, 1914), p. 5. The testimony of W.H. Wilson, *COGE* 14.25 (Jun 23, 1923), p. 4, is typical: ‘I expect to live a pure, clean life, hid in Christ, our precious Savior, and stand for the precious Church of God for I believe she is the model Church, the one without spot or wrinkle, the bride, the Lamb’s wife. Oh, Hallelujah! I feel so good washed in the blood from all my guilty past.’

<sup>281</sup> *COGE* 3.14 (Sep 15, 1912), p. 4.

<sup>282</sup> *COGE* 10.7 (Feb 15, 1919), p. 3.

<sup>283</sup> *COGE* 14.44 (Oct 27, 1923), p. 2.

<sup>284</sup> *COGE* 12.2 (Jan 8, 1921), p. 3. Commenting on Song 6.2, one writer, *COGE* 14.22 (Jun 2, 1923), p. 1, compares the Church of God with the garden of spices into which the Bridegroom comes ‘to inhale the savor thereof (praise of saints) and to gather lilies’.

Others, however, believed that the Church of God would ‘bring forth the bride’. M.S. Lemons explained, ‘Eve was only a part of Adam’s body. Even so, “the church and the bride” are one in the same sense, and will remain so until the great hand of God separates them.’ He continued:

Evidently the church of God is the mother of this fair virgin, the Queen in gold of Ophir. ‘When Zion travails she shall bring forth sons and daughters.’ ‘When one member suffers, all the members suffer with it.’ And this suffering mother, the body of Christ will be enabled, by the grace that Jesus will give her, to present to Him, and to His delight, this fair woman, who is cleansed by the blood and filled with the Spirit, and ‘arrayed in fine linen clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints’. So the pure church will bring forth a pure offering, which will be accepted by Jesus as His bride.<sup>285</sup>

E.B. Culpepper exhorted, ‘Come on brothers and sisters lets keep digging and get the Church of God, from which is to be taken the bride of Christ, robed and ready for her husband.’<sup>286</sup> W.L. Butler agreed, ‘I praise Him for the light He has given me on the glorious Church of God which I believe with all my heart is predestined to bring forth the bride of the Son of God.’<sup>287</sup>

Sanctification and Spirit baptism were understood to be the minimal requirements for membership in the bride of Christ, a view shared by readers of *The Bridegroom’s Messenger*. Numerous testimonies speak of white wedding garments, trimmed lamps, and vessels full of oil, ready to meet the Bridegroom. A number of articles, however, indicate that the bride is of a ‘higher order’ than the wise virgins of Matthew 25.<sup>288</sup> T.S. Payne explained, ‘The lowest order of saints who will get to go to the marriage supper of the Lamb are those who are filled with the Holy Ghost. The bride will be a still higher order, those who have attained unto the high standard of perfection in Christ and have come to a oneness on all lines.’<sup>289</sup>

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<sup>285</sup> *COGE* 1.7 (Jun 1, 1910), p. 2.

<sup>286</sup> *COGE* 6.49 (Dec 4, 1915), p. 4. Compare the testimonies of W.L. Butler, *COGE* 9.29 (Jul 20, 1918), p. 3: ‘I want to praise Jesus for His blood which was shed to sanctify His church. I praise Him for the light He has given me on the glorious Church of God which I believe with all my heart is predestined to bring forth the bride of the Son of God’; and E.L. Folsom, *COGE* 13.36 (Sep 9, 1922), p. 4: ‘The devil is doing everything he can to try and keep the Church of God from bringing forth the bride but he cannot for the Lord said, “The gates of hell shall not prevail against her” or in other words overcome her.’

<sup>287</sup> *COGE* 9.29 (Jul 20, 1918), p. 3. Cf. also *COGE* 13.36 (Sep 9, 1922), p. 4.

<sup>288</sup> For example, J.C. Dunaway, *COGE* 10.42 (Oct 18, 1919), p. 3, believed that the wise virgins are not part of the bride. Accordingly, Spirit baptism does not insure membership in the bride of Christ.

<sup>289</sup> *COGE* 13.23 (Jun 10, 1922), p. 3.

Of all the additional requirements for the bride, unity with one another was mentioned most frequently, often in contrast to the ‘spirit of Babylon’. J.L. Thornhill exhorted:

Let us receive the baptism of oneness spoken of in the 4th chapter of Ephesians. It places us into the family of the bride. This baptism is received after the baptism of the Holy Ghost. This baptism of oneness is very greatly to be desired. Since it places us in the ranks of the bride, let us seek harder to know God’s will and to stay free from the spirit of Babylon—confusion.<sup>290</sup>

In the report of a Church of God camp meeting in Florida in 1910, the practice of biblical hermeneutics in the context of Pentecostal spirituality resulted in the eschatological significance of unity in the Church of God:

Suddenly a sister under the influence of the Spirit took from the pulpit a Bible, opened it, and began reading in tongues from Rev. 18... Immediately after reading this, which seemed to be a call to the people of God to get out of sectism, or the confusion of the common churches, the Spirit caught another sister who was standing on the altar board, and demonstrated by signs that were plainly understood by us, which, as we interpreted added great blessing to the congregation looking on. The signs, and pictures and tongues demonstrated plainly how when the called out ones left mystic Babylon, they would come to the Lord’s church and be closely joined and compacted—knit together in love and caught up to meet the Lord in the air. At this juncture the Spirit began to sing, talk and demonstrate the truth contained in Isaiah 51:11, and Isaiah 52:8,9,10, showing how that prophesy would be fulfilled, and the people were going to come with singing and great joy into the oneness for which Jesus prayed as recorded in John 17.<sup>291</sup>

#### **D. The Marriage Supper and the Tribulation**

While the image of the marriage supper in *The Bridegroom’s Messenger* faded over time, the opposite occurred in *The Church of God Evangel*, where its significance seemed to increase after the Great War. The Church of God followed more closely in the tradition of Azusa Street, where attendance at the marriage supper of the Lamb was viewed as the culmination of the spiritual experiences of justification, sanctification, and Spirit baptism. These experiences were

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<sup>290</sup> *COGE* 10.45 (Nov 15, 1919), p. 3. Cf. the comments of Mrs E.S. Hubbell, *COGE* 5.24 (Jun 13, 1914), p. 6: ‘There is another truth or fact being brought forward—now a recognized need of the Pentecostal church... It is the need of some plan of government in and for the church which shall bring all to be of “one mind” in teaching and practice. This oneness of mind is the only thing which will bring us up to the high standard of efficiency which God requires of the Bride of Christ.’

<sup>291</sup> *COGE* 1.18 (Nov 15, 1910), p. 2. This is perhaps one of the best examples of the practice of discernment in *The Church of God Evangel*.

represented by the imagery of putting on wedding garments, a prerequisite for attendance at the marriage supper.<sup>292</sup> The preaching of the gospel was often depicted as issuing ‘invitations to the marriage supper’.<sup>293</sup>

A strong emphasis on the anticipated communal nature of the marriage supper may be noted in this periodical, a theme in keeping with the ecclesiology of the group. Georgia Haston described whom she expected to see there: ‘Oh, what a company! Apostles, martyrs, fathers, mothers, children, friends, neighbors, ministers, converts.’<sup>294</sup> R.L. Cotnam shared a testimony of a vision he had of the Church of God depicted as ‘the old ship of Zion’ sailing toward ‘the shores of the New Jerusalem’ for ‘the marriage supper of the Lamb’.<sup>295</sup> For J.B. Ellis, the marriage supper was the ‘final goal’ of ‘the great Church of God’.<sup>296</sup> He envisioned the event as ‘the great Assembly in the skies’ where ‘The reception and entertainment committees will take charge of us and conduct us to the great marriage supper of the Lamb at the head of that long! long!! table with its millions seated on either side.’<sup>297</sup>

The members of the Church of God viewed the rapture as a matter of spirituality. While some spoke of the rapture as the means to escape the tribulation,<sup>298</sup> it was more often portrayed as the ‘catching away’ of Jesus’ bride to attend the marriage supper.<sup>299</sup> Sam Perry noted that many will miss the rapture because they ‘did not live near enough to Him to be caught away’.<sup>300</sup> Lillie Gibson expressed the depth of spirituality associated with the rapture. She wrote, ‘I can almost feel the second coming of Jesus surging through my being and can

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<sup>292</sup> The wedding garments are variously associated with cleansing from sin, total purity, and Pentecostal baptism. The testimony of Minnie Lou Mosteller, *COGE* 8.4 (Jun 16, 1917), p. 4, is typical: ‘I am so glad I ever became tired of sin and gave my heart to Jesus and He saved me from all sin, sanctified me and gave me the blessed Holy Ghost that I might be ready for the marriage supper.’

<sup>293</sup> Cf. e.g. *COGE* 1.7 (Jun 1, 1910), p. 6; 7.47 (Nov 18, 1916), p. 1; 9.22 (Jun 1, 1918), p. 3.

<sup>294</sup> *COGE* 9.32 (Aug 10, 1918), p. 2.

<sup>295</sup> *COGE* 12.37 (Sep 10, 1921), p. 3.

<sup>296</sup> *COGE* 14.34 (Aug 25, 1923), p. 2.

<sup>297</sup> *COGE* 14.46 (Nov 10, 1923), p. 1.

<sup>298</sup> Cf. e.g. *COGE* 9.26 (Jun 29, 1918), p. 1-2; 12.46 (Nov 19, 1921), p. 3; 12.47 (Nov 26, 1921), p. 4. Luke 21.36 was quoted most often in reference to the rapture as the means to escape the tribulation.

<sup>299</sup> It is significant that the earliest published list of teachings of the Church of God articulates eschatological hope without using the term ‘rapture’. *COGE* 1.12 (Aug 15, 1910), p. 3. The brief statement read: ‘Pre-millennial second coming of Jesus; First, to resurrect the dead saints, and to catch away the living saints to meet Him in the air: Matt. 24:27-28, I Cor. 15:51-52, I Thess. 4:15-17. Second, to reign on the earth a thousand years: Zech. 14:5, Rev. 5:10, Rev. 19:11-21, Rev. 20:4-6.’

<sup>300</sup> *COGE* 6.42 (Oct 16, 1915), p. 2.

almost feel the power of God raise me with the great Church of God to meet Him in the air. Hallelujah, how wonderful to be in the bride of Christ, and be at the great marriage of the Lamb.<sup>301</sup> John Bunch depicted the coming of Jesus in terms of the Isaianic vision:

The glory of the Lord is getting near and His train is filling the temple. He will soon reveal Himself from heaven and His people will be crying, 'Holy, holy, holy.' He will come to execute judgment upon all that are ungodly and to take vengeance upon them that obey not the gospel. I am writing this with a heart full of love for the saints of God and for the lost world. The glory of the Lord's train will soon fill the earth and we will step aboard and go with Jesus. But what about precious lost souls?<sup>302</sup>

That a time of tribulation was coming upon the world was unquestioned. It was, however, anticipated in different ways. Those in sympathy with Tomlinson's perspective understood the tribulation as a contemporary event that called for immediate preparation and united action. Alonso Gann explained, 'As we see the approach of war, pestilences, and famines, in divers places, we can truly say that perilous times are upon us; and that we are entering the tribulation period foretold by Daniel the prophet, concerning which he said, "Many shall be purified, made white, and tried."<sup>303</sup> For this group, the tribulation would be avoided, not by the rapture, but by appealing to God's mercy to hide them until his wrath is past.<sup>304</sup> Other preparations included being alert to avoid the mark of the beast, and the possible need to organize food banks and other services for those who refused to take the mark.<sup>305</sup> Lillie Gibson was confident: 'The great Church of God is builded on a rock and when the winds begin to blow and the rain begins to fall and great persecutions begin to come and the mark of the beast appears, she is the very thing that will stand the test and go through because she is founded upon the rock.'<sup>306</sup>

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<sup>301</sup> *COGE* 12.39 (Sep 24, 1921), p. 3.

<sup>302</sup> *COGE* 14.13 (Mar 31, 1923), p. 2.

<sup>303</sup> *COGE* 8.15 (Apr 15, 1917), p. 4.

<sup>304</sup> *COGE* 8.20 (May 26, 1917), p. 3.

<sup>305</sup> S.J. Heath, *COGE* 12.24 (Jun 1, 1921), p. 1, wrote, 'I think it would be well for our people to read the 13th chapter of Revelation and be very careful. I am wondering as I meditate on these things if it would not be well for the Church of God to begin preparing for our people by organizing a storehouse and other industries through which we can buy and sell, and secure employment? We are living in perilous times and these things are rapidly developing. It behooves us to know the Word of God, and if we nestle right close to it, and stick close to God, He will see us safely through.'

<sup>306</sup> *COGE* 12.39 (Sep 24, 1921), p. 3.

Understanding the tribulation as a definite period of time<sup>307</sup> that would occur after the rapture, others exhorted their audience to watch and pray to be accounted worthy to escape.<sup>308</sup> Like F.J. Lee, this group viewed the purpose of the tribulation to be centered on the Jews, who would return to their homeland, be deluded by the Antichrist, and be saved by Jesus at the battle of Armageddon.<sup>309</sup> For these commentators, the Great War was a prelude to the tribulation, resulting in the political arrangements necessary for the positive reception of the Antichrist.<sup>310</sup>

### **E. Millennial Glory and the Dispensations**

The premillennial second coming of Jesus was a uniform perspective presented in the *Church of God Evangel*.<sup>311</sup> Its meaning and purpose, however, was multifaceted. In the context of such a strong ecclesiology, it is not surprising that some portrayed the millennium as the triumph of the Church. In his article, 'The Glory of the Church', J.M. Scarbrough wrote,

The Church of God is watching for the dawn of the glad millennial day when Jesus shall come on the clouds of heaven to catch away His bride. Acts 1:9, 10, 11. John speaking of His coming, says 'Behold He cometh with clouds.' Rev. 1:7 His second coming will not be a secret or seen by only a few but will be in a blaze of glory in sight of the whole world.<sup>312</sup>

With a robust optimism that equaled that of Tomlinson, T.A. McAllister linked the eschatological nature of the Church with the coming millennium. He wrote,

God's covenant with Zion, the Church of God, is that His Word and Spirit shall dwell with her forever. These are mightier than the powers of darkness, so in all her conflicts with them, it is certain that she will in the end prevail. Thus her progress must be onward until God shall at last bruise Satan under her feet and give her complete victory over him. Then will arise upon this world, the long promised day of millennial glory,

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<sup>307</sup> Some believed the tribulation would last three and one-half years, while others understood the period to be seven years in duration.

<sup>308</sup> Cf. e.g. *COGE* 9.12 (Mar 23, 1918), p. 3; 11.40 (Oct 2, 1920), p. 3.

<sup>309</sup> *COGE* 5.47 (Nov 28, 1914), p. 6; 8.9 (Mar 3, 1917), p. 3; 9.44 (Nov 2, 1918), p. 4; 12.6 (Jul 16, 1921), p. 3. C. Tarpley, *COGE* 10.8 (Feb 8, 1919), p. 3, interpreted the 'outer darkness' and 'gnashing of teeth' in Mt. 8.12 as a reference to the great tribulation into which the Jews would be cast.

<sup>310</sup> *COGE* 6.3 (Jan 16, 1915), p. 3; 8.9 (Mar 3, 1917), p. 3.

<sup>311</sup> *COGE* 1.12 (Aug 15, 1920), p. 3.

<sup>312</sup> *COGE* 6.6 (Feb 6, 1915), p. 4.

whose brightness shall far exceed what we in our darkness and ignorance are able to conceive. (Isa. 60th chapter).<sup>313</sup>

G.P. Ledford described the millennium in terms of the completion of the restoration begun in the Pentecostal movement and the Church of God:

Just think of a continual refreshing shower that will last 1,000 years with the blessed Holy Ghost abiding, King Jesus the chief Ruler, and the devil bound in the bottomless pit. Then the Lord's prayer concerning the coming kingdom and his will in earth, will be done... The kingdom will be restored beyond our comprehension and everything will be made a blessing. There will be a beautiful form of government and it is going to rest upon His shoulders, and if we desire to participate with the Lord, in this soon coming kingdom, we should begin to put some of it into practice right here and therefore not be an alien when He comes...<sup>314</sup>

Others in the Church of God attributed meaning to the millennium through its contrast with the present Gentile dispensation. Thus, the millennium would follow the 'dark night of tribulation' that would signal the closing of 'the Gentile age'.<sup>315</sup> For these writers, stress is laid, not on the continuity of the millennium with the Church, but on its discontinuity with 'the awful picture of the end of this age'.<sup>316</sup> J.P. Hughes explained, 'The present condition of the world is only the fulfillment of Scripture that must take place before Jesus comes to set up His kingdom for a thousand years reign of peace and righteousness on the earth.' Comparing the end of the age with the days of Noah, Hughes continued, 'Spirituality has been so blighted by opinions and theories of men until the world is full of unbelieving giants that have corrupted it and it has become obnoxious to God. He will send His Son to bring it to an end.'<sup>317</sup> In a scheme probably influenced by Scofield, L.H. Juillerat applied the pattern of each age ending in disaster to seven dispensations: Innocency, Conscience, Human government, Promise, Law, Grace, and Kingdom. In his view, the return of Jesus to set up his kingdom centered on the judgment of the Gentile nations and the establishment of

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<sup>313</sup> *COGE* 11.48 (Dec 4, 1920), p. 4. Tomlinson, *COGE* 13.15 (Apr 15, 1921), p. 1, seemed to share such 'postmillennial' optimism: 'And of course it is predicted and expected that the Church of God will rise higher and shine brighter as we near the end of the age.'

<sup>314</sup> *COGE* 12.26 (Jun 25, 1921), p. 3.

<sup>315</sup> *COGE* 10.25 (Jun 21, 1919), p. 4.

<sup>316</sup> *COGE* 9.11 (Mar 16, 1918), p. 4.

<sup>317</sup> *COGE* 12.1 (Jun 25, 1921), p. 4. The 'spiritual giants' that Hughes named included 'Woman Suffrage, League of Nations, Socialism, Bolshevism, etc., with the lodges and unions that are so numerous in the world'. Hughes applied to the millennium those passages of Scripture, such as Dan. 2.44 and Isa. 2.2, that some applied to the Church of God.

the Jewish one.<sup>318</sup> Juillerat's was a lone voice, however, for the overwhelming majority spoke only of two ages or dispensations, most commonly described as the old and new covenants, or the law and the gospel. Thus, 'this gospel dispensation', a frequent designation for the present age, would be fulfilled in the millennium, when Christ would rule the nations, both Jew and Gentile. Beyond the millennium, as M.S. Lemons envisioned, there would be 'no end to the ages and ages of wonders to follow'.<sup>319</sup>

## **F. Summary and Conclusion**

In summary, the eschatology of the Church of God as documented in *The Church of God Evangel* from 1910 through 1923 was linked inextricably to the group's ecclesiology. Their self-identity as the restored NT Church gave the group a strong sense of eschatological purpose. The process of discernment involved hearing what the Spirit was speaking through the Scriptures in the context of the Church. Because the group's centralized form of government positioned their early leaders to influence grassroots attitudes toward various doctrines, the eschatologies of A.J. Tomlinson and F.J. Lee may be seen as two models around which the ideas espoused in the periodical are clustered.

The themes associated with Tomlinson's perspective may be seen to flow out of a hermeneutic that allowed all Scripture to be read with contemporary applicability. Thus, the Church of God could both fulfill prophecies about Zion and be a prophetic expression of the New Jerusalem. Some even identified the Church of God with the bride of Christ. The emphasis on unity as a condition for membership in the bride may be linked to the continued interest in the marriage supper of the Lamb, especially its communal aspects. Thus, similar to Azusa Street, the rapture was most often portrayed as a means of transport to the marriage supper, which was itself the goal of justification, sanctification, and Spirit baptism. At the same time, the tribulation was often seen as a present danger from which God's grace would hide them until they were 'caught up to meet the Lord in the air'. Their optimistic ecclesiology resulted in a vision of the

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<sup>318</sup> *COGE* 9.11 (Mar 16, 1918), p. 4. Scofield used the same wording in his list of seven dispensations in *The Scofield Reference Bible*. Juillerat, however, does not refer to Scofield.

<sup>319</sup> *COGE* 14.31 (Aug 4, 1923), p. 1. Few besides Lee and Lemons envisioned life beyond the millennium. One exception was O.L. Williams, *COGE* 13.18 (May 6, 1918), p. 4, who spoke of the new earth with its tree of life as the goal of redemption and 'this highway of holiness' as the means to attain it.

millennium as the culmination of the restoration begun in the Pentecostal movement and the Church of God. The millennium would also fulfill 'the gospel dispensation' and lead on to ages without end with Christ as King.

The themes in *The Evangel* that find affinity with Lee's eschatological vision may be seen to flow from a hermeneutic that presupposed a static and reasoned conception of textual meaning, set within a fixed chronological framework. Thus, the prophecies of Zion could refer only to the restored Jewish nation during the millennial kingdom. The Church of God did have significance, however, in that she would bring forth the bride of Christ. All were to watch and pray to be accounted worthy to escape the tribulation, which would occur only after the rapture. The focus of the tribulation would be on the Jews, who would return to Palestine in unbelief, be deceived by the Antichrist, and accept Jesus as Messiah at the end of seven years. The tribulation would close the Gentile age, and prepare the way for the millennium, the last (in one estimation) of seven dispensations.

Some implications of this analysis may now be offered. Examination of this periodical shows that differing hermeneutical presuppositions resulted in differing eschatological visions. Thus, the eschatological themes articulated by early Church of God members did not fall within a uniform scheme but were clustered around two diverse perspectives. It appears that the more the interpreter acknowledged the Spirit and community in the hermeneutical process, the more the Scriptures were read with contemporary applicability. Significantly, this hermeneutic allowed for the emergence of a restoration ecclesiology, which positioned early Pentecostal eschatology more toward a covenantal understanding of the Church and the kingdom, and away from classical dispensational themes. Conversely, the more the interpreter emphasized a logical rationale, such as fixed principles to determine literal or symbolic interpretations, the more the Scriptures were read within a fixed chronological framework, with affinities toward classical dispensational themes. Within this perspective, emphasis was placed on the distinction between the Church and Israel.<sup>320</sup>

The analysis of this periodical illustrates yet again the variety that existed within early Pentecostal eschatology. With strong affinities between *The Church*

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<sup>320</sup> The reasons why the Church of God eventually moved more toward the adoption of classical dispensationalism is beyond the scope of this study.

of *God Evangel* and *The Apostolic Faith*, especially with reference to the sustained emphasis on the marriage supper complex of images not found in *The Bridegroom's Messenger*, one may see that eschatology did not develop in a linear fashion out of Azusa Street. Rather, like spokes of a wheel, various groups emphasized different components of a common heritage. We turn now to the development of eschatology in the early periodicals of the Pentecostal Holiness Church.

## **V. Toward Uniformity: *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* and Its Predecessors**

### **Introduction**

The Pentecostal Holiness Church was formed in 1911 by the merger of The Pentecostal Holiness Church,<sup>321</sup> founded in 1900 by Methodist minister A.B. Crumpler, and The Fire-Baptized Holiness Church, originally organized as an association in 1895 by B.H. Irwin. Both of these groups were swept into the Pentecostal movement largely through the evangelistic ministry of G.B. Cashwell in 1907, as documented in their respective periodicals. The following survey will begin by noting in rough chronological order the few articulations of eschatology appearing in the extant copies of *The Holiness Advocate* and *The Apostolic Evangel* from 1907 forward, moving then into a more detailed focus on the *Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* from 1917 through 1920.

### **A. *The Holiness Advocate***

A.B. Crumpler, editor of *The Holiness Advocate* from 1901 to 1908, ultimately rejected the Pentecostal movement, but allowed some favorable articles to appear in his publication. It is clear that the same discerning process underway at Azusa Street to understand the relation of Spirit baptism to eschatology was also at work among the readership of this journal. In the May 15, 1907 issue, J.A. Culbreth, who served as the associate editor, contributed an article titled, 'The Comforter'. Culbreth argued that Spirit baptism was not necessary for salvation, but that it *was* necessary in order to receive 'the greater rewards of belonging to the higher ranks

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<sup>321</sup> The word Pentecostal was dropped from the name in 1901 but was reinstated in 1909, after the group had become thoroughly Pentecostal.

and of filling the better positions'.<sup>322</sup> Drawing from the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25), in which the oil represented the Holy Spirit, Culbreth was quick to name the primary reward: '[Spirit baptism] is a necessary preparation for a place at the marriage supper of the Lamb, when Jesus shall be married to His bride at His coming.'<sup>323</sup>

In the next issue, Crumpler reprinted an article from *Way of Faith*, in which the author, Rev. B. Dinnick, lamented that the Church had entered the great tribulation:

Many students of Scripture thought the church would have been caught up before the great tribulation began, but as she (the church) 'let slip' (Heb. 2:1) through 'an evil heart of unbelief' (Heb. 3:12) ... here she is still on earth in the midst of the great tribulation, signs of which are all around us in every nation in Christendom, and in the natural signs in the heavens and in the earth.<sup>324</sup>

By appealing to the themes of the book of Joel and to Isa. 26.9, Dinnick concluded that the gift of prophecy may be expected to be restored 'in the midst of the great tribulation'. In his view, the outpouring of the Spirit on a world-wide scale was the fulfillment of this 'latter rain of the Spirit'. Dinnick noted that such a world-wide gathering of believers was prophesied by John in Rev. 7.9 and provides 'the sign of the coming of the King'.<sup>325</sup>

In the same issue, Crumpler included a letter from G.B. Cashwell, whose ministry was impacting the South, including Crumpler's own denomination, so greatly. After encouraging his readers to accept speaking in tongues as the 'witness' of Spirit baptism, Cashwell addressed the proleptic and eschatological significance of the experience:

We are now married to Him in the Spirit, and the Holy Ghost is begetting in us God's sweet gifts of the Spirit, and we are all being placed in His body like the head, the feet, etc, and we are members in particular, but the golden wedding will take place on the sea of glass mingled with fire. Get your Pentecost, my brother.<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>322</sup> HA 7.3 (May 15, 1907), p. 5.

<sup>323</sup> HA 7.3 (May 15, 1907), p. 5.

<sup>324</sup> HA 7.4 (Jun 1, 1907), p. 3.

<sup>325</sup> HA 7.4 (Jun 1, 1907), p. 3.

<sup>326</sup> HA 7.4 (Jun 1, 1907), p. 5.

## B. *The Apostolic Evangel*

Around the same time that J.H. King received Spirit baptism in February 1907, the Fire-Baptized Holiness periodical that he was editing, *Live Coals*, was renamed *The Apostolic Evangel*. Thus while *Live Coals* documents the transition of the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church into Pentecostalism, *The Apostolic Evangel* reflects the group's acceptance of Spirit baptism and ensuing discernment in relation to eschatology. King's editorial dated April 3, 1907 identifies the Spirit 'as the one who seals us into the heavenly kingdom, and the sealing is an earnest or pledge of the Spirit in our hearts that we shall receive the inheritance in Christ throughout eternity'.<sup>327</sup> Later in the same issue, King concludes: 'Pentecost is a foretaste of the powers of the world (age, Greek) to come, that is, of the millennial age or reign of Christ upon the earth. It brings us to the full preparation for that glorious reign of peace.'<sup>328</sup> The cosmic scope of King's eschatological vision becomes evident in an article dated February 15, 1909. He states:

In the final renewal the vast universe will be glory celestialized into eternal existence, and the redeemed will be all glory embodied in immortal splendor and this infinitude of glory will roll Godward eternally in ocean-like volumes of praise and song. Hallelujah will be the chorus of infinite song filling heaven's limitless empire through the sweep of the ages, whose sum is eternity.<sup>329</sup>

J.A. Culbreth, who had served as the associate editor for *The Holiness Advocate*, became the associate editor for *The Apostolic Evangel* in 1909. In his June 1, 1909 contribution of Sunday School Lesson commentaries, Culbreth noted that in this 'dispensation of the Spirit', as foreshadowed on the day of Pentecost, missionary tongues should now become commonplace. In a related lesson, he noted that heroes of faith have lived 'throughout all the dispensations'. He prodded his readers to 'measure up ... to the higher privileges of this dispensation'.<sup>330</sup>

Giving Noah and the flood as an example, an unnamed author indicates that every epoch or age of world history has closed in spiritual darkness, followed by

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<sup>327</sup> *AE* 1.4 (Apr 3, 1907), p. 1.

<sup>328</sup> *AE* 1.4 (Apr 3, 1907), p. 2.

<sup>329</sup> *AE* 1.1 (Feb 15, 1909), p. 4. King moved the printing plant of *The Apostolic Evangel* from Royston, GA to Falcon, NC in 1909, at which time he restarted the volume and issue numbers. In a notice to his readers in this issue, *AE* 1.1 (Feb 15, 1909), p. 4, he stated, '*The Apostolic Faith* is not the organ of the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church, as heretofore, but is on an independent basis as respects denominationalism, and yet it is an organ through which persons of all denominations may teach and testify who are in sympathy with the full Pentecostal gospel.'

<sup>330</sup> *AE* 1.8 (Jun 1, 1909), pp. 6-7.

divine judgment. For this writer, the signs of the close of the present age include preparation of the nations for war and increasing worldliness in the churches. The author concludes, 'If the scriptures are to be our guide the closing days of this present age will be darker spiritually than anything that has ever preceded. The dark days at the close of this age indicates the great judgment tribulations, which are to immediately follow.' The writer exhorts his readers to 'strive to escape the judgment about to break upon the world'.<sup>331</sup>

In an article reprinted from *Kingdom Tidings*, another unnamed author sees the shape of the closing age coming together in the restoration of the Jews to their homeland and the world-wide efforts toward international commerce that would soon culminate in the rebuilding of the city of Babylon. Thus, from the standpoint of a literal reading of Scripture, Jerusalem and Babylon would again become epicenters in the fulfillment of biblical prophecy.<sup>332</sup>

G.F. Taylor, a friend of J.H. King's who would come to figure prominently in *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate*, also contributed articles to *The Apostolic Evangel*. In his contribution of February 15, 1909, Taylor explains the prophetic significance of the rainbow around the throne in Revelation 4:

It is God's token of His covenant with the earth. It signifies that after the lightning and thundering and voices have rained out their contents upon the earth, the planet will emerge from the disasters and whirl on in its orbit forever. Thus the rainbow is prophetic of the culmination of all God's promises to the earth.<sup>333</sup>

Furthermore, the rainbow appearing above the head of the angel in Rev. 10.1, whom Taylor understood to be 'the Jehovah Angel', 'points to the reign of everlasting peace'. The appearance and actions of this angel signify, for Taylor, divine authorization for the saints to possess the world, thus revealing the purpose of the great tribulation. He writes:

He delivers the deed [the parchment] to the saints who are to appropriate the world as their own. The taking of this world by the saints will be a climax to their joys and an answer to the prayer, 'Thy kingdom come,' thus entering into a realization of the fulfillment of the promise, 'Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.'<sup>334</sup>

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<sup>331</sup> *AE* 1.8 (Jun 1, 1909), p. 5.

<sup>332</sup> *AE* 1.9 (Jun 15, 1909), p. 1.

<sup>333</sup> *AE* 1.1 (Feb 15, 1909), p. 6.

<sup>334</sup> *AE* 1.1 (Feb 15, 1909), p. 6.

Judging from the last extant copy of *The Apostolic Faith* in 1912, Taylor eventually contributed a regular column entitled ‘The Second Coming’, perhaps serving as a published draft of his book by the same title that would appear in 1916. His contribution of January 1, 1912, subtitled, ‘Daniel’s Seventy Weeks’, revealed a deep commitment to classical premillennial dispensational thought. Here Taylor laid out a script of future events that included the return of the Jews to Palestine, the rebuilding of the temple and reinstatement of sacrifices, the rise of the Antichrist and his covenant with the Jews for seven years, the ministry of the two witnesses who oppose the Antichrist, the breaking of the covenant after three and one-half years, and the establishment of a worldwide kingdom in Babylon by the Antichrist. Taylor also revealed another purpose of the tribulation: to bring Israel to an acceptance of Jesus as Messiah. He concludes, ‘At the opening of the Millennium, all the Israelites will be saved, and Jerusalem will be forever redeemed from the hand of the enemy, though worldwide salvation and redemption cannot come until the earth is renewed.’<sup>335</sup>

### ***C. The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate***

#### **Introduction**

From its inception in 1917 until his death in 1934, G.F. Taylor served as the editor of *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate*, the official periodical of the Pentecostal Holiness Church. Taylor had left the Methodist church in 1903 to join A.B. Crumpler’s new organization, The Pentecostal Holiness Church (of North Carolina). He served as the head of the Falcon Bible School (1907-1916) and as the general superintendent of the denomination from 1913 to 1917, having been instrumental in its merger with The Fire-Baptized Holiness Church in 1911. The following survey takes into account all issues of *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* published weekly from 1917 through 1920.

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<sup>335</sup> *AE* 3.22 (Jan 1, 1912), p. 1.

## 1. Discernment and Editorial Policy

In distinction from the Church of God, ecclesiology was not a major factor in the discerning practice of the members of the Pentecostal Holiness Church.<sup>336</sup> Rather, importance was placed upon the Word (understood primarily as the Bible), the Holy Spirit, and personal experience, each element being emphasized above the others in various contexts. T.T. West explained, ‘The Word declares it, and human testimony may confirm it, but not until the truth is stamped on our hearts by the blessed Holy Spirit Himself, can we appreciate the stupendous fact [of the imminent return of Jesus] as we ought.’<sup>337</sup> W.S. Noble believed that the ‘sweetness of the Spirit’ within enabled a person to remain receptive to the Word.<sup>338</sup> A.L. Sisler wrote, ‘The Spirit works with and through the Word’. The Word is ‘the very vehicle through which God’s Spirit enters human spirit’.<sup>339</sup>

While he agreed with the foregoing quotations, Taylor also maintained two principles of interpretation that were crucial to his hermeneutical method. First, Taylor believed that certain ‘keys’ could be applied to the Scriptures ‘through the aid of the Spirit’, allowing the Scriptures to ‘unfold’. Two such interpretive filters or ‘keys’ that Taylor named are ‘holiness as a second work of grace’ and ‘the premillennial second coming of Jesus’. Application of these ‘keys’ to Scripture ‘deepens one’s experiences’, and gives the reader ‘a greater desire to know Him’ as ‘the Bible becomes a new Book’.<sup>340</sup> Second, Taylor strove to maintain a sense of moderation or ‘balance’ in his application of Scripture. Thus, concerning the return of Jesus, he advised his readers to avoid both carelessness and fixing dates.<sup>341</sup> Concerning healing, he believed that medicine was not a sin, but trusting God was better.<sup>342</sup> In the area of politics, it was acceptable to vote, but one should

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<sup>336</sup> Several articles were critical of the Church of God (Cleveland) for claiming to be the only true church and thus proselytizing the members of the Pentecostal Holiness Church. Numerous articles articulated an ecclesiology which viewed The Pentecostal Holiness Church as a ‘part of the vineyard’ or field of labor. As a whole, they were pro-organization, but did not see themselves as better than any other group. According to Taylor, *PHA* 2.22 (Sep 26, 1918), p. 16, unity was to be found in the ‘fellowship of the Spirit that church organization does not give, [but] neither does it destroy’. Cf. also *PHA* 1.1 (May 3, 1917), pp. 1, 9; 1.8 (Jun 21, 1917), p. 8; 1.24 (Oct 11, 1917), pp. 2-3; 1.49 (Apr 4, 1918), p. 4; 4.2 (May 13, 1920), p. 2.

<sup>337</sup> *PHA* 2.43 (Feb 20, 1919), p. 5.

<sup>338</sup> *PHA* 1.29 (Nov 15, 1917), p. 14.

<sup>339</sup> *PHA* 3.9 (Jun 26, 1919), p. 6.

<sup>340</sup> *PHA* 4.10 (Jul 8, 1920), pp. 8-9.

<sup>341</sup> *PHA* 1.29 (Nov 15, 1917), p. 9.

<sup>342</sup> *PHA* 2.19 (Sep 5, 1918), p. 6.

not participate in a political campaign.<sup>343</sup> Finally, in reading Scripture, interpreters were to ‘take what is literal as literal’, but must read some passages as figurative, comparing ‘Scripture with Scripture’.<sup>344</sup> Where Scripture was silent, Taylor was silent.<sup>345</sup>

Taylor’s profound influence on the eschatology articulated in *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* is revealed not only through the numerous articles he contributed on the subject, but also through his editorial policy. In Taylor’s view, the periodical was to reflect only the beliefs held officially by the Pentecostal Holiness Church. All contributions, Taylor wrote, should be ‘in harmony with the truths we teach’.<sup>346</sup> For example, after a somewhat extended controversy concerning the officially sanctioned view of ‘divine healing without remedies’, Taylor was adamant that the *Advocate* was not open to the publication of differing views on the matter.<sup>347</sup> Taylor also had opportunities to print opinions that differed from what he understood to be official church doctrine concerning eschatology. In the February 18, 1918 issue, he commented that he had received letters for publication ‘trying to prove’ that the German Kaiser was the Antichrist, but withheld them because such a position, in his view, was obviously in error. He stated, ‘The final Antichrist will not come until the Bride of Christ is in the air, and he will come direct from hell.’<sup>348</sup> Later, in an article in which he defended various aspects of his ministry, Taylor acknowledged, ‘Many people differ with me on certain phases of the Coming of the Lord... I must continue to teach and preach the gospel as I see it; and when the church to which I belong considers me out of harmony with its teachings, you will only be doing your duty in getting clear of me.’<sup>349</sup> Thus, although a variety of views may have been in circulation among early Pentecostal Holiness members, their official publication, through Taylor’s editorial policy, reflects a movement toward uniformity that has not been seen to this point.

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<sup>343</sup> PHA 2.19 (Sep 5, 1918), p. 6.

<sup>344</sup> PHA 1.47 (Mar 21, 1918), p. 5.

<sup>345</sup> In his weekly question and answer column, Taylor refused to comment on the frequently asked question of whether children ‘under the age of accountability’ would be part of the bride of Christ, because, he wrote, ‘I cannot find any scripture on the subject.’ Cf. e.g. PHA 1.52 (Apr 25, 1918), p. 11.

<sup>346</sup> PHA 2.19 (Sep 5, 1918), p. 1.

<sup>347</sup> PHA 3.43 (Feb 19, 1920), p. 1; 3.53 (Apr 29, 1920), p. 3. Cf. Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing*, pp. 128-29.

<sup>348</sup> PHA 1.43 (Feb 21, 1918), p. 1.

<sup>349</sup> PHA 4.12 (Jul 22, 1920), p. 10.

Outside influences, however, were not entirely absent. In formulating his views on eschatology, Taylor openly acknowledged the profound influence of Joseph A. Seiss,<sup>350</sup> the Lutheran pastor whose commentary on the Apocalypse also influenced the writings of Elizabeth Sexton and others in *The Bridegroom's Messenger*.<sup>351</sup> It is not surprising, then, that during the several months of 1917 and 1918 in which *The Bridegroom's Messenger* was not being published, Elizabeth Sexton accepted Taylor's invitation to contribute a regular 'guest editorial' to *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate*.<sup>352</sup>

## 2. A Uniform Script

From its first issue in 1917, through the last issue (reviewed here) of 1920, the articulation of eschatology in *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* remains decidedly uniform, both in terms of the sequence of future events and the function of those events. The following major elements may be considered.

***The Bride of Christ.*** In agreement with other early Pentecostal periodicals, the bride of Christ was understood to consist of the highest order of saints, the only group to be raptured away from the earth before the great tribulation. Likewise, the baptism of the Holy Spirit was a minimum requirement for inclusion in the bride. Beyond having 'oil in the vessel' (i.e. the heart filled with the Spirit),<sup>353</sup> one must also 'be accounted worthy',<sup>354</sup> having gone through 'fiery trials'.<sup>355</sup> For E.H. Blake, the depth of Jesus' agony in the garden was an experience not

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<sup>350</sup> E.g. *PHA* 1.14 (Aug 2, 1917), p. 15. In his preface to answering a question about the two witnesses of Revelation 11, Taylor wrote, 'Permit me to say that Dr. J. A. Seiss gives the best exposition of Revelation there is to be had anywhere. His lectures consist of three volumes, and you can get the whole set from me postpaid for \$2.50. These lectures dwell at length on these two witnesses, and I can endorse all that he says about them. In fact, I never knew anything about the subject until I read those lectures. Everybody should get them. I give a few of his thoughts.' Cf. *PHA* 2.41 (Feb 6, 1919), p. 8.

<sup>351</sup> Taylor included numerous advertisements for his readers to purchase Seiss' books through the Pentecostal Holiness publishing house. Other than the writings of J.A. Seiss and Taylor's own works, no other author on the subject of eschatology is advertized in the *Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* through 1920. One contributor, *PHA* 2.41 (Feb 6, 1919), p. 15, does relate his favorable experience with 'The Scofield Bible Correspondence Course', but otherwise, references to *The Scofield Bible* are absent from this periodical.

<sup>352</sup> *PHA* 1.28 (Nov 8, 1917), p. 8. Sexton's contributions promoted the same views with which readers of *The Bridegroom's Messenger* were familiar.

<sup>353</sup> Cf. e.g. *PHA* 1.27 (Nov 1, 1917), p. 8; 2.30 (Nov 21, 1918), p. 11; 3.15 (Aug 7, 1919), p. 11.

<sup>354</sup> *PHA* 1.35 (Dec 27, 1917), p. 16.

<sup>355</sup> *PHA* 2.18 (Aug 29, 1918), p. 7.

unfamiliar to this ‘higher company’.<sup>356</sup> That there were different orders or ranks among the saints was supported by Scriptures such as Song 6.8-9 which speaks of many queens, concubines and virgins, but only one bride,<sup>357</sup> and Revelation 4–5, in which the living beings and elders were interpreted to represent the bridehood saints, while other companies of saints were described in chs. 6–19.<sup>358</sup> The ‘manchild’ of Rev. 12.4-5 was also understood to refer to the bride, whom the Church was ‘travailing to bring forth’, a definite sign of the soon coming of Jesus.<sup>359</sup> Some argued that just as Eve was taken from the body of Adam, so the bride of Christ will be taken from His body, the Church.<sup>360</sup>

**The Rapture.** For early Pentecostal Holiness members, the rapture of the bride was the next major event in the end-times calendar. Taylor explained that ‘connected with the second coming of our Lord, there are two appearings: the first, before the Great Tribulation to catch away the Bride; and the second, at the end of the Age to set up His Millennial throne.’<sup>361</sup> The rapture was seen more as the means of escaping the tribulation than it was the means of transport to the marriage supper, a perspective shared with *The Bridegroom’s Messenger*. Indeed, relatively few references were made to going to the marriage supper. There were, however, numerous testimonies that closely associated the rapture with the general idea of ‘going to heaven’, an emphasis unique to this periodical. Meeting loved ones in heaven, going home to heaven, and being homesick for heaven were commonly used phrases.<sup>362</sup> R. Bartlett wrote that he intended ‘to ride the clouds of glory home with Jesus when He comes’.<sup>363</sup> Sallie Lucas testified, ‘Often when I am sad and temptations arise, I look to my home far away.’<sup>364</sup> Such an emphasis on going home to heaven seems to contradict the equally recognized belief that the renewed earth would be the eternal home of the saints (see below).

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<sup>356</sup> PHA 2.4 (May 23, 1918), p. 3.

<sup>357</sup> PHA 1.35 (Dec 27, 1917), p. 16.

<sup>358</sup> PHA 1.6 (Jun 7, 1917), p. 16; 3.1 (May 1, 1919), pp. 8-9.

<sup>359</sup> PHA 1.42 (Feb 14, 1918), p. 8; 2.1 (May 2, 1918), p. 10.

<sup>360</sup> PHA 1.5 (May 31, 1917), p. 1; 2.49 (Apr 3, 1919), p. 12.

<sup>361</sup> PHA 1.47 (Mar 21, 1918), p. 6.

<sup>362</sup> Cf. e.g. PHA 1.23 (Dec 6, 1917), p. 7; 1.38 (Jan 17, 1918), p. 7; 2.30 (Nov 21, 1918), p. 15.

<sup>363</sup> PHA 1.22 (Sep 27, 1917), p. 11.

<sup>364</sup> PHA 3.23 (Oct 2, 1915), p. 16.

**The Great Tribulation.** The great tribulation was understood to begin ‘as soon as Jesus comes for His Bride,’<sup>365</sup> during which two major objectives would be achieved. First, because the majority of the Church would remain behind after the rapture, the tribulation period would serve as a corrective punishment for those Christians who were not prepared.<sup>366</sup> Following the view of J.A. Seiss, Taylor interpreted the rider of the white horse in Rev. 6.2 to symbolize a worldwide revival, during which many would obtain salvation and be Spirit baptized.<sup>367</sup> According to Taylor, the ten virgins of Mt. 25.1-13 refer to ‘tribulation saints’, half of whom (‘the wise’) go on to be filled with the Spirit. Many Christians are to be slain for their testimony during the tribulation (Rev. 6.9-11),<sup>368</sup> but many are to be translated to heaven (Rev. 7.9-17).<sup>369</sup> From a larger perspective, the tribulation brings about the overthrow of Satan, the usurper of Adam’s inheritance. Through the actions of Christ, the redeemer or ‘true *Goel*’, the earth is restored back to its proper owners, the saints.<sup>370</sup>

Second, the tribulation would serve as the means by which the Jews would return to salvation in the Messiah.<sup>371</sup> For Taylor, a futurist reading of portions of Daniel 7–12, Ezekiel 47–48, and Revelation 6–19 supported his belief that the Jews would return to their homeland in unbelief, rebuild the temple and reinstitute animal sacrifices.<sup>372</sup> At the beginning of the tribulation, through the ministry of the two witnesses (Enoch and Elijah), 144,000 Jews would come to faith in Christ and be sealed with the baptism of the Holy Spirit.<sup>373</sup> Having made a covenant with Israel in support of the rebuilt temple, the Antichrist would then break this covenant, set up his image in the temple and demand universal worship.<sup>374</sup> After

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<sup>365</sup> PHA 1.13 (Jul 26, 1917), p. 6.

<sup>366</sup> PHA 1.51 (Apr 18, 1918), p. 14.

<sup>367</sup> PHA 3.15 (Aug 7, 1919), p. 8.

<sup>368</sup> PHA 3.23 (Oct 2, 1919), p. 8.

<sup>369</sup> PHA 3.46 (Mar 11, 1920), p. 4. Taylor, PHA 4.2 (May 13, 1920), p. 10, followed J.A. Seiss in his belief that persons ‘will be resurrected at the same time of the translation of those who are alive and belong to the same company’.

<sup>370</sup> PHA 2.38 (Jan 16, 1919), p. 6; 3.6 (Jun 5, 1919), p. 10; 3.13 (Jul 17, 1919), p. 9.

<sup>371</sup> The overwhelming majority of references to the Jews through 1920 support this perspective. Only one passing reference to ‘Israel’ as a synonym for the church was found. Cf. PHA 3.21 (Sep 18, 1919), p. 15.

<sup>372</sup> PHA 1.32 (Dec 6, 1917), p. 16.

<sup>373</sup> PHA 1.14 (Aug 2, 1917), p. 15; 3.22 (Sep 25, 1919), p. 10; 3.46 (Mar 11, 1920), pp. 8-9.

<sup>374</sup> PHA 4.33 (Dec 16, 1920), pp. 8-9. Taylor acknowledges a partial fulfillment of the ‘abomination of desolation’ in the actions of Titus against the Jews in 70 CE.

three and one-half years, at the appearing of Jesus to overthrow the Antichrist, all of the Jews alive at that time would accept Jesus as the true Messiah.<sup>375</sup>

Significantly, some saw a spiritual application or meaning in the literal events of the great tribulation. Taylor explained that Ezekiel 47 refers both to the rebuilt temple that would be cleansed by Jesus when he returns, and to the present spiritual experiences of believers in regeneration, sanctification, and Spirit baptism.<sup>376</sup> Concerning the coming tribulation, T.T. West declared, ‘The conversion and sanctification of this world is near at hand.’<sup>377</sup> E.H. Blake surmised that as tribulation (or suffering) brings about the perfect reign of Jesus in the soul, so the great tribulation would prepare the earth for the perfect reign of Jesus in the Millennium. In both instances, everything contrary is cast out or subdued.<sup>378</sup>

***The Antichrist.*** In keeping with a two-stage coming of Jesus, Taylor read 2 Thess. 2.3 to mean that the ‘man of sin’ or Antichrist would be revealed before Christ’s coming at the *end* of the tribulation.<sup>379</sup> There had been types in the past, such as Antiochus and Titus, but the final fulfillment of the Antichrist would be in the future. For Taylor, this final Antichrist would be none other than Nimrod returned from the dead.<sup>380</sup> Although the Antichrist would not be revealed until after the rapture, the ‘spirit of antichrist’ could already be identified. L.R. Graham associated ‘two great [contemporary] factors, Capital and Labor’, with the future location of the mark of the beast in the forehead or in the hand.<sup>381</sup> T.T. West wrote, ‘Bolshevist, the spirit of antichrist unhindered is eating as a canker; will permeate every nook and corner, and perhaps before this present year closes, will, as a lighted match, ignite the whole world.’<sup>382</sup> Taylor added, ‘I think that all Labor Unions, secret orders, and such like are preparing the world to accept antichrist when he comes. I believe that badges, passwords, etc., are preparing men to accept the mark of the beast.’<sup>383</sup>

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<sup>375</sup> PHA 2.33 (Dec 19, 1918), p. 16; 3.34 (Dec 18, 1919), p. 10; 4.6 (Aug 19, 1920), p. 10.

<sup>376</sup> PHA 4.12 (Aug 5, 1920), p. 9.

<sup>377</sup> PHA 2.1 (May 2, 1918), p. 6.

<sup>378</sup> PHA 1.52 (Apr 25, 1918), p. 10.

<sup>379</sup> PHA 1.44 (Feb 21, 1918), p. 7.

<sup>380</sup> PHA 2.9 (Jun 27, 1918), p. 9; 3.48 (Mar 25, 1920), p. 2; 4.32 (Dec 9, 1920), pp. 8-11.

<sup>381</sup> PHA 2.5 (May 30, 1918), p. 7.

<sup>382</sup> PHA 2.43 (Feb 20, 1919), p. 5.

<sup>383</sup> PHA 3.3 (May 15, 1919), p. 10.

**The Millennium.** Having defeated the Antichrist at the battle of Armageddon, Jesus would set up his throne at Jerusalem to reign for one-thousand years. Corresponding to the two purposes of the tribulation, the millennium would also fulfill two goals. First, Christ is to rule the nations of the earth with His bride.<sup>384</sup> Although the millennium will be a Sabbath rest for the earth,<sup>385</sup> rebellious people will still populate the world. Some will die, and many will backslide at the end of the millennium. Clearly for Taylor, the millennium is not the full redemption of the earth.<sup>386</sup> Thus, the righteous saints, the full overcomers who comprise the bride, will help ‘rule the disobedient by force, by a rod of iron’.<sup>387</sup> Second, although Taylor acknowledged a figurative or spiritual meaning of Abraham’s descendants, he primarily understood the promises to the Jews to be literal. Thus, the millennium would bring about the fulfillment of God’s covenant with Abraham to give the land of Palestine in its entirety to the Jews.<sup>388</sup>

**The Renewed Earth.** Numerous articles may be found in the *Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* that teach that the present earth will not be destroyed and replaced after the millennium, but rather renewed to be the perpetual home of the redeemed. Drawing from 2 Cor. 5.17, F.A. Dail compared the salvation of a human being with the renewal of the earth. The effects of the curse are to be removed. Commenting on Rev. 21.1, Dail explained, ‘We are not to suppose that the first earth, referred to in that verse, passed into oblivion and God created a new earth and put it in its place, but, rather, the passing away of the present order of things, which will bring about the renewing of the earth.’<sup>389</sup> Taylor reasoned that 2 Pet. 3.10 is often mistranslated. The Greek word translated ‘burned up’ actually means ‘discovered’. Thus, ‘the fire of which Peter speaks will burn up all that the curse has wrought [*sic*] upon the earth, and leave the earth as it was in Eden

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<sup>384</sup> The reign of Christ with His bride is the topic most often discussed in relation to the millennium in this periodical. Cf. *PHA* 1.16 (Aug 16, 1917), pp. 2-3; 1.30 (Nov 22, 1917), p. 5; 1.44 (Feb 21, 1918), p. 4; 2.17 (Aug 22, 1918), p. 4; 2.20 (Sep 12, 1918), p. 6; 2.50 (Apr 10, 1919), p. 10; 3.23 (Oct 2, 1919), p. 10; 3.52 (Apr 22, 1920), p. 3; 4.21 (Sep 23, 1920), p. 10.

<sup>385</sup> *PHA* 1.3 (May 17, 1917), pp. 5-6; 1.45 (Mar 7, 1918), p. 2.

<sup>386</sup> *PHA* 1.35 (Dec 27, 1917), p. 16.

<sup>387</sup> *PHA* 4.21 (Sep 23, 1920), p. 10.

<sup>388</sup> *PHA* 2.44 (Feb 27, 1919), p. 3; 3.53 (Apr 29, 1920), p. 6.

<sup>389</sup> *PHA* 1.11 (Jul 12, 1917), p. 3. E.H. Blake, *PHA* 2.9 (Jun 27, 1918), pp. 2-3, contributed a sermon in which he speaks of redemption in terms of the new creation out of the old. Jesus is described as ‘the new man’, ‘the head of the new creation plan’.

before Adam sinned, purified, made over again, made new, a new earth.<sup>390</sup> As noted above, Taylor understood the rainbow over the throne in Revelation 4–5 to symbolize God’s promise to renew and preserve the earth forever.<sup>391</sup> As to whether this view of the future of the earth had contemporary implications, there were mixed opinions. Reflecting on God’s love for the world, A.L. Sisler commented that he had learned to appreciate the beauty of this earth.<sup>392</sup> Conversely, noting that the meek shall inherit the earth, J.H. Shealy concluded, ‘So we need not be so much concerned about the world now, because it will be ours any way in a beautiful state.’<sup>393</sup>

Also unique to this periodical, G.F. Taylor promoted the belief that the earthly human race would continue to reproduce forever upon the renewed earth. Because flesh and blood humans would be alive at the end of the millennium, Taylor reasoned, the ‘fire that renews the earth will renew the race’, removing any trace of the curse from them. As a result, ‘everlasting generations’ of humanity born without a sinful nature would thrive upon the earth forever. Taylor grounded this belief in a prophetic interpretation of the sons of Abraham. He wrote, ‘Ishmael is a prophetic type of the natural race; Isaac, of the spiritual race; and Abraham’s last six sons, of the races of the everlasting ages.’<sup>394</sup> Taylor also appealed to the references in Revelation 21 to ‘nations’ and ‘men’ dwelling upon the earth in a state of everlasting life to support this position.<sup>395</sup>

### **3. Restricting Discernment: The Great War and the Influenza Epidemic**

*The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* began publication in May 1917, just one month after the United States entered the Great War. That summer, the periodical printed a national call to prayer and repentance.<sup>396</sup> By the fall, ‘Army and Navy New Testaments’ that could be purchased and given to those entering the war began to be advertised.<sup>397</sup> In January 1918, a notice appeared for ministers to file the proper papers to avoid the war draft.<sup>398</sup> In the summer of 1918, Taylor began

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<sup>390</sup> PHA 2.6 (Jun 13, 1918), p. 13; 2.22 (Sep 26, 1918), p. 16.

<sup>391</sup> PHA 2.12 (Jul 18, 1918), p. 8; 3.49 (Apr 1, 1920), p. 8.

<sup>392</sup> PHA 2.30 (Nov 21, 1918), p. 2.

<sup>393</sup> PHA 3.52 (Apr 22, 1920), p. 15.

<sup>394</sup> PHA 1.10 (Jul 5, 1917), pp. 8-9; 3.48 (Mar 28, 1920), p. 8.

<sup>395</sup> PHA 4.26 (Oct 28, 1920), pp. 8-9.

<sup>396</sup> PHA 1.13 (Jul 26, 1917), pp. 5-6.

<sup>397</sup> PHA 1.29 (Nov 15, 1917), p. 9.

<sup>398</sup> PHA 1.38 (Jan 17, 1918), p. 9.

to include a regular column, 'Pray for Our Boys', in which names appeared under two headings: 'Saved' and 'Unsaved'.<sup>399</sup> Numerous requests for prayer for husbands, sons, and fathers in the war may be found. Response to the war, however, involved little ethical reflection on war itself. Articles neither promoted nor disparaged pacifism, but focused on the spiritual needs and physical protection of those who were serving. After the war, a few comments did appear that either promoted patriotism<sup>400</sup> or condemned participation.<sup>401</sup>

Generally, the Great War was interpreted within the framework of the uniform script of eschatology noted above. Taylor, the first to publish any extended comments, declared that the war may bring about what he described as 'the toe-age' in biblical prophecy. Although he encouraged his readers to receive his remarks 'as investigative only' and not as 'dogmatic', he went into great detail explaining how the prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7 are to result in an alignment of all the nations of the world under ten major governments. He believed that the Great War and resulting peace treaties could easily lead to such a configuration.<sup>402</sup>

H.M. Clower wrote, 'Some have asked the question, "Is this the battle of Armageddon?" No, it is not. It is the beginning of trouble. It is the distant thunder of the Great Tribulation, which will begin as soon as Jesus comes for His bride. (Matt. 24:27).'<sup>403</sup> J.H. King, then general superintendent, was adamant in his predictions of the war's outcome based on his understanding of prophecy:

It was the Lord that revealed this [the victory of the Allied Forces] to us, we believe, in 1914. We saw Germany and its confederates defeated before a gun was fired. Why? Because they threw themselves right across the path of prophecy as an obstacle to the fulfillment of its inspired prediction. The restoration of the Jews to the land of their original home, and the democratization of the world, is set forth in sacred prophecy, and if Germany and its Associates should win it would be the defeat of the inspired prediction.<sup>404</sup>

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<sup>399</sup> *PHA* 2.13 (Jul 25, 1918), pp. 1, 7.

<sup>400</sup> *PHA* 2.44 (Feb 27, 1919), p. 3; 2.49 (Apr 3, 1919), p. 7.

<sup>401</sup> *PHA* 4.15 (Aug 12, 1920), pp. 6-7.

<sup>402</sup> *PHA* 1.4 (May 24, 1917), pp. 8-9; 2.40 (Jan 30, 1918), pp. 8-9; 2.41 (Feb 6, 1918), pp. 8-9.

<sup>403</sup> *PHA* 1.13 (Jul 26, 1917), p. 6.

<sup>404</sup> *PHA* 2.10 (Jul 4, 1918), p. 3.

In these various comments, it seems that the only discernment taking place among the early members of the Pentecostal Holiness Church in relation to the Great War was, in Taylor's words, to 'find [their] place in the great prophetic chart'.<sup>405</sup>

A similar process of limiting discernment may be seen in regard to the influenza epidemic of 1918-1920. Many requests for prayer, testimonies of healing, and obituaries of victims appeared in the periodical. Those authors who reflected on the implications of the epidemic for eschatology considered the phenomenon to be 'a judgment from God'.<sup>406</sup> J.E. Rhodes, a contributor from South Africa, called the epidemic 'a latter day plague'.<sup>407</sup> But was it one of the plagues of the great tribulation? Taylor's answer was succinct: 'I do not believe the plagues of the book of Revelation have yet begun.'<sup>408</sup>

#### 4. Dispensational Readings

The multifarious use of the term 'dispensation' that was evident in other early Pentecostal periodicals was also present in *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate*. Several instances of the division of history into two ages or dispensations appeared. Actual designations that corresponded roughly to the OT and NT eras, sometimes appearing in the same article, included 'old and new', 'law and grace', 'Jewish and Christian', and 'Jewish and Gentile'.<sup>409</sup> Generally, these articles reflected the view that the 'new' dispensation fulfilled the 'old'. For example, in his reflections about the Sabbath, E.H. Blake pointed to the resurrection of Jesus as the dividing line between the 'law dispensation' and the 'dispensation of grace'. The resurrection was the beginning of 'a new order of things'.<sup>410</sup> Surprisingly, the use of 'Holy Ghost dispensation' is lacking in this periodical.

W.H. Turner, missionary to China, argued that, unlike eternity, 'time is fragmentary' and is 'broken up into ages'. He identified six ages, each ending with 'some great event': the Edenic, Antediluvian, Postdiluvian, Mosaic, Christian, and Millennial.<sup>411</sup> G.F. Taylor seemed to be equally comfortable

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<sup>405</sup> PHA 1.4 (May 24, 1917), p. 9.

<sup>406</sup> PHA 3.10 (Jul 3, 1919), p. 13; 2.41 (Feb 6, 1919), p. 15; 2.42 (Feb 13, 1919), pp. 14-15

<sup>407</sup> PHA 3.3 (May 15, 1919), p. 5.

<sup>408</sup> PHA 3.53 (Apr 29, 1920), p. 10.

<sup>409</sup> Cf. e.g. PHA 1.18 (Aug 30, 1917), pp. 2-3; 1.27 (Nov 1, 1917), p. 8; 2.40 (Jan 30, 1919), p. 4.

<sup>410</sup> PHA 1.45 (Mar 7, 1918), p. 2.

<sup>411</sup> PHA 1.16 (Aug 16, 1917), pp. 2-3.

speaking about two dispensations or about seven. He explained that ‘seven is the complete number in that which is dispensational. It is the union of the heavenly three with the earthly four, and is in some way connected with whatever touches the covenant between God and man.’<sup>412</sup> In his article, ‘The Ordination of the Ages’, Taylor identified the Edenic, Antediluvian, Postdiluvian, Mosaic, Christian, Millennial, and Post-Millennial Ages. Probably influenced by the writings of Seiss, Taylor offered ‘proof’ that ‘God ordained the ages’ by showing that certain events of history correspond to the twelve signs of the Zodiac, as well as to the structure of the Great Pyramid of Gizeh in Egypt.<sup>413</sup> Two months later, Taylor presented a different configuration of seven dispensations based on ‘God’s covenants’, each of which ‘marks the beginning of a new dispensation’. These were the Edenic, Adamic, Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and New.<sup>414</sup> He concluded from Exod. 31.17 that ‘the seven times seven years followed by jubilee speaks of the seven covenants in their dispensational aspect and then a year of jubilee that shall last forever’.<sup>415</sup> Because various aspects of the different covenants were either temporary or permanent, this view of the dispensations allowed for overlap and partial to complete fulfillment throughout history. Significantly, Taylor wrote, ‘Of course other divisions of time can be made. The time from Abraham to Pentecost may be called the Jewish Age, and the Christian Age is often called the Gentile Age.’<sup>416</sup> Apparently, Taylor saw some truth in each of these divisions of history.

Taylor also read Revelation 2–3 with this multifaceted approach. Thus, on the one hand, the letters to the seven churches were messages that ‘reveal the condition of all the churches in all the ages’.<sup>417</sup> On the other hand, the letters could also be ‘dispensationally considered’, so that the seven churches represent ‘seven dispensations’ throughout Church history. Through the latter approach,

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<sup>412</sup> *PHA* 2.12 (Jul 18, 1918), p. 8; 3.49 (Apr 1, 1920), p. 9.

<sup>413</sup> *PHA* 2.13 (Jul 25, 1918), pp. 2-3. Cf. *PHA* 1.34 (Dec 22, 1917), p. 4, where Taylor recommends J.A. Seiss’ book, *The Gospel in the Stars*, which makes the claim that the signs of the Zodiac tell the entire gospel story.

<sup>414</sup> *PHA* 2.20 (Sep 12, 1918), pp. 9-10; 3.48 (Mar 4, 1920), p. 6. Taylor delineated seven ‘aspects’ for each of the seven covenants.

<sup>415</sup> *PHA* 4.2 (May 13, 1920), p. 9.

<sup>416</sup> *PHA* 2.13 (Jul 25, 1918), p. 2.

<sup>417</sup> *PHA* 1.33 (Dec 13, 1917), p. 8.

Taylor declared that the Church is presently in the final Church age, the lukewarm, Laodicean Age.<sup>418</sup>

## 5. The Spirit and the Fivefold Narrative

Beyond the acknowledgment of the Spirit's involvement in the discernment process noted above, the most common reference to the Holy Spirit in *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* appears in the numerous testimonies of the fivefold gospel. In fact, the fivefold testimony appears in this publication significantly more often than in the other previously analyzed periodicals. In a somewhat extended account of the narrative, O.N. Todd declared, 'I praise God for salvation through the blood of Jesus. Born of the Spirit. Adopted into the family of God. Then, sanctified as a second work of grace, filled with the Holy Spirit, healed as provided in the atonement looking [f]or the premillennial second coming of Jesus to reign on the earth. Amen!'<sup>419</sup> The version of R.B. Hayes was more common: 'I am saved, sanctified, and the blessed Holy Ghost abides, healed and looking for Jesus to come.'<sup>420</sup> Whatever Spirit baptism meant for these early recipients, it was meaningful only within this life narrative.

That the experience of the Spirit was integrated into the other elements of the narrative becomes evident in such testimonies as that given by F.M. Britton, who understood the river of life in Rev. 22.1-2 as the Holy Spirit that 'proceeds out of the throne of God and flows through the streets of the New Jerusalem, and breaks loose in your innermost being, and flows up and out in rivers of living water.' With interpretive freedom, Britton's vision of the river of Isaiah 35 included both a future literal fulfillment in the millennium and a present spiritual fulfillment when 'the wilderness of sin' becomes 'rivers in [the] desert soul'.<sup>421</sup> The experience of the Spirit was also an anticipation of eschatological fulfillment. Private Morton Rose stated that since 'the Baptism' he had 'a foretaste of divine glory'.<sup>422</sup> J.W. Wilson exclaimed, 'He fills me so full sometimes I can't be still,

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<sup>418</sup> PHA 2.50 (Apr 17, 1919), p. 8; 3.45 (Mar 4, 1920), p. 6; 4.9 (Jul 1, 1920), p. 1.

<sup>419</sup> PHA 2.43 (Feb 20, 1919), p. 13.

<sup>420</sup> PHA 2.4 (May 23, 1918), p. 13.

<sup>421</sup> PHA 1.5 (May, 1917), pp. 2-3.

<sup>422</sup> PHA 2.43 (Feb 20, 1919), p. 12.

have to walk and talk and cry and laugh, and right then should the gate open, I believe I would walk right in with the blessed forever in heaven.<sup>423</sup>

#### **D. Summary and Conclusion**

A summary of the eschatology of the early Pentecostal Holiness documents may now be offered. The earliest articulations of eschatology from this group as documented in the two periodicals, *The Holiness Advocate* and *The Apostolic Evangel*, indicate that the experience of Spirit baptism was at the center of discernment about eschatology. The Spirit had both present and eschatological significance. The Spirit was preparing people for the marriage supper, creating a global Spirit-centered community as a sign of the coming King, and serving as the pledge of a future inheritance of cosmic renewal. Those articulations that did not emphasize the Spirit focused on a calendar of future events in which the Jews and the saints would play prescribed roles. This variety of perspectives has been typical of the periodicals examined to this point.

With the publication of *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* and the restrictive editorial policy of G.F. Taylor, movement toward a standardized eschatological script is evident. Reflections upon the meaning of the Great War and the influenza epidemic were narrowed to fit within this scheme. The script began with the bride of Christ, an elite group taken from the Church, who would be raptured from the earth in order to escape the great tribulation. The tribulation would serve to punish and purge those Christians left behind, restore the inheritance of the earth back to the saints through the defeat of the Antichrist, and bring about the salvation of the Jewish nation. A literal, one-thousand year reign of Christ would follow, during which the bride would help Christ rule the nations and the redeemed Jews would be given the land of Palestine as a fulfillment of the promise to Abraham. Final redemption would be enjoyed upon a renewed earth, which would also serve as the eternal home of the ‘everlasting generations’ of a sinless human race. This uniform script did allow for some variety of approaches to a philosophy of history, as some preferred to speak of two dispensations or ages, and some of six or seven. The experience of Spirit baptism figured prominently in the many testimonial narratives as a central element in the fivefold

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<sup>423</sup> *PHA* 2.36 (Jan 2, 1919), p. 12.

gospel. This emphasis allowed some texts to have both present and future applicability.

Some implications of this analysis may now be proposed. Variety continues to be evident especially in the earliest years of the Pentecostal movement. Not all groups, however, were granted continued access to such variety. Just as Sexton's editorial policy helped to generate variety in *The Bridegroom's Messenger*, the publications of The Pentecostal Holiness Church through 1920 show that Taylor's editorial policy was a decisive factor in the movement to restrict variety. This narrowing of perspectives to a uniform script very likely helped to direct the future development of eschatology within the Pentecostal Holiness Church toward classical dispensationalism.

The uniform eschatological scheme in *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* may be compared to the similar trajectory of thought in *The Bridegroom's Messenger* that resulted in dissonance between the original Pentecostal spirituality and eschatology. In fact, the development of a single eschatological script magnifies any tensions or inconsistencies that exist within that script. One wonders why an emphasis on going home to heaven developed within a readership where the expectation of a renewed earth was so prominent. One would also expect a consensus to emerge on the number of dispensations, yet the options (two or seven) still remained. Some texts of Scripture that were acknowledged to be prophecies of a future literal situation were simultaneously understood to have contemporary spiritual applicability. The presence of such tension within a uniform script suggests that incompatible hermeneutical presuppositions were functioning simultaneously, namely (1) the presupposition of the experience of the Spirit, which resulted in contemporary applications of prophetic texts within an inaugurated eschatology, and (2) the presupposition of 'keys' (such as reading 'dispensationally') that could be applied to Scripture to 'unlock' meaning, which resulted in predetermined, future applications of the texts.

## **VI. Conclusion: The Wesleyan Holiness Stream**

Having reviewed the major periodical literature produced in the early years of the Wesleyan Holiness stream of the Pentecostal movement in North America, the following conclusions may be enumerated.

First, no single model or system dominated the articulations of eschatology in this stream. Some measure of variety existed in each of the publications that were analyzed. This is, perhaps, the most significant conclusion of this study. The eschatology articulated in *The Apostolic Faith*, grounded as it was in the dynamic spirituality of the adherents, proved to be a fertile seed-bed from which various strands of thought grew up in the subsequent periodicals. In *The Bridegroom's Messenger*, three trajectories of thought were discovered, each with varying degrees of identification with Pentecostal spirituality. Readers of the *Church of God Evangel* were presented with two major options, the classical dispensational model and a covenantal model, each grounded in very different hermeneutical presuppositions. Through the restricting policies of its editor, the *Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* was decidedly dispensational, but its literary predecessors, *The Holiness Advocate* and *The Apostolic Evangel*, displayed the variety evident in the other periodicals.

Second, discernment played a key role in the articulation of eschatology, notably among those groups whose Pentecostal spirituality was brought into conversation with their eschatology. This discernment was structured around the role of Spirit baptism in the *via salutis* and its meaning for the missional task of the Church. Spirit baptism was seen to give eschatological significance to the core testimony of the early Pentecostals, which they called the 'full gospel': that Jesus is Savior, Sanctifier, Spirit Baptizer, Healer, and Coming King. Essentially, the discernment process consisted of bringing relevant biblical texts into dialogue with the believer's experience of the Spirit in the immediate context of the community of faith and the more distant context of the political and social events of the world. It may be concluded that the variety of options concerning eschatology in this stream of the early literature is a result of the open conversation that characterized the discerning process.

Third, political and social events in the world served to confirm more than to inform each group's eschatological orientation. Thus, the same events were viewed differently according to the group's views about eschatology. The Great War could be an immediate fulfillment of the four horsemen of Revelation 6 or simply added to the list of 'the beginning of sorrows' that would precede the tribulation. The return of the Jews to Palestine could be seen as the most significant sign of the soon coming of Jesus or simply as an interesting political

event amid the spread of the Pentecostal message to all the nations (which, in at least one articulation, was itself viewed as the most significant sign). This means that while current events were included in the conversation, they were not at the core of the discerning process.

Fourth, distinguishing between different views or trajectories of eschatological thought in this literature also allows the reader to identify any hermeneutical presuppositions or methods that may be associated with these trajectories. Especially telling in this regard are those biblical texts that are applied only to the future in some trajectories and considered to be presently applicable in others. Examples include passages from the OT prophets and the greater part of the book of Revelation. It may be concluded that the trajectories of eschatology that apply these texts solely to the future are most often associated with a hermeneutic that does not incorporate the movement's spirituality into the interpretive process, but rather focuses on reasoned principles of interpretation. These trajectories of thought lean *toward* classical dispensationalism. Conversely, the trajectories that allow for contemporary application of these biblical texts are most often associated with a hermeneutic that incorporates the dynamic spirituality of the movement found at the core of the discerning process. These trajectories of thought lean *away from* classical dispensationalism.

Finally, the presence of multiple trajectories within early Pentecostal eschatology brings insight to the questions raised by the review of contemporary literature in Chapter 2. Specifically, the variety of views that exists in early Pentecostalism challenges the claims of some contemporary Pentecostal historians that all early Pentecostals were (modified) dispensationalists. Indeed, the variety found in the contemporary situation to a great degree mirrors the early years of the movement. Thus, it is incorrect to assume that the contemporary articulations of Pentecostal eschatology that embrace classical dispensationalism are most faithful to the early history. Rather, the early history is equally supportive of those contemporary efforts to re-vision Pentecostal eschatology to be more compatible with the dynamic spirituality of the movement.

These conclusions will be important in discerning a contemporary Pentecostal eschatology. But first, we must turn our attention to the literature produced within the second major stream of early Pentecostalism, the Finished Work stream.

## Chapter 4

### Early Pentecostal Eschatology: The Finished Work Stream

#### Introduction

The second major stream of Pentecostalism had its origins in the promotion of the soteriological perspective of the ‘Finished Work of Calvary’ by William H. Durham beginning in 1910. Durham, along with many others with a Reformed theological background, had previously claimed an experience of sanctification as a second definite work of grace, a perspective they had shared with their Wesleyan Holiness brothers and sisters. In 1910, Durham modified this understanding to align more with his Baptist roots, so that sanctification was perceived to occur along with justification at the moment of conversion, grounded in the soteriological insight of the finished work of Calvary. The message spread quickly, though not without opposition. Many continued to defend the older view, especially those Pentecostal groups in the Southeastern United States.

Though seldom noticed by interpreters of early Pentecostalism, a Finished Work soteriology was already operative in some Pentecostal circles prior to Durham. As documented in the following review of the early periodical literature, Carrie Judd Montgomery,<sup>1</sup> A.S. Copley, and J. Roswell Flower all make appeals to the finished work of Christ prior to the arrival of Durham’s explosive message. With the organization of the Assemblies of God in 1914, acceptance of the message was advanced through a new network of associations and ministries. Although identified by some as a third stream of Pentecostalism,<sup>2</sup> early Oneness Pentecostals may also be seen to represent a further development within the Finished Work stream. Many of their early leaders were initially associated with the Assemblies of God and continued to hold to a Finished Work perspective.

Thus, the analysis that follows is organized to represent roughly this historical trajectory. First, a review of Carrie Judd Montgomery’s *Triumphs of Faith* (1901-1920) will be offered, representing a voice that began prior to Azusa Street and continued after her Spirit baptism. Second, three periodicals that were associated

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<sup>1</sup> Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing*, p. 277, demonstrates that an appeal to the finished work of Christ was evident in the writings of Carrie Judd Montgomery as early as 1882.

<sup>2</sup> D. Reed, ‘In Jesus’ Name’: *The History and Beliefs of Oneness Pentecostals* (JPTSup, 31; Blandford Forum: Deo Publishing, 2008).

with the Assemblies of God, yet published prior to its organization, will be reviewed: J. Roswell Flower's *The Pentecost* (1908-1910); William H. Durham's *The Pentecostal Testimony* (1910-1912); and E.N. Bell's *Word and Witness* (1912-1915). Third, an in-depth analysis of the official periodical of the Assemblies of God, *The Christian Evangel* (1915-1920) will be offered. All of these periodicals were made available from the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center in digitized format with the exception of *The Pentecostal Testimony*, photocopies of which were made available. Finally, writings representing early Oneness Pentecostalism will be reviewed. Photocopies of various issues of the following Oneness periodicals were made available from the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center: F.W. Ewart's *Meat in Due Season*, G.T. Haywood's *The Voice in the Wilderness*, D.C.O. Opperman's *The Blessed Truth*, H.O. Scott's *A Living Word*, and L.V. Robert's *The Present Truth*. An original copy of a small monograph by Oneness evangelist Mattie Crawford, as well as seven 'Jesus Only' tracts by Haywood, Ewart, and Andrew Urshan, in reprinted format, were also accessed at the Hal Bernard Dixon, Jr Pentecostal Research Center.

## **I. Carrie Judd Montgomery: *Triumphs of Faith***

### **Introduction**

A prominent evangelist within the Divine Healing Movement of the late nineteenth century, Carrie Judd Montgomery (then Carrie Judd) began publishing her monthly periodical, *Triumphs of Faith*, in January 1881. Though influenced by the holistic soteriology of John Wesley, Judd had come to embrace the doctrine of divine healing in the light of the altar theology of Phoebe Palmer, resulting in a Finished Work soteriology very similar to what William Durham would articulate later in 1910.<sup>3</sup> Thus, Montgomery represents a proponent of Finished Work theology whose ministry began prior to Azusa Street. After receiving Spirit baptism in 1908, Montgomery's periodical, based in Oakland, California, became a means of spreading the Pentecostal message, especially as it relates to divine healing. Montgomery's affiliation with the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA) and the Salvation Army, and later with the Assemblies of God is reflected

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<sup>3</sup>Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing*, p. 151.

in the trans-denominational tone of the periodical. As editor, Montgomery included contributions from a number of both non-Pentecostal and Pentecostal authors, including Andrew Murray, J.A. Seiss, C.I. Scofield, A.B Simpson, R.A. Torrey, D.W. Myland, F.F. Bosworth, Andrew Urshan, M.M. Pinson, and Stanley Frodsham. Though most articles reflect a Reformed background, a few Wesleyan Holiness contributors, such as G.D. Watson, B.H. Irwin, and Elizabeth Sexton, are occasionally represented. The themes of healing, faith, and prayer are emphasized, but eschatology is also a dominant topic. The following analysis includes all issues from 1901 through 1920.

### **A. Holistic Finished Work Soteriology**

The eschatological outlook presented in *Triumphs of Faith* is grounded in a holistic view of salvation based upon the finished work of Christ on the cross. Numerous articles assert that redemption is equally applicable for spirit, soul, and body. The theology of salvation presented in the periodical consistently conforms to the following pattern of logic: Christ reconciled all things to God through his death on the cross; this work is finished and complete and will be fully manifested in the eschaton; believers may ‘enter into’ this finished work through faith, being identified with Christ in all areas of life; the present manifestation of redemption in the believer is a foretaste of full redemption to come.

A.B. Simpson, a frequent contributor, was perhaps the most articulate proponent of this view. In his reflections on Rev. 21.5-7, Simpson explains the connection between God’s final announcement, ‘It is done’, and Christ’s death cry, ‘It is finished’:

The mark of the cross must pass over everything that is to enter the eternal age. The cross of Calvary is the supreme symbol of this new creation. Jesus Christ Himself, representing the old creation and the whole Adam race and life had to pass through the gates of death and come forth in resurrection life as the living Head of a new race, a new world and a new age.

But it is not enough that Christ should have finished the work. We must enter into that finished work that counts it finished and answers back the message from the throne with the echo, ‘It is done.’ The same principle applies to salvation, sanctification, receiving the Holy Spirit, physical healing, answers to prayer, and all the forward movements of your Christian life.

Our very physical life is being taught the very same lesson in that form of divine healing, which is not merely a physical miracle, but a union of our physical life with the risen Son of God. This is the earnest of the still more glorious resurrection which awaits us at His coming... In keeping with this glorified body, God is yet to give the transformation of both earth and heaven which will literally and fully make all things new.<sup>4</sup>

After her experience of Spirit baptism, Montgomery exclaimed, 'Rom. viii.11 is made real in my experience beyond words to describe.'<sup>5</sup> This verse speaks not merely of 'a future experience of the immortal body', but of 'the resurrection life of Christ [that] actually quickens our mortal body by the indwelling Spirit'. She continues, 'Our life is hid with Christ in God, but it is made manifest for spirit, soul and body moment by moment as we stand upon the finished work of His cross and upon His never failing Word.'<sup>6</sup> For Montgomery, spirit, soul, body, and mind must remain 'passive' in their natural state, so that they may serve as focal points for the manifestation of Christ's life. She makes clear the eschatological implications of Spirit baptism in the context of a holistic redemption founded upon the finished work of Christ:

Surely the coming of the Lord draweth nigh, and with His coming the full redemption of these bodies of humiliation when they shall be made like unto His glorious body. And as this day of rapture draws near, and the first rays of the Glory Dispensation are shed upon us, many of God's little ones are beginning to realize a foretaste of resurrection quickening in their physical being, which fills them with glory, and yet with holy awe at the Divine condescension.

But, beloved, the groundwork of this glorious fullness is the finished work of the Cross of Christ. Take by faith the power of His Cross upon your spirit, soul and body. Take the Person of the blessed Comforter in all His fullness to manifest Christ in and through you. So shall you have a foretaste even now of the powers of the age to come, and you shall be a faithful witness to His power and glory, continually overcoming by the blood of the Lamb and the word of your testimony.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *TOF* 28.5 (May, 1908), pp. 110-11.

<sup>5</sup> *TOF* 28.10 (Oct, 1908), p. 217.

<sup>6</sup> *TOF* 28.8 (Aug, 1908), pp. 169-70.

<sup>7</sup> *TOF* 28.10 (Oct, 1908), pp. 218-19. This intensification of Finished Work spirituality through Spirit baptism is also noted by G.A. Bailly, CMA missionary in Venezuela, *TOF* 30.2 (Feb, 1910), pp. 41-43: 'The Holy Ghost responds to every active principle of the Cross, working within us. Shall not the climax of this "finished work" be reached and signified by mighty convulsions as God sets his seal to it that it is finished and that the pent up streams of Calvary shall flow forth from the broken depths of our innermost being, convulsed and rent by the dynamite of the Holy Ghost.'

In this context, some articles highlight the relationship between the spiritual and physical realms. For example, appealing to ‘the past tense of faith’, Fannie Rowe describes ‘the strongest position for healing that we can take’:

In the spiritual realm this [healing] has already been accomplished. We have accepted this finished work as ours individually. This is to us the truth, a fact, a reality. In the light of Christ’s finished work on the Cross, the evidence of the Word is stronger to us than the evidence of our senses. As we hold this attitude, all symptoms of disease disappear, and to the evidence of the Word is added the evidence of the senses. The healing is manifest in the body. We rejoice in what God hath wrought.<sup>8</sup>

The effects of Christ’s finished work on the material world, however, goes beyond healing for the body. During a world tour in 1909, Montgomery, while reflecting on Col. 1.20, reports a vision, ‘by faith, of this mighty, restless ocean being reconciled to Christ’. She writes, ‘The time is coming when this will, of course, be fully manifested, but step by step, even now, we may claim the effect of the reconciling blood upon all created things so that they shall become subservient to us through Christ, for our good and to His glory.’<sup>9</sup> A similar claim is made by Mrs C. Nuzum, a close ministry associate of Montgomery’s, who asserts that Jesus’ proclamation, ‘It is finished’, ‘set humanity free from all of Satan’s evil power. Freedom from the curse and all its consequences has been in force ever since Jesus spoke these words.’ Commenting on the ‘manifestation of the sons of God’ in Rom. 8.19, Nuzum writes, ‘Jesus finished the work and told us, “It is finished,” but we are to manifest this truth in our lives by grasping it and clinging to it.’ ‘The creation, groaning and suffering in pain is robbed of the help that God intends us to give it, because we have not learned to use the “power over all the power of the enemy,” which God has given us.’<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> *TOF* 33.5 (May, 1913), pp. 108-11.

<sup>9</sup> *TOF* 29.3 (Mar, 1909), pp. 49-51. In a previous editorial, *TOF* 25.12 (Dec, 1905), pp. 265-67, Montgomery explains that the blood of the cross was the necessary means of the reconciliation of creation because the ‘blighting consequences’ of human sin came upon all of creation. She writes, ‘The fullness of these glorious truths will only be made manifest when it comes to pass that the “creature (creation) itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” (Rom. viii.21). But as we have the first fruits of all our redemption privileges right here and now, as our faith claims them, so it is in this matter.’ Montgomery concludes that faith makes ‘practical application of this wonderful truth’ in relation to ‘all things that come into my life’. ‘I have only to claim by faith that this particular thing has been reconciled to Christ by the blood of His cross, and that it must therefore be used for Him, and not against Him, and therefore it must work out for my good, because I am His little trusting one. It means victory in everything as we take this position.’ Examples given include money, business affairs, freedom and joy, and bodily healing.

<sup>10</sup> *TOF* 40.6 (Jun, 1920), pp. 136-37.

A few contributors emphasize the ‘authority’ of the believer that comes from the finished work of Christ. E.W. Kenyon asserts, ‘It is not Faith, but Legal Rights that are yours.’ ‘All our authority is based on His finished work, but it is enwrap [sic] in His name. By giving us the Legal use of this name, He has let us into the use of omnipotence in our combat with Satanic hosts.’ According to Kenyon, the believer may ‘demand healing’; claim deliverance from Satan; bind demons, disease, and habits; and set diseased and demon-bound persons free. He exclaims, ‘What power we have! Will we ever use it?’<sup>11</sup> S.D. Gordon explains that through disobedience, humankind lost its authority, which was then usurped by Satan. But Jesus won it back through obedience, and now gives it back to the believer. Gordon declares, ‘Prayer is not asking, pleading or begging, it is not extracting favors from God, but it is taking in Jesus’ name what has been won for us.’<sup>12</sup>

A significant reference in these articles is the frequent use of the term ‘manifestation’ to describe both present experiences of salvation as well as the future fullness of redemption. The idea is that redemption is *already* complete; there is no *not yet* aspect concerning the *reality* of salvation. What comes into being through the faith or the authority of the believer is the *evidence*, the ‘manifestation’, of an already-complete reality. Note the testimony of Rev. J. Norvell, who, having been divinely healed three years previously, crushed his leg in an accident. He relates the following prayer from the scene of the accident:

Father, I do not understand this. I have been telling people that Jesus Christ was my health, and my healing, and I was in the new creation, living in the 91st Psalm, and for the past three and one half years I had been dwelling in the Secret Place. I don’t understand why my leg is broken, but this is YOUR chance. Jesus is in me, and in His Name I am going to get up and walk.<sup>13</sup>

He then reports instant healing. Norvell assumes that a constant state of health should be normal for the believer since he or she is living in ‘the new creation’. This idea that the future fullness of salvation is being manifested in part now is consistent with other testimonies where physical healing is depicted as a foretaste of future redemption. A.B. Simpson avers, ‘The life of Jesus in our bodies now is but the beginning and the pledge of that glorious life which is to come to us at the

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<sup>11</sup> TOF 34.12 (Dec, 1914), pp. 281-85.

<sup>12</sup> TOF 35.2 (Jan, 1915), p. 5.

<sup>13</sup> TOF 39.6 (Jun, 1919), pp. 137-41.

resurrection.’<sup>14</sup> Missionary Max Wood Moorhead agrees, ‘Surely there is a causal relation between the Lord’s life for the body and full preparation for the Second Coming of our Lord. Surely in every experience of quickening in the body we have the earnest of Rapture Glory.’<sup>15</sup>

### **B. A Ready Made Eschatology?**

It is clear that present manifestations of salvation, especially healing, are perceived to anticipate the future fullness of redemption. The larger framework within which these ‘foretastes of glory’ are understood, however, is the classical dispensational model. A review of articles about eschatology in *Triumphs of Faith* from 1901 through 1905 show that prior to the Azusa Street outpouring, classical dispensationalism was already the only model being articulated.<sup>16</sup> This perspective did not change after Spirit baptism began to be promoted in the periodical. Rather, the latter rain outpouring became another of the signs of the second coming, intensifying the perception of an imminent end. In the same issue in which Montgomery tells of her Pentecostal baptism, a portion of a tract by W.C. Stevens explains that ‘our present dispensational location’ is characterized by the world-wide outpouring of the latter rain in the context of an oppressive economic situation (as prophesied in Jas 5.7). Stevens believes that the ‘real object’ of this outpouring is the final harvest.<sup>17</sup> A.S. Worrell notes the significance of this last-days mission:

Through Spirit-filled, Spirit-gifted disciples of Christ, the cause of Christianity will be rapidly pushed forward to its consummation, when the fullness of the Gentiles will have been brought in, and the number of full overcomers—composing the ruling force with Christ in the age to follow—will have been completed. Then Jesus Christ will return to the earth, to establish His Millennial reign.<sup>18</sup>

Many authors in the publication agree that only a portion of the Church will be taken away at the rapture. This company is variously referred to as the bride of Christ, the overcomers, or the manchild. Mrs F. Kies writes, ‘Our message to the

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<sup>14</sup> *TOF* 27.12 (Dec, 1907), p. 277. Cf. *TOF* 29.8 (Aug, 1909), pp. 187-88; 30.1 (Jan, 1910), p. 26.

<sup>15</sup> *TOF* 31.12 (Dec, 1911), pp. 280-82.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. e.g. *TOF* 21.4 (Jul, 1901), pp. 154-56; 22.3 (Mar, 1902), pp. 56-60; 23.4 (Apr, 1903), pp. 90-92; 24.5 (May, 1904), pp. 108-15; 25.8 (Aug, 1905), pp. 175-77.

<sup>17</sup> *TOF* 28.7 (Jul, 1908), pp. 157-61. Montgomery echoes this sentiment in her editorial on Jas 5.7. Cf. *TOF* (Jan, 1914), pp. 1-5.

<sup>18</sup> *TOF* 34.2 (Feb, 1914), p. 42.

church is like Elijah's. It is to gather out those whom God has chosen as kings and priests, and to prepare them for the catching away of the Bride.'<sup>19</sup> Ellen Winter notes that 'She [the Lamb's wife] is down here in the "dressing room" making "herself ready" for the marriage.'<sup>20</sup> Alice Evans echoes other Pentecostal writers when she states that as Eve is taken from Adam's body, so 'out from His Body, the Church, Christ's Bride will be formed'.<sup>21</sup> Some, however, are more inclusive in describing the bride. It is significant that the first article in a Pentecostal periodical that challenges exclusion based on spiritual experience appears in *Triumphs of Faith*. In answer to the question, 'For whom is Christ coming?' David Baron responds, 'I believe it includes, in the first instance, the whole redeemed Church of Christ. I cannot confine this to any particular class or set of Christians.'<sup>22</sup> B. McCall Barbour expects Christ to come for 'all who are His'. Citing Luke 17.34-36, he writes, 'They who are not His will at His coming certainly be "left behind."<sup>23</sup>

Whether partially or fully raptured, the Church is often referred to in distinction from Israel. A reprinted article from *Our Monthly* makes a distinction between Christ's coming as the King of Israel, to 'accomplish the conversion of the Jewish nation', and His coming as the Bridegroom, to 'take His Church from the earth to live with Him in glory'.<sup>24</sup> According to F.L. Chapell, Jesus told the disciples that it was not for them to know the times and seasons (Acts 1.7) because of 'the intervening mysteries of the Church and of the apostasy, which are set forth in Paul's epistles, especially in Ephesians and Thessalonians, and further amplified in Revelation'. Chapell continues:

There is a fixed time coming when these intervening mysteries shall be finished and the kingdom shall appear. But if this time were publicly announced it might give an undue advantage to Satan. Therefore the element of time in prophecy, although repeatedly expressed, is left in obscurity which events only will entirely clear away.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *TOF* 37.10 (Oct, 1917), p. 233. Cf. *TOF* 29.9 (Sep, 1909), pp. 195-200. Montgomery, *TOF* 37.4 (Apr, 1917), p. 77, takes this position: 'There is a comparatively small company who will undoubtedly be spared much of the trouble that is coming on the earth by being caught away to meet the Lord.'

<sup>20</sup> *TOF* 32.9 (Sep, 1912), p. 199.

<sup>21</sup> *TOF* 37.11 (Nov, 1917), p. 245.

<sup>22</sup> *TOF* 34.4 (Apr, 1914), p. 89.

<sup>23</sup> *TOF* 37.2 (Feb, 1917), p. 30.

<sup>24</sup> *TOF* 26.3 (Mar, 1906), p. 64.

<sup>25</sup> *TOF* 39.8 (Aug, 1919), p. 181.

The second coming of Christ is the next prophetic event to occur, which, as several articles assert, will transpire in two stages: Christ's appearance in the air to catch away the Church (or Bride), and afterward, Christ's descent to the earth to judge the nations and reign for one-thousand years. In an article in which he lists several contrasting elements of these two stages, J.A. Harris concludes, 'The immediate object of the Church's expectation today is, not her Lord's coming to reign, but the Bridegroom's coming for His bride.'<sup>26</sup> An unnamed contributor asserts, 'This [translation] is the central object of the believer's hope. Not death, but translation; "the *sky*, not the grave, is his goal.'" The ultimate design of Divine healing, which includes holiness, is translation'.<sup>27</sup> The author of a reprinted article from *The Morning Star* anticipates 'the coming moment' only because of 'that wonderful salvation-bringing grace of God, through the *finished* work of our savior Jesus Christ' (emphasis in original).<sup>28</sup>

Though the image of the Bride preparing to attend the marriage supper of the Lamb is prominent in this periodical, stress is also laid on the importance of praying to escape the great tribulation that is coming upon the earth after the rapture. In her article, 'Left Behind', Ellen Winter declares, 'Every age in the past has closed with a dispensational judgment out of which God made a way for the righteous to escape. The way, the only way of escape from the greater one that will close this present age is the Rapture.'<sup>29</sup> The tribulation will be characterized by political upheaval resulting in the rise of a single ruler, the Antichrist, who will deliver Christians to death and persecute Israel.<sup>30</sup> The tribulation will end with the return of Christ to overthrow His enemies at the battle of Armageddon, which will usher in Israel's restoration and the millennial kingdom.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> *TOF* 27.4 (Apr, 1907), p. 92.

<sup>27</sup> *TOF* 27.9 (Sep, 1907), p. 215. George S. Montgomery, husband of Carrie Judd Montgomery, affirms this view in a testimony about a recent personal healing, *TOF* 34.6 (Jun, 1914), p. 134: 'I realize as never before that in these last days when the power of the enemy is so great, that he would like to destroy by death many of God's saints, when Christ's coming is so near, and have them miss being amongst that company of overcomers which shall be caught away at His coming.' In a follow-up testimony, Sadie Cody, friend of the Montgomerys, insists that 'Satan is trying to destroy the bodies of the saints so there will be none left for translation.' She believes that God 'is giving some of His children faith to rebuke death' (p. 135).

<sup>28</sup> *TOF* 39.11 (Nov, 1919), p. 246.

<sup>29</sup> *TOF* 38.9 (Sep, 1918), p. 210.

<sup>30</sup> *TOF* 32.10 (Oct, 1912), pp. 231-35; 33.1 (Jan, 1913), pp. 13-16; 33.2 (Feb, 1913), p. 43; 34.8 (Aug, 1914), p. 179.

<sup>31</sup> *TOF* 38.1 (Jan, 1918), pp. 9-10; 38.9 (Sep, 1918), pp. 208-12.

The central feature of the millennium is the personal and literal reign of Jesus at Jerusalem, with Israel as the premier nation. A.A. Boddy, editor of the British periodical, *Confidence*, surmises, ‘Jesus will reign and He wants kings to reign with Him; the Lord Jesus reigning at Jerusalem in Person, and His own chosen people gathering quickly back to the Holy Land. They will become His own loyal subjects. He is coming back to reign with His saints.’<sup>32</sup> Drawing on imagery from several biblical texts, Montgomery describes the millennium:

All earthly kingdoms will be dissolved, and the Lord will reign over the earth for a thousand years, and the nations will learn war no more. God’s law will go forth from Jerusalem, and the Jews will be the leading people of the world. The times of the Gentiles have about run out, and soon God will take up His dealings again with His ancient people. They will first be deceived by the Antichrist, the coming Man, of whom even now worldly people are beginning to talk, not knowing that such a man has been prophesied in the Bible, and that he is called ‘that Man of Sin.’ (ii Thess. ii.3.) But God will afterwards show great mercy to His chosen people, and He will bless all the other nations in the world through the Jews.<sup>33</sup>

Little is said in this periodical about the eternal state. J.L. Thompson emphasizes the role of the Word of God in bringing the new creation into being. He writes, ‘The entire old creation, cursed by the poison of the serpent, is to be consumed by the WORD OF GOD. By the SAME WORD shall also the new heaven and earth burst forth into eternal being.’ This event, moreover, is not unrelated to the present spiritual experience of the believer. He continues, ‘For as surely as that WORD is taken into our hearts by faith and abides there, so surely shall it destroy out of us all of the works of the devil. And it is only as the WORD *abides* in us that we can ask WHAT WE WILL and it shall be DONE unto us’ (emphasis in original).<sup>34</sup>

### C. Summary and Conclusion

A brief summary of the eschatological outlook presented in *Triumphs of Faith* is now in order. The consistent model within which eschatology is articulated in this periodical is classical dispensationalism, whose components include the return of the Jews to their homeland, the rapture of the Church, the reign of the Antichrist

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<sup>32</sup> *TOF* 32.10 (Oct, 1912), p. 234.

<sup>33</sup> *TOF* 37.7 (Jul, 1917), pp. 145-46. An unnamed contributor, *TOF* 37.8 (Aug, 1917), pp. 184-86, agrees: ‘Israel expected a literal throne and kingdom, and Christ never dimmed their hopes.’

<sup>34</sup> *TOF* 39.2 (Feb, 1919), pp. 45-46.

during the great tribulation, the visible return of Christ to establish an earthly kingdom for one thousand years, and the new heaven and new earth. This vision is closely interwoven within the soteriological system of the finished work of Christ and its attending spirituality. In contrast to the ‘already–not yet’ dialectic prominent in Wesleyan Pentecostal periodicals, emphasis is placed on the reality of salvation at the cross as being ‘finished’ or complete and the ‘manifestation’ of that salvation in the material world through the faith of the believer, especially through divine healing, a manifestation that will be fully realized in the eschaton. The Pentecostal distinctives of Spirit baptism and restoration of the gifts of the Spirit are perceived to intensify this position, enhancing the already-accepted imminence of Christ’s coming as both Bridegroom of the Church and the King of Israel.

The implications of this analysis are striking, especially in the light of the variety of eschatological perspectives that was discovered among Wesleyan Holiness periodicals. First, there is a much tighter articulation of the fourfold gospel than that of the fivefold gospel in the Wesleyan Pentecostal publications. The identity of Christ as Savior, Healer, Spirit Baptizer, and Coming King is almost completely integrated. The kingship of Christ is viewed as the (future) full manifestation of his role as Savior. Likewise, Christ as Healer is perceived to be the demonstration of Christ’s ‘finished work’ as Savior. Similarly, Christ as Spirit Baptizer intensifies or enhances his position as Healer and King. The spirituality that ensues places heavy emphasis on the immediate results of the faith of the believer, potentially yielding an over-realized eschatology.

Second, there is a notable lack of discernment or constructive criticism in *Triumphs of Faith* regarding other eschatological viewpoints.<sup>35</sup> The discussion is streamlined to fit closely the dispensational model. That this model was already in place before Montgomery’s Pentecostal experience may indicate that dispensationalism had already demonstrated its compatibility with Finished Work soteriology, even before the Pentecostal movement was born. That Spirit baptism was perceived simply to confirm Finished Work spirituality suggests that no

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<sup>35</sup> Montgomery does criticize the theological perspectives of the ‘new issue’, condemning the need for rebaptism, *TOF* 35.2 (Feb, 1915), p. 38, and the use of ‘Jesus’ as the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, *TOF* 35.3 (Mar, 1915), p. 69.

discernment regarding this ready-made eschatology was perceived to be necessary.

## II. Finished Work Periodicals Prior to the Assemblies of God

### Introduction

Attention will now be focused upon three periodicals that appeared prior to the organization of the Assemblies of God in 1914. The editors of these publications represent, respectively, the perspectives of a Finished Work adherent (J.R. Flower) prior to William H. Durham's promotion of the message, the perspective of Durham himself during his brief but highly influential campaign, and the perspective of a future Assemblies of God leader (E.N. Bell) after the debut of Durham's Finished Work message.

#### A. *The Pentecost* (1908-1910)

At the age of twenty, J. Roswell Flower founded his first periodical, *The Pentecost*, in August 1908. A.S. Copley, whose articles also appeared in *The Bridegroom's Messenger*, quickly became the predominant voice in the publication. Having served as associate editor since its third issue in November 1908, Copley became the editor in January 1910. Flower remained the associate editor through 1910.

Discernment in *The Pentecost* was focused upon Scripture illuminated by the Spirit. An advertisement for a summer Bible School to be taught by Flower and Copley announced that the students would be 'started on important lines' and then 'left to search for themselves' so that 'the specific, individual leading and illuminations of the Spirit will hereby be unhindered'.<sup>36</sup> Unique to this periodical, however, was Copley's insistence that only Paul's writings were valid for the Church. The Gospels and other NT epistles were 'kingdom truth'.<sup>37</sup> Copley wrote, 'We need to study Pentecost in the light of Pauline Christianity.'<sup>38</sup>

Copley's philosophy of history is patterned after Scofield's dispensations. Having dealt with humankind through the reigns of innocence, conscience, and

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<sup>36</sup> *TP* 1.6 (Apr, 1908), p. 1.

<sup>37</sup> *TP* 1.3 (Nov, 1908), p. 1; 1.11 (Oct, 1909), p. 7.

<sup>38</sup> *TP* 2.6 (May, 1910), p. 4.

human government, God set aside ‘the race as a whole’ and chose Abraham, through whom the whole world was to be blessed. After Israel rejected the Messiah and the Holy Spirit’s witness, God set Israel aside and sought after a people among the Gentiles. Thus, based on 1 Cor. 10.32, Copley divided humanity into three groups: ‘Jews, Gentiles, and the Assembly of God’.<sup>39</sup> The ‘assembly’ (Church, body of Christ) was perceived to be separate not only from Israel, but also from the kingdom of heaven (general Christendom). Only the ‘assembly’ would be raptured; the kingdom would be purged in the tribulation and come forth in the millennium to be ruled by Jesus and His bride.<sup>40</sup>

The soteriological foundation for the eschatology presented in *The Pentecost* is the doctrine of the finished work of Calvary. J.R. Flower wrote, ‘My sanctification was taken by cold faith in the finished work of Christ.’ Similarly, to be baptized in the Spirit, Flower noted that he had to ‘step out by faith and claim the promise.’<sup>41</sup> An unsigned article noted, ‘When we by faith appropriate our redemptive rights, we are made free from sin ... and the flesh is kept in the death state by faith in the indwelling Spirit.’<sup>42</sup> Copley addressed the eschatological implications of this view: ‘The nature and greatness of our hope for the coming ages are all secured for us and vouchsafed unto us through the cross.’ We are ‘identified with Him ... in His priestly reign, in His future Kingly reign and in His eternal state. Identified with Christ forever.’<sup>43</sup> Just as the old nature is put to death, so the old creation will be destroyed, not ‘improved’ or ‘restored’; and as the individual becomes ‘a new creature in Christ Jesus’, so ‘there must be a universal regeneration (Math 19:28)’.<sup>44</sup>

The script of future events as depicted in *The Pentecost* is consistent. The bride, who is the overcoming company ‘hidden away in the church’,<sup>45</sup> is caught

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<sup>39</sup> *TP* 1.10 (Sep, 1909), p. 7. Copley consistently used the term ‘assembly’ or ‘assembly of God’ to refer to the Church. This raises the question of whether Flower was influenced by Copley’s use of the term, especially in its eschatological significance.

<sup>40</sup> *TP* 1.5 (Jan, 1909), p. 7.

<sup>41</sup> *TP* 2.3 (Feb, 1910), p. 1.

<sup>42</sup> *TP* 2.2 (Jan, 1910), p. 7.

<sup>43</sup> *TP* 2.6 (May, 1910), pp. 6-8.

<sup>44</sup> *TP* 2.11 (Nov, 1910), p. 12.

<sup>45</sup> *TP* 2.11 (Nov, 1910), pp. 10-11. Flower describes the bride as ‘an overcoming company, not simply those who have been baptized into the Holy Spirit, but those who have walked in all the light that has been shed upon their pathway, who love the Lord Jesus Christ with all their mind, soul and strength and who have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof, have overcome the world, the flesh and the devil by the blood of the Lamb and the Word of their testimony, and are going on to know Him in the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of

away in the rapture to meet the Bridegroom,<sup>46</sup> and attends the marriage supper, thereby escaping the tribulation judgments.<sup>47</sup> Then will come the millennial day, the ‘seventh day’, when all the resurrected and glorified saints ‘will rejoice with Christ a thousand years’.<sup>48</sup>

### **B. *The Pentecostal Testimony* (1910-1912)**

William H. Durham published *The Pentecostal Testimony* as a faith-based paper, thus it did not appear on a regular basis, but only as his busy schedule and finances would allow. The first issue was published in March 1909. A few pages from an early issue (pp. 5-12) are extant. The five remaining extant issues (1910-1912?) are focused heavily on the teaching of the finished work of Christ, though some comments about eschatological matters do appear. Unlike the other periodicals reviewed in this study, Durham wrote most of the articles except for the testimonies and reports of meetings that were included.

Durham makes it clear in this periodical that once he was convinced of the doctrine of the finished work of Christ, it became the central feature of his theology. Note the following brief quotations:

Not only is this [Christ’s finished work of redemption] the very ground-work of our hope, but it is the foundation of our faith.<sup>49</sup>

I saw clearly that, without a doubt, it was not only the truth, but that it was the great central doctrine of the New Testament. To preach it was to preach Christ.<sup>50</sup>

The simple plan of salvation is contained in the doctrine of the Finished Work of Christ, and it is producing the results.<sup>51</sup>

The Finished Work of Christ on Calvary ... is the most glorious and powerful truth of the Gospel. Yea, it is the very center and heart of the Gospel.<sup>52</sup>

The Finished Work is by far the most important teaching in the Bible.<sup>53</sup>

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His sufferings and being made conformable [*sic*] even unto His death. She is purely an overcoming company along every line.’

<sup>46</sup> Note the testimony of Celia Smock, *TP* 1.6 (Apr, 1909), p. 2: ‘The next great future event in the plan of God is the rapture or catching away of the Bride, in the clouds of the air, to meet her coming Bridegroom.’

<sup>47</sup> Calling on readers to be watchful, Alice Reynolds, Flower’s future wife, wrote, ‘The bride will be taken unto God and the great week of tribulation begin which is set forth in Revelation.’ *TP* 2.11 (Nov, 1910), p. 13.

<sup>48</sup> *TP* 2.3 (Feb, 1910), p. 3.

<sup>49</sup> *PT* 2.1 (Jan, 1912?), p. 1.

<sup>50</sup> *PT* 2.1 (Jan, 1912?), p. 6.

<sup>51</sup> *PT* 2.2 (May, 1912?), p. 1.

<sup>52</sup> *PT* 2.2 (May, 1912?), p. 2.

Commenting on the drawing of a broken candle on the periodical's masthead, Durham writes, 'This is to represent the passing out of the second work of grace theory. It must be replaced by the precious truth of the Finished Work of Christ, in which all truth centers.'<sup>54</sup> Durham claims that once he became convinced of the doctrine, he boldly proclaimed it. Significantly, however, he adds, 'In no other point of doctrine did I change my views.'<sup>55</sup>

Durham saw the 'restoration' of the Finished Work teaching as a sign of the close of this dispensation. He writes, 'God has never changed His plan of salvation one whit and never will. He is now revealing and restoring it exactly as it was in the beginning. The great battle of this dispensation started when the standard of the Cross was lifted up. The last and decisive battle will be fought around exactly the same standard.' He continues, 'As the end draws nigh the opposition to the truth of God will become greater and greater, till it will be as it was in the days of Noah. The world will utterly harden its heart to God, that its cup of iniquity and wrath may be filled to the uttermost.'<sup>56</sup> Durham's view of the baptism in the Holy Spirit as 'the seal of the finished salvation in Jesus Christ'<sup>57</sup> also has eschatological significance. He writes, 'In the end of the age the Holy Spirit has come to exalt Jesus Christ, and give Him His rightful place in the hearts and lives of all God's children, as well as in the assembly.'<sup>58</sup>

The brief, but concise, statements made by Durham concerning eschatological matters reveal that he subscribed to the classical dispensational model. Like other Pentecostals, Durham promoted the premillennial coming of Christ.<sup>59</sup> He writes concerning the rapture, 'We expect that soon our all-glorious Lord will appear in the clouds of the heavens and that His mighty shout will be heard in all parts of the earth along with the sound of the trumpet. We expect that every faithful soldier on the field of battle will be translated and caught up to meet Him in the air.'<sup>60</sup> Several more elements of the classical dispensational script are evident in the following quotation:

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<sup>53</sup> *PT* 2.2 (May, 1912?), p. 2.

<sup>54</sup> *PT* 2.2 (May, 1912?), p. 16.

<sup>55</sup> *PT* 2.1 (Jan, 1912?), p. 7.

<sup>56</sup> *PT* 2.2 (May, 1912?), p. 5.

<sup>57</sup> *PT* 2.1 (Jan, 1912?), pp. 1, 10.

<sup>58</sup> *PT* 2.2 (May, 1912?), p. 3.

<sup>59</sup> *PT* 2.1 (Jan, 1912?), p. 1.

<sup>60</sup> *PT* 2.2 (May, 1912?), p. 6.

Three classes, already formed, are rapidly developing; first the unbelieving world, which is ripening for destruction; second the unbelieving cold and formal church, which together with the unbelieving world is preparing the way for the anti-Christ. A portion of the cold formal church will have life enough to be saved, but will have to pass through the tribulation. The third class is those who are yielding themselves wholly to God, and are sealed unto the day of redemption. These are living the overcoming life, and will constitute the reigning force in the millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ. They are the pre-tribulation rapture saints who will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. I Thess. 4:16-17. I Cor. 15:51-52-53-54. Rev. 20:4-6.<sup>61</sup>

These brief comments, paired with the central, highly focused place allotted to his Finished Work doctrine, reveal that Durham found in classical dispensationalism a ready-made eschatology that was compatible with his soteriological vision. Meanwhile, Durham's energy was concentrated on fighting for the Finished Work message, in the hope that 'When He comes He will find a little company standing against almost unheard of odds, but standing as unmovable as a rock, defending the glorious truths of the Gospel. Great and glorious will be our final victory.'<sup>62</sup>

### **C. *Word and Witness* (1912-1915)**

Prior to his election as the first General Chairman of the Assemblies of God, Eudorus N. Bell, a former Southern Baptist pastor, was the editor of *Word and Witness*, a monthly periodical that was amalgamated into *The Christian Evangel* after 1915. Bell was the editor for all extant issues of *Word and Witness* (August 1912 through November 1915). While the periodical eventually came under the auspices of the Assemblies of God and shared similar perspectives on eschatology with *The Christian Evangel*, it displays a slightly more inclusive editorial spirit than the group's official publication. Appeals for more cooperation and association among believers are found next to warnings to avoid the extremes of focusing only on the Spirit ('fanaticism') or only on the Word ('formalism').<sup>63</sup> Bell often calls for a balanced approach to Scripture. He wrote, 'While there are

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<sup>61</sup> *PT* 1.5 (Jul, 1910), p. 4.

<sup>62</sup> *PT* 2.1 (Jan, 1912?), p. 6.

<sup>63</sup> *WW* 9.12 (Dec, 1913), p. 2; 10.3 (Mar, 1914), pp. 2-3. Indeed, cooperation is given eschatological significance in a sermon by 'Brother Rickard' at the 1915 General Council: 'God said to me that this lawless, independent spirit is the spirit of the anti-Christ and if you don't get rid of that you will have to suffer the judgments of the tribulation. You will never get into the bride unless you learn how to fellowship and learn how to be subject one to another.' *WW* 12.11 (Nov, 1915), p. 5.

dispensational truths that need to be pressed to the front at this time, it should be the constant guard of those engaged in this battle to know the whole Bible and to give proper place to all its truths.<sup>64</sup>

The eschatological outlook in *Word and Witness* follows the classical dispensational model.<sup>65</sup> Articles dedicated to eschatological themes present the script of future events as follows: the return of the Jews to Palestine (and the concomitant separation of the Church from Israel),<sup>66</sup> the rapture of the saints,<sup>67</sup> the tribulation and the rule of the Antichrist,<sup>68</sup> the literal coming of Christ and the millennial reign,<sup>69</sup> and the new heaven and new earth.<sup>70</sup> This outline is also supported by numerous reports of visions, warning the readers to be ready for ‘the soon coming of the Lord’, the marriage supper and the millennial reign, and to escape ‘the darkness coming to the world’.<sup>71</sup> These visions served to confirm rather than to inform the recipients in eschatological matters.

Within this scheme, however, there are distinctive emphases, the most evident being an overwhelmingly positive outlook for the Spirit-empowered church. L.C. Hall summarizes,

What possibilities confront us in these closing hours of this dispensation! What besides our failure can prevent the greatest Evangelism this world has ever seen? As the Vanguard of the Heralds of the Coming Glories of the Coming King, who can tell what is upon us? The greatest victories [the Church] has ever known shall be realized.<sup>72</sup>

S.D. Kinne reports from a Chicago meeting with Maria Woodworth-Etter: ‘The plaintive notes of the dove were heard as a warning that the storm of wrath and the tribulation is soon to break on this poor sin-cursed earth.’ He notes, however, that because the latter rain is falling, ‘Many will, we feel sure, go forth from this

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<sup>64</sup> *WW* 9.1 (Jan, 1913), p. 2.

<sup>65</sup> The only possible exceptions are an article by Frank Bartleman, *WW* 12.6 (Jun, 1915), p. 5, who viewed the Great War as the unsealing of the book of Revelation (cf. his many contributions to *The Bridegroom’s Messenger*); and a contribution by Mrs G.N. Eldridge, *WW* 12.8 (Aug 1915), p. 3, who claimed that the promise to Abraham in Gen. 12.3 is passed on to Christian believers, a claim that does not necessarily contradict but nevertheless stands in tension with the classical dispensational position.

<sup>66</sup> *WW* 9.6 (Jun, 1913), p. 3; 12.8 (Aug, 1915), p. 2.

<sup>67</sup> *WW* 8.6 (Aug, 20, 1912), p. 1; 9.10 (Oct, 1913), p. 1; 9.11 (Nov, 1913), p. 1.

<sup>68</sup> The tribulation is most often portrayed as the judgment of God upon an ungodly world. Cf. *WW* 9.11 (Nov, 1913), p. 1; 10.3 (Mar, 1914), p. 2; 10.7 (Jul, 1914), p. 1; 12.5 (May, 1915), p. 1.

<sup>69</sup> *WW* 10.3 (Mar, 1914), p. 2; 10.5 (May, 1914), p. 1.

<sup>70</sup> *WW* 8.8 (Oct, 1912), p. 2.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. *WW* 8.8 (Oct, 1912), p. 3; 9.2 (Feb, 1913), p. 1; 9.10 (Oct, 1913), p. 2; 12.5 (May, 1915), p. 7; 12.8 (Aug, 1915), p. 1.

<sup>72</sup> *WW* 9.6 (Jun, 1913), p. 3.

meeting to cast out demons, heal the sick, and work the mighty works of the Coming King.’<sup>73</sup> E.N. Bell expects that the spirit of unity and cooperation, including ‘a longing for the coming of our blessed Christ back to the earth’, will result in ‘a building up of the kingdom everywhere’.<sup>74</sup>

The view that Christ’s redemptive work is central to the eschatological vision is another important theme that emerges in *Word and Witness*. Warnings not to exalt the baptism of the Spirit above Christ are numerous.<sup>75</sup> A.P. Collins notes that the focus is always ‘Christ on Calvary’:

How wonderful the work on Calvary! Jesus Christ on the cross is the world’s redemption; but Christ risen from the dead is the believer’s salvation, according to 1 Cor. 15. Jesus Christ at God’s right hand interceding is the saint’s assurance of entering into that haven of rest (Heb. 6:18-20; 9:24); and the Lord’s return is the Christian’s blessed hope (Titus 2:13); but Christ formed in us the hope of Glory is the longing of my heart for myself and for all the dear saints everywhere.<sup>76</sup>

An unnamed writer agrees: ‘Oh brother, why be afraid of the cross that leadeth to the City? In the cross thy life is returned, in the cross is holiness, in the cross is health, in the cross is safety. Outside the cross there is nothing but eternal fire.’<sup>77</sup>

#### **D. Summary and Conclusion**

As examples of publications that promoted Finished Work soteriology prior to the organization of the Assemblies of God, *The Pentecost*, *The Pentecostal Testimony*, and *Word and Witness* share many common themes. Of course, the message of the finished work of Calvary takes center stage, not only as the foundational doctrine of salvation, but also as the basis for spirituality and eschatological hope. The finished work of the cross is seen as the pattern for the future destruction of the old and creation of the new heaven and new earth, as well as the only source of eternal life. Israel is distinguished from the Church and has a distinct future role in the fulfillment of prophecy. The Church itself is perceived

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<sup>73</sup> *WW* 9.8 (Aug, 1913), p. 1.

<sup>74</sup> *WW* 10.5 (May, 1914), p. 2.

<sup>75</sup> P.M. Stokely, *WW* 9.8 (Aug, 1913), p. 3, exhorts, ‘Remember too that Christ is everything to the soul. He is the Rock. Don’t exalt the baptism above Christ. Remember that all blessings come through Him; even the gift of the Spirit is poured out through Him.’ Cf. also *WW* 12.8 (Aug, 1915), p. 4.

<sup>76</sup> *WW* 8.8 (Oct, 1912), p. 2. Collins encourages cooperation among the ‘Second Definite Work’ and the ‘Finished Work of Calvary’ camps, grounded in ‘a clean life’ and a focus on ‘the Lordship of Christ’.

<sup>77</sup> *WW* 9.10 (Oct, 1913), p. 4.

to be divided between the cold formal denominations and the overcoming bride, the latter characterized by a Spirit-empowered witness and optimistic hope. The classical dispensational model dominates all articulations of future events. The script of the rapture, marriage supper, tribulation, Antichrist, millennium, and new creation are set forth as the only eschatological option available to the readers.

Having reviewed these three periodicals, what implications may be deduced? It is noteworthy that although these publications come from different editors amid different historical circumstances, the level of synoptic agreement is remarkable. The soteriology of the Finished Work of Calvary seems to have provided a perspective from which to develop consistently a shared faithful spirituality. It is also noteworthy that the articulation of eschatology in all three periodicals consistently follows the classical dispensational model, once again suggesting that this model is predisposed for compatibility with the Finished Work perspective. Even so, the optimism afforded the Spirit-empowered witness of the Church in the last days is a significant theme that has the potential to challenge the very eschatology in which it is expressed.

### **III. The Assemblies of God: *The Christian Evangel***

#### **Introduction**

The Assemblies of God was organized in 1914 as a cooperative fellowship of various Pentecostal groups and independent ministers, the majority of whom had embraced the Finished Work soteriology of William H. Durham. *The Christian Evangel*, a weekly publication founded by J. Roswell and Alice Flower in 1913, became the official periodical of the Assemblies of God with the July 11, 1914 issue. The editorial influence of E.N. Bell is prominent in the publication as he served in this capacity from July 1914 to October 1915 and again from December 1917 to November 1919. Other editors that made substantial contributions include J.W. Welch (October 1915 to December 1917) and J.T. Boddy (November 1919 to December 1920). J.R. Flower also served as associate editor for a number of years during this early period. It is important to note that the periodical underwent several title changes. These include *The Christian Evangel* (July 19, 1913 through March 6, 1915 and June 1, 1918 through October 4, 1919); *Weekly Evangel* (March 13, 1915 through May 18, 1918); and *The Pentecostal Evangel*

(October 18, 1919 to the present). To avoid possible confusion, I will refer to the periodical as the Assemblies of God *Evangel* or simply the *Evangel*, but I will retain the appropriate abbreviations in the footnotes. The following analysis includes all issues from 1913 through 1920.

### **A. Editorial Policy: Unity through Uniformity**

The Assemblies of God *Evangel* presents a uniform view of eschatology that is generally compatible with the classical dispensational perspective. While the consistent presentation of eschatology in the early years of *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* may be attributed to the editorial policy of a single editor, G.F. Taylor,<sup>78</sup> such is not the case here. Rather, it is evident that the various editors of this publication shared not only the same view about eschatology, but the same editorial policy as well.

Such uniformity stands in stark contrast to the stated purpose of the General Council of the Assemblies of God: unity through cooperation and fellowship.<sup>79</sup> The variety of perspectives that one would expect to be generated by such cooperation is lacking in this periodical. Rather, very little variety appears, and when it does, the editors are adamant to tighten the perspectives presented to fit a uniform dispensational model. For example, Mrs L.N. Mize exhorts the reader to be ready for the coming of the Lord because, in her view, the sign of the great tribulation of the Jews and supernatural phenomenon in the sun and stars have been fulfilled. In a follow-up editorial remark, J.R. Flower argues point by point against Mize's view and assures the reader that the great tribulation and signs in the heavens are yet future.<sup>80</sup> In a similar editorial comment following an article by Elizabeth Sisson, E.N. Bell notes that although he does not agree with everything she wrote, he included the piece because it promotes the 'fundamental truth for this hour, namely, that only prepared ones, real overcomers are going to be caught up and away from the soon coming great tribulation'. Bell acknowledges, 'We do not wish to claim that we know it all', and that in 'minor

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<sup>78</sup> It should be noted that variety does appear in the two periodicals, *Holiness Advocate* and *The Apostolic Evangel*, which predate *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate*. Cf. Chapter 3 above.

<sup>79</sup> *CE* (Aug 22, 1914), p. 2; *WE* (Aug 12, 1916), p. 8; *PE* (Nov 15, 1919), p. 7. J.W. Welch, *WE* (Jan 8, 1916), p. 3, notes that 'it is right and proper to shape the policy of the paper to agree with the spirit and purpose of THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD'.

<sup>80</sup> *WE* (Sep 25, 1915), p. 3.

differences we believe we should love, forbear, and learn of each other'.<sup>81</sup> One 'minor difference' for which Bell allows various opinions is the place in the book of Revelation that the rapture is depicted. He states, however, that it is 'generally agreed' that the rapture occurs before the beginning of the great tribulation.<sup>82</sup>

On the one hand, at least two apologies by the editor for including objectionable viewpoints appear in the periodical. J.R. Flower apologized for publishing an article by Frank Bartleman that condemned the United States for supplying war supplies to England against Germany. Flower agreed that 'national prejudices' have no place in the publication.<sup>83</sup> Editor J.W. Welch noted that the special 'Second Coming Issue' (April 10, 1917) received criticism at the General Council meeting for making it appear that the *Evangel* staff was certain that the Lord would return in September 1917. He promised to be more careful in the future.<sup>84</sup>

On the other hand, it is significant that the editors defend the sale of the *Scofield Reference Bible* by the Gospel Publishing House, especially after a scathing article by W.W. Simpson against Scofield's objections to the baptism in the Holy Ghost. Simpson notes that Scofield attempts 'to find a reason for differences in the operations and manifestations of the Spirit in the distinction between the Jew and Gentile'. Simpson counters that this position 'is contrary to the plain teaching of Peter in Acts ... where he declares that God puts no difference between Jew and Gentile in bestowing the Spirit. It is also contrary to the whole tone of the Gospel and teachings of Paul about the church.' Simpson

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<sup>81</sup> *WE* (Apr 20, 1918), p. 4.

<sup>82</sup> *CE* (Feb 8, 1919), p. 5. Cf. *WE* (Nov 3, 1917), p. 9. It may be noted that D.W. Kerr held a view of multiple raptures, though his articles in the Assemblies of God *Evangel* do not reveal this. Cf. D.W. Kerr, 'The Two-Fold Aspect of Church Life: Will the Church Go thro' the Tribulation?' *The Latter Rain Evangel* (Oct 1919), pp. 2-6. Kerr's view has much in common with those within the Wesleyan Holiness stream, such as E.T. Slaybaugh, F.J. Lee, and G.F. Taylor, who believed in multiple raptures, following generally the views of Lutheran writer J.A. Seiss. As noted above, however, classical dispensationalism is the eschatological framework within which this view is held. The point made by Menzies and Anderson, 'D.W. Kerr and Eschatological Diversity', pp. 8-16, is well taken. Indeed, some latitude is allowed concerning the 'fine points' among early Pentecostal dispensationalists, as E.N. Bell makes clear. Such latitude, however, appears to be acceptable only within the prescribed boundaries of the dispensational view.

<sup>83</sup> *WE* (Aug 14, 1915), p. 2. Bartleman's article appeared in *WE* (Aug 7, 1915), pp. 1-2.

<sup>84</sup> *WE* (Sep 29, 1917), p. 7. The article in question was only one of several contributions that present the year 1917 as the possible date for the closing of the 'times of the Gentiles'. Most of these contributors draw from the writings of H.G. Guinness. One author connects the Feast of Trumpets that occurs annually around September with the rapture of the church. The significance of the year 1917 is summarized by Alice R. Flower, *WE* (Dec 22, 1917), p. 7. Cf. *WE* (Jul 14, 1917), p. 5; (Sep 8, 1917), p. 3; (Mar 23, 1918), p. 13.

goes on to respond to Scofield's remark that 'the so-called gift of tongues in Los Angeles and other places ... is mere gibberish'.<sup>85</sup> The editorial comment that follows this article is revealing:

There are many men, mighty in the Scriptures, who have failed to comprehend the baptism of the Holy Spirit as it is now being manifested. But because they have thus failed, it is no reason for our discounting all their good works. Many of their writings show signs of divine inspiration, and the Scofield Reference Bible, which contains no attacks on the Pentecostal or any other movement, is still highly esteemed among us. The Scofield Bible is found in the hands of hundreds of Pentecostal preachers, workers and Bible students, who take advantage of its clear teachings and rejoice in the aid which its use affords. We continue in our recommendation of the Scofield Bible as the best work of its kind that has ever been published.<sup>86</sup>

Other authors outside the Pentecostal movement whose books on eschatology are promoted in the periodical include A.C. Gaebelein, a noted dispensational writer, and James M. Gray, then Dean of Moody Bible Institute, which promoted dispensationalism.<sup>87</sup> An article, 'The Coming Revelation of the Lord Jesus', appears by G. Campbell Morgan,<sup>88</sup> whose other writings include harsh anti-Pentecostal rhetoric.

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<sup>85</sup> *WE* (Jul 14, 1917), pp. 2-6. It is significant that Scofield argued against the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the basis of the distinction between the Jew and Gentile, the same basis for the doctrine of the rapture of the Church in dispensationalism. Simpson's response, therefore, not only answered Scofield's objections to Spirit baptism, but also implicitly called into question the doctrine of the rapture of the Church, though Simpson does not articulate this. Judging from his views, Scofield would find highly problematic a long series of articles that appeared in the *Weekly Evangel* by Alice Luce entitled, 'Pictures of Pentecost in the Old Testament'. Cf. e.g. *WE* (Nov 3, 1917), p. 6. It is this very tension that has existed in the Pentecostal appropriation of dispensationalism to this day.

<sup>86</sup> *WE* (Jul 14, 1917), p. 6. The same issue contains an advertisement for the Scofield Bible with the following endorsement by a reader: 'The work is a *marvel of condensed Pentecostal truths* brought out more clearly than I have seen anywhere else. I am thankful for the privilege of possessing a copy' (emphasis added). One can only guess that the 'Pentecostal truths' of which this reader speaks includes Scofield's eschatological charts and outlines. When asked by a reader if Weymouth's notes on the Bible were helpful, E.N. Bell criticized Weymouth's postmillennial views, but offered Scofield as a helpful reference. Bell, *WE* (Jun 1, 1918), p. 5, wrote: 'But our Pentecostal people are so well taught on these lines of the Baptism with the Spirit, surely none of them would follow Scofield's wrong conclusions in this matter. Rather, take the many good things in his Bible, and pass these mistakes up to his ignorance of full Pentecostal light.' There are numerous ads for the Scofield Bible in the Assemblies of God *Evangel*, beginning with the issue of August 8, 1914, many of which include commendations from the editor. Some of the ads explain that the Scofield Bible 'has gained universal favor with the Pentecostal people'. Cf. e.g. *CE* (Aug 8, 1914), p. 3; *WE* (Feb 26, 1916), p. 8; (Aug 19, 1916), p. 2; (Jan 27, 1917), p. 16; (May 26, 1917), p. 16; *PE* (Nov 1, 1919), p. 31; (Dec 25, 1920), p. 16.

<sup>87</sup> The editors also heavily promoted Pentecostal author, C.W. Turner, who wrote *Outline Studies of the Book of Revelation and Key to the Chart of the Ages*, which 'makes the Book of Revelation easy to understand'. Cf. *WE* (Nov 25, 1916), p. 6.

<sup>88</sup> *WE* (Mar 23, 1918), pp. 4-6.

## B. Evoking a Pattern and its Center

The first major crisis faced by the Assemblies of God, namely the ‘New Issue’ (Oneness theology), created a situation which impelled the group to adopt formal doctrinal statements sooner than other Pentecostal bodies. The resulting Statement of Fundamental Truths was approved in 1916. In addressing this crisis, Editor J.W. Welch appeals to the ‘true pattern’ to which the Church must conform. This ‘plan for order and cooperation in the Church’ is revealed in the Bible and involves the discernment ‘between truth and error’. Welch speaks of a ‘mighty shaking and winnowing’ taking place, a ‘time of sifting’ that would ‘remove and avoid all recurrence of irritating and dividing differences’. As a result, ‘God would get the substantial elements together and create of them a true witness in the last days.’<sup>89</sup> As Welch indicates here, this concern for doctrinal purity had ramifications for eschatology.

Numerous articles in the *Evangel* appeal to a pattern, plan, or order concerning eschatological matters.<sup>90</sup> Henry Morse believed that the OT tabernacle is ‘a type of God’s plan of salvation from the shedding of blood to the second coming of Christ.’ Morse taught that the outer court corresponds to salvation and sanctification through Christ’s finished work; the holy place represents life in the Holy Spirit, illumination of the Word of God, and praying in the Holy Spirit; and the holy of holies denotes Christ’s action in representing His people before God, which will culminate in His coming forth ‘to bless His people in the millennial reign.’<sup>91</sup> Welch exhorts, ‘The eternal, almighty God of omniscience ... is on the throne of His universe, and all shall eventually take shape and order in accord with His purpose for eternal days.’<sup>92</sup> Bell agrees:

The great outlines of God’s eternal plans are fixed, and will come to pass no matter what men or devils may do. Between these great fixed lines there is ample room for man’s freedom, responsibility and redemption upon acceptance of Christ. But the plan of the ages will roll on exactly as

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<sup>89</sup> *WE* (Jun 24, 1916), pp. 3, 7.

<sup>90</sup> It should be noted that the reader also finds a parallel emphasis on Christ as the pattern to which the believer strives to conform, *WE* (Mar 11, 1916), p. 3; (Sep. 2, 1916), p. 3, and according to which the Holy Spirit works and transforms those who are ‘open to receive’, *WE* (May 26, 1917), p. 9: ‘The pattern is in a safe place. And God is working out the base material to the Pattern He has by His side.’

<sup>91</sup> *CE* (Oct 24, 1914), p. 3.

<sup>92</sup> *WE* (Jun 3, 1916), p. 3.

God has predetermined, and nothing can thwart the eternal ends which God has set out to accomplish.<sup>93</sup>

From Bell's perspective, the 'plan of the ages' includes the dispensational script of future events. Distinctive to this periodical, however, is the understanding that this script is set within a view of Christ's finished work on the cross as the center of truth. In the first of a series of articles titled, 'Pentecostal Bible Course', A.P. Collins notes, 'Order is heaven's first law. There is a logical order in the development of truth. Observe that all lines of truth converge to, and focus in, Jesus Christ, the revelation of the Father.'<sup>94</sup> In response to questions about the Trinity, Mildred Edwards explains that 'the Father and the Spirit both delight to see us center on Jesus. That was why His name was placed central (not just second).'<sup>95</sup>

The eschatological significance of the finished work of Calvary is articulated in numerous articles. One editorial enjoins, '[Calvary] is the focus of eternity. It is the barrier that closes hell against heaven.'<sup>96</sup> Commenting on the future victory of Christ depicted in Rev. 19.11, an unnamed contributor writes, 'This final fight is the counterpart of Calvary. He that conquered at Calvary has a right to have the final conquest.' The writer continues, '[Calvary] is an *earnest* of the endless and unchanging and everabiding love of God in Jesus Christ' (emphasis added).<sup>97</sup> One author notes that at 'the gathering together of the elect, the exodus of the children of God ... the blood will be the distinguishing mark'.<sup>98</sup> Another adds, 'Every repentant sinner who accepts by faith that finished atonement, God gives the right to the Tree of Life. The only passport to glory is the blood of Jesus.'<sup>99</sup> The blood

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<sup>93</sup> *CE* (Mar 22, 1919), p. 5.

<sup>94</sup> *WE* (Dec 9, 1916), p. 13. Cf. the remarks of Dutch pastor, G.R. Polman, *WE* (Feb 24, 1917), p. 6: 'THOSE WHO VISIT OUR PENTECOSTAL MEETINGS REGULARLY DO NOT HEAR US SPEAKING ABOUT TONGUES. The subject is Christ who is to every Spirit-baptized believer the center of the Bible, and the cross of Christ, which is to them the center of truth.'

<sup>95</sup> *WE* (Jan 6, 1917), p. 3. Commenting on the Son's future offering of the kingdom to the Father, Edwards asks, 'Does it not seem the Father has placed His (the Lamb's) name central to show us that humility is the divine center, the most infinitely adorable of all God's attributes?'

<sup>96</sup> *WE* (Jan 6, 1917), p. 6.

<sup>97</sup> *WE* (Jan 13, 1917), p. 3.

<sup>98</sup> *WE* (Dec 8, 1917), p. 3. Cf. the article, 'The Prominence Due the Blood', *CE* (Jan 11, 1919), pp. 6-7, in which the author writes, 'And there are signs that God is going to visit the earth again. Why? He must come because the blood of the Lamb has been shed to redeem us.' To magnify the blood is to anticipate the judgments to come. Those who have the blood applied will be delivered from 'the dragon, the destroyer'. Cf. the comment of an unnamed author, *CE* (Feb 9, 1919), p. 3: 'Appreciation of the blood of the Lamb leads to an appreciation and longing for His Personal appearing.'

<sup>99</sup> *WE* (Feb 16, 1918), p. 2.

of Christ ‘will be effective to the end. It will keep the saint in perfect safety in the New Jerusalem throughout eternity.’<sup>100</sup> A front page devotional summarizes: the blood of Christ is the theme of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. The blood gives safety, atonement, life, access to God, redemption, forgiveness of sins, sanctification, and final victory (Rev. 12.11). All who reject the blood of Christ ‘will be cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:15)’.<sup>101</sup>

The relationship between the sacrifice of Christ and the translation or rapture of the saints is explained in several articles. An unknown contributor notes, ‘Gethsemane and Calvary speak of the cost of the rapture.’<sup>102</sup> Leonard Newby asserts that the promise of 1 Thess. 4.17 is assured to those who ‘*are born again, soundly converted through faith in Christ Jesus, and are resting on Calvary’s finished work*’ (emphasis in original).<sup>103</sup> Another writer explains: ‘God will not allow His son to be robbed of the fruits of Calvary. The translation of the saints will be as complete as the work on Calvary when he cried, “It is finished.” Satan failed at Calvary, failed at the resurrection and will fail when he seeks to devour the man child. The fruit will be gathered—caught up.’<sup>104</sup> In poignant, sermonic style, Mildred Edwards exhorts:

Oh did not our blessed Ishi pass the way of seeming defeat, ignominy, and failure, and must not all have seemed lost? Oh Calvary, dark Calvary! Yet, I believe in this dark hour, when hell seems about to triumph, the bride of the Lamb, the Lamb’s wife, is passing through Calvary and the tomb of His silence, but the stone must roll away, and His glorious life be manifested in His bride. I believe she will ascend out of glorious blood-bought victory to meet Him in the rapture.<sup>105</sup>

Comparing the rapture to Noah’s ark, an unnamed author writes, ‘The ark outside is finished and you have entered in. You have seen the finished work. It was finished on Calvary.’<sup>106</sup>

This trajectory of thought reaches its outer boundary, and perhaps its logical conclusion, in a 1920 article titled, ‘Victory Over Death’, in which the author (noted only as L.E.W.) claims that believers can live free of disease and death, experiencing a realized eschatology. The author reasons, ‘By his wondrous

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<sup>100</sup> *WE* (Nov 3, 1917), p. 3.

<sup>101</sup> *WE* (Jan 20, 1917), p. 1.

<sup>102</sup> *WE* (May 19, 1917), p. 5.

<sup>103</sup> *WE* (Jul 1, 1916), p. 7.

<sup>104</sup> *WE* (Nov 3, 1917), p. 1.

<sup>105</sup> *WE* (Jan 6, 1917), p. 3.

<sup>106</sup> *PE* (Jan 10, 1920), p. 7.

Finished Work—Christ dealt with SIN—SATAN—DEATH, and it is in these three realms that believers are called to wage continual warfare.<sup>107</sup> Although no claim to have resurrection bodies is made, the believer is now ‘free to choose’ which power shall animate his body, ‘the old Adam physical life or the Divine immortal, incorruptible life of “the second Adam—the life-giving Spirit” (1 Cor. 15:45)’. The claim of faith made to this end for the physical body corresponds to the similar claim made for one’s moral and spiritual life. The article concludes with the following suggested ‘attitudes’:

I *refuse* my old evil physical life with its disease and death.

I *declare* death to it and ask God to destroy it.

I *stand* NOW upon the Finished Work of Jesus Christ—in the choice of my will dead unto Sin in body as well as in Spirit and Soul.

I *will* to live wholly by Divine and Heavenly Life.

I *pray* that I may be filled to the uttermost with this Life.

I *trust* God to give it to me and make it manifest moment by moment.

I *refuse* all evil spirits of death and resist them in The Name of Jesus.

I *refuse* the prince of death himself and declare in faith, that as I am joined to the Prince of Life, he is powerless to hold me in death (emphasis in original).<sup>108</sup>

### C. The Plan of the Ages

The dominant approach in the articulation of eschatological matters in the Assemblies of God *Evangel* is the appeal to an overarching pattern or plan for history, within which various past, present, and future events are placed on assorted levels of detail and complexity. The contemporary use of digitized maps where the user may zoom out to view the entire earth or country and zoom in to access various levels of detail may offer an appropriate analogy. Zooming out to the broadest view, one may read of the river of time that courses its way through ‘dispensational epochs’ toward the ‘ocean of eternity’;<sup>109</sup> the successive layers in the earth’s crust that are analogous to the (seven) successive layers or ages of time;<sup>110</sup> or the seven days of unleavened bread in Exodus 12 that serve to

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<sup>107</sup> Note the departure from the typical triad, ‘the world, the flesh, and the devil’.

<sup>108</sup> *PE* (Feb 21, 1920), p. 2. Cf. the comments about this article in relation to healing by Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing*, pp. 170-71. Also cf. *WE* (Jan 29, 1916), p. 6.

<sup>109</sup> *WE* (Apr 20, 1918), p. 1.

<sup>110</sup> *WE* (Mar 23, 1918), p. 11.

represent the seven ages of the world.<sup>111</sup> An article by C.I. Scofield reprinted from *American S.S. Times* announces to the readers that ‘history is prophecy written beforehand’ and that ‘prophecy has to do with great periods called “ages”’.<sup>112</sup>

Zoom in one level, and ‘the times of the Gentiles’ and the prophecies of Daniel dominate the landscape. One writer notes that Daniel’s revelations are ‘the *ne plus ultra* (nothing beyond) of prophecy, for the numbers given by God to Daniel stand out as the main chart as the dates to future events. They are like the steel frame-work of an immense sky-scraper.’<sup>113</sup> As frequently asserted, the ‘steel framework’ provided by Daniel is the understanding that ‘the times of the Gentiles’ would come to a close and that the kingdom would be returned to the Jews. W.E. Blackstone explains that ‘the times of the Gentiles’ refers to ‘governmental dominance by the Gentiles over the Jews’.<sup>114</sup> Thus, the statue image of Dan. 2.31-45 was ever present in the reader’s historical imagination, especially with regard to reflection about the Great War. Gentile governments had run their course from absolutism, to oligarchy, to militarism, to democracy.<sup>115</sup> With the end of the Great War and formation of the League of Nations, expectations were high for a ‘revival of the Old Roman Empire’<sup>116</sup> and the emergence of ‘the ten-toed kingdom of Daniel’s image’,<sup>117</sup> ruled over by the coming Antichrist. The end of the Gentile age would place Israel back on the center stage of prophetic fulfillment. Blackstone insisted, ‘Israel’s history ... has been pre-written in the prophetic Word, and dates set for many of its prophetic events.’<sup>118</sup> The superiority of Israel at this level of history is asserted by one

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<sup>111</sup> *WE* (Nov 10, 1917), p. 3.

<sup>112</sup> *WE* (Oct 28, 1916), p. 6.

<sup>113</sup> *WE* (Dec 22, 1917), p. 3.

<sup>114</sup> *WE* (May 13, 1916), p. 6.

<sup>115</sup> *WE* (Apr 17, 1915), p. 1. This same philosophy of history by D.M. Panton also appeared in *WW* 12.5 (May 15, 1915), p. 5.

<sup>116</sup> *CE* (Dec 28, 1918), p. 4. Cf. also *WE* (Oct 28, 1916), p. 6; (Mar 3, 1917), p. 2; (Apr 6, 1918), p. 6. Focus on the reconstitution of the ‘Roman Empire’ led some to associate the Roman Catholic Church with the false prophet.

<sup>117</sup> *CE* (Oct 31, 1914), p. 4. Cf. also *CE* (Aug 15, 1914), p. 1; (Mar 8, 1919), p. 2; *WE* (Mar 27, 1915), p. 1; (Jul 15, 1916), p. 7.

<sup>118</sup> *WE* (May 13, 1916), p. 8. In a dizzying comparison of historical events with numerous scriptural texts, Blackstone arrives at the ‘suggestion’ that Daniel’s seventieth week could occur between 1926-7 and 1934-5. This article was also offered to the readers of the *Evangel* in tract form.

writer who claimed, ‘God’s purposes for world redemption are wrapped up in that race [the Jews].’<sup>119</sup>

Zoom in slightly on ‘the times of the Gentiles’ and the reader learns that ‘the fullness of the Gentiles’ is the way to speak about this subject in relation to the Church.<sup>120</sup> J.S. Holden explains that the early apostles thought salvation would come to the world through the Jews. It was revealed to Paul, however, that the chosen nation was to be set aside. A Church was to be called out consisting of all who believe in Christ, whether Jew or Gentile. When ‘the fullness of the Gentiles had come in—i.e. when the church was completed—then a new [Jewish] era would begin’.<sup>121</sup> Mrs Reader Harris clarifies, ‘The history of the times of the Gentiles is political. The story of the Pentecostal age is spiritual. We are nearing the end of both.’<sup>122</sup> This spiritual vs. political dichotomy is prominent in several articles in which the Church is perceived to be a ‘mystery’ unknown to the OT prophets, but gathered out of the world to intensify Christ’s glory at his coming.<sup>123</sup> This periodical exhibits little of the precision found in the Wesleyan Holiness publications in defining various levels of inclusion or exclusion within the Church based on spiritual experience (i.e. salvation, sanctification, Spirit baptism, suffering with Christ, etc.). Though the images of the Bride of Christ, the manchild, and the overcomers are used extensively, these terms are typically not utilized to exclude believers of lower spiritual status. The focus is centered, rather, on the ‘true’ vs. the ‘false’ church.<sup>124</sup> Indeed, this journal contains one of only a handful of articles in all of the early Pentecostal literature that explicitly challenges exclusion based on spiritual experience and teaches that all who are

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<sup>119</sup> *WE* (Mar 23, 1918), p. 2. Cf. also *WE* (May 18, 1918), p. 2.

<sup>120</sup> *CE* (Jul 18, 1914), p. 1.

<sup>121</sup> *WE* (Feb 9, 1918), p. 4.

<sup>122</sup> *WE* (Jul 15, 1916), p. 7. Harris explains that the Pentecostal age would end with the completion and rapture of the Spirit-filled Church. The Gentile age would end with the subsequent rise of the ten-kingdom federation of the Antichrist and the return of Jesus to conquer and rule the nations.

<sup>123</sup> *WE* (Mar 23, 1918), p. 12. Cf. also W.F. Carothers, *CE* (Jan 8, 1915), p. 9, who distinguishes between the OT saints who are promised temporal blessings and the ‘Bridehood’ who reject such things. Through the doctrine of healing and resurrection, however, the Church, though world-denying, is still to be body-affirming!

<sup>124</sup> Note the inclusive terminology used in the 1916 Statement of Fundamental Truths concerning ‘The Blessed Hope’: ‘The Resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ, the rapture of believers who are alive and remain, and the translation of the true church, this is the blessed hope set before all believers.’ *WE* (Jan 13, 1917), p. 8.

saved (all who ‘dwell under the cleansing blood of Jesus’) will be included in the rapture.<sup>125</sup>

Finally, the Pentecostal reader who zooms in to view the intricate details of ‘the Church age’ discovers that even the outpouring of the Spirit serves as a sign of Israel’s restoration. E.N. Bell affirms that ‘the former and latter rain, the dispensation of the Gentiles, [and] the dispensation of the Spirit, are to precede the restoring of the kingdom to Israel’. The Church age is a ‘parenthesis ... to give time for the operations of the Spirit’. He concludes, ‘The Jew is to have his time after the work of the Spirit has had full course of operation among the Gentiles.’<sup>126</sup> Thus, the preaching of the gospel was understood to be a witness to the coming political transformation, but not the direct means by which the kingdom of Christ would come to the nations.<sup>127</sup> Israel would accomplish that during the millennial reign.<sup>128</sup>

The delineation of future events in the *Evangel* follows the standard dispensational script. (1) The secret rapture of the true church is portrayed most often as escape from the tribulation,<sup>129</sup> but transport to the marriage supper of the Lamb also holds a prominent place in the discussion.<sup>130</sup> (2) The return of the Jews to Palestine is a key component in the script, since the prophecies about the Antichrist hinge on the Jewish people and their rebuilt temple.<sup>131</sup> (3) The purpose of the tribulation period is threefold: to pour out God’s wrath against the ungodly, to bring the nation of Israel to accept Jesus as the Messiah, and to overthrow the kingdoms of the world and of Satan who gathers the nations against Christ.<sup>132</sup> (4)

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<sup>125</sup> *PE* (Nov 1, 1919), p. 14. Cf. *TOF* 34.4 (Apr, 1914), p. 89. It should be noted that although most articles neither promote nor disparage this view, E.N. Bell is one prominent voice that opposes this viewpoint. He writes that ‘more than regeneration is necessary to be full overcomers ... and to rule the nations with the Lord during the Millennium’. *PE* (Nov 29, 1919), p. 8. Cf. also *WE* (May 26, 1917), p. 9; (Mar 30, 1918), p. 9; *CE* (Aug 24, 1918), p. 4.

<sup>126</sup> *CE* (Sep 6, 1919), p. 4. Cf. *WE* (Aug 11, 1917), p. 11.

<sup>127</sup> *WE* (Jul 8, 1916), p. 6; (Mar 23, 1916), p. 13.

<sup>128</sup> Pastor W.F. Gooch, *WE* (Mar 23, 1918), pp. 12-13, writes, ‘We are on the eve of that completion of the ingathering of the fullness of the Gentiles. There is not a word in the Bible to warrant the expectation that the Gospel will save the world under this dispensation. It is to save the Church out of the world. Then shall come the Redeemer of the world, redeeming Israel and making Israel the blessed channel for the knowledge of their King and Saviour going to all the earth (Rom. 11:11-15).’

<sup>129</sup> E.g. cf. *WE* (Jun 10, 1916), p. 3; (Nov 18, 1916), p. 3; (Nov 24, 1917), p. 8.

<sup>130</sup> E.g. cf. *WE* (Mar 25, 1916), p. 6; (Mar 30, 1918), p. 9.

<sup>131</sup> E.g. cf. *WE* (Jan 29, 1916), p. 7; (Nov 24, 1917), p. 8; (Feb 2, 1918), p. 8; (May 18, 1918), p. 2; *CE* (Oct 19, 1918), p. 6; *PE* (Oct 18, 1919), p. 5.

<sup>132</sup> Elizabeth Sisson, *WE* (Feb 9, 1918), pp. 2-3, writes that the great tribulation is God’s threefold remedy for the present mixed condition in the Church, the Jewish rejection of Jesus as

The Antichrist is a future, literal figure, Satan incarnate, who makes a seven-year covenant with Israel, breaks the covenant after three and one-half years, and engages in a three and one-half year worldwide reign of terror against ‘God’s elect’.<sup>133</sup> The spirit of Antichrist, however, is already at work in the world.<sup>134</sup> (5) The revelation or visible appearance of Christ occurs at the end of the tribulation, at which time Christ overthrows the armies of the Antichrist at the battle of Armageddon, delivering the Jewish people from destruction, for which reason Israel as a nation comes to believe in Jesus.<sup>135</sup> (6) During the millennium, Christ reigns for one-thousand years over the nations from Jerusalem, assisted by the saints who had proven themselves capable during the Church age. The kingdom is restored to the Jews through whom all the nations are blessed.<sup>136</sup> (7) The eternal state is portrayed as everlasting life in the full presence of God, the eternal unending day of God Himself, lived out in the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth.<sup>137</sup>

#### **D. Transcending the Script? The Role of the Spirit**

As noted above, E.N. Bell interpreted the activity of the Spirit as occurring within the prescribed boundaries laid down by the standard dispensational script.<sup>138</sup> Testimonies in the *Evangel* of the Spirit’s presence, however, offer glimpses of a more dynamic role. An anonymous contributor condenses this role to a single

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their Messiah, and the corruption in the world. Cf. *WE* (Apr 24, 1915), p. 1; (Mar 3, 1917), p. 1; *CE* (Mar 22, 1919), p. 5.

<sup>133</sup> *WE* (Jan 20, 1917), pp. 4-5; (Sep 29, 1917), p. 8; *CE* (Jan 25, 1919), p. 5; *PE* (Oct 18, 1919), p. 5; (Nov 5, 1919), p. 8.

<sup>134</sup> *CE* (Oct 2, 1914), p. 3; (Mar 8, 1919), p. 2; *WE* (Apr 24, 1915), p. 1; *PE* (Feb 7, 1920), p. 3.

<sup>135</sup> *CE* (Sep 12, 1914), p. 2; *WE* (Feb 2, 1918), p. 8; (May 18, 1918), p. 2.

<sup>136</sup> *WE* (Mar 11, 1916), p. 7; (Apr 1, 1916), p. 8; (Mar 10, 1917), p. 9; *PE* (Jan 24, 1920), p. 4; (Feb 7, 1920), p. 5.

<sup>137</sup> *WE* (Nov 18, 1916), p. 3; (Mar 19, 1917), p. 8; (Apr 7, 1917), p. 7; (Jun 2, 1917), p. 8; (Aug 25, 1917), p. 8; *CE* (Aug 23, 1919), p. 4.

<sup>138</sup> Editors Bell and Flower, in apparent collaboration to answer a question posed to them about whether the Holy Spirit would remain on the earth after the rapture, respond that the Spirit is the ‘restraining one’ of 2 Thess. 2.6-7, and will be ‘called back to the heavens [at the time of the rapture] the same way He was poured out upon the earth on the Day of Pentecost’. After the Antichrist is revealed, salvation will be granted to people ‘on the same basis they had before the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost or before the Church age was ushered in. The whole world will be on the same basis that it was on under the law of Moses before Christ came, when the last and final week of God’s dealings with the Children of Israel, spoken of by Daniel in chapter 9:27, will be ushered in. Men and women will be saved during the tribulation on a different basis than the church is being saved now in the dispensation of grace.’ They will be ‘slain for the word of their testimony’. *CE* (Oct 31, 1914), p. 2.

statement: ‘The Spirit of God is emphasizing the coming of Jesus.’<sup>139</sup> The manner in which the Spirit emphasized Jesus’ coming is described along three closely connected lines of activity. First, the Spirit is perceived to be actively involved in the interpretation of pertinent Scriptures, and that *in itself* is a sign of the last days. Alice Flower notes that the book of Revelation ‘is being delved into now as never before and the Holy Ghost is making manifest to our hearts many of the hitherto misunderstood things. What does this mean but that we are in the closing days...’<sup>140</sup> In an announcement that the *Evangel* staff would be meeting weekly to study the book of Revelation, the editor assures the readers that, although they will consult other books, they are confident that they will ‘get the Lord’s own interpretation of the Revelation’, in answer to Jesus’ promise that the Spirit ‘shall shew you things to come’.<sup>141</sup> Commenting on this promise in an earlier issue, the editor urges that seeking the Spirit must precede one’s questions about the future. The Spirit is needed in order to ‘bear’ what the Spirit reveals. He continues, ‘When John [was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day] he did not have to ask questions about the future. He was overwhelmed and he had to be strengthened. He had to have the divine hand of the Lord upon him to strengthen him for the Revelation.’ The ‘illumination and revelation’ that accompanies every outpouring of the Spirit, however, will never ‘go beyond the Word’.<sup>142</sup> The priority of the Spirit in the interpretive process is explained further by D.W. Kerr: ‘The Holy Spirit, as we are being filled with Him, will illuminate our whole being with light. We shall not then that any man speak to us after the manner of men, but the Living Word dwelling in us, will so illuminate the written Word as we read it, that all things will be as clear and plain to our understanding, as they were to those who wrote them.’<sup>143</sup>

Second, as already inferred above, the Spirit promotes the coming of Jesus by engaging the spirituality of the believer. The participation of the *Evangel* readers is evident especially through the numerous reports of visions and messages in tongues that ‘Jesus is coming soon’. A.P. Collins warns that ‘visions and dreams

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<sup>139</sup> *PE* (Jan 10, 1920), p. 7.

<sup>140</sup> *WE* (Nov 25, 1916), p. 10.

<sup>141</sup> *WE* (Dec 1, 1917), p. 5.

<sup>142</sup> *WE* (Sep 8, 1917), p. 8.

<sup>143</sup> *WE* (Feb 3, 1917), p. 4.

are valuable only as they are explained in harmony with scripture'.<sup>144</sup> The visions reported served generally to confirm to the recipients the various details of the dispensational script described above.<sup>145</sup> Some reports, however, leave with the discerning reader the potential of transcending this standardized script. After reporting the simultaneous visions received by several girls at a mission station in India of scenes from Revelation 4, 5, and 7, B.F. Lawrence notes, 'These visions are characteristic of the visions of the Pentecostal movement. I regard the scenes of Revelations 4, 5, and 7 as very significant. In my new Pentecostal experience, the reading of these chapters thrills one through and through.'<sup>146</sup> Based on a similar experience, Mildred Edwards recounts a vision of 'the Lamb in the midst of the Throne' that led her to view Jesus as the 'center' of the Trinity, not just 'the second person'. She acknowledges that although Jesus is readily accepted as the King on the Throne, continued reflection on Jesus as the eternal Lamb is needed for the maturity of God's people. She writes,

If we would be the bride of Jesus we must be made like Him, and that [is accomplished] THROUGH BEHOLDING—beholding not only His majesty and power, but His MEEKNESS and HUMILITY, the SECRET of His power. Thus it is the full vision of the GLORIFIED LAMB for which we need to tarry today—JESUS AS THE LAMB ETERNAL.

Again I tarry, and behold not a Lamb of 33 years alone, but THE LAMB ETERNAL! And I hear the ETERNAL WORD declare that when the end cometh, the end of the ages, during which He has put all enemies under His feet, when He shall have put down ALL RULE, and ALL AUTHORITY and ALL POWER, when ALL THINGS have been subdued under His reign, then He Himself shall be SUBJECT unto God even the Father.

As I begin to truly behold THIS VISION, I find myself being ushered into the eternal silences of the Heart Eternal, where prophecies fail, tongues cease, and knowledge vanishes away, where love is made perfect in humility. The Eternal Lamb!<sup>147</sup>

Such reports may not articulate explicitly an alternative eschatological vision, but they do have the potential to engage the reader with scriptural texts and images in ways that point beyond the standard dispensational reading.

The Spirit also engages the spirituality of the *Evangel* readers through their prayers concerning eschatological matters. Though at least one contributor

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<sup>144</sup> *CE* (Feb 13, 1915), p. 2. Cf. *WE* (Jul 31, 1915), p. 3.

<sup>145</sup> The most extensive vision is reported in *PE* (May 1, 1920), pp. 1-3; (May 15, 1920), pp. 6-7.

<sup>146</sup> *WE* (Jun 10, 1916), p. 5.

<sup>147</sup> *WE* (Apr 20, 1918), p. 7. Cf. Edwards' earlier comments in *WE* (Jan 6, 1917), p. 3.

bluntly rejects the notion,<sup>148</sup> most agree that prayer can hasten the day of the Lord's return. Various stated, prayers are offered to 'clear the way for His advent',<sup>149</sup> to 'accomplish the number of His elect and to hasten his Kingdom,'<sup>150</sup> and that 'unfulfilled prophecies may be quickly turned into history, so that ... He may come again'.<sup>151</sup> The front page headline of the Aug. 24, 1918 edition of the *Evangel* boldly announced, 'An Appeal to Pentecostal People Throughout the World to Observe Sunday, Nov. 3rd, and Monday, Nov. 4, 1918 in United Prayer Inviting Jesus, Our Heavenly Bridegroom, to Come Back'. One unnamed author encouraged the reader to 'Dare to be a Daniel' and pray that Satan may be thrown down to the earth and then be chained a thousand years. The writer comments, 'The Spirit has been poured out and will be poured out more abundantly that there may be overcomers in prayer, wrestling, contending, so that victory may be attained.'<sup>152</sup> Though committed to the dispensational script, Elizabeth Sisson offers the most expansive image in this regard. Commenting on Rev. 8.3-6, she explains that the prayers of all the saints 'of all dispensations' will 'usher in Great Tribulation Events that they in turn may make ready for the glories of the millennium reign!' Sisson notes that God is now adding to these prayers 'much incense', i.e. the exuberant Spirit-enabled prayers of the Pentecostal saints. She writes:

Prayer in tongues, sometimes with acute suffering, again with high exultation, again filled with worship and adoration, again with the victory of a triumphal march! *God is putting through us more than we can understand*—Prayer—instruments to Him—He is leading us out in the Spirit where our minds cannot follow. To the prayer of all saints He is now adding through us 'much incense' (emphasis added).<sup>153</sup>

Once again, the readers of the *Evangel* are offered potential insight into the nature of Pentecostal eschatology that goes beyond a predefined map of prophecy, in this instance through the common practice of transcendent, transrational prayer.

Third, the Spirit emphasizes the coming of Jesus through empowerment for mission. J.R. Flower states that the purpose of the latter rain Pentecost is not just

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<sup>148</sup> J.S. Seerist, *CE* (Oct 10, 1914), p. 3; (Jan 23, 1915), p. 3, acknowledges that prayer is helpful to save souls, but it will not 'change the destiny of this world or prolong the time of harvest. This time is set, fixed and settled in the council chambers of heaven.'

<sup>149</sup> *WE* (Mar 2, 1918), p. 4.

<sup>150</sup> *WE* (Mar 23, 1918), p. 11.

<sup>151</sup> *CE* (Mar 8, 1919), p. 4.

<sup>152</sup> *WE* (Feb 16, 1918), p. 3.

<sup>153</sup> *WE* (Aug 5, 1916), p. 6.

to ‘get the saints ready for the rapture’, but ‘that all the world may hear the message, the Gospel of the Kingdom, that then the end may come.’<sup>154</sup> Alice Flower agrees, ‘There are some good people more concerned with “the times and the seasons” than about witnessing for Christ. They are missing the mark of God’s intention and purpose.’<sup>155</sup> J.W. Welch believes that it is wrong ‘to stop trying to get people saved and to give our attention wholly to preparation for the glorious appearing of our Lord.’ The purpose of the latter rain, Welch emphasizes, is ‘HARVEST’.<sup>156</sup> Elizabeth Sisson issues the same call: ‘Hereunto has the Lord baptized us with His Spirit, *for the world’s sake*. We are debtors to all creation’ (emphasis in original). She admonishes the Pentecostal people to repent and to join together to ‘gather out of every nation, and kindred, and tribe, and tongue, a blood-washed throng to welcome His return. So do you prepare the way for His return.’<sup>157</sup>

The intimate connection between the spirituality of the believer and the eschatological nature of the Spirit’s role in evangelism is brought out forcefully by Pastor A.G. Jeffries. After reviewing the worldwide success of the Pentecostal movement, he writes,

What does all this mean? Does it not presage the end of time? Is not this whole movement a prophecy of the coming of Him ‘whose right it is to reign?’ The ineradicable conviction is on the saints of God that Jesus is coming soon. It is more than a conviction; it is a consciousness that floods the soul with a holy rapture. *His promise has become His presence*. He is breaking on each head an alabaster box of precious spikenard and the world is saying, ‘To what purpose is this waste?’ Why all this shouting? Why all this preaching? Why all this fuss about sin? The wise understand. Jesus is at the door (emphasis added).<sup>158</sup>

This emphasis on Spirit-empowered mission grounded in apocalyptic spirituality is perhaps the strongest link that the early Assemblies of God exhibits with the Azusa Street revival.

## **E. Summary and Conclusion**

A summary of the eschatology articulated in the Assemblies of God *Evangel* may now be offered. The lack of a variety of perspectives on eschatology in the early

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<sup>154</sup> *CE* (Feb 27, 1915), p. 1.

<sup>155</sup> *WE* (Dec 18, 1915), p. 2.

<sup>156</sup> *WE* (Dec 2, 1916), p. 8.

<sup>157</sup> *WE* (Oct 6, 1917), p. 3.

<sup>158</sup> *WE* (Mar 18, 1916), p. 7.

Assemblies of God is surprising, considering the emphasis placed on unity through cooperation and fellowship. The strong proclivity toward a uniform view is evident in the editorial practice of the periodical. The commendation of the eschatology of authors opposed to the Pentecostal movement, especially C.I. Scofield, is telling. The fact that most of the early constituents held to the Finished Work soteriology of William Durham is also significant in that the finished work of Christ on Calvary is presented as the center of truth and the foundation of eschatological fulfillment. Eschatology is articulated as God's plan of the ages, which may be viewed on various levels of detail, from wide-sweeping epochs or ages to the minute calculations of 'the times of the Gentiles'. The reader's historical perspective is dominated by the prophecy of Daniel's statue (Dan. 2.31-48), which is interpreted to indicate the future rise of the Old Roman Empire, ruled by the Antichrist. Future events are expected to follow the standard dispensational script, within which is placed the Pentecostal or Church age. This age will end at the rapture of the Church, made up, according to at least one estimation, of all who are saved. Though the articulated boundaries of eschatology are held tightly within the dispensational model, the constituents also acknowledge that the presence of the Holy Spirit among them enables scriptural meditation, eschatological prayer, and missionary vocation. Though not expressed as such, these activities represent latent resources by which to transcend the accepted eschatological map.

What implications may be drawn from this review? The lack of variety of perspectives about eschatology in a group whose acknowledged organizing principles should generate or at least tolerate such variety brings into question the underlying reasons for their doctrinal uniformity. Inductive analysis of this periodical offers at least two possibilities. First, as counterintuitive as it seems, the congregational polity of the Assemblies of God, which encourages unity through cooperation and fellowship, may have actually contributed to the narrowing of perspectives regarding eschatology. Because the group was not organized by means of a centralized governmental structure, unity was sought through doctrinal uniformity, as the editorial practice in the *Evangel* illustrates.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Cf. J.N. Bartholomew, 'A Sociological View of Authority in Religious Organizations,' 23.2 *Review of Religious Research* (December, 1981), p. 124, who argues that 'within a locally autonomous system ... authority tends to be more theologically than institutionally legitimated'.

The boundaries of inclusion were not political, but rather doctrinal. Thus, a tight control was imposed and dissenting perspectives restricted.

Second, the uniform acceptance of dispensationalism alongside the concomitant articulation of the finished work of Christ as the foundation of eschatological fulfillment suggests, yet again, that a Finished Work soteriology is inherently compatible with a ready-made dispensational eschatology. The narrowly prescribed articulation of eschatology found in the Assemblies of God *Evangel* mirrors the compactness with which the fourfold gospel is expressed in the periodical. Specifically, the view of Christ's work as 'finished' or complete lends force to the resistance in the *Evangel* toward allowing any open-ended questions with regard to the future. Thus, prophecy as 'history written in advance' became the eschatological complement to salvation finished on the cross, even when the presence of the Spirit was perceived to offer a potentially radical alternative.

#### **IV. Oneness Pentecostalism: In the End, Jesus Only**

##### **Introduction**

Springing out of a Pentecostal camp meeting in Arroyo Seco near Los Angeles in April, 1913, the message of Oneness Pentecostalism soon became the 'New Issue' within the growing Pentecostal movement. Since its most notable proponents were affiliated with the newly-formed Assemblies of God, this message brought immediate challenges to this group, resulting in the 1916 adoption of its Statement of Fundamental Truths.<sup>160</sup> Forced to take a stand, many ministers left the Assemblies of God to form or join with other groups. The most prominent of these was the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, a group that had organized in 1907, becoming predominantly Oneness by 1918 when many former Assemblies of God ministers joined its ranks.<sup>161</sup> Three prominent members of the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World published periodicals that were recognized officially by the group: F.W. Ewart's *Meat in Due Season*, G.T. Haywood's *The Voice in the Wilderness*, and D.C.O. Opperman's *The Blessed Truth*. Other periodicals that promoted the Oneness Pentecostal message include H.O. Scott's *A Living Word*,

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<sup>160</sup> Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel*, pp. 270-306; Reed, 'In Jesus' Name', pp. 136-66.

<sup>161</sup> Reed, 'In Jesus' Name', pp. 207-11.

and L.V. Robert's *The Present Truth*. In addition to various issues of these five periodicals published between 1915 and 1923, the following analysis also draws from a small monograph by Mattie Crawford,<sup>162</sup> a prominent early evangelist in the movement, and from seven 'Jesus Only' tracts, some previously published in various periodicals, by three prominent Oneness proponents, made available in reprinted format in the Garland 'Higher Christian Life' series.<sup>163</sup>

### **A. Discerning Eschatology and the 'New Issue'**

Early Oneness Pentecostals identified themselves within the same restorationist tradition as their Wesleyan Holiness and Finished Work brothers and sisters. But for them, what was being restored went beyond sanctification and Spirit baptism. In the words of Frank J. Ewart, 'We make our plea for a return to the Apostolic Pattern in all things. The last great crisis is now upon us. God is moving for the complete restoration of His Holy Church. He never duplicates Himself. What He commanded in the beginning of the church is true at the end of the church age.'<sup>164</sup> Frank Bartleman enumerates the order of the restoration: 'First the Holy Ghost, then the full merits of Jesus' blood, then the full revelation of Jesus... All things are being summed up in Jesus. The order of restoration has been "Pentecost," "finished work," and the further revelation of today.'<sup>165</sup>

Acts 2.38 served as the biblical center of this 'further revelation'. G.B. Studd writes, 'Thanks be to God that in these days He is bringing us back to the true Pentecostal pattern,' one baptism consisting of 'the outward and visible immersion in water in the name of Jesus, and ... the true anti-type of it, the baptism with the Holy Ghost'.<sup>166</sup> According to G.A. Cook, this 'Apostolic Pattern' meant that the baptismal formula of Mt. 28.19 was a 'veiled command and when Peter received the Holy Ghost the veil was lifted and the identity of the Father and the Son was revealed'. Subsequent use of the veiled formula throughout Church history resulted in negative consequences: 'darkness is over

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<sup>162</sup> M. Crawford, *The Bride, The Lamb's Wife* (Los Angeles: Crawford Evangelistic Association, n.d.).

<sup>163</sup> D.W. Dayton (ed.), *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts* ('The Higher Christian Life' series; New York: Garland Publishing, 1985).

<sup>164</sup> F. Ewart, 'The Revelation of Jesus Christ', in Dayton (ed.), *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, p. 42. Cf. also Ewart, 'The Last Great Crisis', *MDS* 1.13 (Jun, 1916), p. 2.

<sup>165</sup> *TBT* 3.11 (Aug 15, 1918), p. 1. Here, Bartlemann narrates his own journey as well, as he moved from a Wesleyan Holiness stance to the Finished Work teaching to the Oneness position.

<sup>166</sup> *TPT* No. 1 (n.d., c. 1918), p. 2.

the church or people who have been baptized into a mystery they did not understand'.<sup>167</sup>

The revelation of baptism in Jesus' name, with attending theological claims, was perceived by Oneness Pentecostal believers to have eschatological significance. Consider the following comments by F. Small:

One great phenomenon outstanding in the New Testament scriptures and which great truth I believe God is trying to bring before His people at this time, is the normal New Testament standard of justification, being filled with the Holy Ghost. (Acts 2:4.) Since this standard was lost sight of by the primitive Church during the apostasy of the dark ages, God has set His hand once more *in the close of this age* to recover to His people the faith once for all delivered to the saints (emphasis added).<sup>168</sup>

Small compared the opposition to baptism in Jesus' name to the stubbornness of Israel to trust God to enter the Promised Land. The Church has instead been led to various 'camping places' (Luther, Wesley, Azusa Street) where truth has been gained over a long period of time. For Small, the revelation that Jesus is the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit has allowed many to start 'from the Pentecostal foundation platform (Acts 2:4) which is the normal New Testament standard of justification'.<sup>169</sup> The perception that last-days truth had dawned was shared by G.T. Haywood:

The traditions of men have hidden God's truths from his people. Now that we have been delivered from the errors of the past through being properly baptized into Christ, we have come into a rich storehouse of heavenly things. The beauties of the revelation of 'the Father and Son' in Christ; the New Birth of water and Spirit; the Seven Parables and Seven Candlesticks; the closing of the dispensation; the Revelation of the Ages; the Federation of the Nations; and many other heretofore hidden mysteries of God, truly have become 'hidden manna' to our hearts.<sup>170</sup>

In his effort to clear up 'some perplexing points', Haywood tellingly comments on Gen. 1.26: 'This, like all other heretofore difficult verses in the Word of God, has become very clear at the close of the age.'<sup>171</sup>

The larger historical context within which early Oneness Pentecostals viewed the last-days revelations was the fulfillment of 'the dispensation of the fullness of times' in Eph. 1.10, a perspective articulated most eloquently by G.T. Haywood:

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<sup>167</sup> *TPT* No. 1 (n.d., c.1918), p. 2.

<sup>168</sup> *TPT* No. 1 (n.d., c.1918), p. 4.

<sup>169</sup> *TPT* No. 1 (n.d., c.1918), p. 4.

<sup>170</sup> *TVW* Second Edition Special (n.d.), p. 1.

<sup>171</sup> *TVW* Second Edition Special (n.d.), p. 2.

The mystery of Revelations is likened unto the blossoming of a rose. While a rose is confined in the bud, every petal is perfect; but though we try ever so earnestly to pick it open before its time, we are forced to admit that all our efforts are in vain. And the final result is that the petals are torn and the rose as a whole is marred beyond recognition. But if we leave it until its appointed time it will gently unfold itself in all its beauty, every petal in its place and the air will be filled with its fragrance.

Thus it is with the Mystery of the Godhead. It has been folded away in God's infinite wisdom, awaiting the day appointed, when 'in the dispensation of the fullness of times' all things were to be gathered in Christ, both which are in heaven and in earth. Eph. 1:10. Now that the 'fullness of times' has come, the hidden mystery is now being revealed in Christ. The Rose of Sharon has gently unfolded, and we are beginning to see the 'King in His Beauty.' What a fragrance fills the air! JESUS, JESUS, BLESSED JESUS! The Mystery of the FATHER, SON and HOLY GHOST is fully comprehended in Christ Jesus. As Father, He was the Creator, or Begetter of all things. As Son, He was our example in the days of His flesh, from His baptism in the Jordan up to His ascension of the resurrection morning. As Holy Ghost He comes within and abides forever.<sup>172</sup>

Haywood explains further: 'Now notice, this gathering together was one of God's great purposes to be brought about in the dispensation of the fullness of times. It shows Christ Jesus will be greatly magnified in the end of the age, and be seen as the great One.'<sup>173</sup> Noting the importance of this concept for ecclesiology, Haywood continues, 'Every man outside of Jesus is dead; and had not Jesus risen, we would also be dead. But now is Christ risen and we are being gathered into Him right now before the end comes. So the question is "How am I to get into Him?"' Haywood's complex answer combines the concepts of federal headship, ecclesiology, and Oneness spirituality, all framed within the eschatological purpose of gathering together all things into Christ. I quote extensively:

So, if we were all in the loins of our first father Adam, and Adam was the Son of God, then we undoubtedly had the baptism of the Holy Ghost in him. Every man that gets the baptism of the Holy Ghost has been put back into the One Body of Christ, of whom the first Adam was a type. There is one body. I was in the Ark of Noah, too. Were you? You were, but you do not remember it. So we were saved by water once before ... in the loins of Noah's sons. In these latter days we have another ark. 'Few' souls were saved 'by water' in Noah's days; and so it is going to be when the Son of man is revealed. There were three stories, but only one ark. Our ark is 'Father, Son, and Holy Ghost' high, but only one ark, even Christ.

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<sup>172</sup> *TVW* No. 18 (n.d., c. 1916), p. 1.

<sup>173</sup> *TVW* 2.13 (n.d., c. 1922), p. 11.

We were all in the loins of Adam the first, and all in Christ at the crucifixion, and we must all be in Christ when we shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

Now if all Israel was God's 'son' and they finally summed up in Jesus, then is it a surprise that another big nation of baptized Saints should be called a 'Son'? Even the kingdom of God's dear Son? Truly, 'you need not look for me, down in Egypt's sands!' So the 'Son of God' on earth is the body of Saints; and the one Lord in heaven is Jesus. We that are filled with the Holy Ghost have come back into the one man, which is the 'body of Christ,' or 'the kingdom of God's dear Son.' God only sees us now in one big body called 'My beloved Son.' All Israel—Jesus Christ—and the church—is the order.<sup>174</sup>

Haywood also incorporates his view of the threefold manifestation of God into his philosophy of history. The eschatological implications may be noted in the following (again, extensive) quotation:

It was necessary for God to manifest himself in a threefold manner unto his creatures before his eternal purpose (Eph. 3:11) could be fulfilled. In this, also, might be seen the meaning of the words 'Let us make man.' God manifested himself through his creative acts (Psa. 19:1-4) and caused man to know, after the fall, that there was a living God. But in order to redeem man, God manifested himself in flesh (I Tim. 3:16), but the world knew him not. (John 1:1-14; Matt. 1:33) God with us. His third manifestation to mankind was in the Holy Ghost, comforting, guiding and working in his redeemed ones his eternal purpose, and we are being changed into the 'same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.' (2 Cor. 3:17-18.) And it is this Spirit, the Holy Ghost, that is in us that shall change our vile bodies into the 'likeness' of his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.<sup>175</sup>

## **B. Oneness Spirituality and Eschatology**

As was observed in the previously analyzed periodicals, the articulation of eschatology finds its larger home in the expressions of the spirituality of the early Pentecostal believers. The same holds true for Oneness Pentecostals. The theological claim of the oneness of God finds its experiential complement in a compressed Pentecostal spirituality. Because Jesus is also the Spirit, the experiences of Calvary and Pentecost are joined together as a single theological event. Lee Floyd explains, 'The Spirit is the life of God, and is, therefore, the blood of God. Acts 20:28. The blood of the man Christ Jesus the human, was poured out on the cross. The blood of Jesus the One True God was poured out at

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<sup>174</sup> *TVW* 2.13 (n.d., c. 1922), p. 11.

<sup>175</sup> *TVW* Second Edition Special (n.d.), p. 2.

Pentecost. At the cross is where the redemptive price was paid, but it was never receipted for until Pentecost.’<sup>176</sup> F.W. Ewart agrees, ‘You can no more separate Calvary from Pentecost in the work of redemption than you can separate the God-head so as to make the Father, Son and Holy Ghost perform separate and independent portions of that great work. We were guilty of the same weak theology until God delivered us, by the present great revelation.’<sup>177</sup>

Thus, for the believer, the soteriological benefits of Calvary are received only at Spirit baptism. L.V. Roberts explains that the blood that was shed on the cross was taken by the resurrected Jesus and ‘offered for the sins of the whole world’ at the ascension. Commenting on Heb. 10.12, he writes, ‘And when He came out to let them know that the blood had been accepted, He came with the SOUND of a mighty rushing wind, and the righteousness which had only been IMPUTED unto them before thru faith in the shed blood, was now imparted unto them thru their receiving the Holy Spirit, the Lord. For the Lord is the Spirit.’ Roberts summarizes: ‘The power that is in the blood to cleanse us from sin is the Holy Ghost.’<sup>178</sup>

Indeed, all spiritual blessings may be condensed into a single, ‘sudden’ experience. Note the eschatological overtones in these comments from William E. Booth-Clibborn’s article, ‘Suddenly’:

God in these last days is going to work more suddenly than ever!

And I believe God is working quickly getting ready the Bride. Everything is reaching a zenith of perfection and completion and God is now fully restoring His Apostolic way of getting souls saved.

Everything must be according to the early pattern and in being born we expect just as instant a miracle of grace as in being healed.

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<sup>176</sup> *TVW* No. 24 (n.d., c. 1918), p. 3.

<sup>177</sup> *TPT* No. 1 (n.d., c. 1918), p. 2.

<sup>178</sup> *TPT* No. 1 (n.d., c. 1918), p. 8. Cf. the comments of Harry Morse, *TPT* No. 1 (n.d., c. 1918), p. 6: ‘The life of Jesus (spiritual) was imparted on the day of Pentecost. The blood that we must drink of in order to receive His life was imparted on the day of Pentecost. This brings out this: That Jesus gave his blood as a price for our redemption and also He gave His blood as a life to be received. Jesus bought salvation for us at Calvary and Jesus brought salvation to us at Pentecost.’ Similar thoughts are expressed by Lee Floyd, *TVW* No. 24 (n.d., c. 1918), p. 3: ‘At the cross we take our place with Him, but at the cross we do not find cleansing. Jesus did not cleanse or sanctify any one at the cross. He suffered without the gate that He might sanctify the people. Heb. 13:13. “That He might.” That is future tense. We recognize His death on the cross that we might be sanctified. The blood of God sanctifies us at Pentecost. Before Pentecost they only looked forward to the thing to be done. Since we have now received Pentecost, we now have the promised blessing fulfilled in our lives. This imparted life of God is the fulfillment of God’s promise.’

What if God would wrap up in one bundle repentance, salvation, justification, sanctification, healing, cleansing, baptism in the Spirit and unknown tongues and any other favorite blessing we might name and deliver the whole business in ten minutes or even more SUDDEN than that!<sup>179</sup>

One of the most frequent testimonies included in these periodicals is that of someone coming up out of the waters of baptism, speaking in tongues. The far-reaching implications of this for Pentecostal spirituality are revealed in H.O.

Scott's comment:

What we want to do now is locate God's normal plan for leading souls into the baptism and thus remove the necessity for the many labored and unnecessary plans in operation. This plan is laid down in Acts 2:38. No long altar service. No prolonged tarrying meeting. These are good but God's normal plan, repent, be baptized, and receive the Holy Ghost is better.<sup>180</sup>

Entrance into the Church is also included in the singular spiritual experience of early Oneness Pentecostals. Ecclesiology is drawn into Oneness soteriology.

Winifred Westfield explains:

To be IN HIS BODY is to be IN HIM or IN CHRIST—a new creation. No man can be 'in him' without being in his 'body,' which is the church. Then it is equally correct to speak of the CHURCH, his BODY, and IN HIM as one and the same thing. No man could be in a thing that did not exist. The new testament church was not in existence nor set up until the day of Pentecost.

The scriptures thus record that the disciples came into the church (the body or into Christ) SPEAKING IN TONGUES; likewise the Ephesians; also the Gentiles; and the Samaritans too came into the church 'baptized by one Spirit into the BODY.'<sup>181</sup>

G.T. Haywood gives a theological explanation for this conflation of ecclesiology and soteriology, again in an eschatological framework. He explains, 'There are only two great factors in the plan of the world's redemption, and these are The Lord and His Church.' The formation of the woman from the man's side 'was typical of the "Second Adam" entering into a "deep sleep" on Calvary where from His side flowed a substance (blood and water) with which He "builds" His church.'<sup>182</sup> Haywood continues:

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<sup>179</sup> *MDS* 1.13 (Jun, 1916), p. 4.

<sup>180</sup> *ALW* No. 3 (Aug, 1915), p. 1.

<sup>181</sup> *MDS* 1.9 (Dec, 1915), p. 2.

<sup>182</sup> G.T. Haywood, 'The Victim of the Flaming Sword', in Dayton (ed.), *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, p. 38.

Christ in person is our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ in mystery, is the Church. Christ in Spirit is the Holy Ghost. It is the Christ in person whom we are expecting to come again. Christ in you the hope of glory we recognize to be the Holy Ghost, which is the Spirit of Truth. But Christ the Church is the body of baptized believers, that is, Spirit-filled.

Christ, the Church, is the head of every man. No individual, or company of individuals is superior to Christ, the Church. Since the Church is Christ (Col. 2:17) it can be clearly seen that Jesus, who is the head of Christ (the Church) is God. Therefore, 'The head of every man is Christ; and the head of every woman is the man; and the Head (Jesus) of Christ (the Church) is GOD.' 1 Cor. 11:3.<sup>183</sup>

The fusion of membership in the Church with salvation in Jesus is the point at which Durham's Finished Work soteriology appears to be inadequate. In an article on justification, an unidentified author asks this revealing question: 'We have said we preached the "finished work" and all the time we were preaching men into an experience short of the body of Jesus Christ, which is the church. Col. 1:24. I ask you, is that a finished work?'<sup>184</sup> H.O. Scott raises this question: 'Why did so many fail God when the message of the "Finished Work of Calvary" swept over the land? The cause is very apparent, "They needed no new revelation." Are not many once again making this same sad mistake?'<sup>185</sup> F.J. Ewart explains Durham's shortcomings:

[Identification with Christ] constituted the Apostolic Gospel. Every form of doctrine they preached could be arranged under this head, and it set forth this theme. This point was clearly and forcefully made in the message that shook the true Christian world which Brother Durham preached. [But] he failed to fully preach the beautiful truth embraced in the acts of faith that identify a sinner with his Lord. These acts of faith are repentance, water baptism, and the reception of the Holy Ghost.<sup>186</sup>

In the light of the 'singular' spirituality revealed in these publications, it appears that for early Oneness Pentecostals, truth was 'finished' not so much on the cross as in the believer's personal experience of the revelation of the name of Jesus and the particular acts of obedience of repentance, water baptism in Jesus' name, and the reception of the Holy Spirit.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> G.T. Haywood, 'The Victim of the Flaming Sword', in Dayton (ed.), *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, pp. 39-40.

<sup>184</sup> *TPT* No. 1 (n.d., c. 1918), p. 6.

<sup>185</sup> *ALW* No. 3 (Aug, 1915), p. 1.

<sup>186</sup> *MDS* 1.13 (Jun, 1916), p. 4.

<sup>187</sup> Cf. the comments of G.T. Haywood, 'The Birth of the Spirit in the Days of the Apostles', in Dayton (ed.), *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, p. 8: 'A strong point to consider is that the church which is the body of Christ, and the Kingdom of God are synonymous. In order to enter into the

What does Oneness spirituality as described here imply for eschatology? On the one hand, some tendency toward an over-realized (existential?) eschatology may be noted. Notice, for example, the qualification that G.T. Haywood sensed was needed after making the following weighty statement:

We have been put into the 'Son' place where He then was dwelling. We become Sons by being brought forth through Mt. Zion, our heavenly Mother, through the resurrection of Christ Jesus; while Jesus was the only one begotten by the Holy Ghost being upon Mary. Many Sons were born by the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost after being 'begotten' by the Word of God.

To say that we are 'in the temple' now, *is not saying that we are in heaven now*. If we stay in Christ, we shall be sure to get into heaven; for this is but the beginning. And to be in Christ here in the spiritual house, is only the 'earnest' of what is to come! Eph. 1:13-14. We are going to enquire in His temple! But first we must get in the temple (emphasis added).<sup>188</sup>

Thus, Haywood cautions that death has not yet been overcome.<sup>189</sup> In a printed transcription of a 'Holy Ghost message', however, L.V. Roberts seems to leave the question open:

Don't you see, children, you have overcome the grave? You died with me on the cross, and was resurrected. Why is there so much unbelief in your hearts yet? If you will only believe, and put the grave clothes off, the grave will never receive you, for that same Spirit which raised me from the dead is already in you, and is making alive your mortal bodies. I took your place, I died in your stead, and have tasted death for you, and have come to give you life forevermore. And you which have believed me have passed from death to life. But very few believe it is for them. They are not taking their privileges. I have purchased it for you. You have a right to live and reign with me forever. I have counted you worthy through my death and shed blood to partake of my glory. It is to shine to you while you are still on the earth. You shall be the children of light; yes, great glory shall be seen.<sup>190</sup>

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Kingdom of God one must be born of water and the Spirit, or, to enter in Christ, the Church, one must be baptized in water and the Holy Spirit.'

<sup>188</sup> *TVW* No. 24 (n.d., c. 1918), p. 3.

<sup>189</sup> *TVW* 2.13 (n.d., c. 1922), p. 6. Haywood writes, 'We are living in a day when the coming of the Lord is even at the door, and some of us must be "alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord," for that cause we must lay hold on faith to abide till he comes. It is possible. But to reach out for such faith is not "Redemption of the Body." I believe in living as long as we possibly can, and die when we cannot help it. God is able to preserve us blameless unto His coming.' Cf. also G.T. Haywood, 'The Victim of the Flaming Sword', in Dayton (ed.), *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, pp. 40-42. Haywood's warnings imply that some among them were teaching that death could be overcome.

<sup>190</sup> *TPT* No. 1 (n.d., c. 1918), p. 8.

On the other hand, the articulations of future eschatological events follow the classical dispensational script found in other finished work publications. It is to these articulations that we now turn.

### **C. Dispensationalism in Oneness Clothing**

An analysis of the early Oneness periodicals reveals that the basic wardrobe of classical dispensationalism remained intact. How each garment was tailored, however, was uniquely Oneness. The following elements may be enumerated.

#### **1. This ‘Peculiar Dispensation’**

As noted above, the early Oneness Pentecostals saw eschatological significance in the expansion of the Oneness message, as it signaled for them the imminent end of the current dispensation. Calling it ‘a peculiar dispensation’, Glenn Cook drew its boundaries with precision: ‘It began with the day of Pentecost and will end when the church is caught up to meet the Lord.’<sup>191</sup> Andrew D. Urshan notes that as the revelation of the name of God to Abraham and to Moses marked new dispensations, so Jesus is ‘His new revealed NAME for this dispensation’.<sup>192</sup> Indeed, Urshan perceives another dispensation ‘which is right in the present one—even “The dispensation of the fullness of times” (see Eph. 1:10).’ He explains, ‘In this last dispensation God is raising His chosen messengers not to make a people ready but to make “The People” ready and prepared for the soon-coming Lord and the Millennium reign during the coming “Dispensation.”’<sup>193</sup> G.T. Haywood sees a correlation between the seven Church ages and what he calls simply ‘the seven parables of Jesus’. Thus, the last Church age (Laodicean) and the last parable (dragnet) correspond. He concludes: ‘We are living in the lukewarm age of the church, in the end of the age, when God is dragging the gospel dragnet throughout the world. I believe that net is water baptism in Jesus’ name which has come forth “in the end of the gospel age.”’<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> *TPT* No. 1 (n.d., c. 1918), p. 5.

<sup>192</sup> A.D. Urshan, ‘The Almighty God in the Lord Jesus Christ’, in Dayton (ed.), *Seven ‘Jesus Only’ Tracts*, pp. 43-45.

<sup>193</sup> A.D. Urshan, ‘The Doctrine of the New Birth, or The Perfect Way to Eternal Life’, in Dayton (ed.), *Seven ‘Jesus Only’ Tracts*, p. 23. One may assume that ‘The People’ to whom Urshan referred were Oneness Pentecostals.

<sup>194</sup> *TVW* 2.13 (n.d., c. 1922), p. 7.

## 2. The Gentile Bride

In true classical dispensational fashion, the early Oneness Pentecostals held to the separation of Israel and the Church. G.T. Haywood explains, 'Israel as a people was to be set aside, for God had chosen Zion for His habitation; a people filled with the Spirit. And today Mt. Zion, heavenly Jerusalem, is the Bride, the Spirit-filled church. The Church, Zion, which was with Israel, has been taken from them and placed among the Gentiles until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled.'<sup>195</sup>

Evangelist Mattie Crawford asserts that the Bride is Gentile, 'gathered out for His Name'. She reasons that just as a Gentile bride was presented to Joseph, the rejected son, and became co-regent with him over Joseph's brothers, even so

...the Holy Spirit came down to the place of [Christ's] rejection to gather out from among the Gentiles a people for His name, Acts 15:14; i.e., a Gentile bride for the rejected Son. O, Hallelujah! a people are to be gathered out for His **Name**. Many are now refusing to take upon them His Name, but this Bridal company will take upon them the Name of the blessed Bridegroom, **Jesus**. When the Bride is completed He will receive her to Himself. Then the Glad Day of the Marriage of the Lamb will come. Then His brethren, through terrible famine (tribulation), will be brought to own Him, and He, with His Bride, whom He calls to share His glory, will reign over them; they being restored to their long-lost land as the head of the nations and channel of blessing to all the world (emphasis in original).<sup>196</sup>

The Oneness boundaries in F.J. Ewart's succinct statement could not be clearer: 'A church, denomination, organization or assembly which refuses to take the name of the Lord-Jesus-Christ in Christian baptism could never have a place in His Bride.'<sup>197</sup> Similar to other Pentecostals, G.T. Haywood defines the bride in terms of the overcomer. Overcomers, however, are recognized by their Oneness beliefs. He writes:

The Name of God is revealed to the overcomer only. Even now while I write these lines the Spirit says all who read these words will not understand. There is but one God. To the world this is a great mystery (1 Tim. 3:16), but [to] him that overcometh is this mystery revealed. The

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<sup>195</sup> G.T. Haywood, 'The Finest of the Wheat', in Dayton (ed.), *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, p. 34.

<sup>196</sup> Crawford, *The Bride, The Lamb's Wife*, pp. 16-17. The story of Isaac and Rebekah serves for Crawford as another type of the Gentile bride of Christ (pp. 18-23). In her Oneness reading of the story, the well where Eliezer met Rebekah typifies the waters of baptism, where 'we go down in His Name'. 'There and then the Father will acknowledge us as His sons.'

<sup>197</sup> F.J. Ewart, 'The Revelation of Jesus Christ', in Dayton (ed.), *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, p. 42.

name of our God is JESUS and his God and our God is the same. This is only for them that overcome.<sup>198</sup>

### 3. The Jewish Kingdom

In distinction from the 'spiritual' people of God, again defined in Oneness terms, Israel is depicted as the 'earthly' people of God. Andrew Urshan explains:

Without the real earthly people of God there could have been no Christ, no salvation, and with the spiritual Christ (GOD) and a spiritual people of God, chosen in Christ before the world was, the Jews could not be lost nor restored to their earthly kingdom. But Israel will yet be restored to their land and to their God and Messiah. Their kingdom will be yet restored, but when? After God gets 'a people for His name' from among the nations, a people born into the Heavenly kingdom by being baptized in water and the Spirit and that into His name, then after this He will return to raise the ruins of David. Please read Acts 15:13-18.<sup>199</sup>

Glenn Cook asserts that through divine appointment, the human descendents of Abraham are 'human royalty'. He states, 'Wherever this blood is flowing it will manifest itself in due time, and He will gather the whole house of Israel out from among the nations. When the time comes you will find [that] the blood declared royal by God will be able to speak and make manifest the tribal relations of the whole house of Israel.'<sup>200</sup> Cook notes that a parallel 'spiritual' plan is also in place to bestow royalty on those who are born again, who receive the blood that was shed at Calvary and poured out in the Spirit at Pentecost. He continues, 'One plan pertained to the natural man, the other pertained to the spiritual man. The process for the bestowal of this life was parallel, but the results were to be different.'<sup>201</sup>

G.T. Haywood interprets the woman of Revelation 12 as 'the Church during God's dealings with the Jewish nation'. He clarifies,

They were the Church first (Acts 7:38), and shall be the Church last (Matt. 20:16). The Church today at the close of the Gentile age is no doubt bringing forth a 'perfect Man' who shall come forth in the power of the Spirit. These are the overcomers of the Laodicean age who 'shall sit with me in my throne,' Rev 3:21. But those who fail shall pass on into the 'time of Jacob's trouble.' During that time the Church, which is no longer

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<sup>198</sup> *TVW 2?* (1920), pp. 9, 16.

<sup>199</sup> A.D. Urshan, 'The Doctrine of the New Birth, or The Perfect Way to Eternal Life', in Dayton (ed.), *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>200</sup> *MDS* 1.13 (Jun, 1916) p. 3.

<sup>201</sup> *MDS* 1.13 (Jun, 1916) p. 3.

Gentile, but Israelitish, comes to the knowledge of Christ, evidently through the preaching of the 'two witnesses' (Rev. 11:3-12).<sup>202</sup>

Yet Haywood makes it clear that the nation of Israel is still to retain a distinct identity. He expected the land of Palestine to become 'a Jewish state to be ruled exclusively by the Jews'. He writes, 'As soon as the Kingdom of Israel is completely restored, her temple shall be rebuilt. The fig tree is putting forth her leaves.'<sup>203</sup>

#### 4. The Rapture

It was understood among Oneness Pentecostals that before his coming back to the earth, Jesus would first appear to 'catch away the Church' and thereby close the Church age. The importance placed upon this teaching is revealed in the report of the 1920 resolution of the General Assembly of the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, which states:

Whereas the Word of God teaches the imminent second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: (And that there will be a first appearing or catching away of the Church preceding His second coming back to the earth, and which first appearing we believe to be imminent at hand, is likely to occur at any moment). Therefore, Be it Resolved, that all persons denouncing such imminent appearing shall not be entitled to credentials with this body.<sup>204</sup>

Several articles equate the rapture with 'the manifestation of the sons of God' (Rom. 8.19), accompanied by an emphasis upon bodily transformation. Note the following comments:

The world shall stand in astonishment at the 'manifestation of the sons of God.' They shall see the 'lightning' but will see no man. 'For as the lightning cometh out of the East and shineth even unto the West, so shall the coming of the Son of man be.'<sup>205</sup>

Paul is talking here [1 Cor. 15.50] about the necessity of this flesh and blood being changed at the rapture. Our flesh and blood in its present state is corrupt, and has certainly got to be changed. It is speaking about the rapture when we will get IMMORTAL BODIES.<sup>206</sup>

Let us fearlessly teach and preach it [the word of God] just as it stands. God will confirm it by not only giving us a wonderful revival, but by

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<sup>202</sup> G.T. Haywood, 'The Finest of the Wheat', in Dayton (ed.), *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, p. 53.

<sup>203</sup> G.T. Haywood, 'The Finest of the Wheat', in Dayton (ed.), *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, p. 31.

<sup>204</sup> *TVW 2?* (1920), p. 16.

<sup>205</sup> *TVW 2?* (1920), p. 5.

<sup>206</sup> *MDS 1.13* (Jun, 1916), p. 1.

giving us our redeemed bodies in the rapture. 'For all creation gazing eagerly with outstretched neck is waiting and longing to see the manifestation of the Sons of God.' (Rom. 8:19) (Wey.)<sup>207</sup>

Some day; if we should happen not to be in [the] grave, yet we must be born out of our body which is dead because of Sin; a tabernacle liable to corruption in which we groan and travail with pangs of death and be clothed upon with that glorious eternal tabernacle which God has promised to all His water—Spirit—born children.<sup>208</sup>

Warnings to be ready for the rapture are common. Instructions include being faithful to the name of Jesus,<sup>209</sup> and following the paradigmatic injunction of Acts 2.28. Otherwise, as E.R. Bass exhorts, 'You may start to meet the Bridegroom with a happy heart and your lamp trimmed and burning brightly, and yet be left in the darkness at the end.'<sup>210</sup>

## 5. The Great Tribulation

Though not articulated in great detail, the consensus that the great tribulation will follow the rapture is clear in these early Oneness writings. Haywood states bluntly, 'Those who are not filled with the Spirit when Jesus comes will be bound hand and foot and parted asunder from the Bride of Christ, and left to pass through the awful tribulation period.'<sup>211</sup> L.C. Hall laments, 'At last sudden destruction shall hold high carnival, and men and classes shall be the victims of this unhindered reign of Satan until it shall settle down o'er all the earth, in Earth's darkest Night, and the Great Tribulation shall engulf the unprepared millions.'<sup>212</sup> Though the 'spirit of anti-Christ' is already active in the world, the great tribulation will witness the rise of 'the next great personage ... who will exalt himself above all that is called God,'<sup>213</sup> 'who will soon appear to be head of most of the nations of the earth, whose name is Anti-Christ'.<sup>214</sup> Frank Bartleman asserts that 'God is raising this standard [Oneness doctrine] to meet the oncoming, terrible stream of the Anti-Christ's opposition to the "name" and person, the

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<sup>207</sup> TPT No. 1 (n.d., c. 1918), p. 2.

<sup>208</sup> A.D. Urshan, 'The Doctrine of the New Birth, or The Perfect Way to Eternal Life', in Dayton (ed.), *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, p. 43.

<sup>209</sup> A.D. Urshan, 'The Almighty God in the Lord Jesus Christ', in Dayton (ed.), *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, p. 67.

<sup>210</sup> TPT No. 1 (n.d., c. 1918), p. 4.

<sup>211</sup> TVW No. 18 (n.d., c. 1916), p. 4.

<sup>212</sup> TBT 4.18 (Oct 1, 1919), p. 3.

<sup>213</sup> MDS 1.9 (Dec, 1915), p. 3.

<sup>214</sup> A.D. Urshan, 'The Almighty God in the Lord Jesus Christ', in Dayton (ed.), *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, p. 61.

divinity of Christ.’ He warns, ‘Which side are you on? There must be a final, complete separation. The “name” of Christ, or the mark of the Anti-Christ.’<sup>215</sup>

For missionaries B.S. Moore and his wife, the purpose of the tribulation is to purge the world of the spirit of Antichrist. They write, ‘God is soon going to rise to shake terribly the earth and the heaven, also, and He will shake it and winnow it until every vestige of antichrist has been destroyed or subdued, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. Then will follow the establishing of the kingdom which cannot be moved.’ Lamenting the false religions around them, they note, ‘This is a poisonous pie and will be cooked in the tribulation judgments and smashed by the great millstone of Rev. 18:21.’<sup>216</sup> Others emphasize the destruction of the human figure of the Antichrist at the battle of Armageddon, when ‘suddenly the heavens will burst asunder and there will appear the Great King’.<sup>217</sup>

## 6. The Millennium

The classical dispensational understanding of a literal thousand-year reign of Christ on the earth populates the early Oneness Pentecostal imagination. Andrew Urshan admonishes the ‘lukewarm Christians’, i.e. ‘post-millennialists’: ‘They do away with the hundreds of scriptures which specifically and clearly speak of the thousand years’ reign of Jesus Christ with His church on this very earth, the restoration of Jews to their God and Messiah, and their reign on the earth through the power and appearance of Jesus Christ, their King, with the Queen, His Redeemed Bride.’<sup>218</sup> Within this traditional portrait, however, some Oneness Pentecostals paint unique strokes. John Schaepe finds Zech. 14.9 instructive:

‘In that day shall there be one Lord and His name one.’ (R.V. Jehovah shall be one and his name one). We see that the prophet speaks here about the millennium to come and he says: ‘In that day Jehovah shall have one name.’ He is called by many names from Genesis to Malachi, but He shall be known by one name in that day. We are close to that day now. Truths that have been covered up by the tradition of the elders, are coming forth

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<sup>215</sup> *MDS* 1.9 (Dec., 1915), p. 3.

<sup>216</sup> *TPT* No. 1 (n.d., c. 1918), p. 7.

<sup>217</sup> A.D. Urshan, ‘The Almighty God in the Lord Jesus Christ’, in Dayton (ed.), *Seven ‘Jesus Only’ Tracts*, p. 83. Cf. also *TVW* Second Edition Special (n.d.), p. 1.

<sup>218</sup> A.D. Urshan, ‘The Almighty God in the Lord Jesus Christ’, in Dayton (ed.), *Seven ‘Jesus Only’ Tracts*, p. 65.

as new light or as ‘Meat in due season.’ Messages that will close this dispensation and usher in the new.<sup>219</sup>

Mattie Crawford also highlights Oneness beliefs in her description of the millennium:

Out of the side of Adam was the rib taken from which the woman was made, and on the seventh day, we see them resting with God, in dominion over the works of His hands—all His creation. So ‘the last Adam’, with His Bride that has been made from the blood and water that flowed from His wounded side, will reign over all God’s creation in the glorious Sabbath day of Millennial glory. O glorious day when Christ shall come forth from the marriage supper with His Bride to rule and reign!<sup>220</sup>

Interpreting Rev. 11.15 in a way compatible with his Oneness stance, G.T.

Haywood writes,

The world is now being ruled by Satan and his people, but thank God, the kingdoms of this world shall soon become the kingdom of our LORD and his Christ, or anointed. Since Jesus is our Lord, we, then, are his anointed. The church, anointed with the Holy Ghost, is the body of Christ. We shall reign with him, if we suffer here with him.<sup>221</sup>

## 7. The New Creation

Although images of the new creation are not frequent in this literature,<sup>222</sup> a few may be noted. Andrew Urshan portrays the eternal state in the literal terms of a reconstituted earth. He writes:

When the new Jerusalem comes down from Heaven, then the earthly Jerusalem will be cleaned up from all the enemies of God, and the earthly kingdom of David will be restored over all the earth by the Kingdom of God from above, or by the great King of Heaven, even Jehovah Messiah, who shall come down with His great glory to cause the restitution of all things. See Zech. 14:1-5 with Psalm 45:13-17.<sup>223</sup>

G.T. Haywood focuses on the future form of God, and presents a much more ephemeral image of eternity:

Then shall the necessity for rulership be over. Redemption will then have been completed. The Mediatorial office of God ‘as a Son’ will be ended. Sorrow and mourning, pain and death, will be forever past. God’s eternal purpose shall be finished. Then shall the sons of God, enraptured,

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<sup>219</sup> *TPT* No. 1 (n.d., c. 1918), p. 6.

<sup>220</sup> Crawford, *The Bride, The Lamb’s Wife*, p. 12.

<sup>221</sup> G.T. Haywood, ‘The Victim of the Flaming Sword’, in Dayton (ed.), *Seven ‘Jesus Only’ Tracts*, p. 50.

<sup>222</sup> More typical is the comment of M.E. Mills, *TPT* 8.7 (Jul 1, 1923), p. 2, who likens salvation to ‘a new beginning, a new creation, a new creature with a new name’.

<sup>223</sup> A.D. Urshan, ‘The Doctrine of the New Birth, or The Perfect Way to Eternal Life’, in Dayton (ed.), *Seven ‘Jesus Only’ Tracts*, p. 15.

transformed, filled with eternal glory, soar away in the breeze of God's eternal love, knowing God no longer in the form of man, but as the Eternal Spirit, filling and thrilling their glorified being throughout all the endless ages of Eternity! Thus shall the Kingdom be delivered up to the Father, that God may be all in all.<sup>224</sup>

## 8. In the End, Jesus Only

A final theme that deserves treatment in this review of early Oneness Pentecostal eschatology is that of Jesus as the End. Andrew Urshan exhorts, 'Jesus Christ will be our all in the coming world also, and ... there we shall find and see all of God in Him and through Him for us. Therefore, Christ becomes our only Hope.'<sup>225</sup> He continues, 'O, beloved fellow-Christians, remember, for time and eternity, that Jesus Christ is not only the DOOR through which alone we can enter into the eternal mysteries of the Deity, but He is also the WAY in which we shall walk in all ages to come, and as we walk in the light and glory of Him over there, we shall find Him also to be THE END.'<sup>226</sup> F.J. Ewart summarizes much of what may be the best of Oneness Pentecostal eschatology:

The New Testament commences with the name of Jesus in the first and ends with the name of Jesus in the last verse. His is the first and the last. Everything came forth from Him, and everything will finally centralize in Him. After all the wonders that go to make up the revelation of Jesus Christ according to the last book in the Bible are fulfilled, like the immortal trio on the mount of transfiguration, we will see no man any more save Jesus only.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> *TVW* Second Edition Special (n.d.), p. 3. Haywood seems to have modified this view somewhat in the light of Dan. 7:14. He writes, 'There are many who have written upon the subject of the Son, "delivering up the kingdom of God," but there has always been something lacking. The perplexity began to lift when we noticed in Dan. 7:14 that the dominion of the Son was to be "an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and shall not be destroyed." When the "last enemy is destroyed" the Sonship that God assumed will come to its end. The full work of redemption will have been completed. It is after death is destroyed that God will be all and in all. Then turning to Rev. 21:4 we read that when "there shall be no more death" and God himself shall be with men and shall be their God we hear the voice of Jesus saying, "Behold I make all things new. Write, for these words are true and faithful. It is done. I AM Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I WILL BE his GOD, and he SHALL be My Son." (Compare Rev. 1:10-18 and 21:6, 7) The Son in this manner only will deliver up the Kingdom to God, for he was God (John 1:1) is now (John 1:14; Tim 3:16), and forever shall be. The Lord which is, which was, and which is to come, the ALMIGHTY. (Rev. 1:8.)' Cf. G.T. Haywood, 'The Victim of the Flaming Sword', in Dayton (ed.), *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, p. 41.

<sup>225</sup> A.D. Urshan, 'The Almighty God in the Lord Jesus Christ', in Dayton (ed.), *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, p. 89.

<sup>226</sup> A.D. Urshan, 'The Almighty God in the Lord Jesus Christ', in Dayton (ed.), *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, p. 91.

<sup>227</sup> *TPT* No. 1 (n.d., c. 1918), p. 7.

#### **D. Summary and Conclusion**

A summary of early Oneness Pentecostal eschatology may now be offered. Grounded in a restorationist perspective, Oneness Pentecostals perceived the renewal of the ‘Apostolic pattern’ of salvation (repentance, water baptism in Jesus’ name, and Spirit baptism—unified as a singular salvific experience within a Oneness understanding of God) to be a sign of the last days and the fulfillment of ‘the dispensation of the fullness of times’ (Eph. 1.10). The spirituality that served as the ethos of this group’s eschatology is marked (ideally, at least) by an emphasis upon a sudden, singular experience in which all spiritual blessings may be received at once. While occasional hints of an over-realized eschatology appear in the literature, the common portrait of eschatology presented here consists of the classical dispensation script punctuated by Oneness doctrine. Thus, the bride, identified by Oneness beliefs, comprises the spiritual people of God, while Israel, defined as the (divinely chosen) human descendents of Abraham, comprises God’s earthly people. Those who hold fast to the name of Jesus and subscribe experientially to the pattern of Act 2.28 can expect to be caught up in the rapture, while those who are left will face the great tribulation judgments. The millennium, ushered in by the proclamation of God’s name, is characterized by the literal reign of Jesus with his overcoming Bride, after which the Sonship of God will no longer be necessary. Jesus, however, will remain the central figure throughout eternity.

In the light of this analysis, the following conclusions are now offered. Although some formal similarities exist between the early Oneness Pentecostal emphasis on the restored ‘Apostolic pattern’ and the claims of some Wesleyan Holiness Pentecostal groups to be the restored NT Church (e.g. the Church of God), Oneness Pentecostalism has more substantive commonalities with the Finished Work stream of the tradition. The centrality of Christ found throughout early Finished Work periodicals is continued and intensified in early Oneness writings. Likewise, the amalgamation of sanctification into justification by Finished Work adherents is developed further by Oneness constituents so that ‘initial salvation’ includes all possible spiritual blessings (justification, sanctification, Spirit baptism, healing, and entrance into the Church). In a sense, the fourfold gospel has become the twofold gospel: Jesus as Savior and Coming King. The over-realized eschatology that might be expected from this

intensification or radicalization of spiritual experience is only minimally present in early Oneness publications. This reticence may be due in part to the eschatological contours of the threefold manifestation of the one God, noted especially by G.T. Haywood. It is also possible to interpret the adoption of classical dispensationalism by Oneness adherents as a deterrent to the tendency toward an over-realized eschatology inherent in Oneness spirituality. At least, it appears to function this way in the early literature. Dispensationalism serves to provide a predefined historical pattern in which the restored 'Apostolic pattern' finds eschatological significance. The 'finished work' of Acts 2.28 finds its eschatological complement in the 'finished script' of classical dispensationalism.

## **V. Conclusion: The Finished Work Stream**

Having surveyed the periodical literature produced by early Finished Work Pentecostals, the following conclusions are now in order. First, the only model of eschatology articulated in this stream of early Pentecostalism is classical dispensationalism (with occasional modifications). This stands in contrast to the discovery, noted in Chapter 3, of the variety of views that were present within the early Wesleyan Holiness stream. Second, there appears to be no perceived need to dialogue about other eschatological options, and in some cases other options are intentionally excluded (through editorial policies). Except for an occasional tweaking of definitions (e.g. who comprises the bride), the dispensational script is accepted 'as is'. Third, discernment appears to be focused on the implications of Finished Work soteriology for the doctrinal commitments and spiritual practice of the adherents. This may be seen in the tendency to view the fourfold gospel as a tidy, compact system that yields a compatible, tightly structured spirituality, in which salvific benefits, having been secured through the finished work of Christ, become manifested by faith. Fourth, the implications of Finished Work soteriology for eschatology may be seen in the expectations for immediate results of a believer's faith that reckons a spiritual blessing already accomplished. The potential for an over-realized eschatology is enormous and warnings against such are evident in the literature. Fifth, the claim for Finished Work soteriology as the center of truth and the foundation for eschatological fulfillment supports the conclusion that the Finished Work perspective is inherently compatible with classical dispensationalism. This conclusion is corroborated by the evidence that

classical dispensationalism is the only view propounded in *Triumphs of Faith*, a journal that promotes a Finished Work soteriology both before and after it advocates the Pentecostal gospel. Sixth, the perception of Spirit baptism as the seal of Christ's finished work on the cross truncates the potential for Finished Work spirituality to challenge the adoption of dispensational eschatology because, in this theological construction, Spirit baptism only strengthens the soteriological foundation that supports this model. Lastly, while early Finished Work adherents acknowledge that the Holy Spirit engenders such activities as scriptural insight, eschatological prayer, and missionary vocation, these activities are not integrated into the core of their articulations about eschatology. The seeds that could have yielded an alternative eschatology remain dormant. Instead of challenging and transcending the dispensational script, such Spirit-led activities, while beneficial in themselves, serve to sustain tension with the accepted model of eschatology.

How these conclusions inform the discernment of a contemporary Pentecostal eschatology will be explored in the next chapter.

## Chapter 5

### Toward a Pentecostal Eschatology: Discerning the Way Forward

#### Introduction

In the previous two chapters, an analysis of the periodical literature of the early Pentecostal movement in North America has been presented, from both the Wesleyan Holiness stream and the Finished Work stream. While eschatology was an essential component of the spirituality in both streams of early Pentecostalism, this study has shown that while a variety of eschatological models or trajectories were articulated in the Wesleyan Holiness stream, only one model, classical dispensationalism, was found in the Finished Work stream. It was also discovered that discernment played a central role in some articulations of early Pentecostal eschatology, yielding multiple trajectories of thought that were traced through the literature. These trajectories of thought were distinguished in terms of how much or how little such discerning spirituality was integrated into the conversation about eschatology.

I suggest that the activity of discernment in the early literature serves as a model to point the way forward toward the development of a contemporary Pentecostal eschatology. In this way, a contemporary vision of Pentecostal eschatology may remain grounded in and faithful to the early spirituality of the movement, which is its heart or originating source. The goal is not simply to repeat the conclusions of the early Pentecostals, but rather to employ their methodology of discernment in order to develop a contemporary Pentecostal eschatology.

This chapter presents a narration of Pentecostal eschatology that takes seriously the discerning spirituality of the early movement while also taking into account the contemporary context. This will be developed, first, by analyzing the discernment process in the early years of the movement to determine which trajectories of thought are the most and least helpful to discern a contemporary Pentecostal eschatology. Second, the contemporary contributions reviewed in Chapter 2, which were also perceived as multiple trajectories, will be critiqued in terms of their faithfulness to the discerning spirituality of the movement and, in turn, their value as dialogue partners in the effort at revision. Third, a Pentecostal

narrative eschatology will be offered that flows out of the soteriology of that part of the early movement in which discernment thrived. Specifically, this narrative will center on a Pentecostal reading of scriptural texts that informs a contemporary account of the fivefold gospel, bringing into the discussion helpful voices both inside and outside the movement. Finally, attention will be given to discerning the relevance of a Pentecostal narrative eschatology in the midst of current popular options of eschatology.

### **I. Discerning Early Pentecostal Discernment**

For the purposes of this study, I understand discernment to be the practice of the early Pentecostals in bringing eschatology into dialogue with their holistic spirituality, allowing the experience of the Spirit, in both its individual and corporate dimensions, to inform their hermeneutical practice and subsequent conclusions about eschatology. Often this meant that some questions remained open in the context of a conscious, ongoing dependence on the Holy Spirit to reveal truth. Such discerning activity is also characterized by the presence of a variety of perspectives that may be likened to an ongoing conversation that is always open to deeper insight.

It is significant that discernment about eschatology among early Pentecostals took place at all. This is highlighted by the observation that some groups seemed actively to restrict discernment or to shut it down completely. With this in mind, a trajectory of discerning activity may be traced through the literature. Discernment about eschatology began at the Azusa Street revival, held to be the originating event in North America by both streams of the movement. As was observed in *The Apostolic Faith*, discernment resulted in a view of eschatology that was shaped more by the dynamic spirituality characteristic of the early period than by a predefined script of the future. The analysis of *The Bridegroom's Messenger* revealed three trajectories of thought, each resulting from differing levels of discerning activity. The single extant copy of *The Whole Truth* showed a high degree of similarity with *The Apostolic Faith*, yielding a view of eschatology in keeping with a discerning spirituality. Discernment was evident in *The Church of God Evangel* where two opposing views were presented side by side. The discernment that gave a variety of views to readers of the early periodicals of the Pentecostal Holiness Church was restricted over time into a single view, noted

especially in *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate*. Such restriction of discernment characterized the entirety of the Finished Work stream where classical dispensationalism was the only view that was articulated from the beginning.<sup>1</sup> Although the analysis of the early periodicals reveals more of a geometric than linear development of eschatological thought out of Azusa Street, a rough historical trajectory is evident through the literature that begins with robust discerning activity, steadily moves away from such activity, and ends with a lack of any significant discernment. It may be concluded, then, that discernment is most prominent in the earliest years of the movement, and that to be faithful to the heart of the movement, discerning activity should play a significant role in the construction of a contemporary Pentecostal eschatology.

Asking which parts of the tradition are most helpful in discerning a contemporary Pentecostal eschatology is another way to pose this question. Clearly, the most helpful are those parts of the tradition in which discernment about eschatology was given a primary place. These include particular trajectories within the Wesleyan Holiness stream of the movement. Conversely, when this discernment was restricted or lacking entirely, the questions were halted, the conversation shut down, and the eschatological script that remained, invariably classical dispensationalism, became fossilized. The development of a contemporary Pentecostal eschatology may be perceived in some sense as picking the conversation back up from those parts of the tradition in which discernment thrived, and moving it forward into the contemporary context.

Examining *how* the early Pentecostals discerned and observing *what* they discerned concerning eschatology can provide some reasonable parameters in the development of discernment as a contemporary methodology. From the analysis of the early periodical literature, it appears that a dynamic interchange between the Spirit, the Scriptures, and the faith community comprises the nucleus of the early Pentecostal process of discernment. From this dialectical process emerges the core narrative or testimony as the community discerns the various essential elements of the salvation story in the light of the baptism in the Spirit. The

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<sup>1</sup> This is not to say that all spiritual discernment was lacking among early Finished Work Pentecostals. Rather, the kind of discernment concerning eschatology that I have defined in this study, and that was apparent in certain trajectories within the Wesleyan Holiness stream, was lacking. Minor differences in the future script do appear among different Finished Work groups, but the overall pattern is that of classical dispensationalism.

experience of the Spirit is primary, but the focus of the discernment is Jesus. Thus, they articulate what they term ‘the full gospel’: Jesus is Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, Spirit Baptizer, and Coming King. This urgent narrative is both restorationist and eschatological. The restoration of Jesus’ identity fuels an ever increasing eschatological expectation. Thus, discernment of eschatological matters is an essential element of this narrative. Eschatology is not an addendum to the soteriological narrative, but is integrated into and is characterized by it. In other words, their discernment of Jesus as Bridegroom and Coming King is integrally related to their discernment of Jesus as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Spirit Baptizer.

It may be noted here that differences appear in how the Wesleyan Holiness stream and the Finished Work stream articulate the fivefold and fourfold narratives respectively. It appears from my reading that the fourfold narrative in the Finished Work stream is more tightly held together than the fivefold narrative in the Wesleyan stream. This is probably due to the way the fourfold ‘narrative plot’ in the Finished Work stream hinges on a single reference point, the ‘finished work’ of Jesus as Savior. In addition, one trajectory in the Finished Work tradition leads to Oneness theology, constituting an extreme tightening of the fourfold into the doctrine of God—Jesus as the Name—and into a ‘singular’ experience of salvation. The Finished Work soteriological narrative indeed brings Jesus as Coming King into dialogue with Jesus as Savior, Spirit Baptizer, and Healer, but does so in a way that restricts or shuts down the conversation about eschatology. The Wesleyan stream allows much more room for conversation between the components of the fivefold narrative, possibly a result of the experientially ‘unfinished’ or ‘messy’ nature of sanctification. This conversation results in a larger variety of eschatological views and trajectories, as the literature bears out. Thus, though Jesus is the center of both streams, the identity of Jesus is more open and dynamic in the Wesleyan stream. Although his death on the cross is essential in the fivefold narrative, the soteriological claims for Jesus’ work are spread across the narrative so that the elements of the narrative (salvation, sanctification, Spirit baptism, healing, and resurrection/eschaton) become transformational events in themselves, linked to and interdependent upon each other for their meaning and effect. Whereas the eschatology becomes fossilized very early in the Finished Work stream, raising questions about the adequacy of a

Finished Work soteriology to provide the framework for a contemporary Pentecostal eschatology, the process-oriented soteriological perspective of the Wesleyan stream allows a more dynamic understanding of eschatology, at least in some trajectories. It is this dynamic conversation that can be picked back up in a contemporary Pentecostal discernment of eschatology.

Woven throughout and integral to the fivefold narrative, the early Pentecostal perception of the Church is often the focus of discernment. Indeed, it appears that early Pentecostal ecclesiology was formed as a result of the conversation between the various elements of the fivefold gospel. Generally, this discussion may be categorized into two areas: identity and mission. For the most part, the identity of the Church is articulated from a restorationist perspective. The true church is being formed by means of the restoration of the full gospel narrative, and is distinguished from the lukewarm or apostate church. The experiences of salvation, sanctification, and Spirit baptism are the minimal qualifying marks of membership in the true church, most often identified as the bride of Christ, a designation that orients the early Pentecostals toward the consummation of salvific experience. Another common designation, the company of full overcomers, highlights the optimistic outlook that characterizes the self-perception of the Spirit-filled church.<sup>2</sup> On the one hand, suffering with Christ now ensures reigning with him in the future. On the other hand, the formation of the overcoming church is the beginning of Christ's reign on the earth. In its most expansive vision, the formation of the global Spirit-filled community is the surest sign of the coming King. The mission of the restored church is understood to flow from its eschatological identity: to evangelize the world for the last-days harvest. The urgency of the mission is kindled by the imminence of Jesus' coming. In this light, the mission also serves as a warning beacon to the nations. The restored church is called to participate in the fulfillment of end-time events through Spirit-enabled prayer.

In those trajectories in the early Pentecostal literature that adopt the categories of classical dispensationalism, a clear distinction between the Church and Israel is

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<sup>2</sup> Though an optimistic attitude concerning the true church is evident throughout most of the early Pentecostal periodical literature, some groups proposed that only a small number would comprise the bride of Christ and that most of the Church would enter into the great tribulation. For example, Editor Elizabeth Sexton spoke consistently of the bride as 'the little flock' in *The Bridegroom's Messenger*.

maintained. On the one hand, some believe that most of the Church will enter the great tribulation for corrective punishment. On the other hand, some teach that all Christians will be taken away in the rapture, an idea more in keeping with classical dispensationalism. Within the Finished Work stream, the 'Church age' is viewed as a parenthesis in God's prophetic plan, so that the purpose of the gospel is to prepare the Church for the rapture, and the work of the Spirit is relegated to this purpose. In this stream, often the Church is viewed as the Gentile, heavenly people of God, while Israel is viewed as the Jewish, earthly people of God, for whom Jesus is viewed as Bridegroom and King respectively. A contemporary Pentecostal eschatology will be informed by these differences in ecclesiology that emerge in the early Pentecostal narrative.

From the perspective of this core theological narrative, early Pentecostals also discern the role of historical and social events in the world. These events appear to confirm rather than inform differing eschatological perspectives. Thus, the same event could be perceived to hold different meanings for differing perspectives. The Great War (1914-1918) is a prime example. In those trajectories that lean toward classical dispensationalism, the Great War is perceived to be one of the 'sorrows' that would precede the great tribulation. In this case, historical events are made to 'fit' within the predetermined script. In those trajectories that lean away from dispensationalism and that allow a contemporary reading of apocalyptic texts, the Great War is perceived to be a fulfillment of the destruction described in the book of Revelation. Here, historical events are brought within the purview of a hermeneutic that reads Scripture in a participatory way. In either case, while historical events enter into the conversation about eschatology, they do not determine the core eschatological narrative. This insight will be taken up in the development of a contemporary Pentecostal eschatology.

Finally, the early Pentecostal periodical literature reveals that various dialogue partners outside of the Pentecostal movement were invited into their conversations about eschatology. Among the Wesleyan Holiness groups, outside contributors were most prominent in *The Bridegroom's Messenger*. Editor Elizabeth Sexton reprinted several articles from non-Pentecostal journals which promoted views of eschatology consistent with the classical dispensational view, most often concerning the role of the Great War in prophecy and the return of the

Jews to Palestine. The most frequent dialogue partner in *The Bridegroom's Messenger* was Lutheran pastor, Joseph A. Seiss, whose view of multiple companies being translated to heaven before and during the tribulation period was promoted by Sexton and other Pentecostal contributors. A detailed comparison of Seiss and these contributors indicates that although they borrowed from him, they did not simply parrot his views, but rather integrated them into their own constructions.<sup>3</sup> The writings of J.A. Seiss were also prominently engaged by G.F. Taylor, editor of *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate*. Curiously, C.I. Scofield is engaged in this stream only indirectly by F.J. Lee.

The outside dialogue partners among Finished Work Pentecostals were more numerous. Carrie Judd Montgomery, editor of *Triumphs of Faith*, included articles by several Reformed Holiness leaders including Andrew Murray, A.B. Simpson, and R.A. Torrey. The Assemblies of God *Evangel* promoted and engaged C.I. Scofield's writings heavily. Other outside dialogue partners in this stream include Arno C. Gaebelein, a contributing editor for the *Scofield Reference Bible*, G. Campbell Morgan, a contributor to *The Fundamentals*, and James Gray, pastor of the Moody Church, Chicago. The fact that some of these authors wrote blatantly against the Pentecostal view of Spirit baptism led the early Pentecostals to qualify (at times) the recommendations of their material. It may be noted that the majority of the dialogue partners in both streams of early Pentecostalism were committed to a premillennial dispensational view of eschatology.

The answer to the question of why these dialogue partners were chosen over others, especially when these writers were sometimes antithetical to the Pentecostal belief in Spirit baptism, is probably found in the larger conversation that was going on in the religious world concerning the correct approach to Scripture in the light of the new 'liberal' attempt to undermine the basic beliefs of conservative Christianity by means of higher critical approaches to biblical interpretation. The emerging fundamentalist reaction was to find the means to ensure that the foundations of the faith remained secure. Because they shared many of the same conservative principles, early Pentecostals assumed that the

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<sup>3</sup> For example, Seiss does not designate the bride of Christ as 'overcomers', a theme that was prominent in Sexton's contributions. E.T. Slaybaugh did, however, quote verbatim large sections of Seiss's commentary on the Apocalypse.

most appropriate allies for dialogue were those in this conservative group.<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, the early Pentecostals did not often reflect critically upon the tensions that were created by their promotion of the fundamentalist dispensational eschatology of this group, to say nothing of their often incompatible hermeneutical presuppositions. In some ways, it may have served the early Pentecostals better to have conversed more with their ‘liberal’ brothers and sisters! In this light, the criteria for selecting contemporary partners for dialogue might include such things as compatibility with or openness toward the Pentecostal understanding of the Holy Spirit including the use of Pentecostal-friendly hermeneutical methodologies and engagement with the elements of the fivefold gospel narrative that emerged from the discerning spirituality at the heart of the Pentecostal movement.

## **II. Discerning Contemporary Contributions to Pentecostal Eschatology**

### **Introduction**

The awareness that discernment concerning eschatology in early Pentecostalism allowed for a variety of perspectives calls for a critique of the current historical analyses of the movement reviewed in Chapter 2. The employment of the methodology of discernment in the development of a Pentecostal eschatology also enables a critique of the biblical and theological contributions to eschatology among contemporary Pentecostal scholars. This assessment will be conducted from the standpoint of the discernment about eschatology that was identified as flowing from the heart of the movement in its early years. The purpose of this evaluation is to identify those contemporary voices that may serve as helpful dialogue partners in the effort to develop a genuine Pentecostal eschatology. The primary question to ask of the contemporary literature, then, is, which contributions are most faithful to the heart of the movement in terms of assigning the experience of the Spirit a central role in the interpretive and discerning process?

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<sup>4</sup> For a study of the relationship between Pentecostalism and fundamentalism in the United States from 1906 to 1943, see G.W. King, ‘Disfellowshipped: Pentecostal Responses to Fundamentalism in the United States, 1906-1943’ (PhD thesis; University of Birmingham, 2009). Cf. also G.M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism 1870–1925* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp. 93-4; Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel*, pp. 111-12.

### **A. A Critique of the Historical Reviews of Early Pentecostalism**

Although Pentecostal historiography is not the primary concern of this study, my analysis of the early Pentecostal periodical literature sheds some new light upon contemporary reviews of early Pentecostalism, specifically in regard to eschatology. This critique begins with the three contributions that focus upon the role of eschatology in the formation of Pentecostal thought and then moves to those that examine eschatology within early Pentecostalism and beyond.

My research has confirmed the conclusions of Donald Dayton that early Pentecostal eschatology should be seen as a parallel development to the rise of classical dispensationalism, with common dynamics and much intermingling.<sup>5</sup> This insight, however, was found to be most credible within the Wesleyan Holiness branch of early Pentecostalism, making Dayton's claim that the inner logic of Pentecostalism is best represented by the fourfold (Finished Work) pattern somewhat ironic, and perhaps even suspect. Indeed, his assertion that the four elements of the 'full gospel' adhere around soteriology, as they emerged from the evolution of sanctification into the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the radicalization of sanctification into the doctrine of divine healing, found clear resonance within the early Finished Work stream. If this tight logic of the fourfold pattern is also what allowed classical dispensational eschatology to be so appealing within this stream of the movement, as my research suggests, then a reconsideration of the significance of sanctification for eschatology, as well as its role generally within the inner logic of Pentecostalism, appears to be in order.

I concur that the analysis of William D. Faupel is extremely helpful in painting in broad strokes the significance of eschatology as it emerged in the American Holiness movement for the birth and early development of Pentecostal thought.<sup>6</sup> It appears, however, to be applicable mostly for those parts of the movement that adopted classical dispensationalism early on (i.e. the Finished Work stream and parts of the Wesleyan Holiness stream) and does not seem to account for the variety of eschatological views that was discovered in the early Wesleyan Holiness stream of the movement. For example, though early Pentecostalism may be associated broadly with the fundamentalism that was emerging in reaction against American liberalism, as Faupel implies, the

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<sup>5</sup> Dayton, *Theological Roots*, p. 33.

<sup>6</sup> Faupel, *Everlasting Gospel*, pp. 44-186.

trajectories of thought concerning eschatology that flowed from a distinctive Pentecostal hermeneutic certainly did not fit within fundamentalism with its attending eschatology of dispensationalism. As was noted earlier, not all early Pentecostal eschatology followed the modernist based claim that prophecy is ‘history written in advance’. Likewise, Faupel’s conclusion that eschatology was essential in the birth and development of Pentecostal thought, but not so much in its long-term growth and subsequent definition, may also need to be rethought in the light of the variety found in the discerning activity of the Wesleyan stream. Indeed, the ongoing significance of eschatology appears to be sustained beyond the initial development of the Pentecostal movement (the first decade) most readily within those groups or trajectories of thought in which discernment remained active. Again, his conclusion seems most appropriate to those parts of the tradition that limited or shut down any discernment concerning eschatology.

My research shows that the assertion of Peter Prosser that the primary influence of classical dispensationalism on the Pentecostal movement came through the distribution of the *Scotfield Reference Bible*<sup>7</sup> is valid for the Finished Work stream but not for the Wesleyan Holiness stream, at least as that influence may be deduced from the early periodical literature through 1920. As noted above, none of the periodicals examined from the Wesleyan Holiness stream promoted Scofield’s Study Bible, and the first reference to C.I. Scofield does not occur in this stream until 1919.<sup>8</sup> Conversely, Scofield’s Reference Bible was heavily promoted early on in the periodicals of the Finished Work stream, especially in the Assemblies of God *Evangel*, and several articles by Scofield are found there. The early Wesleyan Holiness stream appears to have been influenced more by the dispensational ideas of Joseph A. Seiss, as his writings are promoted throughout *The Bridegroom’s Messenger* and *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate*.

Those historically focused contributions that either examined eschatology generally within early Pentecostalism and beyond or those that examined individual leaders in the movement are almost unanimous in claiming that early Pentecostals adopted and modified the eschatology of classical dispensationalism, the influence usually being traced from J.N. Darby to C.I. Scofield into

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<sup>7</sup> Prosser, *Dispensationalist Eschatology*, pp. 253-62.

<sup>8</sup> *PHA* 2.41 (Feb 6, 1919), p. 15. This study does not address the possible influence of Scofield in the Wesleyan Holiness stream beyond the early 1920s.

Pentecostal circles. Again, according to my research, this claim is most indicative of the Finished Work stream of the movement, but needs to be qualified when referencing the Wesleyan Holiness stream. The kind of variety found in the early Wesleyan Pentecostal periodicals is more profound than what is implied by the claim made by several historians for eschatological diversity generated by the modifications to the dispensational script. Indeed, the latter ‘diversity’ exists even within the Finished Work stream, but the diversity found in the Wesleyan Holiness stream arises, not so much from the question of how to fit Pentecostal distinctives into the dispensational scheme, but from the question of what does the individual and communal experience of Spirit baptism mean for the future and for the reading of biblical texts concerning the future. This systemic diversity arises, in other words, from the practice of discernment. Thus, it appears that the majority of historians have overlooked the early contributions of Wesleyan Holiness Pentecostals to make sweeping assertions that generally apply only to the Finished Work stream of the movement.<sup>9</sup>

### **B. A Critique of the Biblical Contributions to Eschatology by Pentecostal Scholars**

The biblical contributions to eschatology by Pentecostal scholars reviewed in Chapter 2 may be divided into three genre categories: the Gospels, the Pauline epistles, and the book of Revelation. Though these are not intended to be theologically constructive pieces, the exegetical conclusions reached by the authors certainly imply a particular eschatological position. First, as the only piece to address a text in the Gospels, Priscilla Patten’s conclusion that Mark 13 conveys a present word of encouragement to Mark’s readers who face persecution stands in continuity with the discerning tradition of early Pentecostalism:

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<sup>9</sup> The proposal of D.M. Coulter, ‘Pentecostal Visions of the End: Eschatology, Ecclesiology and the Fascination of the *Left Behind* Series’, *JPT* 14.1 (2005), pp. 81-98, that early Pentecostals were drawn to dispensationalism because of their ecclesiological concerns (to be the true church) is symptomatic of this lacuna. Coulter overlooks Tomlinson’s contribution to ecclesiology in the Church of God as articulated in *The Church of God Evangel*, which was tied closely to a vision of eschatology very different from dispensationalism. One exception to this is the work of Douglas Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, who summarizes the theological visions of several early Pentecostal leaders. Though he does not make this explicit, Jacobsen’s analysis reveals the kind of systemic diversity among early Wesleyan Holiness Pentecostals (Spurling, Seymour, and King) that I am espousing here.

prophetic texts do not simply predict the future but offer a present word to a discerning audience.<sup>10</sup>

Second, the four contributions that focus on the Pauline epistles share a common theme: the tension of the eschatological ‘already’ and ‘not yet’. Furthermore, both French Arrington and Gordon Fee point out that the activity of the Holy Spirit, a hallmark of the anticipated messianic age in Judaism, is central to Paul’s perspective.<sup>11</sup> While Arrington highlights the cosmic reach of God’s redemptive activity, Fee notes that the Spirit enables both Jews and Gentiles to live according to the new covenant, essentially redefining the people of God. Thus, the Spirit is important, not only to the individual, but also to the corporate experience of Christians. Charles Holman and Hubert Jurgensen address the issue of delay from a pastoral perspective, encouraging faithfulness in the context of expectancy.<sup>12</sup> None of these biblical interpreters appear to be predisposed toward any particular eschatological position, but strive to exegete the text in its own setting. The conclusions presented in these contributions are, at least, compatible with core Pentecostal presuppositions.

Turning to the book of Revelation, the Pentecostal interpreters that I reviewed display the variety of views that were discovered in the early Pentecostal literature. First, the presuppositions which undergird Stanley Horton’s interpretation are aligned fully with classical dispensationalism (biblical literalism, and the separation of Israel and the Church), resulting in a restatement of the dispensational future script, with little interaction with Pentecostal spirituality.<sup>13</sup> Second, the contributions of R. Hollis Gause and of Rebecca Skaggs and Priscilla Benham are more open to Pentecostal applications of the text, but they still appear to be somewhat beholden to the dispensational script of future events, arguing for the rapture of the Church followed by a tribulation period that emphasizes the fulfillment of the (separate) Jewish covenant with Abraham.<sup>14</sup> Third, the most helpful contributions according to the guidelines of this critique, come from Francis Martin, Robby Waddell, and John Christopher Thomas, who consciously employ a Pentecostal hermeneutic in the interpretive

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<sup>10</sup> Patten, ‘Parable and Secret in the Gospel of Mark’.

<sup>11</sup> Arrington, *Paul’s Aeon Theology*; Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*.

<sup>12</sup> Holman, *Till Jesus Comes*; Jurgensen, ‘Awaiting the Return of Christ’.

<sup>13</sup> Horton, *The Ultimate Victory*.

<sup>14</sup> Gause, *Revelation*; Skaggs and Benham, *Revelation*.

process (especially in the case of Waddell) and utilize narrative and intertextual methodologies that are compatible with such a hermeneutic.<sup>15</sup> The result is an interpretation of the Apocalypse that has prophetic relevance for the contemporary reader and yields fruitful insights for a contemporary Pentecostal eschatology.

### **C. A Critique of the Constructive Contributions to Pentecostal Eschatology**

It was observed from the review in Chapter 2 of theologically constructive contributions to Pentecostal eschatology that three trajectories of thought may be distinguished in the literature: (1) those whose constructive efforts mimic both the presuppositions and conclusions of classical dispensationalism, giving no consideration to Pentecostal distinctives, (2) those that are shaped largely by classical dispensational presuppositions and conclusions but also promote Pentecostal beliefs, resulting in theological tension, and (3) those that allow Pentecostal theology and spirituality to inform directly their construction of eschatology. It is significant and, I believe, not coincidental that the same three trajectories may be observed in the early Pentecostal literature. This high measure of comparability supports the need to bring current efforts of theological construction under the critique of Pentecostal discernment that I am suggesting here.

The contributors in the first group narrate the standard dispensational script, and most are forthright in their dependence upon classical dispensational presuppositions. Two seeming exceptions warrant special notice. Stanley Horton's conclusions regarding the role of Israel during the tribulation and millennium stand in conflict with his argument for a unified understanding of Israel and the Church.<sup>16</sup> Also, his modified dispensational stance does not take into account Pentecostal presuppositions. Elijah Hill's fluid interpretation of the book of Revelation, the anomaly in this group, cuts across some standard elements of the dispensational script, but his lack of appeal to Pentecostal beliefs and his

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<sup>15</sup> Martin, 'Book of the Apocalypse'; Waddell, *The Spirit of the Book of Revelation*; Thomas, 'The Mystery of the Great Whore'; 'The Thousand Year Reign'; 'Toward a Pentecostal Theology of Prophetic Witness'; 'Pneumatic Discernment: The Image of the Beast and His Number – Revelation 13.11-18'.

<sup>16</sup> Horton, *Our Destiny*.

heavy dependence upon dispensational assumptions leave his conclusions suspect as a consistent Pentecostal eschatology.<sup>17</sup>

The second group brings Pentecostal beliefs into the discussion but remains beholden to the classical dispensational script. Guy Duffield and Nathaniel Van Cleave argue for the present operation of the spiritual gifts in the Church based upon the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost as prophesied by Joel.<sup>18</sup> Supporting his proposal of a christological framework for eschatology, French Arrington appeals to the overlapping of the future and present ages to argue that the new creation, that was begun with Christ's first advent and the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, will be completed at Christ's second coming.<sup>19</sup> William Simmons also appeals to a modified two-age motif to construct a proleptic understanding of the kingdom of God, viewing the outpouring of the Spirit and the charismatic community of faith as eschatological events that bring the future presence of God into the present.<sup>20</sup> Although these insights are helpful to inform a distinct Pentecostal eschatology, the fact that these contributors end up with a future script identical with that of classical dispensationalism suggests that the dispensational presuppositions of a literal hermeneutic and exclusive ecclesiology are given priority. Any distinct Pentecostal beliefs are subsumed within this framework.

The contributions in the third group give priority to Pentecostal theology and spirituality in their constructions of eschatology, and few articulate a specific sequence of end-time events. Those that do narrate a future script limit their discussions to the *parousia* of Christ, the millennial reign, final judgment, and the new heaven and new earth. The majority of these scholars have the following themes in common: (1) The eschatological vision is framed broadly upon an understanding of the kingdom of God that is both 'already' and 'not yet'. Thus, proleptic anticipation or foretaste, defined both christologically and soteriologically, is a major theme among these contributors. (2) Flowing from this 'inaugurated' eschatology, contemporary political and/or social critique is integral to the eschatological vision. (3) The new heaven and new earth will appear as the transformation of the old creation, not as a completely new creation. (4) A belief

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<sup>17</sup> Hill, *The Unsealing of the Last Things!*

<sup>18</sup> Duffield and Van Cleave, *Foundations*, p. 426.

<sup>19</sup> Arrington, *Christian Doctrine*, III, pp. 221-54.

<sup>20</sup> Simmons, 'Eschatology', pp. 105-107.

in the rapture of the Church, a primary feature of dispensationalism, is not acknowledged. These themes may be seen as possible points of consensus that carry with them significant implications for a contemporary Pentecostal eschatology.

While there are points of agreement among the contributors of this group, each one brings a unique perspective to the conversation. Peter Kuzmič highlights the inauguration of the kingdom of God in the first coming of Jesus and the outpouring of the Spirit and notes that a proper consideration of the continuity between the present and future aspects of the kingdom leads to the development of a robust social conscience and ethical responsibility in our world today.<sup>21</sup> J. Rodman Williams, who also takes the kingdom of God as the framework for eschatology, is the most outspoken concerning the adoption of an ecclesiology in which the promises to Israel have been fully realized in the Church.<sup>22</sup> Steven Land provides a helpful and comprehensive framework for the integration of Pentecostal spirituality and eschatology, focused especially upon the transformation of the affections, and worked out through the concept of the eschatological Trinity.<sup>23</sup> Identifying his view of Christ's return as premillennial and post-tribulationist, Larry Hart appeals to a pneumatic approach to Scripture, according to which biblical passages can both have contemporary relevance and take on heightened meaning for the last days.<sup>24</sup> Peter Althouse is instrumental in bringing the work of Jürgen Moltmann into conversation with four Pentecostal theologians, with an emphasis upon the political, social, and cosmic dimensions of Pentecostal eschatology.<sup>25</sup> Mayling Tan finds grounds in the historic events of the day of Pentecost and the Azusa Street revival and in the biblical writings of John, Luke, and Paul to construct an eschatology that promotes contemporary cultural engagement by means of encounter with the dynamic eschatological Spirit.<sup>26</sup> In conversation with the theological forebears of Wesleyan Pentecostalism, Matthew Thompson fleshes out the proleptic dimensions of soteriology by expanding the fivefold gospel narrative on a cosmic scale.<sup>27</sup> Finally, Amos Yong highlights the

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<sup>21</sup> Kuzmič, 'History and Eschatology', pp. 135-64.

<sup>22</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, III, pp. 51-54.

<sup>23</sup> Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, pp. 182-223.

<sup>24</sup> Hart, *Truth Aflame*, pp. 139, 453-62.

<sup>25</sup> Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days*, pp. 158-97.

<sup>26</sup> Tan, 'Pneumatological Eschatology', pp. 65-178.

<sup>27</sup> Thompson, 'Kingdom Come', pp. 179-228.

need to redirect Pentecostal eschatology toward a pneumatological apocalypticism that stands in congruence with the holistic soteriology of the movement and thereby informs a political theology and practice for contemporary society.<sup>28</sup> Keeping the insights of these contributors in mind will be helpful in the construction of a contemporary Pentecostal eschatology.

### **III. Toward a Pentecostal Eschatology: Discerning the Way Forward**

#### **Introduction**

The broad contours of a contemporary Pentecostal eschatology that flows out of the discerning spirituality of the early Pentecostal movement and that takes into account helpful contemporary contributions may now be enumerated.

First, the fivefold ‘full gospel’ paradigm that emerged in the early Wesleyan Holiness stream provides the best narrative context in which to discern the way forward. This conclusion is supported by the critique of current Pentecostal historiography which appears to have overlooked the variety of perspectives about eschatology that this stream produced. Specifically, the inclusion of the doctrine of sanctification as a crisis-development dialectic has important ramifications for Pentecostal eschatology.

Second, fresh insights about ecclesiology that have eschatological import should emerge out of the conversation between the components of the fivefold gospel. Perceptions about the contemporary church from an eschatological perspective have important implications for its relationship to the modern state of Israel (and attending political issues), as well as its own ministry and mission.

Third, recent biblical scholarship on the Apocalypse which is grounded in Pentecostal hermeneutical insights represents a movement to reclaim the theological richness of texts that have previously been relegated exclusively to a futurist interpretation. This trend lends support to developing a coherent Pentecostal eschatology that will utilize the results of such scholarship.

Fourth, recent theological contributions to Pentecostal eschatology that take seriously Pentecostal presuppositions point to the need to articulate the fivefold narrative within a larger Trinitarian and creational framework. Such a move

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<sup>28</sup> Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, pp. 316-58.

expands the eschatological scope beyond individual salvation to include a vision of cosmic redemption and helps to unify the experiences of salvation within this larger vision of the kingdom of God.

Fifth, the most helpful theological dialogue partners outside the Pentecostal tradition are those whose theological agendas are at least compatible with basic Pentecostal presuppositions and who are not hostile toward the movement. Those who have already been in dialogue with recent Pentecostal theology would appear to be the most promising.<sup>29</sup> A major lesson learned from the past is that Pentecostals should not adopt uncritically any eschatological vision developed apart from a distinct Pentecostal soteriology and spirituality. Otherwise, the eschatology may impose various foreign elements that must be held in tension with Pentecostal perceptions or be allowed to compromise those perceptions. Such has been the case with the long-standing 'uneasy relationship' between Pentecostalism and dispensationalism.

Sixth, although not an essential component of the core eschatological narrative, contemporary historical and social currents should be approached from the same discerning center. The question is not, how does this or that event or trend fit within a preconceived eschatological script? But rather, how does it function to help or hinder the eschatological purposes of God for the Church and for the world?

#### **A. Eschatology and the Fivefold Gospel**

From the rather sweeping historical perspective of the early Pentecostals, the restoration of the fivefold gospel is ordered thus: Jesus is *Savior* (Protestant Reformation), *Sanctifier* (Wesleyan revival), *Healer* (Divine healing movement), *Coming King* (prophetic conference movement and the shift to premillennialism), and *Spirit Baptizer* (late Holiness and early Pentecostal movements). It is noteworthy that because of its eschatological significance, the last of the five components to be restored, Spirit baptism, becomes determinative for viewing the others. Through the outpouring of the Spirit as the latter rain, the elements of the

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<sup>29</sup> This is not to say that productive dialogue cannot take place with those who oppose basic Pentecostal presuppositions, but it is to claim that the most fruitful dialogue results among those who have a solid base of common ground.

fivefold gospel are infused with eschatological significance.<sup>30</sup> Jesus as Spirit Baptizer sets his salvific work on an eschatological course. Furthermore, the prior association of Spirit baptism with sanctification in the Wesleyan Holiness movement, prompted early Pentecostals to identify Spirit baptism as a ‘third blessing’, occurring subsequent to sanctification. Thus, it was natural to ‘rearrange’ the order of the restored fivefold gospel so that Jesus as Spirit Baptizer comes after Jesus as Sanctifier, and Jesus as Coming King appears at the end of the narrative, which is what we find in the myriad of personal testimonies in the early Pentecostal literature: ‘Jesus is *Savior, Sanctifier, Spirit Baptizer, Healer, and Coming King*’. This (re)ordering of the story is already an interpretation, implying that Jesus as Coming King will complete his work as Savior, Sanctifier, Spirit Baptizer, and Healer.

The fluidity of the order of the fivefold gospel noted here points to the inherent correlation between the components of the fivefold gospel itself. The dynamism of Pentecostal spirituality affirms that the components of the fivefold gospel are not neatly sequential but comprise a holistic or perichoretic unity. Though impossible, there is a real sense in which every part of the narrative needs to be told at once.<sup>31</sup> Like a testimony, the soteriological-eschatological narrative is not necessarily limited to only one way or order of telling, as experience does not always fit within neatly devised theological constructs. This is why, even though it does have structure, a Pentecostal narrative eschatology cannot be reduced to a predetermined script of future events.

The importance of the unity of the fivefold gospel for a congruent eschatology may also be seen in its utilization in recent Pentecostal scholarship. The move to reclaim the fivefold gospel as the theological heart of Pentecostalism finds its most cogent support in the proposals of John Christopher Thomas<sup>32</sup> and

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<sup>30</sup> Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, p. 63; F.D. Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), pp. 40-41.

<sup>31</sup> Perhaps this intuitive impulse was one of the forces behind the development of Oneness doctrine in the early Pentecostal movement. Like the persons of the Trinity, however, the components of the fivefold narrative can be distinguished theologically and related perichoretically.

<sup>32</sup> J.C. Thomas, ‘Pentecostal Theology in the Twenty-First Century’, *Pneuma* 20.1 (1998), pp. 3-19 (now in J.C. Thomas, *The Spirit of the New Testament* [Blandford Forum: Deo, 2005], pp. 3-22); J.C. Thomas (ed.), *Toward a Pentecostal Ecclesiology: The Church and the Fivefold Gospel* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2010).

Kenneth J. Archer.<sup>33</sup> Undergirded by the foundational work of R. Hollis Gause<sup>34</sup> and Steven J. Land,<sup>35</sup> these scholars envision the construction of a full-fledged Pentecostal theology based on the fivefold gospel.<sup>36</sup> Crucial to this vision is the assumption that what is distinctive about Pentecostalism is the *Gestalt* or total configuration of the fivefold gospel and not any single component within it. Remove any single element and the distinctive *Pentecostal* full gospel evaporates. That Spirit baptism is integrated fully into the soteriological nexus of the narrative is another crucial concern. Failure to do so allows power to be divorced from purity and could easily promote a distorted eschatology. Steven Land and Matthew Thompson<sup>37</sup> address this concern by recognizing sanctification as the heart of the narrative, thereby ensuring the ethical as well as the vocational significance of Spirit baptism. Frank Macchia<sup>38</sup> and Amos Yong<sup>39</sup> attend to the

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<sup>33</sup> K.J. Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic: Spirit, Scripture, and Community* (JPTSup, 28; Continuum, 2005; Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2009), pp. 160-61, 223-60 (Page numbers cited in this study are from the CPT Press edition); *idem*, 'A Pentecostal Way of Doing Theology: Method and Manner', *IJST* 9.3 (July, 2007), pp. 311-14; *idem*, 'Nourishment for our Journey: The Pentecostal *Via Salutis* and Sacramental Ordinances', *JPT* 13.1 (2004), pp. 88-95. Archer promotes narrative as an integrative theological method with the fivefold gospel as its theological center, articulated within a Spirit-Word hermeneutic. Following the lead of J.C. Thomas, Archer identifies five corresponding sacraments in which the narrative is embodied. For an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of Archer's methodology in comparison with intercultural theology, see M.J. Cartledge, 'Pentecostal Theological Method and Intercultural Theology', *Transformation* 25.2-3 (2008), pp. 92-102.

<sup>34</sup> R.H. Gause, *Living in the Spirit: The Way of Salvation* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, rev. edn, 2009), pp. 1-7. Cf. also, R.H. Gause, 'A Pentecostal Response to Pinnock's Proposal', *JPT* 14.2 (2006), pp. 183-88. Gause acknowledges the unity of redemptive experiences (which includes all elements of the fivefold) through their shared characteristics. Specifically, they are provided by Jesus Christ, received by faith, announced by the Word of God, and experienced through the agency of the Holy Spirit. Gause emphasizes that soteriology is thoroughly pneumatic. He also affirms that the apocalyptic experience of salvation in Pentecostalism orients eschatology toward a kingdom fulfillment and longing.

<sup>35</sup> Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, pp. 125-61.

<sup>36</sup> K.J. Archer, 'The Fivefold Gospel and the Mission of the Church: Ecclesiastical Implications and Opportunities', in Thomas (ed.), *Toward a Pentecostal Ecclesiology*, pp. 7-43, assesses the strengths and weaknesses of recent articulations of the fivefold gospel for the development of a Pentecostal ecclesiology. Although theology proper is not her focus, Virginia Nolivos, 'A Pentecostal Paradigm for the Latin American Family: An Instrument of Transformation', *AJPS* 5.2 (2002), pp. 222-34, utilizes the fivefold gospel paradigm to address the social and spiritual situation of the Latin American family.

<sup>37</sup> Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, pp. 23-32; Thompson, 'Kingdom Come', pp. 104-23, 152-225; *idem*, 'The Greatest of These: The Theological Virtues and Pentecostal Soteriology', Paper Presented to the 39th Annual Meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies, 2010. As noted in Chapter 2, Thompson develops a comprehensive Pentecostal kingdom-oriented eschatology around a macrocosmic expansion of the fivefold gospel. Thompson argues for the reintegration of a Wesleyan transformative, processive view of sanctification as the theological center of soteriology and eschatology, undergirded by a sacramental and soteriological view of Spirit baptism.

<sup>38</sup> Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit*, pp. 89-154; *idem*, *Justified in the Spirit: Creation, Redemption, and the Triune God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), pp. 85-99, 337; *idem*, 'Jesus is

issue by adopting an expanded role for Spirit baptism to address the various domains in which salvation is experienced (including a transformational view of both justification and sanctification), resulting in a ‘pneumatological soteriology’. In terms of developing a congruent Pentecostal eschatology, both emphases are essential.<sup>40</sup> *Sanctification* as a theologically distinct doctrine and experience is essential as the basis for a transformational eschatology, and *Spirit baptism* is essential as the eschatological impetus and orientation of transformational salvation. What these (and other) Pentecostal scholars have in common is that a Trinitarian understanding of the kingdom of God is presented as the larger narrative context of the fivefold gospel.<sup>41</sup>

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Victor: The Eschatology of the Blumhardts with Implications for Pentecostal Eschatologies’, in Althouse and Waddell (eds.), *Perspectives in Pentecostal Eschatologies*, pp. 399-400; *idem*, ‘The Church of the Latter Rain: The Church and Eschatology in Pentecostal Perspective’, in Thomas (ed.), *Toward a Pentecostal Ecclesiology*, pp. 248-58. In his recent work, *Justified in the Spirit*, Macchia breaks open the standard Protestant concept of forensic justification by developing from Scripture its highly participatory character and by showing how Spirit baptism, as the effusion of the life-giving Spirit sent from the vindicated and anointed Son, includes all salvific experiences in terms of the ‘rightwising’ action of God. This effectively grounds all salvific experience in the *Gestalt* of Christ’s kingdom-inaugurating actions (incarnation, death, resurrection, exaltation, and Spirit-outpouring). The components of the fivefold are seen as theologically nuanced and ‘mutually defining’ dimensions of the unified, processive action of salvation in the life-giving flow of the Spirit. By giving a theological basis for the ‘eschatologizing’ of all aspects of salvation through the outpouring of the eschatological Spirit, Macchia’s synthesis allows eschatology to be grounded in the concept of the inauguration of the kingdom of God in a way that is both thoroughly Pentecostal and ecumenical.

<sup>39</sup> A. Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Pentecostal Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), pp. 81-120, explores the concept of Spirit baptism as a NT metaphor for the full salvific work of God and defines this as a ‘pneumatological soteriology’: salvation as a multidimensional, holistic, transformative, and dynamic process. Cf. also Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, pp. 95-98, where the fivefold gospel figures prominently as the framework for a constructive political theology in dialogue with Pentecostal theology. He notes that the fivefold is useful as an organizing motif, especially in ‘the specific constellation that emerges when brought together’, in that it ‘presents a pluriform and polyphonic Christology, pneumatology, and, by extension, soteriology’. In this framework, Yong demonstrates the holistic nature of Pentecostal soteriology and develops the political implications of a congruent pneumatological eschatology.

<sup>40</sup> S. Chan, *Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spiritual Tradition* (JPTSUP, 21; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), p. 70.

<sup>41</sup> For example, V.-M. Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology: Pentecostal and Ecumenical Perspectives on Ecclesiology, Soteriology, and Theology of Mission* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2002), pp. 223-24; *idem*, ‘Spirit, Reconciliation and Healing in the Community: Missiological Insights from Pentecostals’, *International Review of Mission* 94.372 (January, 2005), p. 44, takes up the kingdom of God as the unifying concept for the fivefold gospel and promotes the development of a holistic missiology. He recognizes a necessary interrelation of the various theological tasks (Trinitarian theology, Christology, pneumatology, soteriology, ecclesiology, missiology) and teases out the eschatological dimensions of these interrelationships. Cf. also S.M. Studebaker, ‘Beyond Tongues: A Pentecostal Theology of Grace’, in S.M. Studebaker (ed.), *Defining Issues in Pentecostalism: Classical and Emergent* (McMaster Divinity College Press Theological Studies Series; Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2008), pp. 46-68; *idem*, ‘The Spirit in Creation: A Unified Theology of Grace and Creation Care’, *Zygon* 43.4 (December, 2008), pp. 943-60. In an attempt to overcome the ontological dichotomy between the

With these considerations in view, how might a contemporary Pentecostal eschatology be discerned within the matrix of the fivefold gospel? The approach taken here is to inquire how each of the elements of the fivefold gospel might appear when viewed from the perspective of Jesus as Coming King. For this particular study, I have chosen the text of Revelation 21–22 (in appropriate portions) to serve as the primary interpretive lens through which the fivefold gospel is viewed. It should be noted that because biblical texts are central to the methodology of Pentecostal discernment, the texts themselves and the trajectories of thought they encourage will set the boundaries of the discussion. Revelation 21–22 is only one such text. Adding other texts to the inquiry over time would enhance the richness of this approach. It should also be noted that the very nature of a Pentecostal hermeneutic that has the Spirit-Word-Community at its core dictates that no single articulation is the final word. Because the interpretive process is kept open in the ongoing dynamic of the human-divine relationship, it is necessarily an open-ended dialogue.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, because the global Pentecostal church as a discerning community is diverse in terms of social and cultural location (as became evident very quickly within the early Pentecostal movement), a full-fledged Pentecostal eschatology will host a variety of voices from many interpretive contexts (see Rev. 7.9). Yet, the call to discern what the Spirit is saying to the churches is offered to each ‘one having an ear’ (Rev. 3.6). Thus, in keeping with the early Pentecostal practice of discernment, this preliminary study is offered as suggestive for further reflection and dialogue. It is an invitation for others to join in the discerning process.

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so-called objective and subjective elements of salvation, thereby subordinating pneumatology to Christology. Studebaker draws on the Pentecostal experience of the Spirit to propose a ‘Pentecostal theology of grace’ that is grounded in the identity of the Holy Spirit as the person who constitutes loving union within the immanent Trinity, and that finds expression economically in Spirit Christology (the incarnation), which is, in turn, recapitulated in an holistic, Spirit-centered soteriology (the union of believers—and indeed of all of creation—with the Father and the Son). G.D. Fee, ‘The Kingdom of God and the Church’s Global Mission’, in M.W. Dempster, B.D. Klaus, and D. Petersen (eds.), *Called and Empowered: Global Mission in Pentecostal Perspective* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), pp. 7, 9-10, 15-16, views the saving actions of Jesus as both the fulfillment of Israel’s hopes and the inauguration of God’s eschatological kingdom.

<sup>42</sup> L.R. McQueen, *Joel and the Spirit: The Cry of a Prophetic Hermeneutic* (JPTSup, 8; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995; Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2009), pp. 105-109. Pages cited here follow the CPT Press edition.

## B. Discerning Jesus as Savior

*And the Enthroned One said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.' And he said, 'Write, for these words are faithful and true.' And he said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the thirsty out of the spring of the water of life freely. The one who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be to him "God", and he will be to me "son".'*

— Revelation 21.5-7

How might Jesus as Savior be discerned from this brief passage in the final vision of the book of Revelation? This particular pericope offers numerous textual openings through which to 'look back', as it were, through the entire Apocalypse upon the present experience of salvation.

John is addressed with words of salvific import by 'the one sitting on the throne' (Rev. 21.5). The kaleidoscopic nature<sup>43</sup> of the Apocalypse may be experienced by gazing back through the book to see that this throne is 'shared'. In the opening vision of the Apocalypse, the one sitting upon the throne, who is depicted in multi-splendored brilliance (Rev. 4.2-3), is closely associated with 'seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God' (Rev. 4.5; cf. Rev. 1.4). Furthermore, the Lamb is often united with the throne (Rev. 5.13; 6.16; 7.9, 10), sometimes depicted in the 'midst' or 'center' of the throne (Rev. 5.6; 7.17) and even as one to whom the throne also belongs (Rev. 22.1, 3). The fact that both God and the Lamb are worshipped as divine beings (Rev. 4.9-11; 5.9-12; 15.3) also infers shared rulership. Finally, the seven Spirits of God are more tightly woven into the throne imagery by being identified as the seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb (Rev. 5.6). To speak of the throne, then, is to speak of the fullness of the divine being—God Almighty, the Lamb, and the sevenfold Spirit—at once. This signifies that the Lamb *saves* in perichoretic unity with the Father and the Spirit and that the Trinitarian perception of the reign of God is an authentic delimiter for faithful articulation of the fivefold gospel.<sup>44</sup>

John is invited to observe that this Enthroned One is 'making all things new' (Rev. 21.5). As the immediate context shows, 'all things' is a reference to none

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<sup>43</sup> The description of the Apocalypse as a kaleidoscope is borrowed from John Christopher Thomas.

<sup>44</sup> Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, p. 197, suggests that perichoresis is the most helpful model of the Trinity to articulate a genuine Pentecostal eschatology, with God, and not 'speculative end-time sequences', as 'the last thing'. Cf. J. Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom: The Doctrine of God* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), pp. 174-76. Page numbers cited in this study follow the Fortress Press edition.

other than the entire cosmos: ‘a new heaven and a new earth’ (Rev. 21.1). The breadth of this creative action is without comparison in the Apocalypse, but there are echoes of newness prior to this amazing announcement. Twice, a ‘new song’ is sung by groups who are specifically identified as having been redeemed from the earth (Rev. 5.9; 14.3). And twice, promises are made to anyone who overcomes: first, to receive a white stone on which is written a hidden ‘new name’ (Rev. 2.17; cf. Rev. 19.12), and second, to have written upon him or her the name of the new Jerusalem and the ‘new name’ of Jesus, promises signifying the gift of a new inner nature that is characterized by the ever renewing character of Jesus and that is shared by others in the new *polis* of God (Rev. 3.12). That newness in the Apocalypse is associated with redemption reverberates strongly with Paul’s testimony that if anyone is in Christ: ‘new creation!’ (2 Cor. 5.17),<sup>45</sup> and that what really matters is not an outward mark of identity, but rather a ‘new creation!’ (Gal. 6.15). Salvation experienced now as a ‘new birth’ (Jn 3.3, 7) or a ‘new beginning’ or ‘renewal’ (Tit. 3.5) shares proleptically in the eschatological ‘new beginning’ (Mt. 19.28) of all things. It is not that eternity breaks into time, but rather that the eschatological Spirit breaks into the present.<sup>46</sup> Because of this, present salvation *anticipates* final salvation.

The universal scope of eschatological renewal answers the longing of creation to throw off the corruption of decay and share in the glorious freedom that awaits the children of God (Rom. 8.21). In this context, the royal character of Jesus’ salvific action includes the recapitulation of the original vocation of humanity to subdue the created order and protect it from evil (Gen. 1.28; 2.15; Ps. 8.3-8). Jesus comes as the last Adam, the true *imago Dei* (Col. 1.15), to fulfill the royal mandate to deliver creation from every enemy. He will offer up the subdued kingdom to the Father (1 Cor. 15.24-26), having prepared a cosmic garden in which nothing unclean dwells (Jn 14.1-4; Rev. 21.1).<sup>47</sup> The universal scope of the

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<sup>45</sup> Note the lack of a verb in the original text of 2 Cor. 5.17a.

<sup>46</sup> The idea of eschatology as ‘eternal ultimate reality’ breaking in at the moment of conversion is foreign to Pentecostals. J. Moltmann, *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), pp. 13-22, critiques this ‘transposition of eschatology into eternity’. Closer to Pentecostal sensibilities is the idea of ‘pneumatological apocalypticism’ espoused by Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, pp. 330-32, according to which what breaks into the present is not ‘eternity’ but rather the eschatological Spirit.

<sup>47</sup> Russell D. Moore, *The Kingdom of Christ: The New Evangelical Perspective* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), pp. 105-108, represents a ‘new perspective’ among Evangelicals who repudiate traditional dispensationalism. Moore, ‘Leftward to Scofield: The Eclipse of the

final ‘new creation’ invites believers now to see themselves as participants and agents in God’s purpose to renew the cosmos, and engenders an understanding of salvation that goes beyond the individual to encompass social, political, and ecological issues.<sup>48</sup>

After John is instructed to write down this vision and that he can be assured that ‘these words are faithful and true’, the Enthroned One declares, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end’ (Rev. 21.6). This amazing announcement invites the hearer to step to the very edge of the hermeneutical lookout to peer across the entire textual and experiential landscape. The plural verbal form, γέγονεν (*gegonen*), may be translated, ‘they have come to be’, so that what is ‘done’ can refer to the ‘words’ that are ‘faithful and true’ that John is instructed to write (v. 5). In the Apocalypse, the adjectives, πιστὸς καὶ ἀληθινός (*pistos kai alēthinos*, faithful and true) are otherwise used together only to describe Jesus who is speaking to the churches as the ‘faithful and true’ witness (Rev. 3.14) and who is later revealed to John sitting on a white horse, and is called both ‘Faithful and True’ and ‘Word of God’ (Rev. 19.11-13). What has come to fulfillment, then, is the entirety of the words of God which find their truest expression in Jesus, the Word made flesh (Jn 1.14), thus validating the singular translation, ‘It is done!’ This Word was in the beginning (Jn 1.1) and is now at the end bringing to pass what he says, which is his true nature. This Word has come to fulfillment within the boundaries set by the Enthroned One whose very being *constitutes* the boundaries: the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. ‘Alpha and Omega’ is used in the Apocalypse as a designator for both God

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Kingdom in Post-Conservative Evangelical Theology’, *JETS* 47.3 (September, 2004), pp. 423-40, also sounds a warning that more recent moves to embrace inclusivist tendencies (including open theism and pneumatocentric perspectives) will undermine the christocentric character of Scripture and of the kingdom, allowing ecclesiology to slide back into a ‘two ways, two peoples’ perspective that mimics the old dispensational viewpoint, citing Clark Pinnock and Amos Yong as examples. I would suggest that Pentecostal soteriology is christocentric precisely because it is pneumatological (and thus Trinitarian). Cf. W. Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, III (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), pp. 16-17.

<sup>48</sup> R. Jerome Boone, ‘Created for Shalom: Human Agency and Responsibility in the World’, in A. Yong (ed.), *The Spirit Renews the Face of the Earth: Pentecostal Forays in Science and Theology of Creation* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2009), pp. 17-29, notes that the role of humankind as agents of shalom in creation is advanced in Israel’s land laws and recapitulated in Jesus’ concern for justice and care for the poor. Shane Clifton, ‘Preaching the “Full Gospel” in the Context of Global Environmental Crises’, in Yong (ed.), *The Spirit Renews the Face of the Earth*, pp. 117-34, asserts that the Pentecostal narrative that ‘Jesus saves’ should include a pneumatological theology of creation, and that salvation includes ecological liberation.

Almighty and for Jesus (Rev. 1.8; 1.11; 21.6; 22.13), highlighting once more the perichoretic nature of this fulfillment. This all-inclusive self-designation of the Enthroned One means that the Triune God is the source (*ἀρχή*, *archē*), the path, and the goal (*τέλος*, *telos*) of all things (Acts 17.28; Rom. 11.36) and yet exists as One who has no beginning or ending.

For our particular inquiry, this all-encompassing announcement means, first, that the fulfillment of the promise of salvation in Scripture is assured by the faithful character of the Word who will accomplish all that he says. This is the true nature of Jesus as Savior. That the proclamation of Jesus' character as 'Faithful and True' occurs at the *parousia* highlights the primary importance of this event in the fulfillment of the promise of salvation. This event is described primarily as the establishment of righteousness on the earth through victory over the forces of evil, symbolized especially by the beast and the false prophet and those aligned with them (Rev. 19.11-21). The *parousia* is a saving event because Jesus defeats by the word of his mouth the forces that oppose the truth and that practice falsehood through oppressive and unrighteous actions and structures. Present salvation entails being aligned with Jesus as he will be revealed at his coming, that is, being aligned with the practice and promotion of freedom, righteousness, and justice defined by the faithful and true witness.<sup>49</sup> Promotion of these values in their personal, social, and cosmic dimensions is integral to the Church's present mission. The Church proclaims God's reign through word and sacrament and invites people to experience personal freedom by conversion to that reign; the Church demonstrates the righteous reign of God in its fellowship, creating spaces where a diversity of callings amid a plurality of socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds are honored in just structures; and the Church sides with the marginalized in terms of both providing immediate assistance to hurting people and opposing unjust social and political systems.<sup>50</sup> The Church, then, is the justified community<sup>51</sup> and serves as a foretaste of the just social order of the coming kingdom.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> V.-M. Kärkkäinen, "'Truth on Fire': Pentecostal Theology of Mission and the Challenges of a New Millennium', *AJPS* 3.1 (2000), pp. 33-60.

<sup>50</sup> Dempster, 'Evangelism, Social Concern, and the Kingdom of God', in Dempster, Klaus, and Peterson (eds.), *Called and Empowered*, pp. 22-38.

<sup>51</sup> Macchia, *Justified in the Spirit*, pp. 258-66. Cf. also F.D. Macchia, 'Justification and the Spirit: A Pentecostal Reflection of the Doctrine by which the Church Stands or Falls', *Pneuma*

Second, present salvation is to be viewed as ‘in process’, awaiting completion. At first glance, the announcement, ‘It is done!’ appears to echo the cry of Jesus on the cross, ‘It is finished!’ (Jn 19.30). Yet Jesus’ cry, *Τετέλεσται* (*Tetelestai*), is more accurately a declaration of a life-goal accomplished and does not mean that there is nothing more to be done.<sup>53</sup> What is accomplished on the cross still requires being ‘worked out’ between these two announcements. The resurrection and *parousia* are also saving events. Jesus is still *active* as Savior. He is bringing to pass or ‘unpacking’ the weighty significance of his redemptive Word-in-action on the cross, especially through the cruciform suffering of the Church (Acts 9.5; Col. 1.24). This second insight has special relevance as a call for the Church to avoid both the extremes of pessimism and of triumphalism, and to adopt a discerning optimism about the future.<sup>54</sup> Individual salvation, as well, is characterized by continued faithfulness to the Faithful and True Witness, as the believer flees temptations to worship alternate (but false) sources of salvation, especially wealth and power (cf. Rev. 17.6).

Another rewarding textual portal through which insight about salvation is illumined in this pericope appears in v. 6: the Enthroned One ‘will give to whoever is thirsty water from the spring of the water of life freely’. This spring is described further in Rev. 22.1 as ‘a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb’. A similar promise has already appeared once in the Apocalypse, when John is told that the Lamb will

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22.1 (Spring, 2000), pp. 3-21; *idem*, ‘Justification through New Creation: The Holy Spirit and the Doctrine by Which the Church Stands or Falls’, *Theology Today* 58.2 (July, 2001), pp. 202-17.

<sup>52</sup> Brian Klaus, ‘The Holy Spirit and Mission in Eschatological Perspective: A Pentecostal Viewpoint’, *Pneuma* 27.2 (Fall, 2005), pp. 322-42, admonishes that as Pentecostals become more involved in holistic mission, the fast-paced social and political movement towards globalization requires sustained theological reflection. Tormod Engelsen, ‘This-Worldly Realities and Progress in the Light of the Eschatological Kingdom’, in H.D. Hunter and P. Hocken (eds.), *All Together in One Place: Theological Papers from the Brighton Conference on World Evangelization* (JPTSup, 4; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), pp. 192-255, writing from the perspective of the Scandinavian welfare state, warns that social improvement alone is not necessarily a sign of the kingdom of God. Social ministry must be grounded in the proclamation of holistic redemption through Christ.

<sup>53</sup> Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, III, pp. 550-51, writes: ‘Fellowship with Jesus Christ as the basis of Christian eschatology is more than just promise because it rests on an event of fulfillment that has taken place already. Nevertheless, this event is not yet complete. It also carries a reference to a future completion that we are not to regard as simply supplementing the salvation that is already guaranteed but that is constitutive also for the salvation that has come already in Jesus Christ and for its definitiveness.’

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Macchia, ‘The Church of the Latter Rain’, p. 253-58; and P. Althouse, ‘Ascension–Pentecost–Eschaton: A Theological Framework for Pentecostal Ecclesiology’, in Thomas (ed.), *Toward a Pentecostal Ecclesiology*, p. 234. Cf. also Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, pp. 178-79; W. Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, III, pp. 30-32.

lead the innumerable multitude ‘to living springs of waters’ (Rev. 7.17). An intimate connection of these waters with Jesus is suggested in the description of the exalted Christ whose ‘voice is like the sound of many waters’ (Rev. 1.15). The final reference to the water of life in the Apocalypse appears as an invitation given by the Spirit and the bride (and the hearer) for anyone who is thirsty to come and for anyone who desires to take of the water of life freely (Rev. 22.17). These references to final salvation as life-giving water find immediate correspondence in a nearly identical description given by Jesus who tells a Samaritan woman that the water that he gives will be in the recipient a ‘spring of water’ gushing up unto eternal life (Jn 4.14). Later in the Fourth Gospel, Jesus makes this invitation publicly as he cries out in the temple for anyone who thirsts and believes on him to come to him and drink, explaining that, as the Scriptures attest, rivers of water will flow from his (Jesus’) innermost being (Jn 7.37-38).<sup>55</sup> The author of the Fourth Gospel explains further that Jesus is speaking of the Spirit who would be given after Jesus is glorified (v. 39).

These tight textual connections indicate, first, that present salvation is of the same quality and experience as final salvation. On this side of the eschaton, salvation as a flowing river is experienced as coming to us from the future. The continuity of present salvation and future salvation is grounded in the source of the river of salvation in the eschatological throne of God. Using a different metaphor, present salvific experience of the Spirit is the ‘first fruits’ of the coming harvest (Rom. 8.23).<sup>56</sup> Second, salvation is defined primarily as participation in the Trinitarian life of God.<sup>57</sup> As noted earlier, the throne, which is the source of living water, is ‘shared’ by God, the Lamb, and the sevenfold Spirit. Furthermore, each is involved in the gift of salvation: the river of salvation flows from the throne of God who will give the water of life; Jesus leads us to the river by

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<sup>55</sup> This reading of Jn 7.37-39 is possible because of the ambiguous placement of the nominative absolute phrase, ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ (‘the one believing on me’). If it is linked with the one who thirsts in v. 37, then it follows that *Jesus*, and not the believer, is the referent of the one from whose innermost being flows rivers of living water, especially in the light of the editorial explanation that Jesus was speaking of the Spirit that would be given after Jesus was glorified. This reading is also supported by the fact that the OT passages to which this text may refer attest that God and not the believer is the source of living water (Exod. 17; Deut. 8.15-16). For an expanded discussion of this view, see Thomas, *The Spirit of the New Testament*, pp. 163-66.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Althouse, ‘Ascension–Pentecost–Eschaton’, p. 239; Chan, *Pentecostal Theology*, p. 110.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. D. Coulter, ‘“Delivered by the Power of God”: Toward a Pentecostal Understanding of Salvation’, *IJST* 10.4 (October, 2008), p. 449-54.

inviting us to come to him and drink; and the Spirit is the river to which the Spirit (and the bride) also invites us to come. The intertwining of these images in relation to the river of the water of life points to a perichoretic sharing within the Enthroned One as the source of salvific life (cf. 2 Pet. 1.4). Jesus does not save ‘alone’, but he saves in mutual fellowship with the Father and the Spirit. From these texts, it appears that present salvation is an eschatological gift from the exalted Christ who gives the Spirit in fellowship with the Father, and that the Spirit is our ‘point of entry’ into the life of the Trinity. Third, salvation as the ongoing reception of life from God (drawn from the metaphor of drinking) positions the believer in a relationship of everlasting dependence upon Jesus as Savior. In none of these passages is salvation presented as something that can be ‘possessed’ by the believer statically, but is promised as a gift into the everlasting ages of eternity as the believer continues to ‘drink’.

The final textual entrance from which to discern Jesus as Savior appears in Rev. 21.7, which consists of two promises from the Enthroned One. John hears, first, that ‘the overcomer will inherit these things’, and second, that the relationship between the Enthroned One and the overcomer will exist as θεὸς (*theos*, God) and υἱός (*huios*, son). Each of these promises emphasizes familial-covenantal aspects of final salvation: inheritance and reciprocal belonging. From the immediate context, ‘these things’ that are inherited probably refers to the new creation of all things. But since it is ὁ νικῶν (*ho nikōn*, the one who overcomes) that will inherit them, the seven promises to ‘the overcomer’, noted in the letters to the seven churches (Rev. 2.7, 11, 17, 26; 3.5, 12, 21), may also be included in what is inherited. These promises are linked to the final inheritance especially by the promise in Rev. 2.11. Here the overcomer is told that she will not be hurt by the second death; whereas in Rev. 21.8, the inheritance of the overcomer is contrasted with the ‘portion’ of the ungodly: the lake of fire, which is the second death. But how does one overcome, especially if the beast overcomes the two witnesses (Rev. 11.7)<sup>58</sup> and the saints (Rev. 13.7)!? The answer is given in Rev. 12.11: ‘they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their witness’. To be an overcomer, then, is to participate in the victory of Jesus by entering into the sacrificial way of the Lamb so as to live and speak the truth even

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<sup>58</sup> For a sustained argument that the two witnesses represent the church, see Waddell, *The Spirit of the Book of Revelation*, pp. 170-88, and the discussion below.

unto death. This answer reveals the paradoxical interrelationship between the believer's choice and the free gift of God within salvation. This paradox is also revealed in that it is the *overcomer* who *inherits*!

Given the prominence of the theme of the overcomer in early Pentecostalism, this text is especially relevant for discerning Jesus as Savior. The early Pentecostals understood that this theme sets salvation within the context of a conflict of kingdoms which requires struggle against opposing forces, usually defined as 'the world, the flesh, and the devil'. Salvation as liberation has personal, communal, and cosmic dimensions and occurs within a kind of finite 'cosmic dualism', as the kingdom of God is set against temporal, rival powers derived from creaturely freedom.<sup>59</sup> Salvation is a transfer from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of light (Mt. 4.16; Jn 8.12; Col. 1.13) and represents the conquering of the kingdom of Satan (Mk 3.27; Jn 12.31-32; 2 Tim. 2.25-26). As such, deliverance is an essential part of God's justifying action (in the Hebraic sense) of setting to rights what has become disordered through sin in its personal, social, and cosmic dimensions.<sup>60</sup> As testimonies in Pentecostal worship services attest, personal salvation is often experienced as a crisis act of being wrested from the dark realm of 'the god of this age' (2 Cor. 4.3-4) and of pressing into the kingdom (Mt. 11.12). Such an apocalyptic experience prepares one for the final apocalypse. Paul exclaims that we are 'more than overcomers' through him who loved us (Rom. 8. 37). Jesus establishes the kingdom in exorcisms, healings, the overthrow of principalities and powers (Col. 2.15), and, ultimately, the defeat of Satan, the Serpent (Gen. 3.15; Jn 12.31; Rom. 16.20; Heb. 2.14-15; 1 Jn 3.8; Rev. 12.9-10; 20.10). Salvation as deliverance thus includes the discernment that all human systems of political and social power are subject to Christ (Eph. 1.20-21; Col. 1.19-20) and that the communal witness and worship of Jesus as Lord is a claim against their ultimate significance.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> D. Coulter, 'Delivered by the Power of God', p. 455.

<sup>60</sup> Macchia, *Justified in the Spirit*, p. 85. Cf. also P. Althouse, 'Pentecostal Eschatology in Context: The Eschatological Orientation of the Full Gospel', in Althouse and Waddell (eds.), *Perspectives in Pentecostal Eschatologies*, pp. 224-30.

<sup>61</sup> Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, pp. 121-65, discusses the 'cosmopolitical' implications of worship informed by the Pentecostal view of salvation as deliverance.

At the center of salvation is the intimate, parent-child relationship of the believer with God. This covenant bond<sup>62</sup> begins with ‘new birth’ in the Spirit as we are adopted (Rom. 8.14-15) and welcomed into the family of God with Jesus our brother (Heb. 2.11-12, 17), with whom we are made joint heirs (Rom. 8.17). Our familial identity is patterned after that of Jesus who is τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ (*ton huion ton monogenē*, the unique [only begotten] son, Jn 3.16) with whom the Father is well pleased (Mt. 3.17; 17.5; Lk. 3.22) and who shares in unique fellowship with God (Mt. 11.27; Lk. 10.22). It is as the Son that Jesus is sent by God to taste death for everyone, that through death he might destroy death and the devil, and thereby bring ‘many children to glory’ (Heb. 2.8-15). Salvation entails following in the way of the cross, knowing that Jesus, the perfecter of our faith (Heb. 12. 2), was made perfect through suffering (Heb. 2.11) and that hardship brings opportunities to become more childlike (Heb. 12.7-11). Redemption entails ‘adoption as children’ as the Father sends the Spirit of his Son into our hearts. In this encounter, the Spirit cries, ‘Abba, Father!’ (Gal. 4.6) and enables us to cry the same in common witness (Rom. 8.15-16). Ultimately, we will inherit final salvation because we are God’s children.

### C. Discerning Jesus as Sanctifier

*And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having been prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice from the throne, saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with humanity, and he will tabernacle with them, and they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and be their God.’*

— Revelation 21.2-3

What may be discerned about Jesus as Sanctifier from this concise passage in John’s final vision recorded in the Apocalypse? John’s announcement of seeing ‘a new heaven and a new earth’ in Rev. 21.1 is followed almost immediately with a similar declaration: ‘And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem’. The repeated designation of this city as ‘holy’ in v. 10 introduces an extended description that occupies the remainder of the chapter. In the concluding vision of the Apocalypse, the New Jerusalem, as ‘the bride, the wife of the Lamb’ (Rev. 21.9), stands in contrast with another city, ‘Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and

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<sup>62</sup> Note the echo in the standard OT covenant formula: ‘I will be your God and you will be my people’, both in the establishment of the covenant with Israel (Exod. 29.45; Lev. 26.12) and in the prophetic hope for the renewal of the covenant (Jer. 7.23; 24.7; 31.33; Ezek. 34.24; 37.23).

of the earth's abominations' (Rev. 17.5).<sup>63</sup> On one level, the name 'Babylon', borrowed from the OT city that destroyed Jerusalem and to which Israel was sent to live in exile, designates the city of Rome, situated on seven hills (Rev. 17.9). But more than a single city, Babylon 'the great' takes on a universal character as she 'sits on many waters' which, John relates, are 'peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues' (Rev. 17.15, 18; cf. Rev. 18.3). As such, Babylon is the all-pervasive *unholy* city, representing the very opposite of the *holy* city, the New Jerusalem. Babylon does, however, try to mimic the glory of the holy city as she is described as being decked in a dazzling array of wealth and power, alluring enough that upon seeing her, John 'wonders with great wonder' (Rev. 17.3-6). Before the description of her utter destruction, a stern imperative is given to God's people to 'come out of her' in order to avoid participating in her sins as well as in her plagues of judgment (Rev. 18.4). Both John's astonishment at her glory<sup>64</sup> and the prospect that God's people can partake of Babylon's sins sound a sobering warning about the believer's need to guard against complicity in false sources of salvation. Paul's admonition to the Corinthian believers to 'come out from among them, and be separate' and avoid *συμφώνησις* (*sumphōnēsis*, harmonious accord) with the realm of darkness reflects the same attitude of warning (2 Cor. 6.14). Separation must begin in the heart where temptations seek a welcoming response in order to grow into mutual participation and affectional compatibility. John's first readers were not expected literally to leave the seven cities in Asia Minor in which they lived, but rather to repent and put away the sins that were prevalent there (Revelation 2-3). Sanctification does not mean removal from the world, but rather inward separation and protection from the source(s) of evil (Jn 17.15). Though interspersed among the cities of the world, collectively the Church is 'a city' situated on a hill (Mt. 5.14), a counter-colony that shines throughout and within the various cultures of the earth. Being in-but-not-of the world reorients the believer away from the injustice and greed of 'Babylon' towards an economics of justice and Christ-like *kenosis* that anticipates life in the holy city.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> For a succinct comparison between Babylon and the New Jerusalem in the Apocalypse, see R. Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 126-32.

<sup>64</sup> Thomas, 'The Mystery of the Great Whore', pp. 122-23.

<sup>65</sup> D.C. Augustine, 'Pentecost Communal Economics and the Household of God', *JPT* 19 (2010), pp. 219-42, explores the significance of Pentecost and sanctification (centered on

The vision of the holy city, New Jerusalem, also invites reflection about the communal and political aspects of holiness, especially in the light of its multinational constituency. The dazzling imagery of ‘walls of jasper’ and ‘streets of gold’ (Rev. 21.18, 21) tends to overshadow the fact that the New Jerusalem is primarily a community of human beings who dwell in the presence of God (Rev. 21.3). Who will comprise this community? The description of God’s assembled people in Rev. 7.9-17 indicates that the inhabitants of the holy city are anticipated to be ἐκ (*ek*, out of) every conceivable social grouping of humanity: all nations, clans, peoples, and tongues, a fourfold designation used in varying order seven times in the Apocalypse to indicate global humanity.<sup>66</sup> Instead of being attired in multicolored indigenous dress that might distinguish these various groups or in clothing that might differentiate between economic classes or political ranks, all are arrayed, uniform-like, in white robes, denoting equality and unity derived from a common source: the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 7.14). Signposts of the trajectory that leads to this eschatological vision of multiethnic unity are evident in the NT, especially in moments of glossolalic encounter with the Spirit in the book of Acts, during which social, religious, and ethnic barriers are crossed.<sup>67</sup> These culminate in the communal discernment concerning the ‘inclusion of the Gentiles’ (Acts 15) and in Paul’s unyielding insistence that distinctions like race, socio-economic status, and even gender do not count as identity markers for inclusion ‘in Christ’ (Gal. 3.28; Col. 3.11). This does not mean that Israel has been displaced by the Church, but as the context of the vision of the innumerable multitude shows (Revelation 7), Israel itself has been transformed into a global community that transcends national barriers.<sup>68</sup> Such unity among God’s people across national,

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transformation into Christ-likeness) for the socio-political and economic nature of God’s kingdom-household.

<sup>66</sup> The fourfold designation of humanity is found in Rev. 5.9; 7.9; 10.11; 11.9; 13.7; 14.6; and 17.15. For a detailed discussion, see R. Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy: Studies in the Book of Revelation* (London: T&T Clark, 1993), pp. 326-37.

<sup>67</sup> G. Hovenden, *Speaking in Tongues: The New Testament Evidence in Context* (JPTSup, 22; London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), pp. 99-100. P. Hocken, ‘Baptized in Spirit—An Eschatological Concept: A Response to Norbert Baumert and his Interlocutors’, *JPT* 13.2 (2005), p. 265, states, ‘Both these occurrences are critical fulfillments of Old Testament prophecy concerning the Messianic age and the relationship of Israel to the nations. In other words, they have nothing to do with normative patterns for Christian initiation, and everything to do with a decisive stage in the fulfillment of the plan of God for Israel and the nations.’

<sup>68</sup> This reading is based on the view that the innumerable multitude which John *sees* is a transformed image of the 144,000 of Rev. 7.1-8 about which John *hears*. This parallels John’s earlier vision of Jesus as the slain *Lamb* standing, having just heard that the *Lion* of the tribe of Judah has conquered (Rev. 5.5-6). Particularly, the Jewish hope for messianic conquest through

ethnic, and social barriers may seem impossible from a worldly standpoint today, especially in the light of long-standing national hatreds and widespread racial prejudices that exist in the world. These biblical texts challenge the contemporary church to pray for an experience of communal holiness that requires radical repentance, mutual acceptance, and the sustained embrace<sup>69</sup> of all who respond in faith to the Spirit's call, no matter their ethnic, social, or economic status.<sup>70</sup> That sanctification is personal makes it no less communal.<sup>71</sup>

Next, John relates that he saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, 'coming down from God out of heaven' (Rev. 21.2). The close association of the holy community with God is expanded in vv. 10-11, where the city is described as 'descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God'. Jesus has already described New Jerusalem as 'the city of my God ... coming down out of heaven from my God' (Rev. 3.12). The bond between this city and God (and Jesus) is strengthened even further by the promise that the overcomer will have the *name* of God, the *name* of the city of God, and Jesus' new *name* inscribed upon him. This means not only that the city itself shares in the characteristics and glory of God, but also that each inhabitant is 'marked' with the very nature and character of God and of Jesus. That the city is repeatedly described as coming down 'out of heaven' also connects the city closely with God in that 'heaven' in the Apocalypse is the dwelling place of God and is separated from the earth throughout the book until this final vision. All of this is to say that God is the source of the holiness of the New Jerusalem. As the πόλις (*polis*, city) of God, it reflects the holiness of God. Its character and nature, polity and culture, do not derive from the earth or from humanity but is a gift from God out of heaven. This is also why nothing 'unclean' can enter the holy city (Rev. 21.27). Those whose actions reveal a

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military victory over the Gentiles has been transformed into conquest through the Messiah's sacrificial death, with the result that God's people are drawn, not from Israel alone, but from all the nations. Cf. Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, pp. 215-29.

<sup>69</sup> M. Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), pp. 111-19, discusses this in terms of 'the politics of a pure heart'.

<sup>70</sup> For some contemporary implications of the ecumenical and multinational character of the Azusa Street revival, see D.T. Ervin, "'Drawing All Together in One Bond of Love": The Ecumenical Vision of William J. Seymour and the Azusa Street Revival', in *JPT* 6 (1995), pp. 25-53.

<sup>71</sup> J.S. Raymond, 'Social Holiness: Journey, Exposures, Encounters', in K.W. Mannoia and D. Thorsen (eds.), *The Holiness Manifesto* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), pp. 166-87, speaks of the 'ecology of holiness' created in the communal life of the church.

character that stands in opposition to the faithful and true witness will, rather, find themselves in the lake of fire (Rev. 21.8).

Appeals throughout Scripture for God's people to 'be perfect' (Gen. 17.1; Mt. 5.48) and to 'be holy for I am holy' (Lev. 11.44-45; 1 Pet. 1.15-16) indicate that the call to holiness is consistently grounded in the character of God, with the intent that his people will demonstrate the same moral excellence. In this broad sense, sanctification is the process by which the subjects of God's kingdom, marred and stained by sin, are restored to the image and character of God.<sup>72</sup> This is not a negation of self but a transformation into true humanness as God's gift.<sup>73</sup> This truth also finds remarkable resonance in Paul's instruction to the Philippians (3.20-21) that the believer's *πολίτευμα* (*politeuma*, citizenship) is in 'heaven'. Our present communal life is to emulate the character and values of God's dwelling place, from which we also expect Jesus to come and change even our bodies to reflect his glorified body. Paul's admonition in Col. 3.1-2 is similar. Believers are to seek and orient their inward dispositions toward 'things above' that are compatible with the risen and exalted Christ, in anticipation of sharing in his glory when he appears. As the context shows, this does not mean seeking to go to 'heaven' but rather seeking to live on earth now in a way that reflects God's holiness. In both of these passages, the Church is depicted as an outpost of the kingdom here on earth in anticipation of the day when the dwelling place of God will descend 'out of heaven' to envelop the whole creation. In this sense, sanctification is always eschatological.

Next, John observes that the holy city that is descending out of heaven is 'prepared as a bride adorned for her husband' (Rev. 21.2). John learns that this is a *particular* bride in v. 9 as an angel instructs John to come and see 'the bride, the wife of the Lamb'. But what John is shown is 'the holy city, Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God' (v. 10). The same confluence of images of city and woman is paralleled in the depiction of Babylon as a whore (Revelation

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<sup>72</sup> Cf. C. Bridges Johns, 'Transformed by Grace: The Beauty of Personal Holiness', in Mannoia and Thorsen (eds.), *The Holiness Manifesto*, pp. 152-65; *idem*, 'From Strength to Strength: The Neglected Role of Crisis in Wesleyan and Pentecostal Discipleship', *WTJ* 39.1 (Spring, 2004), pp. 137-53. Johns discusses both the means of grace for the development of Christ-like character and the importance of attending to crisis to establish new pathways toward spiritual maturity.

<sup>73</sup> R.H. Gause, 'The Doctrine of Holiness', in Han (ed.), *Transforming Power*, pp. 89-96, notes that the positive virtues such as love and truth signify what is truly human and that sin is the foreign element. Thus, being 'only human' is no excuse for sinfulness.

17-18). The bride's appearance has been expected since the announcement in Rev. 19.7-9 that 'the marriage of the Lamb has come'. If Christ's coming, which follows immediately after this announcement (Rev. 19.11-21), is the appearance of the Bridegroom, with the intervening events as the processional to the marriage, then the bride's appearance in ch. 21 is not a surprise.<sup>74</sup> This means that final salvation in Revelation 21–22 is depicted as an unending, joyous wedding festival! The purity of the bride is established not only by her contrast in character to 'the great whore' but also by her clothing. Unlike the 'fine linen' of the whore, which will be stripped from her (Rev. 18.12-16), that of the bride is described as 'clean and white' and represents the δικαιώματα (*dikaiōmata*, righteous deeds) of the saints (Rev. 19.8). That her attire is something that is both 'granted unto her' (v. 8) and something that she prepares herself (v. 7) speaks of the deep participation of the bride in the gift of her purity.

This same integration of the passive and active aspects of holiness is evident in other depictions of God's people in the Apocalypse. The 144,000 in Rev. 14.1-5 is described as being παρθένοι (*parthenoi*, virgins)—another contrast with the great whore!—who *follow* the Lamb wherever he goes. That no ψεῦδος (*pseudos*, lie) is found in their mouth testifies to the congruence of their actions and inner character. The singular term 'mouth' indicates that this trait is shared by all, derived no doubt from the nature they share with the Lamb and the Father of the Lamb by bearing their names. Put succinctly in v. 5, they are ἄμωμοί (*amōmoi*, without blemish, faultless). Likewise, the innumerable multitude (passively) is clothed in white robes (Rev. 7.9), yet they (actively) have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 7.14). Clearly, their attire denotes more than status, though it does that. It also denotes actively seeking and following in the way of the Lamb.

How do these final visions of the holy community impact our discernment of Jesus as Sanctifier? During his earthy ministry, Jesus applies the image of bridegroom to himself when his accusers ask why his disciples do not fast (Mt. 9.15; Mk 2.19-20). He notes that the pervasively joyful atmosphere he brings would change when the bridegroom is taken away (Lk. 5.34-35). Final salvation as a marriage banquet is anticipated even more clearly in Jesus' refusal to allow

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<sup>74</sup> Gause, *Revelation*, pp. 239-47. Cf. C.R. Koester, *Revelation and the End of All Things* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), p. 171.

purity issues to hinder his ministry to outcasts (Mk 1.40-44; 5.25-34, 41; Lk. 7.12-15; 17.11-19) or to deter his practice of table fellowship with ‘tax collectors and sinners’ (Mt. 11.19; Lk. 5.30).<sup>75</sup> Jesus’ frequent table fellowship with the ritually (and morally?) impure challenges the view that holiness is impaired by external contact. Rather, Jesus emphasizes purity of heart over outward ritual purity (Mk 7.1-23; Mt. 15.11, 17-20), calling both the oppressors and the oppressed to repentance (Mt. 23.13; Mk 2.5, 17).<sup>76</sup> In Luke’s gospel, the blessings of the eschatological banquet are extended to the poor, the hungry, the mournful, and the excluded (Lk. 6.20-26; 14.12-24).<sup>77</sup> Jesus refuses a sectarian view of purity, but rather practices an ‘inclusive purity’,<sup>78</sup> a scandalous stance with which the early church is challenged in the question of Gentile inclusion (Acts 10.1–11.18; 15).<sup>79</sup>

The association of the Church as the bride of Christ and the attire of the bride denoting moral purity is clearly evident in Paul’s letters. Paul views himself as a father who has betrothed his daughter, the Corinthians, as a παρθένον ἁγνήν (*parthenon hagnēn*, holy virgin) to one husband, Christ (2 Cor. 11.2). In a rather extended discussion in which Christ’s love for the Church serves as the model for the husband’s love for his wife (Eph. 5.22-33), Paul relates that because of Christ’s self-giving love, he sanctifies the Church by cleansing her with the ‘washing of water by the word’, with the intent that he might present her to himself a glorious Church, ἁγία καὶ ἄμωμος (*hagia kai amōmos*, holy and unblemished). Here Jesus sanctifies through intimate embrace and communion, as we are made ‘members of his body’, a clear reference to the Jewish marriage covenant (Gen. 2.23). The early Pentecostal assertion, found in both the Wesleyan Holiness stream<sup>80</sup> and the Finished Work stream,<sup>81</sup> that the bride is

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<sup>75</sup> J.D.G. Dunn, ‘Jesus and Purity: An Ongoing Debate’, *NTS* 48.4 (2002), pp. 449-56, notes that at the time of Jesus, Second Temple Judaism emphasized holiness as separation from sources of impurity, especially unclean foods and unclean people. Cf. W.A. Simmons, *Peoples of the New Testament World: An Illustrated Guide* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2008), pp. 44-48, 57-63, 107-11.

<sup>76</sup> Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, pp. 111-19. Cf. Simmons, *Peoples of the New Testament World*, p. 111.

<sup>77</sup> D.E. Smith, ‘Table Fellowship as a Literary Motif in the Gospel of Luke’, *JBL* 106.4 (1987), p. 637. Cf. J. Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), pp. 258-59.

<sup>78</sup> Dunn, ‘Jesus and Purity’, p. 465.

<sup>79</sup> J.B. Green, *The Theology of the Gospel of Luke* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 88-89, 125-26.

<sup>80</sup> *COGE* 1.7 (Jun 1, 1910), p. 2; *PHA* 1.5 (May 31, 1917), p. 1; 2.49 (Apr 3, 1919), p. 12.

<sup>81</sup> *TOF* 37.11 (Nov 1917), p. 245; G.T. Haywood, ‘The Victim of the Flaming Sword’, in Dayton (ed.), *Seven ‘Jesus Only’ Tracts*, p. 38.

created through *separation from* the body of Christ, on the analogy of the creation of Eve, misses this point. Rather, the Church becomes the bride through *union with* Christ and his body, through the mutual sharing of Christ's cruciform love (Eph. 4.2-5). Putting off the old garments of sin (Col. 3.8-9) and putting on the new garments of 'Christ' (Gal. 3.27), 'the new man' (Eph. 4.24), and Christ-like dispositions, especially love (Col. 3.14), also constitute proleptic anticipation of the 'fine linen' of the eschatological bride. Love, as the nature of the Triune God (1 Jn 4.8), is the essence of holiness and the primary gauge of growth in sanctification. This is not mere sentimentality but rather suffering love expressed ultimately in the love of one's enemies (Mt. 5.44; Lk. 6.27, 35; 1 Jn 4.10). Because love has its source in the dynamic interchange of communion in the divine relationships, there is no end to the pursuit of spiritual growth, even in eternity.<sup>82</sup>

Preparing to meet the Bridegroom for the eternal wedding banquet involves longing for the kingdom and ridding oneself of dispositions that do not please the King. Though we may appreciate (and emulate!) their zeal to be prepared to meet the Bridegroom (Mt. 25.1-13), the early Pentecostals too often used the bridal metaphor to develop experience-based hierarchical levels of spiritual attainment, which excluded many Christians from participation in 'the marriage supper'—granted this was (mis)understood as an isolated event in the future script. It is more helpful to view the metaphor of the Church as the eschatological bride as a call to holiness within an intimate relationship with Christ, as evidenced in the texts above.<sup>83</sup> To hope and pray for the *parousia* is to prepare for it (Rev. 22.17). The hope of being made like Jesus when he is revealed motivates believers to purify themselves now 'even as he is pure' (1 Jn 3.3), revealing an active-passive dynamic that echoes the participation of the eschatological bride in the gift of her purity (Rev. 19.7-8). Love as the core of holiness discourages exclusivist-

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<sup>82</sup> John Wesley defined 'entire sanctification' or 'Christian perfection' in terms of wholehearted love for God and others, which results in the harmony of intention and action that is to increase throughout eternity. Cf. M.E. Dieter, 'The Wesleyan Perspective', in *Five Views on Sanctification* (Counterpoints; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), pp. 15-36; M.B. Wynkoop, *A Theology of Love: The Dynamic of Wesleyanism* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1972), pp. 157-58.

<sup>83</sup> Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit*, p. 278, notes that, rather than promoting escapism as it was prone to do in early Pentecostalism, the metaphor of the church as the bride of Christ 'can help us to realize that our ecclesiality or essential nature as the church is not something we can simply take for granted but must renew in covenant faithfulness to God'.

sectarian tendencies and promotes the unity of the sanctified Church, a community that is embraced within the fellowship of the Trinity (Jn 17.20-23) and embraces the ‘other’ with the same inclusive holiness that Jesus enacted.<sup>84</sup>

The final textual window through which we may gain discernment concerning Jesus as Sanctifier appears in Rev. 21.3, which reveals a spoken explanation of the vision of the holy city descending from God out of heaven: ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with humanity and he will dwell with them.’ With this announcement, the boundaries of the metaphors of the holy city, New Jerusalem, and bride of the Lamb are surpassed by a category more evocative of creation than redemption. The descent of the city from God means that God σκηνώσει (*skēnōsei*, will dwell, tabernacle) with ἀνθρώπων (*anthrōpōn*, humanity), a generic term that includes all human individuals. The relationship envisioned is one between humanity as God’s λαοὶ (*laoi*, peoples) and the divine being as their θεός (*theos*, God). Here, God claims a covenant relationship with the nations, as God’s glory, which gives light to the nations, and the glory of the nations, which is brought into the holy city, are shared reciprocally (Rev. 21.24, 26). In the light of the ambiguous role the nations play in the Apocalypse, this offers an exceedingly optimistic hope for worldwide human redemption.<sup>85</sup> This astonishing vision of the unmediated presence of God with humanity is enhanced by the description of the New Jerusalem. Both the ‘foursquare’ or cubic shape of the city and its primary building material of gold are patterned after the shape and material of the inmost sanctuary of the temple, the holy of holies (1 Kgs 6.20-22; 2 Chron. 3.4-8). The New Jerusalem as the holy dwelling place of redeemed humanity is permeated with the immediate presence of God and thus is completely holy space. The New Jerusalem as the holy bride of the Lamb is entirely filled with the holiness of God, which has love as its essence, and thus is wholly

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<sup>84</sup> M. W. Dempster, ‘Eschatology, Spirit Baptism, and Inclusiveness: An Exploration into the Hallmarks of a Pentecostal Social Ethic’, in Althouse and Waddell (eds.), *Perspectives in Pentecostal Eschatologies*, pp. 170-88, explores three basic moral norms in Jesus’ ethic: love, justice, and respect of persons. Cf. also, Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, pp. 176, 202-203; E. Villafaña, ‘The Politics of the Spirit: Reflections on a Theology of Social Transformation for the Twenty-First Century’, *Pneuma* 18.2 (Fall, 1996), p. 166.

<sup>85</sup> R. Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, pp. 238-337; *idem*, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, pp. 98-104, attributes the tension between the language of universal judgment of the nations and universal salvation of the nations to the unknown outcome of the Church’s faithful witness. R. Herms, *An Apocalypse for the Church and the World: The Narrative Function of Universal Language in the Book of Revelation* (BZNW, 143; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2006), suggests that the universal language in the book is not meant to be taken in a ‘literal’ fashion, but rather lends rhetorical power to the final vision of the vindication of God’s people.

beloved and loving. The New Jerusalem as the holy place of the worship of God, with no need of sun or moon to regulate feasts days and Sabbaths (Rev. 21.23), enjoys never ending day, and thus experiences unbroken holy time.<sup>86</sup> Finally, if the New Jerusalem is the description of the new creation of Rev. 21.1 (which, oddly, is not otherwise described), then all of creation has become the holy of holies!<sup>87</sup> At the least, these images signify redeemed humanity living in the unrestricted presence of God.<sup>88</sup>

We may reflect on the significance of this final vision for sanctification by noting that the verb σκηνώω (*skēnoō*, to pitch a tent, to dwell) is also used of Jesus, where it is closely associated with the incarnation (Jn 1.14). This nomadic image of Jesus' sojourn on the earth both recapitulates the nomadic presence of God in the tabernacle in the wilderness and anticipates the new creation as the dwelling place of the Triune God. Jesus' actions in relation to the temple, presupposing the significance of the temple and the temple mount (Zion) in Jewish eschatology, may also be interpreted as his self-identification with the temple as the true revelation of divine glory and the place of atonement for the sins of Israel and of the world.<sup>89</sup> Even as Jesus took on the role of the temple in his death and resurrection, temple symbolism is also transferred to the disciples. Matthew's view of the Church has close affinities with temple imagery.<sup>90</sup> The

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<sup>86</sup> Moltmann's idea of the transformation of chronological time into eternal time or *aeonic* time (*The Coming of God*, pp. 279-95) corresponds to the biblical notion of everlasting ages (e.g. Eph. 2.7). This sense of time as being unbroken or whole may indicate that 'eternity' will be experienced as an unbroken *kairos* moment, filled with ultimate significance that allows movement and growth. This line of thought moves from Jesus' ministry as the time of Jubilee (the Sabbath of Sabbaths); to the early church's adoption of the first (eighth?) day of the week as the appropriate day to worship, which effectively extends sacred time to every day (Rom. 14.5-6); to the emphasis upon time, not as chronologic, but as filled with *kairos* moments of salvation and transformation that anticipate the fulfillment of sacred time in the eschaton, the sanctification of eternity. Cf. also W. Pannenberg, 'Eternity, Time, and the Trinitarian God', *Dialog: A Journal of Theology* 39.1 (Spring, 2000), pp. 9-14.

<sup>87</sup> For an extended argument of this view, see G.K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God* (New Studies in Biblical Theology, 17; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), pp. 365-93.

<sup>88</sup> C.H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), p. 181, draws on these images to describe the goal of salvation as the union of humanity with God.

<sup>89</sup> We may include here Jesus' proclamation of the forgiveness of sins (Mk 2.5; Lk. 5.20), his inflammatory remark about raising 'this temple' in three days (Mt. 12.40; 26.61; 27.40; Jn 2.19-20), his action of 'cleansing' the temple to become a house of prayer for all the nations (Isa. 56.6-8; Mk 11.1-25), and his statements about his blood and body during the last supper (Mt. 26.26-29; Mk 14.22-25; Lk. 22.15-20).

<sup>90</sup> B. Charette, *Restoring Presence: The Spirit in Matthew's Gospel* (JPTSup, 18; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), pp. 98-118.

new covenant community<sup>91</sup> formed by the Spirit around Jesus is the place where the divine presence dwells and where all nations may be brought into covenant relationship with God (Mt. 28.18-20). Especially significant are the texts which transfer to the disciples the significance of the temple as (1) the presence of God with his people, (2) the intersection of heaven and earth,<sup>92</sup> and (3) the place of God's righteous rule. As sacred space, commitment to righteousness is central to this temple identity (Mt. 5.20, 48; 6.33). Finally, the transfer of the Spirit from Jesus to the Church not only assures the disciples of Jesus' continuing spiritual presence but also enables them to continue his messianic ministry to the ends of the earth (Mt. 4.23; 10.1, 7-8; 28.20); that is, the Spirit enables them to function as the new temple of God. Thus, through Spirit-empowered mission, this temple-on-the-move extends the 'holy land' to include all the nations.<sup>93</sup>

The connection between the presence of the Spirit and the holiness of the believer is made explicit in the references by Paul to the faith community and the individual believer as the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3.16-17; 6.19; Eph. 2.19-22).<sup>94</sup> This means that holiness is both communal and embodied. As the dwelling-place of the Spirit of Christ, through whom Christ offered himself to God (Heb. 9.14) and who raised Jesus from the dead (Rom. 8.11), believers personally and corporately host and are shaped by God's cruciform and resurrection glory. Thus, they offer their bodies as holy, living sacrifices, continually being transformed through inner renewal (Rom. 12.1-2). A similar

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<sup>91</sup> Charette, *Restoring Presence*, p. 98. Matthew is the only evangelist to employ the term *ἐκκλησία* (*ecclesia*, church) to refer to the community of disciples. In the LXX, this word is used regularly to translate the Hebrew term *קהל* (*qahal*), the 'congregation' of Israel, a technical term used to designate the covenant people.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. J.D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985), pp. 122-25, 169-71, draws on Psalm 24 to note that the temple as cosmic center is also moral center.

<sup>93</sup> The term 'holy land', a contemporary term to refer to present-day Israel, is used only once in the OT (Zech. 2.12). The concept that the land may be polluted, however, is pervasive in the prophets (e.g. Jer. 2.7). Jon D. Levenson's proposal (*Creation and the Persistence of Evil: The Jewish Drama of Divine Omnipotence* [New York: HarperCollins, 1988], pp. 78-99) that the temple is a microcosm of creation is pregnant with significance for a cosmic eschatology drawn from the NT adaption of temple symbolism. This trajectory of thought includes the human vocation to extend the conditions of the Garden of Eden over all the earth. Though frustrated by the curse of sin, this vocation is redeemed and restored by the Last Adam and made an integral part of kingdom participation. Sanctification as real transformation anticipates the complete removal of the curse (Rev. 22.3) and supports the notion of continuity between this present earth and the new earth. Cf. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, pp. 169-244.

<sup>94</sup> For Paul's use of temple imagery and its implications for communal holiness, see J.A. Adewuya, *Holiness and Community in 2 Cor 6:14-71: Paul's View of Communal Holiness in the Corinthian Correspondence* (Studies in Biblical Literature, 40; New York: Peter Lang, 2001), pp. 110-28.

call to reflect God's holiness surrounds Peter's description of believers as 'living stones', built 'into a spiritual house' (1 Pet. 1.13-19; 2.1-5, 9), with the goal toward affective transformation, as they forsake selfish desires and become a people defined by love, the essence of holiness (1 Pet. 1.22). Thus, personal holiness takes shape only within the context of the community with the eschatological goal of becoming the dwelling place of the unmediated presence of God, the emphasis of Rev. 21.2-3.

#### **D. Discerning Jesus as Spirit Baptizer**

*And he bore me up in the Spirit onto a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.*  
—Revelation 21.10a

*And I fell before his feet to worship him, and he said to me, 'Take heed to not do that! I am a fellow servant of you and of your brothers who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy.'*

—Revelation 19.10

The role of the Spirit in the book of Revelation provides much insight for the discernment of Jesus as Spirit Baptizer in an eschatological context. In the midst of the final vision of new creation, John is borne up ἐν πνεύματι (*en pneumati*, in the Spirit; Rev. 21.10), the fourth reference in the Apocalypse to such an occurrence. John is 'in the Spirit' on the Lord's Day when he sees the initial vision of the book (Rev. 1.10); he is 'in the Spirit' as the first vision of heaven is opened to him (Rev. 4.2); and he is borne up 'in the Spirit' to behold each of the contrasting city visions of Babylon, the great whore (Rev. 17.3), and of the New Jerusalem, the bride of the Lamb (Rev. 21.10). This signifies more than simply the inspiration of the book of Revelation by the Spirit (which may be said of all biblical books). It also means that the experience of the Spirit is central to the *eschatological* revelation of Jesus Christ. The Spirit is the ethos or energizing environment in which the end of all things is revealed and spiritually discerned. This is made clear in Jesus' messages to the seven churches in Revelation 2-3. Repeatedly, the one 'having an ear' is called to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To hear what the Spirit is saying requires a capacity for pneumatic discernment. Like John, the Church is given this capacity 'in the Spirit'. In this light, Paul's insight in 1 Cor. 2.10-14 that the mystery of salvation is spiritually discerned is helpful. He explains that only those who have the Spirit of God know

the things of God. Furthermore, the witness of those things occurs by the Spirit, so that both *what is communicated* and the *means of communication* are given by the Spirit. Similarly, the Holy Spirit enables both the revelation of Jesus Christ in the Apocalypse and its reception and response in the hearers. Discernment requires participation in the Spirit who gives the revelation of Jesus.

A particular example of this occurs in Rev. 11.8, where John is told that the great city in which the two witness are killed is called πνευματικῶς (*pneumatikos*, spiritually, pneumatically) ‘Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified’. By means of the Spirit, the identity of the city takes on a connotation beyond the literal sense, which also resonates knowingly in the pneumatically enabled perception of the hearers (i.e. those with ‘ears’). Discernment occurs ‘on the ground’ as it were as believers recognize themselves to be in ‘Sodom and Egypt’. Pneumatically, the great city becomes a dynamic metaphor for *every* place where the witness of Jesus is met with resistance and martyrdom and is promised vindication. Thus, we may say that Jesus pours out the eschatological Spirit to enable pneumatic discernment of the last days. Broadly, as early Pentecostals recognized, the age of the Spirit is marked by the effusion of the Spirit from Jesus that began at Pentecost and continues now as an age in which fulfillment and proleptic anticipation intermingle in dynamic tension.<sup>95</sup> Pneumatic discernment is relevant precisely in this tension, as the Church, in its many social contexts, comes to awareness of its spiritual condition in terms of deficiency and of faithfulness. Such discernment is an essential part of discernment about eschatology.

As noted above, the Spirit in the Apocalypse is intrinsically linked to God and to the Lamb by means of the images of the seven torches of fire burning before the throne (Rev. 4.5) and of the seven eyes of the Lamb which are the ‘seven Spirits of God’ (Rev. 5.6). Thus, in some sense, the Spirit is involved in all divine activity in the book. There is one activity, however, with which the Spirit is particularly associated: that of the faithful witness of Jesus. This is intimated in Rev. 5.6, where the seven Spirits of God, which are the seven horns (of power)

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<sup>95</sup> Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit*, pp. 59-60, 85-87, calls for the expansion of the metaphor of Spirit baptism based on the broad eschatological significance of the outpouring of the Spirit in the NT. Macchia uses the categories of ‘prophetic eschatology’ and ‘apocalyptic eschatology’ to refer to the functions of the Spirit that must be held in tension to bring about the fulfillment of God’s will through historical transformation and supernatural interventions respectively (pp. 277-78). Cf. Macchia, ‘The Church of the Latter Rain’, p. 252; V.-M. Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology*, p. 221.

and eyes (of discernment) of the Lamb, are said to be ‘sent out into all the earth’. What is the mission of the Spirit referred to here? Revelation 3.1 reveals a close affinity between the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars (messengers of the seven churches with their seven lampstands), which are possessed concomitantly by the exalted Christ, and suggests a close association of the Church with the mission of the Spirit in all the earth. More insight into the mission of the Spirit in the Apocalypse and of the Church’s role in that mission is given in Rev. 19.10. Here, John is about to worship an angel who is involved in announcing the marriage of the Lamb, when he is told that worship must be reserved for God alone. The angel then adds a rather cryptic explanation: ‘For the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy’. This saying opens a textual window onto the entire landscape of the Apocalypse, for the entire book is designated as a prophecy to be kept by its hearers (Rev. 1.3; 22.7), which is immediately relevant for the Church and is, therefore, not to be ‘sealed’ (Rev. 22.10) or changed in any way (Rev. 22.18-19). Keeping (τηρέω, *tēreō*) denotes holding fast both in the sense of attentiveness and faithful observance. Prophecy in the biblical sense is ‘kept’, not by devising an abstract, rationalistic scheme for the future, but by heeding the message of God, taking corrective action if necessary, and obeying God to fulfill God’s purposes. As Rev. 19.10 shows, the prophecy from the Spirit given to the churches relates intrinsically to the testimony of Jesus and is ‘kept’ in fellowship with other believers in the midst of temptations to worship entities other than God. But what is the core prophecy of the Apocalypse that is to be kept by the churches? How does the Church keep the words of the book of Revelation?

Revelation 11.1-13 addresses these issues in a way that brings clarity both to the role of the Spirit in the Apocalypse and to the role of the Church in the Spirit’s mission. This text reveals the contents of the open scroll that John is told to eat in Rev. 10.8-10. Several factors surrounding this event highlight its importance in the Apocalypse. First, if this is the same scroll that was seen by John in the opening vision of the book, which is sealed with seven seals and could only be opened by one who is worthy, that is, by the Lamb (Rev. 5), which is likely,<sup>96</sup> the significance of its contents are increased appreciably. Second, the scroll is delivered to John by an angel whose divine characteristics have led scholars to

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<sup>96</sup> Waddell, *The Spirit of the Book of Revelation*, pp. 150-54; Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, pp. 243-61; Koester, *Revelation*, p. 102.

identify it variously as the revelatory messenger of Rev. 1.1, an appearance of Christ himself, or a personification of the Holy Spirit.<sup>97</sup> Whatever identity is granted, the event is given weighty significance by the presence of this impressive being. Third, the scroll is delivered to John with a sense of urgency and finality, as the angel announces that ‘there will be delay no longer’ for the mystery of God, proclaimed to the prophets, is about to be brought to completion (Rev. 10.6-7). Finally, the proclamation of the universal reign of the Lord and of his Christ, the announcement of final judgment, and the opening of the temple of God in heaven follow immediately after the scroll’s contents are revealed (Rev. 11.15-19).

The content of the scroll (Rev. 11.1-13) is a prophecy that the Church will be protected during a time of Spirit-empowered witness to the nations. This is the central prophecy that is to be kept by the Church. It is the essential message of the book of Revelation. The prophecy of the Church’s spiritual protection is given in the symbolic gesture of John who is told to measure ‘the temple, the altar, and those who worship there’ but omit the outer court which is given to the nations who will trample the holy city for forty-two months.<sup>98</sup> The prophecy of the Church’s mission is announced in the ministry of the two witnesses, who embody that mission as one of Spirit-enabled, prophetic testimony to the nations. As evidenced by their clothing of sackcloth, their authority to replicate the deeds of prior biblical prophets, especially those reminiscent of Elijah and Moses, and their martyrdom and vindication, the two witnesses are presented as exemplar prophets, prototypical of all true witnesses in the Apocalypse. That they are empowered by the Holy Spirit is made clear in their primary description in v. 4: ‘These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.’ Drawn from Zechariah 4, this depiction combines two images in which the Spirit is central. As the two olive trees, the two witnesses are God’s anointed ones, whose victory, like that of Joshua and Zerubbabel, is assured, not by might nor power, but by the Spirit of the Lord (Zech. 4.6, 14). As the two lampstands, the two witnesses represent the Church in its entirety, a conclusion reached by adducing that *two* witnesses are depicted to fulfill the legal requirement for genuine witness (Deut. 17.6; 19.15; Mt. 18.16; Jn 8.17; 2 Cor. 13.1) and that

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<sup>97</sup> Waddell, *The Spirit of the Book of Revelation*, pp. 154-61, who develops the proposal that the angel is a personification of the Holy Spirit, gives a summary of the other views.

<sup>98</sup> For the plausibility of understanding the temple here as a symbol for the Church and not as a literal end-times Jewish temple, see Koester, *Revelation*, pp. 105-106.

*lampstands* in the Apocalypse consistently represent the Church (Rev. 1.20; 2.1, 5).<sup>99</sup> John's transformation of Zechariah's image of seven torches and seven eyes (Zech. 4.2, 10) to apply directly to the Holy Spirit in perichoretic fellowship with the Lamb (Rev. 4.5; 5.6) ties the mission of the Spirit 'sent out into all the earth' directly to the ministry of the two witnesses. The victory of the Lamb is brought to bear in the world through the Church's witness. In summation, the Spirit speaks 'the words of Christ in the church and inspire[s] the church to bear the testimony of Jesus to the world'.<sup>100</sup> The witness of the Church in the Apocalypse is accomplished in the midst of intense persecution and temptation (Rev. 6.9; 7.14; 12.11, 17; 13.7; 17.6; 18.24; 20.4) and requires tremendous endurance (Rev. 13.10; 14.12). Paradigmatically, the Church's faithful witness includes martyrdom and vindication (Rev. 11.7-11) patterned after the death and resurrection of Jesus, the faithful and true witness without equal (Rev. 3.14; 19.11). That the witness of the Church takes place globally is indicated by the pneumatically-discerned universal identity of the 'great city' (noted above; Rev. 11.8), and the world-wide celebration of the death of the witnesses (Rev. 11.9-10). Finally, the success of the Church's witness is prophesied by the relatively mild judgment of destruction that follows in the great earthquake, during which the majority 'was afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven' (Rev. 11.13), an appropriate response to the gospel according to Rev. 14.6-7.<sup>101</sup>

In the light of the Spirit's role in the book of Revelation, the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2.33) marks the beginning of the Spirit's special mission as the seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb, 'sent forth into all the earth' (Rev. 5.6).<sup>102</sup> Regardless of one's interpretation of Jn 20.22,<sup>103</sup> a

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<sup>99</sup> Waddell, *The Spirit of the Book of Revelation*, p. 173.

<sup>100</sup> Waddell, *The Spirit of the Book of Revelation*, pp. 177-78.

<sup>101</sup> Waddell, *The Spirit of the Book of Revelation*, pp. 187-88.

<sup>102</sup> Hocken, 'Baptized in the Spirit', pp. 257-68, proposes that Spirit baptism is primarily an eschatological event that leads the church to 'a deepening preparation for the Kingdom that is truly under the leading and control of the Holy Spirit'.

<sup>103</sup> For discussions of the various interpretive options, see J.D.G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit* (Philadelphia: SCM Press, 1970), pp. 173-82; G.M. Burge, *The Anointed Community: The Holy Spirit in the Johannine Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), pp. 123-31; M. Turner, *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts in the New Testament Church Today* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, rev. edn, 1998), pp. 90-102; R.P. Menzies, *The Language of the Spirit: Interpreting and Translating Charismatic Terms* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2010), pp. 51-57; and Thomas, *The Spirit of the New Testament*, pp. 171-74. In the light of Jesus' insistence that he must depart before the Paraclete can come (Jn 16.7) and lack of evidence in the disciples that the Paraclete had come in the event of Jn 20.22, the view of Thomas that Jn 20.22 is a symbolic or proleptic action that points to a reception of the Spirit that is not recorded in the Fourth Gospel

narrative-canonical reading of the Johannine literature invites the reader to view the book of Revelation as a kind of Johannine ‘Book of Acts’, according to which the age of the Spirit is an age of missional enablement and accomplishment that is characterized by the faithful witness of Jesus in the context of severe conflict with principalities and powers (i.e. ‘the world, the flesh, and the devil’).<sup>104</sup> In the ethos of discernment that the Spirit creates in the Church’s encounter with Scripture, the faithful witness of the Church is taken up into the Spirit’s mission, as the Church hears what the Spirit is saying, responds appropriately to become equipped for witness, and is empowered in the actual practice of witness. The Spirit enables the Church’s witness of Jesus by speaking words of prophecy to edify the Church with the goal of unity and increased witness (1 Cor. 14.3; Eph. 4.7-13), by giving the appropriate words of witness in the ‘hour’ of witness (Mk 13.11; Lk. 21.13-15), and by serving as the *παράκλητος* (*paraklētos*, advocate), defending the witness of believers by revealing to the world the truth about sin, righteousness, and judgment (Jn 16.7-11).<sup>105</sup> This witness is to extend ‘to the ends of the earth’ (Acts 1.8) in expectation that people from every nation, tribe, people, and language will comprise God’s faithful and vindicated people.

It is important to note that the Spirit-empowered witness of the Church in the Apocalypse does not take place apart from the experience of Jesus as Savior and Sanctifier. It is the sanctified ‘holy city’, soon to ‘descend from God out of heaven’ (Rev. 21.2) that is trampled by the nations during the time of witness (Rev. 11.2). Conversely, it is Babylon, the great whore, which amazes as a counterfeit source of salvation while at the same time is ‘drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the μαρτύρων (*marturōn*, witnesses, martyrs) of Jesus’ (Rev. 17.6). It is the overcomers, destined to inherit the new creation (Rev. 21.7), who overcome precisely by the word of their witness of the slain Lamb, even unto death (Rev. 12.11). And it is the innumerable multitude, dressed in white robes, who ‘are coming out of great tribulation’, whose unity is denoted not only by

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appears to be the best reading. Thus, Jn 20.22 parallels Lk. 24.49 and Acts 1.8 and anticipates the outpouring of the Spirit in Acts 2.

<sup>104</sup> A.M. Lord, ‘Mission Eschatology: A Framework for Mission in the Spirit’, *JPT* 11 (1997), pp. 111-23, considers the link between mission and eschatology and asserts that the ‘inbreaking of the Spirit’ is often required in times of direct confrontation with opposition.

<sup>105</sup> Gause, *Living in the Spirit*, pp. 127-28.

common cleansing in Jesus' blood, but also by the palm branches in their hands, symbols of their victory and vindication (Rev. 7.7-17).<sup>106</sup>

The book of Revelation makes clear, therefore, that an essential element of the call to faithful witness is the sanctity of witness. To be a witness of Jesus is to be a recipient and participant in the content of that witness. The witness that the Spirit enables is not something separate from the transformative experience of the believer, but rather flows out of it. The Spirit brings the presence of Jesus near to save, sanctify, and heal, and then to enliven the believer's testimony of those experiences. Thus, the holiness of our witness is crucial to that witness.<sup>107</sup> Conversely, we are transformed in the process of mission.<sup>108</sup> This convergence of the salvific and empowering action through the Spirit is noted in Rom. 8.11 where the context allows the application of the resurrection of believers both to their present spiritual condition and to their future bodily resurrection. It is as the dwelling place of the resurrecting Spirit that we are witnesses of Christ's resurrection and may expect our own. But living temples of the Holy Spirit are called to be holy in heart and deed, as noted above.<sup>109</sup> The same eschatological context is apparent in Phil. 3.10-14 where Paul, as the basis for the attainment of the resurrection, combines the pursuit of the knowledge of Christ's resurrection with the knowledge of, or participation in, his sufferings.<sup>110</sup> The victory of the Lamb that the Spirit brings to the world through the Church is a victory that was accomplished through sacrificial love resulting in death. The witness of the Church, then, is shaped by self-giving love, the essence of holiness, which remains constant to the death.<sup>111</sup> We are 'following the Lamb wherever he is going' (Rev. 14.4). Owing to the emphasis on communal holiness in the Apocalypse, sanctified witness empowered by the Spirit necessarily involves a

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<sup>106</sup> Koester, *Revelation*, p. 90.

<sup>107</sup> Andrew Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission: A Holistic Charismatic Missiology* (Bletchly: Paternoster, 2005), pp. 125-29, develops the relationship between holiness and mission in terms of 'attractive holiness'.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. Thompson, 'The Greatest of These', pp. 10-11.

<sup>109</sup> Gause, *Living in the Spirit*, p. 146, notes: 'The Holy Spirit, as the gift of God for the last days, enforces the same union of spiritual and moral duty with the formation of the kingdom. If the Holy Spirit—the eschatological gift to the kingdom of God—is also present, we ought therefore to live in spiritual crisis: to live as those who stand in the presence of the coming glorious and holy King.'

<sup>110</sup> J. Goldingay, 'Was the Holy Spirit Active in the Old Testament? What Was New about the Christian Experience of God?' *Ex Auditu* 12 (1996), p. 27, suggests that openness to the Spirit involves 'an openness to anguish, and therefore an integrity which declines to hide from ambiguity, pain, or failure'.

<sup>111</sup> Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, p. 175.

commitment to holistic mission which promotes the development of just social structures and political policies.<sup>112</sup> Pertinent here are the eschatological parables in Matthew 25 which exhort the Church to be prepared for Jesus' coming by being wise stewards of the resources given, particularly in the service of the marginalized of the world, in whom Christ is hidden. Thus, the deepening of sanctification through the Spirit for the purpose of witness is not for the Church's sake alone, but also for the sake of a broken world, waiting for the liberation of the children of God.<sup>113</sup>

It is significant that in the conclusion to the Apocalypse, the Spirit and the bride together say, 'Come' (Rev. 22.17). The Spirit is never restricted to the Church, but comes inside and alongside to cleanse, transform, and then empower the voice of the Church to become that of the eschatological bride, so that its witness and mission are in accord with its experience.<sup>114</sup> The united call of Spirit and bride also means that the Church does not exist for itself alone. The Church will never outlive its eschatological vocation to invite the world to come into the fellowship of the Triune God.<sup>115</sup>

### E. Discerning Jesus as Healer

*And he will wipe away all tears from their eyes, and death will be no more; grief and crying and pain will be no more, for the former things are passed away.*

—Revelation 21.4

*And on either side of the river is the tree of life, producing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. And every curse will be no more.*

—Revelation 22.2-3a

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<sup>112</sup> Kuzmič, 'History and Eschatology', p. 158; and Lord, 'Missional Eschatology', pp. 116-22, propose that the characteristics of the kingdom to come should be viewed as marks of the present mission of God in the world. But the point of Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, III, p. 49, that 'no existing constitutional or judicial order does full justice to the task of establishing social justice and peace' is well taken.

<sup>113</sup> Kuzmič, 'History and Eschatology', pp. 154-59; and Dempster, 'Eschatology, Spirit Baptism, and Inclusiveness', p. 145-66, link eschatology and Christian ethics by way of the ethics of Jesus in the context of his proclamation of the eschatological kingdom of God. Cf. also Chan, *Pentecostal Theology*, p. 110.

<sup>114</sup> Macchia, 'Church of the Latter Rain', p. 251, states: 'Eschatology thus qualifies the life and ministry of the church precisely because the church is constituted by the Spirit and directed by the eschatological calling of Israel to bless the nations. The church does not administer Spirit baptism, Spirit baptism administers the church.'

<sup>115</sup> Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology*, p. 225; Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, III, p. 45.

These brief passages from the final vision of the Apocalypse will serve as textual entry points from which to explore the eschatological dimensions of Jesus as Healer.

Revelation 22.4 continues the announcement from the throne of the intent of God to tabernacle with humanity. John hears that a series of extraordinary phenomena will accompany God's unmediated presence among God's people. First, 'He will wipe away all tears from their eyes.' This promise is part of Jewish eschatological expectations, noted in Isa. 25.6-8, where its ultimate fulfillment in the context of cosmic renewal and the abolition of death is already predicted. The promise has been given previously in the Apocalypse to the innumerable multitude in Rev. 7.17 where it is connected to the nourishment and spiritual refreshment provided by the Lamb. That God will ἐξαιλέψει (*exaleipsei*, wipe away, blot out) all tears indicates complete removal of both symptom and cause. Thus, wiping away tears encompasses the comprehensive healing of human persons in the totality of their individual, communal, and environmental contexts, in essence signifying שְׁלוֹמִי (*shalom*, wholeness). This intimate image of motherly care by God is combined with overtones of priestly anointing, as the root ἀλείφω (*aleiphō*, to anoint) indicates (cf. Lk. 7.46; Exod. 40.15). Significantly, the word is also associated in the NT with the removal of sin (Acts 3.19) and guilt (Col. 2.14), hinting at the salvific aspects of God's action in Rev. 22.4. The redemptive element in the removal of tears from their eyes is made all the more relevant when the description of the eyes of the exalted Christ is taken into account. They are 'as a flame of fire' (Rev. 1.14), the significance of which is pertinent to all the churches: Jesus is the one 'who searches minds and hearts' (Rev. 2.18). Furthermore, Jesus' admonition to the church at Laodicea to 'buy' from him 'salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see' (Rev. 3.18) points to the need for the healing of spiritual perception as a necessary step toward the eventual removal of tears. The fact that what John *sees* in the Spirit often reinterprets and transforms the significance of what he *hears* is not without relevance here.<sup>116</sup> The visual power of John's visions, though overwhelming in some respects, are an integral part of the discernment of the eschatological revelation of Jesus. Keeping

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<sup>116</sup> Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, pp. 74, 76.

in mind the spiritual dimension of sight in the Apocalypse is essential to the pneumatic discernment of the symbolism in the book.

Similarly, the opening of the eyes of the blind in the earthly ministry of Jesus often takes on a deeper meaning than physical healing, especially in the Fourth Gospel where the healing of the man born blind (John 9) brings together Jesus' pronouncement as the Light of the world, the recapitulation of creation in Jesus' action of anointing the man's eyes with clay, the participation of the man in his own healing by washing, and the consequent belief of the healed man and unbelief of the Pharisees. In the Synoptic Gospels, 'the recovery of sight to the blind' is a primary sign of Jesus' messianic anointing with the Spirit (Lk. 4.16), and the healing of physical ailments is indicative that the kingdom of God has come near (Mt. 9.35; 11.15; Lk. 4.43; 8.1; 9.11).<sup>117</sup> As such, healing is a sign that actualizes what it signifies. That healing is meant to be viewed salvifically is evident when Jesus proclaims the forgiveness of sins along with physical healing (Mk 2.3-5) or speaks of physical healing directly as a saving event (Mk 5.34; 10.52).<sup>118</sup> In this light, physical healing may be perceived alongside spiritual redemption as an essential element in the holistic salvation of human persons, which anticipates the removal of all tears from our eyes. Healing asserts the materiality of salvation,<sup>119</sup> affirms the goodness of creation, and opposes all Gnostic views of redemption.

Next, John hears that several negative experiences universally shared by humanity will 'be no more', the first being the ultimate: death itself (Rev. 21.4)! The magnitude of such an announcement reflects the radical difference concerning life in the new creation: it is immortal and unending. On the one hand, death in the Apocalypse functions as the common destiny of all of humanity, as its power remains operative for both those who are judged (Rev. 2.23; 18.8; 19.21) and for the faithful witnesses of Jesus (Rev. 2.10; 6.11; 11.7; 12.11). On the other hand, Death is personified and rides out with authority to slay a fourth of the earth (Rev. 6.8) and is finally destroyed in the lake of fire (called 'the second death'), a fate it shares with the rest of God's enemies (Rev. 20.10, 14). Death does not possess its own authority because Jesus is ὁ πρωτότοκος τῶν νεκρῶν (*ho prōtotokos tōn*

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<sup>117</sup> P. Kuzmič, 'Kingdom of God', *DPCM*, p. 523.

<sup>118</sup> Thomas, *The Spirit of the New Testament*, p. 33.

<sup>119</sup> M. Volf, 'Materiality of Salvation: An Investigation in the Soteriologies of Liberation and Pentecostal Theologies', *JES* 26.3 (Summer, 1989), pp. 457-67, challenges Pentecostals to incorporate social and political issues into their doctrine of healing.

*nekrōn*, the firstborn from the dead, Rev. 1.5; cf. Col. 1.18), the Living One who was dead, and is alive forevermore, and has the keys of Death and Hades (Rev. 1.18). Christ ‘dies no more’ because ‘death has no more dominion over him’ (Rom. 6.9). Thus, death does not represent defeat for the overcomer who values faithfulness over physical safety (Rev. 12.11), but it represents a temporary resting period (Rev. 6.9-11). Indeed those who ‘die in the Lord’ are ‘blessed’, for as the Spirit attests, ‘they will rest from their labors’ (Rev. 14.13).

But because death itself is to be destroyed as ‘the last enemy’ (1 Cor. 15.26), the temporary state of the deceased is never viewed as final redemption. Rather, the faithful witnesses come to life and reign with Christ (Rev. 20.4), an event which corresponds to Paul’s rather lengthy explanation of the resurrection of the dead in 1 Cor. 15.12-58. Using an agricultural metaphor, Paul notes that the body dies in a state characterized by mortality, decay, dishonor, and weakness, whose life principle is ψυχικός (*psuchikos*, natural, of the soul). As such, the body that ‘bears the earthy image’ is subject to illness and degenerative diseases. In contrast, the body that is raised is characterized by immortality, incorruption, glory, and power, whose life principle is πνευματικός (*pneumatikos*, spiritual, of the Spirit). Using a different metaphor, at the moment of resurrection, the body that is mortal and subject to decay is clothed upon with immortality and incorruption so that ‘death is swallowed up in victory’, a clear reference to the same passage (Isa. 25.6-8) to which Rev. 22.4 refers. In both metaphors, a continuity of individual identity is maintained as the mortal is not destroyed but is taken up into the immortal. Ultimately, the resurrection of the body is the answer to all issues of physical healing.

Along with the disappearance of death, John hears that grief, crying, and pain will also ‘be no more’ (Rev. 22.4). These terms reveal both the affective and physical aspects of suffering. Πένθος (*penthos*, grief) most often denotes mourning for the deceased (e.g. Mt. 9.15) and is used in the Apocalypse as part of the judgment against Babylon (Rev. 18.7-8; cf. Jas 4.9). Significantly, the word may also denote grief over sins (1 Cor. 5.2; 2 Cor. 12.21). The blessing that Jesus proclaims in the Sermon on the Mount upon ‘those who mourn’ (Mt. 5.4) finds ultimate fulfillment in the comfort that comes from knowing that all causes of mourning ‘are no more’. Κραυγή (*kraugē*, crying), rather than signifying the

shedding of tears, denotes a loud outcry. Though the verbal form (κράζω, *krazō*) is especially associated in the Fourth Gospel with the proclamation of Jesus' true identity (Jn 1.15; 7.28, 37; 12.13, 44), it also appears in the Apocalypse in the lament of the martyrs 'under the altar' who 'cried out with a loud voice, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will you not judge and avenge our blood upon them that dwell upon the earth?"' (Rev. 6.9-10). That the cry of justice will be satisfied holds enormous ramifications for the healing of human society, for ultimately, eschatology must answer the theodicy question. In this sense, both outcry and healing participate in the setting to rights of the world. The cries of Israel (cf. Exod. 2.23-24), eventually articulated as personal and communal psalms of lament and incorporated into the worship of Yahweh (cf. Pss. 13, 86, 74, 137),<sup>120</sup> join with the outcries of the downtrodden and oppressed throughout the centuries the world over to ask, 'How long?' Crying out to God in the face of apparent silence reflects a faith in God that submits human knowledge to the wisdom and power of God to one day make all things right. Such discerning spirituality calls for 'the patience and faith of the saints' (Rev. 13.9-10). In contrast to the sinfulness of the Laodicean church (Rev. 13.17) or the unbelief of Babylon (Rev. 18.7) who both refuse to acknowledge pain or sorrow, such faith participates in the divine longsuffering required of God's redemptive justice,<sup>121</sup> and, if necessary, *waits* for healing for the sake of both the oppressed and the oppressors.<sup>122</sup> Ultimately, Jesus heals by gathering up into God's unmediated presence all those who have come into solidarity with his own crucifixion cry of redemptive forsakenness (Mt. 27.46). Finally, that there will 'be no more' πόνος (*ponos*, pain) testifies to the material, bodily nature of final redemption, especially since the word is closely associated with the fatigue of physical labor. Since the word may also denote intense physical pain (Rev. 16.10-11), here is a promise for the relief

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<sup>120</sup> W. Brueggemann, *The Psalms and the Life of Faith* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), pp. 84-111, explores the usefulness of the psalms of lament for the public expression of grief in the life of Israel and proposes that the loss of lament in church and society is costly in terms of psychological authenticity and social justice. Such an analysis is confirmed by the use of lament in the Apocalypse.

<sup>121</sup> Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, III, p. 580.

<sup>122</sup> M.W. Mittelstadt, *The Spirit and Suffering in Luke-Acts: Implications for a Pentecostal Pneumatology* (JPTSup, 26; London: T&T Clark International, 2004), pp. 131-38, challenges Western world Pentecostals to integrate a theology of suffering into their view of Spirit-empowered witness.

of all pain, whether chronic or sporadic, especially for those who have labored in the faith (Rev. 2.3).

Participation in the divine longsuffering as the context for cosmic healing invites reflection upon Paul's understanding of the eschatological longing that the believer and creation share with the Spirit for final redemption. In 2 Corinthians 4–5, Paul develops the notion of 'this treasure in clay jars' as the 'carrying in the body the death of Jesus' so that his life might be revealed (2 Cor. 4.7, 10). This indwelling treasure sets up in the believer a longing, not to be divested of the body and mortality, but to be clothed further by immortality (2 Cor. 5.2, 4). Significantly, the treasure we carry is τὸν ἀρραβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος (*ton arrabona tou pneumatos*, the earnest of the Spirit). As the earnest or first installment, the Spirit guarantees the future triumph of life for the body as the *presence* of the future, even in the midst of bodily afflictions (2 Cor. 4.16; Eph. 1.14). The believer's experience of the Spirit *in the body* generates a tension between the burdensome aspects of mortal existence and the foretaste of wholeness, yielding a faith characterized by στενάζω (*stenazō*, hopeful sighing).<sup>123</sup> An eschatology that incorporates the present activity of the Spirit will necessarily acknowledge the eschatological reservation of the Christian life, for even the gifts of the Spirit partake in the limited nature of mortal existence (1 Cor. 13.9).<sup>124</sup> Jesus heals in the midst of this eschatological tension.

Paul carries this idea forward in Rom. 8.18-27 where the Spirit is said to help the weakness of believers by interceding with στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις (*stenagmois alalētois*, inexpressible groanings). Because we have been given τὴν ἀπαρχὰν τοῦ πνεύματος (*tēn aparchan tou pneumatos*, the first fruits of the Spirit), similar groanings characterize our present spirituality,<sup>125</sup> as we wait expectantly for 'adoption': 'the redemption of the body'.<sup>126</sup> But our longing for ultimate healing

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<sup>123</sup> W. Szypuła, *The Holy Spirit in the Eschatological Tension of the Christian Life: An Exegetico-Theological Study of 2 Corinthians 5,1-5 and Romans 8,18-27* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 2007), pp. 153-72.

<sup>124</sup> O. McMahan, 'Grief Observed: Surprised by the Suffering of the Spirit', in Land, Moore, and Thomas (eds.), *Passover, Pentecost, and Parousia*, pp. 296-314, affirms the need to confess grief and suffering as an expression of the Spirit's longing for eschatological wholeness.

<sup>125</sup> For a discussion of whether this might include glossolalia, cf. Fee, *Empowering Presence*, pp. 579-85.

<sup>126</sup> Szypuła, *The Holy Spirit in the Eschatological Tension of the Christian Life*, pp. 362-64, speaks of the 'kenosis of the Spirit' in this regard. The Spirit is the first fruits of the renewed creation because the Spirit participates in the brokenness of human frailty and the futility of creation. Similarly, M.K. Thompson, 'Eschatology as Soteriology: The Cosmic Full Gospel', in

(bodily resurrection) is set within the longing of the entire creation to shake off the ‘bondage to decay’ and the ‘futility’ to which God has subjected it and to partake in the liberation that will come in the wake of final human redemption (Rom. 8.20-21). In so far as the frailty of human existence partakes in the God-ordained ‘futility’ of creation, healing falls outside of the redemption of human sinfulness but solidly inside of the cosmic restoration of the created order in unbounded life.<sup>127</sup> Jesus as Healer is an essential part of the full gospel in that final salvation includes bodily resurrection as a part of the transformation of the creation into inexhaustible life.<sup>128</sup> Present healing, then, finds its place within a holistic spirituality that both acknowledges the limits of the human condition (Rom. 8.26) and trusts that God works all things, including bodily weaknesses, together for our ultimate good (Rom. 8.28, 35, 38-39).<sup>129</sup> In this light, perhaps Jesus groaned (ἐστέναξεν, *estenaxen*) as he opened the ears of a deaf person (Mk 7.34) to express the universal groan for all of creation to ‘be opened’ to hear and to speak the praise of the eschatological glory of God!

Revelation 21.4 asserts that death, grief, crying, and pain belong to the ‘former things’ that are ‘passed away’ (ἀπῆλθαν, *apēlthan*). John has already noted that the ‘first heaven and first earth’ are ‘passed away’ (Rev. 21.1). If these statements interpret one another, it is not the *annihilation* of the first cosmos that is revealed here, but rather its *transformation* in the passing away of the σχῆμα

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Althouse and Waddell (eds.), *Perspectives in Pentecostal Eschatologies*, p. 201, argues that the empowering presence of the Spirit in the believer is a kenotic experience appropriate to this age.

<sup>127</sup> Moltmann’s insistence on viewing redemption within the framework of an eschatological interpretation of creation instead of the other way around is helpful here. Eschatology, then, is not just about the restoration of original creation because of sin, but includes the fulfillment of creation as something new (*The Coming of God*, pp. 261-67).

<sup>128</sup> F.D. Macchia, ‘The Struggle for Global Witness: Shifting Paradigms in Pentecostal Theology’, in M.W. Dempster, B.D. Klaus, and D. Petersen (eds.), *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel* (Oxford: Regnum, 1999), pp. 19-23, asserts that a Pentecostal theology of glossolalia is a way to integrate solidarity with suffering creation into a holistic spirituality.

<sup>129</sup> This holistic understanding of healing from an eschatological perspective is in keeping with the vision of healing found in the early Wesleyan Holiness Pentecostal literature. Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing*, pp. 198-209, notes that faithfulness in the context of God’s sovereignty was an integral part of the theology of healing of early Wesleyan Pentecostals, who viewed every act of healing as a sign of the coming kingdom. W.W. Menzies, ‘Reflections on Suffering: A Pentecostal Perspective’, in W. Ma and R.P. Menzies (eds.), *The Spirit and Spirituality: Essays in Honour of Russell P. Spittler* (JPTSup, 24; London: T&T Clark International, 2004), pp. 141-49, proposes that Pentecostals should neither ‘capitulate prematurely to the problem of human suffering’ nor demand from God healing in every situation. Rather, believers are to intercede on behalf of the suffering while recognizing that God’s purposes may include suffering.

(*schēma*, present form, manner) of the world (1 Cor. 7.31).<sup>130</sup> The world, defined as ‘the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life’ is passing away (1 Jn 2.17). Even now, the believer experiences the passing away of old things (2 Cor. 5.17) in anticipation of the final new creation. We may say, then, that the resurrection of Jesus, as the first born from the dead (Rev. 1.5), marks the beginning of the passing of this world and its transformation into the new creation.<sup>131</sup> Jesus heals in proleptic anticipation of the ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων (*apokatastaseōs pantōn*, restoration of all things, Acts 3.21), of which the presence of the Spirit in the believer is the first installment and first fruits.

The final passage in this study which serves as a textual entry point to discern Jesus as Healer appears in Rev. 22.2. Here, John describes ‘the tree of life’ which grows on either side of the river of the water of life, which produces twelve kinds of fruit in as many months. Jesus has already promised that the overcomer will be given to eat of the tree of life (Rev. 2.7), and this tree serves as a central symbol of final salvation (Rev. 22.14) for those who wash their robes, a clear reference to the innumerable multitude (Rev. 7.17). If what John envisions here is access to the protological tree of life, this image serves as a narrative *inclusio* for the entire biblical canon (cf. Gen. 2.9; 3.22, 24). The new creation is a fulfilled Garden of Eden; the biblical drama has reached its conclusion. Significant for this study is John’s statement that ‘the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations’. In the Apocalypse, the healing of the nations presupposes their recognition of God as the true source of salvation and peace. In one trajectory, the nations maintain a rebellious stance against God, consorting with the great whore, Babylon (Rev. 14.8; 17.2; 18.3), worshipping the beast and his image (Rev. 13.4, 7-8), refusing to repent but rather cursing God (Rev. 9.20-21; 16.9, 11, 21), gathering to make war with Christ at his *parousia* (Rev. 16.14, 16; 19.15, 18), and finally being deceived by Satan and consumed by fire from heaven (Rev. 20.8-9). Yet, in another trajectory, the nations respond positively to the faithful witness of the Church,

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<sup>130</sup> Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, pp. 268-72; R. Waddell, ‘Apocalyptic Sustainability: The Future of Pentecostal Ecology’, in Althouse and Waddell (eds.), *Perspectives in Pentecostal Eschatologies*, p. 103; *idem*, ‘Revelation and the (New) Creation’, in Yong (ed.), *The Spirit Renews the Face of the Earth*, pp. 30-50. At the same time, the term *καινός* (*kainos*, new), used to describe the heaven and earth that John now sees, denotes a qualitative newness that is heretofore unprecedented and, thus, astonishing. Although there is continuity between this creation and the next, there is also a high degree of discontinuity. Cf. Kuzmič, ‘History and Eschatology’, p. 151.

<sup>131</sup> J. Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), pp. 256-59.

made evident by their giving glory to the God of heaven following the ministry of the two witnesses (Rev. 11.3-13) and their singing of the song of Moses and of the Lamb following the proclamation of the ‘everlasting gospel’ by three angels flying in mid-heaven (Rev. 14.6-11; 15.2-4). The presence of the nations in the holy city (Rev. 21.24, 26) and the vision of the healing of the nations (Rev. 22.2) hold out enormous hope that the Spirit-empowered, sacrificial witness of the Church ultimately will be successful for the conversion and wholeness of the nations.

That the eschatological age will be characterized as a cosmic garden is prominent in Ezek. 47.1-13, where the leaves of the trees are for healing. Significantly, Assyria is portrayed in Ezekiel 31 as an enormous tree that claims in its pride to shelter the nations but is judged and brought down, with imagery that parallels the downfall of Babylon in Revelation 17–18. What is implicit in Ezek. 47.12 is made explicit in Rev. 22.2: final salvation includes the healing *of the nations*. This promise transcends that of the multinational constituency of the holy city of God, noted above (cf. Rev. 7.9). It also embraces a vision of global and political peace among the diverse cultures and ethnic groups of the world, and therefore, of their sustained significance in the new creation. Thus, social holiness and communal healing are mutually fulfilling.<sup>132</sup> The שְׁלוֹמִים (*shalom*, peace, wholeness) that characterizes the new creation is constitutive of every level of society and the environment,<sup>133</sup> with every individual, community, region, and nation living in complete harmony that makes for global well-being. In this light, the leaves of healing allow for the supply and sharing of resources that serve global peace and prosperity. This restored ecology of life on the new earth is reflected in the generous sharing of resources evident both in the teaching and ministry of Jesus (Mt. 5.38-48; 14.13-21) and in the early church after the day of

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<sup>132</sup> Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing*, p. 238. Althouse, ‘Pentecostal Eschatology in Context’, pp. 211-14, purports to explore the doctrine of healing within the framework of the fourfold narrative of the full gospel that was made prominent in the Finished Work stream of Pentecostalism. What he develops, however, picks up a major theme in the Wesleyan Pentecostal model of healing that Kimberly Alexander uncovered in her work in the early Pentecostal literature, that healing is a proleptic participation in the future kingdom (see Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing*, pp. 203-204). In response to the question of why some are not healed, Althouse’s answer—‘Simply, we have not experienced the eschatological resurrection yet. Healing is a partial realization of the new creation, anticipatory signs of the cosmic reign of Christ.’ (p. 213)—is a thoroughly Wesleyan approach to healing and thus presupposes a broader understanding of atonement than Finished Work theology allows.

<sup>133</sup> Clifton, ‘Preaching the “Full Gospel”’, p. 131.

Pentecost (Acts 2.43-47; 4.32-35). The Church, called to live in peace as a holy nation made whole in the generosity of the Spirit, then, serves as a proleptic sign of the healing of the nations. Jesus heals so that those who are made whole contribute to the wholeness of the community, becoming conduits of health, not only among one another but also to the broken society and creation around them. Healing always has a social dimension.<sup>134</sup>

Finally, John hears the announcement that ‘every curse will be no more’ (Rev. 22.3a). In the context of the healing of the nations, *κατάθεμα* (*katathema*) may refer, not to what is accursed, but to the curse itself, the *קריה*, or sacred ban of destruction under which the enemy nations of Israel were marked for destruction (cf. Isa. 34.1-2; Zech. 14.11).<sup>135</sup> This ‘destruction’ of the ban of destruction parallels the ‘death’ of death; the healed nations need not fear judgment again. But the association of the tree of life with the removal of every curse also points to the One who was ‘cursed for us’ by hanging on a tree (Gal. 3.13) removing the judgment imposed by the Torah. In this broader sense, the tree of life is Calvary’s tree that continuously yields the fruit of eternal life and forever produces the green leaves of communal healing. The gates to the Garden will always be open (Rev. 21.25). ‘Blessed [indeed] are those who have the right to the tree of life’ (Rev. 22.14).

## F. Discerning Jesus as Coming King

*Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who is keeping the words of the prophecy of this book.*

—Revelation 22.7

*Behold, I am coming soon, and my reward is with me to repay according to each one’s work.*

—Revelation 22.12

*The One who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely, I am coming soon.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.*

—Revelation 22.20

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<sup>134</sup> Augustine, ‘Pentecost Communal Economics and the Household of God’, pp. 231-41, notes that the secularization of this vision is doomed to failure, as evidenced by the Eastern European Marxist experiment. Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, pp. 295-315, reflects on Jesus as Healer from a Pentecostal perspective and explores the dynamics of informal economies of grace that exist in the Church independently of the formal global market economy. Cf. also Kärkkäinen, ‘Spirit, Reconciliation and Healing in the Community’, pp. 46-50.

<sup>135</sup> Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, pp. 316-18.

In the previous sections, the eschatological dimensions of Jesus as Savior, Sanctifier, Spirit Baptizer, and Healer have been explored. The following extended section is offered as a reflection on Jesus as Coming King as an integral component of the fivefold gospel. As such, the insights enumerated in the previous sections have continuing relevance for this discussion. The identity of Jesus as Coming King is both shaped by and brings to fulfillment his role as Savior, Sanctifier, Spirit Baptizer, and Healer. As noted above, present experiences of salvation, sanctification, Spirit baptism, and healing are proleptic anticipations of life with God in the new creation.

### **1. The Coming of Jesus**

The three texts chosen as entry points for discerning Jesus as Coming King appear in the epilogue to the Apocalypse (Rev. 22.7, 12, 20), where in each text, Jesus exclaims, 'I am coming soon'. This emphatic message also appears three times in the letters to the seven churches (Rev. 2.5, 16; 3.11) and once in the vision of the sixth bowl judgment (Rev. 16.15), for a total of seven occurrences, a number used throughout the Apocalypse to indicate completeness.<sup>136</sup> The immediacy of Jesus' coming is highlighted by the fact that, unlike other NT documents, no nouns are used in the Apocalypse to describe this event from a third person perspective; rather, it is announced by Jesus in the first person (ἔρχομαι, *erchomai*, 'I come') and revealed to John in multiple visions (Rev. 14.14-16, 17-20; 19.11-21). Thus, as prophetic utterance, the coming of Jesus is kept in the interpreter's discerning vision as an ever-present reality that requires an ongoing faithful response. The fact that the initial words which introduce the book, Ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (*Apokalupsis Iēsou Christou*, Revelation of Jesus Christ), are used in other NT texts to refer to Jesus' coming (e.g. 1 Cor. 1.7; 1 Pet. 1.7) suggests that the entire book is to be closely related to the event of Jesus' coming. The encounter with Jesus which the Apocalypse mediates takes on the same 'apocalyptic' quality as Jesus' coming itself. Jesus' announcement, 'I come', is made specifically to two of the seven churches as a message of warning that if repentance is not forthcoming, the church would face removal from Christ's presence (Rev. 2.5) or judgment from the sword of his mouth (Rev. 2.16), actions that anticipate the

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<sup>136</sup> Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, p. 30.

vision of Jesus' appearance in Rev. 19.11-21. The announcement of Jesus' coming is also given to encourage the Church to remain faithful in its witness of Jesus (Rev. 3.11), especially in the 'hour' of trial (Rev. 3.10) or judgment upon the world (Rev. 14.7; 18.10, 17, 19), from which the Church is kept. As seen already, this does not mean that the Church is exempted from suffering and martyrdom; rather, it will gain victory through its faithful witness (Rev. 12.11). Thus, Jesus comes repeatedly to the Church *prior* to the event of his eschatological coming so that the Church may be challenged and strengthened to conquer through faithful obedience in the midst of lovelessness, false teachings, false worship, persecution, apathy, weariness, and self-sufficiency. In the midst of John's description of the sixth bowl judgment (Rev. 16.15), Jesus' words, 'Behold, I am coming', burst forth unexpectedly to announce that his *coming* will be unexpected, 'like a thief' (cf. Rev. 3.3). The depiction of Christ's coming as a thief and the need to stay alert is a theme woven throughout the NT (Mt. 24.42-43; 25.13; Mk 13.33-37; Lk. 12.39; 21.36; 1 Thess. 5.2, 4; 2 Pet. 3.10). In Rev. 16.15, blessing is assigned to those who watch and stay ready by discerning the deceiving signs of the demonic spirits who gather the world together in opposition to God. The final occurrences of Jesus' declaration, 'I am coming soon', repeated three times within fourteen verses (Rev. 22.7, 12, 20), leave no doubt that preparation for Jesus' coming by keeping the words of the prophecy of the book (cf. Rev. 1.3) and by doing works appropriate to obedient faithfulness (cf. Rev. 11.18) is of utmost importance. Further, that Jesus is coming *ταχύ* (*tachu*, soon, quickly, without delay) accentuates the need to prepare.

It has been noted already that Jesus' identity as Savior, Sanctifier, Spirit Baptizer, and Healer is revealed in perichoretic union with the Father. In a similar way, Jesus does not come as King apart from the purposes of God. Rather, the coming of Christ is, in a very real sense, the coming of God to reign. This is made evident through a notable alteration in the repeated designation for God as 'the one who is, who was, and who is to come' (Rev. 1.4; 1.8; 4.8). Significantly, this threefold formula designates God, not as one who 'will be' (as might be expected in a progression of verb tenses), but as *ὁ ἐρχόμενος* (*ho erchomenos*, the one who is coming). Here, John reveals his interest, not so much in the future of God in

terms of ontology, but in the future of God in relation to the world.<sup>137</sup> God does not abandon the world, but comes to fulfill his commitment to the world—summed up in the person of Jesus. It is significant, then, that in the final two occurrences of the formula, it is abbreviated to read, ‘the one who is, and who was’, suggesting that at these points in the vision, God’s coming is no longer future but is being described as a present occurrence.<sup>138</sup> The first of these appears in Rev. 11.17 at the conclusion of the witness, martyrdom, and vindication of the Church (represented by the two witnesses) and the judgment and salvation of the nations (represented by the majority who give glory to God). Here, God is said to have ‘taken [his] great power and begun to reign’. The second occurs in Rev. 16.5 in the midst of the series of bowl judgments, the seven last plagues by which ‘the wrath of God is completed’ (Rev. 15.1). Here, God is praised for the establishment of truth and justice through the judgment of those who have slain God’s people. Thus, the coming of Jesus is equated with the coming of the kingdom of God upon the earth in judgment and salvation. The petition in the Lord’s Prayer, ‘Your kingdom come; your will be done, on earth...’ (Mt. 6.10) is fulfilled ultimately in the coming of Jesus.

The close affinity between the coming of Jesus and the coming of God’s kingdom is also denoted by Jesus’ adoption of another designation for God, that of ‘the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end’ (Rev. 1.8; 21.6). In Rev. 22.12-13, the designation for Jesus as ‘the first and the last’ (Rev. 1.17) is integrated into this designation for God, so that Jesus proclaims, ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.’ That Jesus says this about himself along with the announcement of his coming in v. 12 suggests that the coming of Jesus occurs in perichoretic fellowship with God. Jesus comes in the fulfillment of God’s nature as ‘the Omega’, ‘the last’, and ‘the end’. In this way, the coming of Jesus brings about the will of God for final salvation. This idea stands behind Paul’s understanding of Jesus’ coming in 1 Cor. 15.23-28 where Paul anticipates that all things are made subject to God through the reign of

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<sup>137</sup> Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, p. 30. Contra Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, pp. 22-29, who takes this threefold designation to refer to God’s ontological nature, so that he can say, ‘God’s being is in his coming, not in his becoming’ (p. 23). At the risk of oversimplifying, Moltmann develops his complex view of time from this ontological understanding of God.

<sup>138</sup> Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, pp. 28-30; *idem*, *The Climax of Prophecy*, p. 32; Koester, *Revelation*, p. 112.

Christ over all God's enemies, especially death. Thus, Jesus is called 'the ruler of the kings of the earth' (Rev. 1.5). It is through him that it may be said, 'The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign forever and ever' (Rev. 11.15). The kings of the earth, united under the beast, are conquered by the Lamb, for he is 'the Lord of lords and King of kings' (Rev. 17.14). The defeat of the beast, the false prophet, Satan, and eventually death itself, represents the destruction of all the powers of evil (Rev. 19.20; 20.10, 14). In the end, Christ, in the mutual love of the Father, submits the kingdom to the Father, so that God may be 'all in all' (1 Cor. 15.28).

Various dimensions of Jesus' coming may be discerned from the three passages in the Apocalypse that directly portray this event, each in highly symbolic images. In Rev. 14.14-16, John records the 'reaping of the earth' by 'one like the Son of Man' who is 'seated on a cloud'. In this vision, an angel announces that 'the hour to reap is come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe'. The consistent representation of harvest throughout Scripture as a positive image for the gathering of the redeemed (e.g. Mk 4.29; Jn 4.35-38) suggests that this is a positive portrayal of Jesus' coming.<sup>139</sup> Furthermore, the depiction of Jesus here as 'the Son of Man' links this text to Dan. 7.13-14 where 'one like the Son of Man' comes 'with the clouds of heaven' and receives an everlasting kingdom from 'the Ancient of Days'. The term 'Son of Man' is used of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels in reference to his passion, resurrection, ascension, and coming. The Son of Man is the prophetic figure who is betrayed, suffers, and dies as a ransom for many (Mt. 20.18, 28; Mk 10.33, 45), then who rises from the dead and comes in the clouds of heaven (Mt. 24.30; Mk 14.62; Lk. 21.27; 24.7). In the Fourth Gospel, the Son of Man is lifted up in crucifixion and is glorified (Jn 3.14; 8.28; 12.23, 34; 13.31). Thus, Jesus as the Son of Man is the Savior of humankind who gives his life, is raised from the dead, and receives the kingdom in glory. In the Apocalypse, Jesus already stands among the lampstands as 'one like the Son of Man' (Rev. 1.13); that is, he stands in solidarity with and as Lord over the Church. The image of reaping the earth, then, is the image of gathering the redeemed into full glory (cf. Mt. 24.31; Mk 13.27; Jn 14.3; Eph. 1.10; 2 Thess. 2.1) and not of judgment. As the 144,000 represent the *first fruits* redeemed from the nations

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<sup>139</sup> Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, pp. 96-97.

(Rev. 14.4), the reaping of the earth, resulting from the preaching of the ‘eternal gospel’ (Rev. 14.6-7), is the *completion of the harvest* of the nations at Jesus’ coming.

The second passage that directly portrays Jesus’ coming appears in Rev. 14.17-20 as a parallel image<sup>140</sup> to that of reaping: the image of the treading of the earth’s grapes in ‘the great winepress of the wrath of God’. Here, angels gather the grapes from the earth and throw them into the winepress, but the identity of the one who treads the grapes is hidden, that is, until Rev. 19.15. Further, the image of the ‘blood’ of the grapes flowing up to the horses’ bridles makes sense only in the light of the battle scene of Revelation 19, where the mounted armies of heaven accompany the victorious Christ. Yet, so much blood! Certainly, the imagery is apocalyptic hyperbole designed to stress the utmost seriousness and comprehensiveness of God’s judgment. This depiction of Jesus’ coming as the treading of God’s winepress of wrath is anticipated in the Apocalypse by ‘the wine of the wrath of [Babylon’s] fornication’ (Rev. 14.8; 17.4), which becomes ‘the wine of God’s wrath’ upon the nations who drink of Babylon’s intoxicating luxuries (Rev. 14.10; 18.3). It is clear in the full portrayal of Babylon’s judgment (Revelation 17–18) that God judges Babylon by means of the very nations that are enticed by her allurements: they turn on her, abuse her, and burn her with fire (Rev. 17.16-17). Her judgment is mixed in the very cup she used to entice her clients (Rev. 18.6). In other words, Babylon’s judgment, which symbolizes God’s judgment on ancient Rome and thus on all world empires, is carried out by allowing the self-destructive nature of the godless empire to run its course. This is similar to Paul’s understanding of the present wrath of God upon the idolatrous world, in that God hands them over to their own self-destruction (Rom. 1.18-23). In the coming of Jesus, these judgments reach their culmination and fulfillment and are not arbitrary, even in their final form; rather, they are ‘intrinsic’ to the nature of the world in rebellion against God.<sup>141</sup>

The third and final passage in the Apocalypse that depicts Jesus’ coming (Rev. 19.11-20) is the most comprehensive of these portrayals and is integrated

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<sup>140</sup> P. Bechdloff, ‘Evangelism and Eschatology’, in Hunter and Hocken (eds.), *All Together in One Place*, p. 248, points out that the ambiguity of the succession of visions in the book of Revelation in terms of chronology thwarts an attempt to predict an order of events for the things to come.

<sup>141</sup> Cf. Stephen H. Travis, *Christ and the Judgement of God: The Limits of Divine Retribution in New Testament Thought* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, rev. edn, 2008), pp. 292-98.

fully into the concluding narrative of the book, falling as it does between the two city-visions of Babylon and New Jerusalem. Given its context immediately after the judgment of the great whore, and the announcement of the wedding of the Lamb, the appearance of Jesus here should likely be viewed as the appearance of the Bridegroom as he begins the processional to meet the bride, depicted in Rev. 21.9–22.5 as noted above. But it is also the appearance of the divine Warrior and Judge (Rev. 19.11) who comes to overthrow the powers that oppose God’s righteous rule. Structurally, the scene is set up as a battle, with the armies of heaven led by Jesus sweeping down to meet the armies of the kings of the earth led by the beast. Yet, at a deeper narrative level, the ‘battle’ is that between truth and deception. This is evident both in the appearance of Jesus and in his names. As the rider of a white horse, Jesus stands in contrast to the earlier white-horse rider, bent only on conquest and followed by war, famine, and death (Rev. 6.2–8).<sup>142</sup> As one crowned with *διαδήματα πολλά* (*diadēmata polla*, many crowns), Jesus is the true sovereign who stands against the false claims to royalty of the dragon who has seven crowns (Rev. 12.3) and the beast who has ten (Rev. 13.1). Indeed, Jesus is ‘King of kings, and Lord of lords’! His eyes are like ‘a flame of fire’, a trait already connected in the Apocalypse with Jesus’ ability to search minds and hearts (Rev. 2.18, 23). He is called ‘Faithful and True’, a designation that describes the authentic nature of his witness (Rev. 3.14; 22.4). His robe is dipped in the blood of his own witness, through which his followers are made overcomers (Rev. 12.11). His name is ‘the Word of God’, the very essence of God’s inmost nature, which constitutes ‘the sword of his mouth’, the Truth of God spoken and embodied. Thus, the coming of Jesus portrayed here is the revelation of Truth that exposes and destroys the falsehood of the world in rebellion against God, symbolized by the beast and the false prophet who deceive the world into allegiance through lying signs. Having known Jesus already as the faithful and true witness with eyes like a flame of fire and with a sharp sword coming from his mouth, the Church now constitutes the armies of heaven and joins in his victory. His word of truth ‘strikes’ the nations: ‘Behold! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of him’ (Rev. 1.8). Jesus comes as King precisely in his role

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<sup>142</sup> Alternately, the image of the rider on the white horse in Rev. 6.2 may be viewed as an anticipation of the coming of Jesus in Rev. 19.11.

as Savior, for it is his word of salvation that also condemns those who refuse to acknowledge the truth (Jn 12.46-49).<sup>143</sup>

These portrayals of the coming of Jesus invite us to explore other NT texts that depict this event. A synopsis of the semantic field of terms denoting Christ's coming may be gained by summarizing the three most common.<sup>144</sup> First, some texts refer to the ἀποκάλυψις (*apokalupsis*, revelation) of Jesus (1 Cor. 1.7; 2 Thess. 1.7; 1 Pet. 1.7, 13; 4.13). This term denotes the uncovering or disclosure of what was unknown or hidden from view. Thus, it can refer to a prophetic word (1 Cor. 14.26) or the unveiling of the gospel (Rom. 16.25). The 'revelation' of Jesus in reference to his coming, then, stresses the disclosure of the fullness of Jesus in glory. The truth of who Jesus is will be revealed at his coming. This suggests that Jesus is not yet known by anyone as he will be known when he comes; the coming of Jesus will be salvific in itself.

Second, other texts refer to the ἐπιφάνεια (*epiphaneia*, appearing) of Jesus (2 Thess. 2.8; 1 Tim. 6.14; 2 Tim. 4.1, 8; Tit. 2.13). This term also denotes the appearance of something hidden, but as its root, *phan-*, signifies 'shining', it stresses the openness to sight or visibility that accompanies the appearing. Thus, it can refer to the incarnation of Jesus, our Savior, to bring to light the eternal purpose of God in Christ (1 Tim. 1.10). When the term is used in relation to Jesus' coming, it denotes the 'shining forth' of Jesus by which he destroys 'the lawless one' (2 Thess. 2.8) and judges the 'living and the dead' (2 Tim. 4.1). It is the 'glorious appearance' of Jesus which the believer loves (2 Tim. 4.8) and for which she hopes (Tit. 2.13). Thus, it serves to inspire sustained obedience (1 Tim. 6.14). The coming of Jesus will bring all things into the light of his own person so that all will know themselves for who they are in his light, and all will know Jesus as the Lord who is unavoidable. Although neither 'revelation' nor 'appearance' is a technical term for Christ's coming, both carry with them an eschatological connotation in that Jesus who is 'revealed' and who 'appears' at his coming discloses the truth of all things in their finality (Rev. 22.11). As was shown

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<sup>143</sup> Obviously, such a depiction of Jesus' coming stands in stark opposition to the attempts of some to predict a literal 'flesh and blood' battle of Armageddon with supersonic fighter jets, multiple warhead missiles, and battalions of armed troops all trained on the figure of Jesus riding down on a white horse to meet them. The images are not meant to promote such literalism; rather, they portray the ultimate victory of the truth of Jesus and of his witnesses against the falsehood of the world-in-rebellion. Cf. Koester, *Revelation*, pp. 173-80.

<sup>144</sup> Cf. Hart, *Truth Aflame*, pp. 446-47.

above, this is the primary emphasis of the depiction of Jesus' coming in Rev. 19.11-20.

The third term in this semantic field, παρουσία (*parousia*, coming, arrival), is the most common. Unlike the two previous terms, *parousia* is never used in the NT of the first advent of Jesus, but is reserved for Jesus' eschatological coming. The term itself denotes arrival and consequent presence (cf. Latin *adventus*). In royal court language, the term refers to the visit of Caesar, a king, or a high official to a city. Paul uses the term to refer to the personal visit and presence of friends (1 Cor. 16.17; 1 Cor. 7.6) and of himself (2 Cor. 10.10; Phil. 1.26). Thus, the *parousia* of Jesus especially signifies his arrival and presence.

In the context of apostolic instruction to the Corinthian church (1 Cor. 15.12-58), Paul connects the *parousia* with the resurrection of Jesus, the resurrection of believers, the destruction of death, and the fulfillment of the kingdom of God. The resurrected Christ serves as the 'first fruits' of all those who will rise at his coming (1 Cor. 15.20, 23). Jesus has entered into the eschatological future of God by being raised from the dead ahead of all others.<sup>145</sup> As the 'first fruits', Jesus' resurrection is the 'prototype' and guarantee of the 'full harvest', when all will enter into this future. Though the newness of resurrection life already characterizes existence in Christ (2 Cor. 5.17; Gal. 6.15), the resurrection of the body will mark the completion of salvation for the believer: union with Christ in eschatological glory (Phil. 3.10-11) when 'we will be like him' (1 Jn 3.2). Paul explains that both the dead in Christ and believers who are alive at Jesus' coming 'will be changed' or transformed (*ἀλλαγησόμεθα*, *allagēsometha*, 1 Cor. 15.51-52); that is, mortality will 'put on' immortality, and death will be swallowed up in victory. The coming of Jesus will bring with it the fullness of holistic redemption. This is why, in his concluding remarks, Paul can direct the believer's attention to their present work or labor in the Lord (1 Cor. 15.58). Such labor, often physically exhausting or even life-threatening, is not 'empty' but filled with a hope that includes the redemption of the body-put-at-risk (1 Cor. 15.30-31), with the knowledge that the entire created order is destined for the same transformation (Heb. 1.12).<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 214.

<sup>146</sup> Land's comment (*Pentecostal Spirituality*, p. 223), that 'there is an implicit "post-millennial" activism contained within the premillennial expectancy' within the Pentecostal

The *parousia* of Jesus is a theme that runs through both of Paul's letters to the Thessalonians. In 1 Thess. 4.13-18, Paul is concerned to address a pastoral issue in the church concerning whether Christians who have died will be disadvantaged at the coming of Jesus. Some were afraid that the deceased might be withheld from the Lord's presence. Paul depicts the coming of Jesus specifically to address this fear, but does so with a theologically rich and politically engaging portrayal of the event. First, Paul sets the event in a Trinitarian context, for he asserts that just as Christ has been raised from the dead, *God* will bring or lead (ἄξει, *axei*) those who 'sleep in Jesus' with him (1 Thess. 4.14). This action suggests that deceased believers are cared for by God who ensures that they share in the destiny of Jesus. Jesus' coming is the consummation of his own resurrection, for those who are raised at his coming are 'in Jesus'. This also implies that God is an active participant in the coming of Jesus, so that the coming of Jesus is God's coming too, a conclusion borne out in the Apocalypse.<sup>147</sup>

Second, it is the *Lord himself* (αὐτὸς ὁ κύριος, *autos ho kurios*) who comes; he sends no angel or emissary in his place. His descent from heaven is ultimately a statement of origin, similar to the descent of the holy city in Rev. 21.10: Jesus comes from the divine dwelling place. The image of descent corresponds to the statement of the angels concerning Jesus' ascension into heaven (Acts 1.9-11), and thus, theologically describes the extension of his reign from heaven to earth. In so far as his ascension is the exaltation and vindication of Jesus as the Messiah and Lord of humanity (Phil. 2.9-11), his *parousia* brings his exaltation and vindication to bear directly upon the world. The descent of Jesus from heaven is the coming of the kingdom of God in glory to the earth. The *parousia* is a noisy event, for Jesus arrives with a shout of command, the voice of the archangel, and the trumpet call of God, with the effect that the dead in Christ arise from the dead! On that day, all will hear the trumpet voice that John heard on Patmos (Rev. 1.10). This is the 'hour' in which the dead hear his voice and come out of their graves

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worldview is relevant here. Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, pp. 66-77, asserts that belief in the resurrection of the body leads to 'a full acceptance of life here, and means that human beings can give themselves up to the whole of life without any reservations'. Holistic salvation means that resurrection entails the metamorphosis of the 'person's total configuration or Gestalt' into its glorified form, along with the entirety of transient creation.

<sup>147</sup> A. Oepke, 'Parousia', *TDNT*, abridged edn, p. 791, claims that 'the term *parousia* is Hellenistic, but its content derives from the OT'. Cf. also Jurgensen, 'Awaiting the Return of Christ', pp. 81-113.

(Jn 5.28). It is the blast of the ‘last’ trumpet (1 Cor. 15.52), signaling the final, joyful assembling of the people of God (Heb. 12.22-24).

Third, Paul assures the believers that if any group has an advantage, it is the dead in Christ, for they arise ‘first’. Then those who are alive join them and together all are ‘caught away together in clouds, unto a welcoming assembly of the Lord in the air, and so we will be forever with the Lord’ (1 Thess. 4.17). Just as Philip was ‘snatched away’ by the Spirit to another location (Acts 8.39; cf. 2 Cor. 12.2, 4; Rev. 12.5), so all believers are transported to welcome Jesus’ arrival.<sup>148</sup> Paul’s reference to ‘clouds’ does not mean that Jesus must come on a cloudy day, but rather they are to be identified as ‘clouds’ on which the Son of Man comes, that is, ‘clouds of heaven’ that signify the glory of God (Mk 14.62; Lk. 21.27; Rev. 14.14; 2 Thess. 2.14). Believers are gathered εἰς ἀπάντησιν (*eis apantēsin*, unto a welcoming assembly). Following through with the secular usage of *parousia* to designate the arrival of a dignitary into a city, Paul describes the assembly of believers to meet the Lord as an ἀπάντησις (*apantēsis*), a term describing the entourage of citizens that go out to meet their lord to escort him into the city.<sup>149</sup> Paul was welcomed this way by his friends from Rome in Acts 28.15. Thus, at his coming, Jesus is met by the newly risen, transformed, and gathered saints (1 Cor. 15.51-52; 2 Thess. 2.1), who escort him to the earth and enjoy his presence forever. Jesus is *coming* to the earth! Paul’s conclusion is appropriate to his pastoral purpose: believers are to encourage one another with the knowledge that we will be with the Lord forever (1 Thess. 4.18)! Any details of life with Jesus after his coming will be discerned from other biblical passages.

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<sup>148</sup> The doctrine of a ‘rapture’ of believers to heaven is not supported by this text given the parallels with a royal visitation that Paul draws on here through the use of the terms *parousia* and *apantēsis*. Paul does, however, assert that believers will be ‘caught away’ (ἀρπάζω, *harpazō*; Latin *raptus*) to the welcoming assembly of the Lord in the air. Such a gathering together would be appropriate to the event of the resurrection and transformation of bodily existence. Paul’s use of the term ‘caught up’ in 2 Cor. 12.2, 4 to describe an extraordinary revelation in which he was transported into Paradise (whether in the body or out of the body, he could not determine) suggests that he is using the term of believers in 1 Thess. 4.17 to describe their transport to a particular location. Contemplation of such an unprecedented event, however, resists speculation about location and logistics. It is significant that a transport or rapture of believers to heaven is not depicted in the Apocalypse. On the interpretation of *harpazō* as transport, cf. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, p. 350.

<sup>149</sup> K.P. Donfried, ‘The Imperial Cults of Thessalonica and Political Conflict in 1 Thessalonians’, in R.A. Horsley (ed.), *Paul and Empire* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), pp. 215-23.

Thus, while Paul depicts the coming of Jesus in a way that reassures believers that those who have died will participate fully in Jesus' coming, he also offers a bold alternative eschatology to the Roman Empire, manifested in the *parousia* of Caesar who claims to bring peace and safety to the realm (cf. 1 Thess. 5.3). Paul asserts that the believers at Thessalonica, a city long associated with the imperial cult, have changed allegiances, now that they have come into 'God's own kingdom' (1 Thess. 2.12). Indeed, the witness to a different Lord was partly the cause of the persecution at Thessalonica (Acts 17.7), the same sort of persecution suffered by the Judean churches (1 Thess. 1.6-8; 2.14). Given the presence of persecution in such a highly-charged political context, it is possible that some of those who had 'fallen sleep' among them were martyrs for their faith (cf. Acts 7.60).<sup>150</sup> The political dimension of Paul's depiction of Jesus' coming is an essential part of its theological and religious meaning, providing a strong textual connection to the portrayal of Jesus' coming in the Apocalypse. Jesus' *parousia* will vindicate those who have witnessed faithfully to the death, as they join with those who have received their witness in the festive welcome of their rightful Lord to his kingdom. Necessarily then, Jesus' *parousia* will counteract the *parousia* of 'the man of lawlessness' (2 Thess. 2.3, 9), who is described by Paul as one who deceives and demands worship as God, a description quite similar to that of the beast in the Apocalypse (Rev. 13.8, 14-15). Paul's depiction of Jesus' coming does not support a dualistic view of heaven and earth, as if redemption is about leaving the earth behind, but is set firmly within the context of the earthly cry for justice and the resistance of the oppressive forces of evil.<sup>151</sup> Thus, while Jesus comes to gather his people to himself (Rev. 14.14-16; Jn 14.3), he also comes to destroy the kingdom of darkness, in whatever form it is embodied, and to judge those who have pledged loyalty to its king (2 Thess. 2.8-12; Rev. 14.17-20; 19.11-20).<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Donfried, 'The Imperial Cults of Thessalonica', p. 217, points out that it was specifically 'the decrees of Caesar' that Paul's attackers were accusing the believers in Thessalonica of disobeying (cf. Acts 17.7). This does not negate the application of Paul's encouragement to believers who die from sickness or other causes.

<sup>151</sup> Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, p. 201.

<sup>152</sup> This is also the view of J.A. Bertone, 'Seven Dispensations or Two-Age View of History: A Pauline Perspective', in Althouse and Waddell (eds.), *Perspectives in Pentecostal Eschatologies*, pp. 61-94.

The images of harvest and of gathering together to welcome Jesus at his coming not only provide joyful and optimistic representations of Jesus' coming, but also depict the Church as a hope-filled and hope-generating place for the world. In the light of the Spirit's mission to empower the Church for the last-days cruciform witness of Jesus, the Church is portrayed as a victorious community gathered in the Spirit to welcome the coming of Jesus.<sup>153</sup> The Church as *ἀπάντησις* (*apantēsis*) invites the nations to prepare for the coming King through allegiance to the true Lord in opposition to the abusive and self-destructive social orders of this age.<sup>154</sup> The Church is a gathered and gathering community that invites humanity onto the path toward the festive reign of God.<sup>155</sup> Jesus' coming is good news!

## 2. The Millennial Reign and the Final Judgment

If Jesus is coming as King, how then should we speak about the kingdom that he brings? Paul's portrayal of Jesus' coming in 1 Thess. 4.13-18, focused as it is on particular pastoral issues, stops short of describing any particular events that will follow the arrival of Jesus upon the earth. The expanded depiction of this event in Revelation 19–20, however, invites discerning reflection upon the meaning of the reign of Jesus as King. Revelation 20.1-10 has been the subject of centuries of theological debate, and major interpretive views about eschatology have grown up around it,<sup>156</sup> with far reaching implications not only for the Church but for the political landscape as well.<sup>157</sup> This is due in part to the nature of the passage itself. It is brief and cryptic, and it leaves many of the questions that interpreters bring to it unanswered. In this light, it seems best to focus on what the passage actually says, rather than to speculate about that which the text itself seems unconcerned.

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<sup>153</sup> Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit*, p. 275, points out that the optimism generated in the church by the Spirit contradicts the pessimism of dispensationalism.

<sup>154</sup> Dempster, 'Evangelism, Social Concern, and the Kingdom of God', pp. 30-37.

<sup>155</sup> Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, p. 182.

<sup>156</sup> For a discussion of the major views and a history of millennial movements, see T.P. Weber, 'Millennialism', in J.L. Walls (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 265-83.

<sup>157</sup> Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, pp. 159-92, provides a helpful survey of the ecclesial and political landscape in relation to millennial thought.

The two city-visions of Babylon and New Jerusalem with intervening material comprise a continuous narrative from Revelation 17.1 to 22.5.<sup>158</sup> The multiple parallels and contrasts in the text between these cities<sup>159</sup> suggest that the appearance of the New Jerusalem is meant to be the climax of this narrative, with the intervening material serving as a transition toward the New Jerusalem. The announcement of the marriage of the Lamb and the appearance of Jesus in Rev. 19.6-8, 11-16 strengthens this view, so that the intervening material may be viewed as the processional toward the eternal wedding feast.<sup>160</sup> The coming of Jesus (Rev. 19.11-20), the binding of Satan (Rev. 20.1-3), the millennial reign (Rev. 20.4-6), Satan's release and judgment (Rev. 20.7-10), and the judgment at the great white throne (Rev. 20.11-15), then, are necessary elements in the progression toward the New Jerusalem. In particular, they are presented as progressive steps in the conquest of Jesus as King.

At the appearance of Jesus, Satan is not captured and thrown into the lake of fire as the beast and the false prophet are (Rev. 19.20). Rather, John sees an angel descend from heaven, bind Satan for a thousand years, and cast him into the Abyss, setting a seal upon it (Rev. 20.1-3). Satan's imprisonment is determined until the thousand years τελεσθῆ (*telesthē*, should be completed, should come to its fulfillment). Numbers in the Apocalypse that are in multiples of one thousand regularly signify the quality of fullness of what is numbered (Rev. 5.11; 7.4-8; 11.13; 14.1; 21.16).<sup>161</sup> Here, then, is a reference to a period of time that signifies fullness that, itself, comes to fulfillment! Then, surprisingly, Satan δεῖ λυθῆναι (*dia luthēnai*, must be loosed) for a short period of time. This language of 'fulfillment' and 'necessity' indicate that these actions are divinely ordained. The binding of Satan is necessary for the thousand years to reach its goal. The loosing of Satan is necessary once this goal has been accomplished. Further, the stated purpose of the binding of Satan is that he may not deceive the nations. Deception is a prominent theme throughout the Apocalypse in the depictions of Satan, who deceives the whole world (Rev. 12.9); the false prophet, who through signs and wonders entices the nations to worship the beast (Rev. 13.14; 19.20); and the great whore, who deceives the nations through her sorceries (Rev. 18.23).

<sup>158</sup> Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, pp. 18-22.

<sup>159</sup> Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, pp. 131-32.

<sup>160</sup> Gause, *Revelation*, pp. 241, 263.

<sup>161</sup> Koester, *Revelation*, pp. 181-83.

Significantly, in a passage that anticipates the judgment of the great whore, the church in Thyatira is warned that judgment will fall upon the false prophetess, Jezebel, and upon those whom she seduces to commit fornication (Rev. 2.20). The judgment and destruction of all of these figures leads up to the binding of Satan and his inevitable destruction. Thus, the binding of Satan provides the nations with a thousand-year reprieve from the very origin of all deceiving influences. This amazing act of God's mercy upon the nations is all the more astonishing given the apparent judgment of the nations at the coming of Jesus (Rev. 19.17-21)! As we will see later, this is not the last time the nations 'reappear' after their seeming destruction! At the least, the reference to the nations anchors the purpose of the thousand-year binding of Satan to the earth.

Before John explains the details of the loosing of Satan, another vision is revealed: that of thrones that are occupied by those who are given judgment (Rev. 20.4). Though the location of these thrones is not specified, that the vision is enclosed by the binding and loosing of Satan, an action related directly to the welfare of the nations, suggests that they are part of the fulfillment of the thousand years as well. This vision also reveals the next step in the progression of the reign of Jesus. John also sees the ψυχὰς (*psuchas*, souls, lives) of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God. This designation has strong affinities with that of the ψυχὰς (*psuchas*) 'under the altar' of those who had been slain for the word of God and for their testimony and who, in response to their cry for justice, were told to wait until their fellow servants had been slain (Rev. 6.9-11). It appears, then, the group John sees in Rev. 20.4 includes the souls 'under the altar' and all of the faithful witnesses of Jesus portrayed throughout the Apocalypse, 'who did not worship the beast or his image and did not receive the mark on the forehead or on the hand', but rather, remained loyal to Jesus. The faithful witnesses who faced martyrdom by the beast (Rev. 11.7), the false prophet (Rev. 13.15), and the great whore (Rev. 17.6; 18.24) are gathered up, and they 'came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years'. The symbolic value of one thousand years signifying 'fullness', noted above, is enhanced when the thousand-year reign of the faithful witnesses is compared with the forty-two-month reign of the beast (Rev. 13.5; cf. Rev. 11.2) or the one-hour reign of the ten kings (Rev. 17.12). What may have seemed an eternity of persecution to the

martyrs under the reign of the beast is really but a moment compared to the reign that they are to share with Christ (cf. 2. Cor. 4.17)! Such a reign with Christ ‘on his throne’ is promised to the overcomer (Rev. 3.21) and is described in song by the twenty-four elders as a reign ‘on the earth’ that will include people from every nation who are ransomed by the blood of the Lamb, and who have been ‘made a kingdom and priests for our God’ (Rev. 5.10; cf. Rev. 1.6). John’s emphasis here is upon the relational nature of this reign: they will reign ‘with Christ’.<sup>162</sup> Such an emphasis places the focus of their reign on the redemptive provisions of Christ as King. Having suffered with Christ, they now reign with him (2 Tim. 2.12). This reign fulfills in believers their victory over all that opposed them in their faithful witness of Jesus. As children of God, they are co-heirs with Christ, inheriting his kingdom with him (Rom. 8.17). They exercise full authority as co-regents with Christ. Yet, even this extensive period of reigning with Christ will reach its fulfillment (τελεσθῆ, *telesthē*), at which time the ‘rest of the dead’ will come to life (Rev. 20.5; cf. Jn 5.28-29). That the thousand years comes to fulfillment in relation to the reign of the martyrs, just as it does in relation to the nations, suggests that the reign of the saints with Christ upon the earth has an inherent goal or purpose that coincides with that of the nations.

This purpose is likely to be found both in the designation of the risen saints as ‘priests of God and of Christ’ (Rev. 20.6) and in the meaning of their ‘reign with Christ’. First, their role as priests suggests that they continue to offer themselves as living sacrifices to God and to be faithful witnesses of Jesus to the nations (Rev. 1.5-6). This designation also means that the experience of communal holiness among the people of God is brought into the reign that they share with Christ upon the earth at his coming. They are a kingdom of priests whose holiness continues to be derived from their communion with Jesus, in anticipation of life in the holy city in the new earth yet to come. Indeed, as participants of the ‘first resurrection’, they are ‘blessed and holy’ (Rev. 20.6). Not only is their witness of

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<sup>162</sup> The lack of specific details about the millennial reign has prompted some interpreters to fill this lacuna with visions of a transformed natural order from Isaiah and other OT passages (e.g. Isa. 11.6-9; 65.20-25; Ezek. 47.1-9). The dispensational understanding of eschatology places emphasis upon the land of Israel and the city of Jerusalem as the center of world government, complete with a millennial temple and animal sacrifices (cf. Isa. 24.23; Ezekiel 40–48). John’s vision, however, lacks any reference to these OT prophecies. Rather, the emphasis is upon reigning ‘with Christ’. It is this relational emphasis which determines the meaning of the millennium. Cf. Koester, *Revelation*, pp. 183-86; Thomas, ‘The Thousand-Year Reign’, forthcoming.

Jesus no longer thwarted by the deceptions of Satan, but also it is no longer encumbered by the limitations of mortality. Second, the reign of the saints with Christ in relation to the nations may be perceived in the fulfillment that such a reign will bring for the destiny of humankind as God's co-regents to exercise faithful dominion over creation (Gen. 1.26, 28; Ps. 8.6).<sup>163</sup> As such, the saints become examples of the stewardship given to humanity at the beginning of creation. Indeed, the ambiguity of those who occupy the thrones may be intended to allow a double reference to the symbol of dominion. The fact that John sees the occupied thrones *before* he sees the saints who come to life suggests that the thrones stand separate yet intimately connected to the resurrected faithful witnesses.<sup>164</sup> The saints reign with Christ in justice and equity precisely to point to the calling of the nations to exercise responsible dominion upon the earth. Thus, the thrones both symbolize the reign of the saints with Christ and point beyond to the calling of the nations to fulfill their destiny as co-regents of God upon the earth. The indistinct phrase applied to the occupants of the thrones that 'judgment was given to them' (Rev. 20.4) could also serve this double reference, as κρίμα (*krima*, judgment) could refer to the vindication of the faithful witnesses as well as the authority to exercise judgment. In any case, the people of God do not exist for themselves alone, even as they reign with Christ. The question that remains is whether the nations will heed the testimony and example of the saints to believe in Jesus in these near perfect conditions of freedom from Satan's deceptions and the restoration of creation's original destiny.<sup>165</sup>

With the release of Satan 'from his prison' at the fulfillment (τελευσθῆ, *telesthē*) of the thousand years (Rev. 20.7), the answer comes swiftly. The nations are deceived yet again by Satan who gathers them from the 'four corners of the earth', in number 'as the sand of the sea' (Rev. 20.8). Such a depiction reveals the unchanging nature of Satan as a deceiver and the extreme vulnerability of the nations to his deception. Only Satan's utter defeat will give ultimate hope for the

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<sup>163</sup> Thomas, 'The Thousand-Year Reign', forthcoming.

<sup>164</sup> John also introduces the throne of God (Rev. 4.2-3) and the thrones of the twenty-four elders (Rev. 4.4) progressively by noting the throne first and then describing who occupies it. In these instances, John makes it clear who is seated upon the thrones. In Rev. 20.4 such clarity is withheld.

<sup>165</sup> It follows from this discussion that belief in an earthly millennial reign stands in staunch opposition to a dualistic or Gnostic view of eschatology. The Christian hope is not primarily to go to heaven but that the kingdom of God will come 'on earth as it is in heaven' (Mt. 6.10).

salvation of the nations. Like the ancient enemies of God's people, Gog and Magog (Ezekiel 38–39), Satan's forces surround the 'camp of the saints and the beloved city', whereupon, fire comes down from heaven and consumes them. Satan's destruction is just as swift. He is thrown into the lake of fire to join the beast and the false prophet where together they suffer everlasting torment. The contrast between the nations and the people of God is noteworthy. Whereas the nations gather together for war and march over the earth for that purpose, the saints dwell as a community<sup>166</sup> within the bounds of God's gracious actions, symbolized by 'the beloved city', a reference to Jerusalem, which serves to remind believers of their heritage in the promises of Israel as well as to point forward to their ultimate dwelling in the New Jerusalem.<sup>167</sup> Further, the designation, 'camp of the saints', which recalls Israel's nomadic existence from Egypt to the Promised Land, suggests that the people of God are once more about to enter into 'new territory'. With the destruction of God's enemies, save one, their reign of vindication with Christ has been fulfilled; New Jerusalem awaits.

The image of many thrones in Rev. 20.4 gives way to the image of a *single* throne in Rev. 20.11. Unlike all previous thrones mentioned in the Apocalypse, it is 'a great white throne', signifying the majesty and purity of the One sitting upon it, as well as the unsurpassable justice of his judgment. The presence of the Enthroned One overwhelms all else, for John exclaims that the earth and the heaven fled away from his face, and 'no place was found for them'. Similar language is used in Rev. 16.20 to speak of the overwhelming effects of God's wrath in the form of a great earthquake: 'every island fled and mountains were not found'.<sup>168</sup> The fleeing of the earth and the heaven is pivotal in the Apocalypse, as most of the action that John has related up to this point occurs either in heaven or on the earth. Now, all former points of reference are removed to leave only the Enthroned One to fill John's field of vision. No appeals to earthly or heavenly realities are possible any longer. The Enthroned One is the single and universal point of reference.

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<sup>166</sup> P. Hocken, *The Challenges of the Pentecostal, Charismatic and Messianic Jewish Movements: The Tensions of the Spirit* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), p. 132, notes that 'the millennium concept is inherently communal and historical'.

<sup>167</sup> Thomas, 'The Thousand-Year Reign', forthcoming.

<sup>168</sup> Compare Rev. 12.6 where it is said that the woman *fled* into the wilderness, where she had a *place* prepared of God. In Rev. 20.11, the earth and the heaven *fled*, and *no place* was found for them.

The fleeing of the earth and the heaven also exposes the realm of Death, the final enemy to be conquered (Rev. 20.12; 1 Cor. 15.26). On the one hand, unlike the souls of the faithful witnesses who ἐζήσαν (*ezēsan*, came to life, Rev. 20.4), the dead here are described as ἐστῶτας (*hestōtas*, having taken their stand) before the throne, but they are still referred to as νεκρούς (*nekrous*, the dead ones), and so throughout the passage, suggesting that this vision of the dead depicts only ‘the rest of the dead’ apart from those who participate in the ‘first resurrection’ (Rev. 20.5).<sup>169</sup> On the other hand, owing to the universal nature of this vision along with its unique character in the Apocalypse, the dead here are probably meant to include all who have come under the power of Death (Rom. 5.12; Heb. 9.27), that is, all of humanity, which is precisely what the contrasting adjectives, ‘the great and the small’ intend to convey. This understanding corresponds to the depiction of universal judgment in Mt. 25.31-46 as well as the Pauline assertion that all will stand before the judgment seat of Christ (Rom. 14.10-12; 2 Cor. 5.10).

The vision of the final judgment is united theologically with the coming of Jesus, for Jesus is coming to ‘give to each one according to his works’ (Rev. 22.12). Though ‘the One sitting on the throne’ is a reference to God (the Father) throughout the Apocalypse, signifying a consistent monotheism,<sup>170</sup> the throne is ‘shared’ by the Lamb (Rev. 5.6, 13; 6.16; 7.9, 10, 17; 22.1, 3) and by the seven Spirits of God (Rev. 1.4; 4.5; 5.6), as noted above. Thus, the throne signifies God’s sovereignty in its perichoretic nature and fullness. Just as Jesus does not save ‘alone’ but in perichoretic union with the Father and Spirit, so God does not judge apart from the revelation of himself in the Son and Spirit. God’s rule and will is mediated by the slain-yet-risen Lamb who stands ‘in the midst of the throne’ (Rev. 5.6; 22.1), as the Apocalypse bears out in numerous ways, particularly in its depiction of the Spirit-empowered witness of the Lamb’s victory (Rev. 11.1-13). The wrath of God that proceeds from the throne-room (6.1, 3, 5, 7; 8.2, 6; 15.1, 5, 7) is also the ‘wrath of the Lamb’ (Rev. 6.16; 14.10). This wrath is not incompatible with the sacrificial love displayed by Jesus in his death for the world, but rather is a necessary correlation to the double truth revealed by that

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<sup>169</sup> So Skaggs and Benham, *Revelation*, p. 211.

<sup>170</sup> Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, pp. 60-65.

love: the truth that Jesus is Lord and that love invites but does not force.<sup>171</sup> This truth simultaneously brings salvation and life to those who embrace it and judgment and death to those who reject it. The fragrance of the gospel is the sweet aroma of life to the one and the stench of death to the other (2 Cor. 2.15-16). This means that Jesus as Savior is the criterion for the judgment of God (Jn 5.22) and that the cross stands at the heart of that judgment.<sup>172</sup>

The relational nature of the final judgment is evident by the opening of ‘books’ along with ‘the book of life’ (Rev. 20.12). At first glance, the statement that the dead are judged ‘by what has been written in the books according to their works’ might appear to denote a strictly legal, retributive judgment. In the context of the Apocalypse, however, ‘works’ refer to actions that reveal one’s deeply held allegiance either to the Lamb or to the beast (Rev. 14.9-13; 16.15; 21.7-8). Especially relevant here is the fact that Jesus knows the ‘works’ of the seven churches, some of which receive commendation (Rev. 2.2, 19) and others strong rebuke and warnings to repent (Rev. 2.23; 3.2, 15). ‘Works’ such as love, faithfulness, and patient endurance certainly do not refer to actions that earn final salvation, but rather are ‘indications of one’s disposition towards God’ (Rev. 14.13),<sup>173</sup> that is, they are expressions of a transformative relationship with God (Jas 2.14-26) through which the believer is being sanctified. The presence of ‘the (Lamb’s) book of life’ (cf. Rev. 13.8; 21.27) at this judgment scene indicates that salvation is ultimately determined by God’s gracious action in Christ. Yet, God’s grace is not to be taken for granted, for it is possible to be blotted out of the book of life (Rev. 3.5; 21.27). Similarly, the ‘works’ of the rebellious express a continuous and unholy defiance toward God (Rev. 9.20-21; 16.11; 18.6; 21.8; 22.15). Yet, judgment is not to be presumed, for repentance is possible, not only for the Church but also for the nations, which is exactly the purpose of God’s

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<sup>171</sup> Contra Moltmann (*The Coming of God*, pp. 243-55) whose affirmation of universal salvation hinges on the belief that God’s grace is finally irresistible and that God’s love will ultimately overcome all rebellion. J.L. Kvanvig, ‘Hell’, in Walls (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, pp. 413-26, notes that recent discussions about universal salvation and the doctrine of hell focus on the freedom of individuals to make choices that oppose the love of God. Cf. Travis, *Christ and the Judgement of God*, p. 324.

<sup>172</sup> R. Bauckham, ‘Conclusion: Emerging Issues in Eschatology in the Twenty-First Century’, in Walls (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, pp. 671-89, notes that the singularity of truth is rejected in a strictly postmodern worldview. I would suggest that the crucified Christ as the criterion for truth does not oppose difference, but comes underneath all differences, as it were, in order to redeem and validate them. Cf. also Travis, *Christ and the Judgement of God*, p. 325.

<sup>173</sup> Travis, *Christ and the Judgement of God*, p. 288.

wrath (Rev. 3.19; 9.20; 16.9). Moreover, an exceedingly hopeful response to the Church's faithful witness is depicted by John in the vision of the innumerable multitude (Rev. 7.9-10), the positive response of the remnant-majority to the two witnesses (Rev. 11.13), and in the harvest of the earth, for which the 144,000 are the first fruits (Rev. 14.4, 14-16). The jubilant 'song of Moses' is the most optimistic: 'All nations will come and worship before you, for your judgments have been revealed' (Rev. 15.4). Thus, in the larger context of the Apocalypse, the final judgment scene is best understood as the completion of the vindication of God's people, which is the vindication of God's own will and purpose. The opening of the books is a reminder that our lives already are 'open books' before Christ 'who has eyes like a flame of fire' and 'who searches minds and hearts' (Rev. 2.18, 23) and that 'the Day' will reveal the true character of our works 'by fire' (1 Cor. 3.10-15).

Along with Death and Hades who give up the dead in them, the sea also gives up the dead in it (Rev. 20.13). Surprisingly, the sea does not 'flee away' with the earth and the heaven, but is distinguished as a place where the dead have been kept, remaining in its place in order to give up its dead. But, whereas Death and Hades are personified as active enemies of God and are thrown into the lake of fire (Rev. 20.14), the sea does not receive this fate. When the new heaven and the new earth are unveiled, however, there is no more sea (Rev. 21.1)! Significantly, the sea is distinguished in the Apocalypse, along with the heaven and the earth, as a separate realm of creation (Rev. 10.6; 14.7). It is differentiated from the heaven and the earth in the vision of the angel who gives John the scroll to eat (Rev. 10.2, 5). Probably most significant of all, the sea is the realm from which the beast arises (Rev. 13.1),<sup>174</sup> who is in league with the dragon who is cast out of heaven (Rev. 12.12) and the false prophet who arises from the earth (Rev. 13.11). Thus, the sea, though not an 'active' enemy of God, is the realm of creation that is linked with the potentiality for evil. Indeed, the depiction of creation in the OT is not one where chaos does not exist, but rather where chaos is kept in bounds, most often portrayed as the sea (Ps. 104.6-9; Job 38.8-11). Further, the establishment of the Davidic kingship in Israel involved conquest over the 'sea' (Ps. 89.26), and

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<sup>174</sup> Note that the sea is associated with the Abyss from which the beast arises (Rev. 11.7) through the imagery of the primordial waters in the LXX version of Gen. 1.2; 7.11.

even Yahweh is depicted as sitting ‘enthroned over the Flood’ (Ps. 29.10).<sup>175</sup> If the sea has similar connotations in the Apocalypse, as appears to be the case, the sea at last gives up its dead, is divested of its threat to undo creation,<sup>176</sup> and simply ‘is no more’ (Rev. 21.1).

The ‘lake of fire’ is depicted as the final destiny of the beast and the false prophet (Rev. 19.20), the devil (Rev. 20.10), and Death and Hades (Rev. 20.14). This fate is now shared by ‘those who were not found written in the book of life’ (Rev. 20.15). In two instances, this horrific destiny is described as ‘the lake of fire burning with sulfur’ (Rev. 19.20; 21.8). In two instances, the lake of fire is said to be ‘the second death’ (Rev. 20.14; 21.8), yet ‘the second death’ is mentioned elsewhere apart from the lake of fire (Rev. 2.11; 20.6). The interweaving of these concepts in the Apocalypse may be set out as follows:

Rev. 2.11	Second death
Rev. 19.20	Lake of fire
Rev. 20.6	Second death
Rev. 20.10	Lake of fire
Rev. 20.14	Lake of fire is the second death
Rev. 20.15	Lake of fire
Rev. 21.8	Lake of fire is the second death

How does the image of the lake of fire function to represent the second death?

The lake of fire is the destiny of the evil triumvirate, who suffers torment ‘day and night forever and ever’ (Rev. 20.10), a fate whose duration equals that of the reign of Christ and the servants of God (Rev. 11.15; 22.5). Of Babylon’s demise, it is also proclaimed, ‘The smoke goes up from her forever and ever’ (Rev. 19.3). Yet, the beast, the false prophet, and Babylon (the great whore) are all personifications of corrupt systems of political and economic power, embodied in Rome’s empire in John’s day, as the Apocalypse makes clear. The lake of fire is also the destiny of Death and Hades, again abstract powers that are personified as enemies of God (Rev. 6.8). The power of the image of ceaseless torment for these intangible entities lies in its ability to evoke reassurance and comfort for God’s people that no opponent will ever again deceive or cause suffering, a consolation especially comforting as this fate also applies to the father of deception, the devil (Rev. 20.10).

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<sup>175</sup> Levenson, *Creation and the Persistence of Evil*, pp. 14-17, 22, 133.

<sup>176</sup> Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, p. 53.

But what about humans who share such an inconceivable fate? The lake of fire is depicted as the destiny of those omitted from the book of life (Rev. 20.15) whose ‘works’ reveal a disposition of rebellion against the truth of God (Rev. 21.8). Similarly, Rev. 14.9-10 asserts that everlasting torment in fire and sulfur awaits those who ‘worship the beast and its image and receive its mark on the forehead or on the hand’. Such a description (repeated again in v. 11) emphasizes the deep loyalty that such people exhibit toward the beast. They are identified with and fully belong to the beast. The context of this passage invites a comparison to be drawn between those who *worship* the beast and those who respond positively to the ‘everlasting gospel’—who fear God, give him glory, and *worship* the true creator (Rev. 14.6-9). Those who worship the beast ‘have *no rest* day or night’ (Rev. 14.11); whereas, those who ‘keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus’ and who die ‘in the Lord’ are granted ‘*rest* from their labors’ (Rev. 14.12-13). Further, the fate of those who worship the beast is bound up with that of Babylon, for ‘the wine of the wrath of her fornication’ which she causes the nations to *drink* (Rev. 14.8) is also the ‘wine of the wrath of God’ which the beast-worshippers *drink* (Rev. 14.10). And, like Babylon, ‘the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever’ (Rev. 14.11; 19.3). To share in the judgment of Babylon is to share both in the self-destructive nature of the love-hate relationship between the beast and Babylon (Rev. 17.3, 9, 16, 17) and in the everlasting nature of Babylon’s downfall.<sup>177</sup> No wonder John exclaims: ‘Here is the endurance of the saints’ (Rev. 14.12)! By contrasting the destinies of those who worship the beast and those who worship God, this passage reminds us that present loyalties have ultimate and everlasting consequences, and that, like their character, the destiny of those who worship the beast will be conformed to that of the beast as well. If the meaning of the second death is applied to this passage, it appears, then, that the lake of fire as everlasting torment is to be understood as an image that conveys the unimaginable horror of the reality of the second death. In

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<sup>177</sup> Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, III, p. 611, writes ‘God is Judge only inasmuch as in his eternity he is the guarantor of truth and justice. The same applies to the last judgment as well. Here also the judgment is simply that sinners are left to the consequences of their own deeds. When that takes place their lives necessarily perish of the inner contradictions of their existence.’ This corresponds to Paul’s assertion in Rom. 1.24, 26, 28 that God’s action of ‘wrath’ toward Gentile sinners is in ‘giving them over’ to their own self-destructive evil. Significantly, this passage, like Rev. 14.6-12, identifies the core of sin as idolatry, the worship of the creature and the refusal to worship and give glory to the true creator.

contrast, the overcomers are not hurt by the second death (Rev. 2.11), and the second death has no power over the participants of the first resurrection (Rev. 20.6). Instead, what awaits them is as inconceivable in its wonder as the second death is in its horror.

With the destruction of Death and Hades, no more enemies stand in the way of the fulfillment of the kingdom of God. The procession to the marriage of the Lamb is complete. The ‘already–not yet’ tension finally is dissolved in the new creation of all things.

### **3. The New Jerusalem and Hope for the Nations**

Having begun this constructive contribution to Pentecostal eschatology by viewing the fivefold gospel through the lens of Revelation 21–22, this study now comes full circle to consider this text from the perspective of the coming of Jesus as King. When the various dimensions of the coming of Jesus that have been observed in this study are brought into conversation with the other components of the fivefold gospel, it becomes evident that Jesus’ coming is an essential element of his salvific work. In essence, the coming of Jesus will remove the eschatological reservation (i.e. the ‘not yet’) of the present experience of redemption. In terms of *salvation*, Jesus comes to expose and destroy the kingdom of Satan. The overthrow of the beast and the false prophet express Jesus’ victory over evil as it is embodied in the oppressive political, economic, and religious systems of this world-in-rebellion. The reign of the saints with Jesus is their vindication and fulfillment of God-given authority upon the earth. The defeat of Satan and the undoing of Death complete the conquest. With respect to *sanctification*, Jesus comes as the full revelation of Truth. The world, the flesh, and the devil are vanquished in hearts made whole. Jesus’ earthly reign solidifies the people of God as a holy community, whose ‘works’ testify to their abiding loyalty to God at the final judgment, when all things come into the inescapable light of Truth embodied in Jesus. Regarding *Spirit baptism*, Jesus comes to gather the harvest of his Spirit-enabled witnesses and to vindicate their martyrdom. The partial knowledge and prophecy accompanying such witness gives way to full revelation. Unhindered by the deceptive influence of Satan during the earthly reign of Christ, this witness is emboldened to continue being guided by its optimistic vision of God’s people gathered from all nations of the earth. Finally,

in terms of *healing*, Jesus comes to raise the dead and usher the bodies of believers, along with the nations and the entire creation, anticipated in the earthly reign of Christ, into incorruptible life. Grief and sorrow are lost in eternal joy.

Narratively, the coming of Jesus and his triumphant procession to the marriage of the Lamb leads to the final vision of salvation in the Apocalypse. Here is the fulfillment of all divine promises, the completion of the kingdom of God, so that God may be ‘all in all’ (1 Cor. 15.28). If Jesus comes as King to fulfill his identity as Savior, Sanctifier, Spirit Baptizer, and Healer, it is no surprise, then, that the final vision of redemption is filled with the themes of newness, holiness, hope, wholeness, and eternal reign.<sup>178</sup> These themes are woven throughout the narrative so tightly that each one colors every scene.

Broadly speaking, final redemption is depicted as the union of God and humanity in intimate fellowship. Heaven and earth, having fled from the face of God at the final judgment, are made new to accommodate such an arrangement (Rev. 21.1). Indeed, the new heaven and new earth appear to merge into a single space as God sets up his home among humanity (Rev. 21.3). The personal intimacy of their fellowship is depicted by the image of God wiping every tear from their eyes, an indication that death and all of its subsets of suffering have passed away (Rev. 21.4). Such intimate communion, portrayed as well in the images of water given to the thirsty and of inheritance given to the overcomer, is all the more incredible because these are actions of the transcendent Enthroned One, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End (Rev. 21.5-7). With the appearance of the bride, which is New Jerusalem, the images of communion are intensified as God Almighty and the Lamb are described as the temple of the holy city (Rev. 21.22). This merging of person and place signifies a deep indwelling of humanity in God, appropriate to the marriage metaphor, portrayed as well by the image of God’s glory shining out from the Lamb as the light and solitary lamp of the city, which is bright enough not only to illuminate the fifteen-thousand cubic-mile metropolis, but so brilliant that the nations walk around in its light (Rev. 21.23-24)!<sup>179</sup> The appearance of the bride, the Lamb’s γυναῖκα

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<sup>178</sup> Thompson, ‘Eschatology as Soteriology’, pp. 200-204, speaks of ‘the full gospel of the eschaton’ in which healing, Spirit baptism, entire sanctification, and justification are applied cosmically in the new creation.

<sup>179</sup> This image stands in stark contrast to that of fallen Babylon, in which the light from a single lamp will not be found (Rev. 18.22)!

(*gunaika*, woman, wife), signifies that the marriage of the Lamb has arrived and that life in the holy city is characterized as an eternal wedding feast. The unmediated fellowship of humanity with God is represented most poignantly, however, in the depiction of the servants of God worshiping before the throne, beholding his face (Rev. 22.3-4). What God had refused to Moses, he now grants to all of his people (Exod. 33.20, 23)! As the worshipers of the beast were marked with the name or number of the beast, identifying them as its servants, so God's servants have his name on their foreheads. Such identification with and beholding of God on the part of humanity denote their status as God's beloved and their absolute purity in the fullness of his presence (cf. 1 Jn 3.2).

The fellowship of humans with God is depicted not only in personal terms but also in corporate and societal images. Strikingly, humanity is denoted as the λαοὶ (*laoi*, peoples)<sup>180</sup> of God (Rev. 21.3), a universalizing of the covenant formula (e.g. Ezek. 37.27; cf. Isa. 19.24-25). The peoples of the earth, in all of their cultural diversity, dwell with God in covenant fellowship, and God himself dwells with them as their God! Further, the nations walk by the light of New Jerusalem and 'the kings of the earth' bring their glory into it (Rev. 21.24, 26). Here, and not during the millennial reign as many interpreters surmise, John draws on the hopeful visions of Isaiah (e.g. Isa. 2.3-4; 24.23; 49.6; 60.3, 5, 11; 66.19-20) to depict the nations gathered to New Jerusalem to walk in the glory of God.<sup>181</sup> In an expanded interpretation of Ezek. 47.12, the nations also partake of the healing power provided by the leaves of the tree of life (Rev. 22.2). The presence of the nations in the final vision of redemption is particularly astounding since they were (apparently) destroyed not only at the coming of Jesus (Rev. 19.15, 18, 21) but also after the thousand years had reached its fulfillment and Satan had gathered them to oppose the people of God (Rev. 20.9). How should we view the presence of the nations in this final vision? Here, the prophetic aspect of the book of Revelation must be acknowledged (Rev. 1.3; 11.6; 19.10; 22.7, 10, 18-19). As noted already, the primary prophecy in the Apocalypse to be kept by the Church is its call to witness faithfully to the nations of the Lamb's victory through sacrificial death (Rev. 10.11; 11.1-13). The response to this witness by the nations is

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<sup>180</sup> The plural λαοὶ is found in the oldest NT manuscripts (Codices Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus) and, being the most difficult reading, is probably the most accurate. Cf. Travis, *Christ and the Judgement of God*, p. 317.

<sup>181</sup> Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, pp. 313-18.

depicted in two distinct outcomes. On the one hand, they are seen to fear God and give him glory (Rev. 11.13), an outcome that corresponds to the vision of an innumerable multitude gathered before the throne from every nation, tribe, people, and language (Rev. 7. 9-17) and to the ‘song of Moses’ that proclaims that ‘all nations will come and worship’ before the true God (Rev. 15.4). On the other hand, the nations are seen to worship the beast (Rev. 13.7-8), to curse God and refuse to give him glory (Rev. 16.9), and to come under the allurements of Babylon (14.8; 18.3, 23) and the deception of Satan (Rev. 20.8). For this, they are struck down and killed at Christ’s coming (Rev. 19.15, 21) and consumed by fire from heaven after the millennial reign of Christ (Rev. 20.9). The presence of the nations in the final vision of redemption allows us to discern these two equally valid outcomes with prophetic openness and to permit the message of hope for the conversion of the nations to remain operative to the end.<sup>182</sup> Obviously, such a reading places enormous responsibility on the Church to fulfill its role of faithful witness to the nations, i.e. to ‘keep the words of the prophecy of this book’ (Rev. 22.7), while at the same time, it energizes that witness with buoyant hope.

The description of New Jerusalem also portrays the corporate nature of final salvation in a variety of ways. It is significant that the bride of the Lamb is identified as a city, a society of saints in unity. The dimensional aspects of the description of the city signify the fullness of the people of God through the use of the number twelve and its multiples (Rev. 21.12-17). The bride-city measures 12,000 (12 x 1,000) stadia in length, breadth, and height. Thus, as a cubic form, it has twelve ‘edges’, each 12,000 stadia long, which equals 144,000. The wall of the city measures 144 (12 x 12) cubits high and has twelve gates, three on each side (3 x 4 = 12), with twelve angels stationed at the gates. Inscribed on the gates are ‘the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel’ (cf. Ezek. 48.30-34). The wall also has twelve foundations, on which are inscribed ‘the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb’. These inscriptions show that the city represents the fulfillment of the history of Israel and the Church, but does so in a way that honors the role of Israel as the people of God to bring the Messiah, who established the Church upon the ‘foundation’ of the twelve apostles (Mt. 10.1-4; Eph. 2.19-20). Thus, Israel as the *people* of God is not superseded by the Church

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<sup>182</sup> Travis, *Christ and the Judgement of God*, pp. 319-20, 327. Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, pp. 307-309.

but is transformed into the *peoples* of God. Jerusalem is now *New Jerusalem*. This double reference corresponds to the description of God's people in Revelation 7, also replete with multiples of twelve, where John *hears* that 144,000 are sealed (12,000 'from every tribe of the sons of Israel') and then *sees* an innumerable multitude from all nations, tribes, people, and languages. If the pattern of John *hearing* one thing and *seeing* another is applicable here (e.g. Rev. 5.5, 6; 21.9-10),<sup>183</sup> these are two references to the same assembly, described from different perspectives. Israel, described in its eschatological fullness of 144,000, is an innumerable crowd from every nation of the earth, depicted in Rev. 21.9-21 as the bride of the Lamb. The hope for the conversion of the nations is integrated into the vision of the fulfillment of the people of God by the image of the nations walking by the light of the holy city and of the kings of the earth bringing their glory into it (Rev. 21.22-26). The idea here is not that the nations live as second-class citizens compared to a superior status of the people of God. Rather, the vision of the nations enjoying the benefits of salvation in the New Jerusalem, drawn from the OT images of the nations flocking to Jerusalem, is an explication of how the broader vision of God dwelling with humanity (*ἀνθρώπων*, *anthropon*, Rev. 21.3) comes to pass.<sup>184</sup>

The optimistic hope for the conversion of the nations is circumscribed by the holiness of the new creation, exhibited by the description of the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21.16, 18) as an enormous replica of the most holy place, which is patterned after the cubic shape and gold-covered space of the temple's inner sanctuary, the place where God's glory dwelled (1 Kgs 6.20-22; 2 Chron. 3.4-8). Like the golden breast piece with twelve gemstones worn by the high priest into the holy of holies (Exod. 28.15-30), the abundance of precious stones in the holy city with streets of pure gold reflects the brilliance of God's glory in a diversity of vivid hues and refractive properties that produce an optical feast of unimaginable splendor (Rev. 21.19-21). The holiness of the New Jerusalem means that the ungodly are excluded. The reader is reminded that instead of receiving an inheritance as a son, the wicked will have their part in the lake of fire and sulfur

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<sup>183</sup> Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, pp. 179-80.

<sup>184</sup> For a broader discussion of the relationship between the themes of particularism (the covenant people) and universalism (hope for the nations), see Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, pp. 138-40.

which is the second death (Rev. 21.8; 20.15).<sup>185</sup> Further, though the nations may bring their glory into the holy city, nothing unclean will enter it (Rev. 21.27), an odd statement that should almost go without saying in the light of the previous image of the unclean in the lake of fire. Surprisingly, in the final reference to the wicked, they are stationed ‘outside’ the city gates, but the gates are open (Rev. 22.14-15)!<sup>186</sup> The image of gates that ‘are never shut’ (Rev. 21.25) depicts the holy city as a place that has universal access and is intentionally ‘vulnerable’ to its ‘enemies’. Here is an image of God’s eternal love that exists in an open invitation to come and share in the feast of its joy. Indeed, the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come’ (Rev. 22.17), an invitation that reverberates through all the ages past, present, and future. By its very nature, God’s holiness excludes the unholy, but it also invites through the power of sacrificial love. If love is the core of holiness, the vulnerability of holiness is the vulnerability of love, which is also its transforming power. This means that the holiness of God is the source of everlasting hope.

#### **IV. Discerning Eschatology in Theology and Ministry**

##### **Introduction**

Having offered an example of a Pentecostal narrative eschatology shaped by the fivefold gospel which serves as the core testimony of the Pentecostal movement, the question of the relevance of this contribution for the current discernment of eschatology in contemporary theological practice and ministry is in order. This

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<sup>185</sup> B. Jersak, *Her Gates Will Never Be Shut: Hope, Hell, and the New Jerusalem* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009), pp. 80-97, traces the historical roots of the image of the lake of fire from the judgments upon Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 14.3, 10; 19.23-28) that become paradigmatic for the historical judgment of the wicked (Ps. 11.6; Ezek. 38.22), Jerusalem (Deut. 29.22-23, 27; Ezek. 16.46b-50; Isa. 1.7-10), and Israel’s enemies (Isa. 34.8-10; Jer. 49.17-18; Dan. 7.9, 11), a theme that is applied to the ungodly in the NT (1 Pet. 2.6, 9; Jude 7). The association of judgment with the smoke of burning sulfur in the area around the Dead Sea is also common in Jewish writers from the Wisdom of Solomon (10.8) to Josephus (*Wars of the Jews*, IV.8.4). It is amazing then that Ezek. 16.53-55 prophesies the restoration of Sodom! Even more astounding is the vision of living water that flows from the eschatological temple into the Dead Sea, where the waters become fresh and support abundant marine life as well as fruitful trees whose leaves are for healing (Zech. 14.6-9; Ezek. 47.8-12), the very vision that John utilizes in his depiction of the new creation (Rev. 22.1-2)!

<sup>186</sup> Jersak, *Her Gates Will Never Be Shut*, pp. 167-68. Travis, *Christ and the Judgement of God*, p. 318, cautions that the paradoxical and allusive writing style in the Apocalypse will not permit a ‘systematic theology’ to be constructed in a logical and tidy way. Rather, ‘we must see [John’s] contradictions, if that is what they are, as deliberate and provocative’.

question arises from the process of discernment that was discovered in early Pentecostalism noted earlier in this study. Pentecostal engagement with early twentieth-century culture and world events (evident in some trajectories of the early Pentecostal periodicals) grew out of their prior articulation of the core narrative of the fivefold gospel. How should a similar engagement with contemporary culture proceed today?

### **A. Discerning Contemporary Options**

To begin it is helpful to inquire about how current approaches to eschatology engage the culture.<sup>187</sup> At one extreme, some contemporary manifestations of apocalyptic eschatology have moved into the arena of the cultic and bizarre, such as the Branch Davidians whose leader, David Koresh, led the group toward a tragic end at a compound in Waco, Texas in 1993. At the other extreme, many in the churches simply ignore biblical eschatology, and by default, have unwittingly bought into the waning but still potent eschatology of modernity: political, economic, and technological progress toward utopia, fueled either by a capitalist or socialist-Marxist economic and social vision. Younger believers are tempted toward the post-modern faith of tribal truth and the worship of immediate gratification, which leads to satiation and the commoditization of everything.<sup>188</sup> Between these extremes, the contemporary church is presented with a smorgasbord of best-selling books about eschatology, the most popular being the *Left Behind* series,<sup>189</sup> and Christian broadcasting is filled with the claims of the ‘omniscient’ televangelist that, for instance, the Antichrist has been identified (yet again!). Never mind the ethics of these popular offerings, as when the ‘Tribulation Force’ murders a few innocent people to stop the evils of the beast, or when (speaking more realistically) Palestinian Christians are sacrificed on the

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<sup>187</sup> My purpose here is not to present other scholarly options of eschatology, but rather to represent the current state of popular options familiar to the Pentecostal believer. For a helpful overview of the former from an historical and methodological perspective, cf. W.J. La Due, *The Trinity Guide to Eschatology* (New York: Continuum, 2004).

<sup>188</sup> Cf. Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, pp. 223-24.

<sup>189</sup> With over sixty-million copies sold, the *Left Behind* twelve-volume series (Wheaton, IL; Tyndale House, 1996-2004) is by far the most successful of the barrage of fictional accounts of the book of Revelation. A block-buster profit-maker, the series is now complemented with an entire array of calendars, comic books, devotionals, and audio products, as well as several book-series spinoffs. For a critique of the *Left Behind* series by a Pentecostal scholar, cf. Althouse, “‘Left Behind’—Fact or Fiction’.

sacred altar of Christian Zionism.<sup>190</sup> Indeed, if the future script is predetermined, one needs only to fit present events into it to determine ‘where we are’ on the chart of prophecy. In this approach, world events tend to drive eschatology. As the world scene changes, however, so does the identity of the beast. From the Roman Catholic Church, to the former Soviet Union, to (most recently) militant Islam, all have been touted as *the* beast of the Apocalypse. Though these represent important movements that have religious or political significance, uncritically proclaiming every contemporary threat as the fulfillment of biblical prophecy is counterproductive to the intent of the biblical witness. Rather than motivate the Church to fulfill its role as faithful witness to the nations, such contemporary attempts to unravel the ‘signs of the times’ according to the standard dispensational script tend, instead, to promote eschatology as entertainment in a culture of consumerism.<sup>191</sup>

How do contemporary Pentecostals discern their way forward in this quagmire of eschatological options? I suggest that Pentecostalism must reappropriate the book of Revelation, not as a text to be dissected and pieced together to form a map for the future, but as a symbolic world into which we enter in order to be challenged and transformed by the same Spirit in which John received the revelation. This method of *reading the text in the present tense* preserves the pathos of immediacy so valued in Pentecostal spirituality and reflects the way we interpret other portions of Scripture. The visions of the Apocalypse become the media of the Spirit’s message, so that the Spirit brings the ultimate realities of the future to bear on our present experience of redemption. As we enter into this symbolic world, the images begin to interpret one another. We *find ourselves* in the visions of the innumerable multitude, the two witnesses, the thousand-year reign of Christ, and the New Jerusalem. But we also *find ourselves* in the apathy of the Laodicean church, or with John in awe of the great whore, or with the earth’s inhabitants in the clutches of the beast’s influence. In essence, one way to discern the relevance of eschatology is to discern what the

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<sup>190</sup> Cf. S. Sizer, *Christian Zionism: Road-map to Armageddon?* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2004); G.M. Burge, *Whose Land? Whose Promise? What Christians Are Not Being Told about Israel and the Palestinians* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2003).

<sup>191</sup> D. Thompson, *Waiting for Antichrist: Charisma and Apocalypse in a Pentecostal Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 31, 112-15, argues that apocalyptic rhetoric has functioned historically as ‘a sort of entertainment’ and continues to do so to some extent in the Evangelical and Pentecostal traditions.

Spirit is saying to the churches (Rev. 2.7) through the visions of the book of Revelation.

The final portion of this study will offer a brief foray into the image of the beast in the Apocalypse as a possible way in which discerning reflection within the book of Revelation may help contemporary Pentecostals engage faithfully with our contemporary world.

## **B. Discerning the Beast of the Apocalypse**

The beast of the Apocalypse is described in detail in Revelation 13, but is introduced in Rev. 11.7 in the vision of the ministry of the two witnesses. This foreshadowing indicates that the content of the unsealed scroll, articulated in Rev. 11.1-13, is revealed in greater detail in Revelation 12–14. In Rev. 11.7, three aspects about the beast may be surmised. First, the beast is identified as ‘coming up from the Abyss’, held generally to be the place of the dead (Rom. 10.7) and, more ominously, the abode of demons (Lk. 8.31; Rev. 9.1-3). Second, the beast ‘will make war’ with the two witnesses, whose prophetic ministry is described in terms that denote in prototypical fashion the prophetic witness of the Church to the world (Rev. 11.3-6).<sup>192</sup> Thus, a major reason for the beast’s appearance is to oppose the witness of the Church. Third, the beast ‘will conquer [the two witnesses] and kill them’. By this the beast appears to be successful in his opposition to the Church, but of course, this is not the end of the story. Faithful witness is always a witness that may result in death, but just as the witnesses share in the death of Jesus, they also share in his resurrection from the dead; in this way their witness is vindicated (Rev. 11.11-12).

These themes are expanded in the depiction of the beast in Revelation 13. Here, the beast is described in terms that denote an illegitimate accumulation of power and authority. Seemingly conjured up by Satan the dragon, who ‘took his stand’ on the seashore (Rev. 12.18), the beast comes up from the sea, the realm of creation associated with the Abyss (Rev. 11.7; translated ‘the deep’ in Gen.1.2; 7.11, LXX). Like the red dragon (Rev. 12.3), the beast has seven heads and ten horns, but whereas the dragon has seven diadems, the beast has ten, suggesting an increase in Satan’s lust for sovereignty since being cast down to the earth (Rev.

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<sup>192</sup> Thomas, ‘Toward a Pentecostal Theology of Prophetic Witness’, (forthcoming); Waddell, *The Spirit of the Book of Revelation*, pp. 170-80; Koester, *Revelation*, pp. 108-109.

12.9).<sup>193</sup> The description of the beast in the shape of a leopard, with the feet of a bear and the mouth of a lion, suggests that John is combining the beasts of Dan. 7.1-8 in an image that signifies the amassing of world power. Yet, its authority is limited to forty-two months (Rev. 13.5), the same time period that the nations are given to trample over the holy city (Rev. 11.2) and the two witnesses are given authority to prophesy (Rev. 11.3). Thus, it is no surprise that the beast is given authority to make war with the saints and to conquer them (Rev. 13.7). The beast and its reign are characterized by blasphemies against God (Rev. 13.2, 5-6), and its authority extends to ‘every tribe, people, language, and nation’ (Rev. 13.7), the fourfold designation from which the innumerable multitude of believers comes (Rev. 7.9) and to which the ministry of the two witnesses extends (Rev. 11.9).

It is significant that the beast is presented as a parody of Christ. This is seen not only in its claim to kingly rule, which the ten diadems signify (cf. Rev. 19.12), but especially in the description of one of its heads as ‘having been slaughtered’ (ἐσφαγμένην, *esphagmenēn*, Rev. 13.3) but its mortal wound was healed,<sup>194</sup> in a parody of John’s description of the Lamb standing as ‘having been slaughtered’ (ἐσφαγμένον, *esphagmenon*, Rev. 5.6). Further, the beast derives its power, throne, and authority from the dragon (Rev. 13.2), a caricature of how the Lamb shares the power, throne, and authority of God (Rev. 5.6, 12, 13; 12.5, 10). But in a perverse distortion of how God sent the Lamb to give his life for the world, the dragon sends the beast to demand the world’s allegiance and to cause the world to suffer. The parody is extended when John notes that all the earth marveled and followed after the beast because of the healing of its mortal wound (Rev. 13.3). Their worship of the dragon and of the beast (Rev. 13.4) is a distortion of the worship given to God and the Lamb by every creature in the cosmos (Rev. 5.11-14). This is why their songs of worship, ‘Who is like the beast?’ and ‘Who can make war against the beast?’ are a satirical blasphemy against the Lamb whose followers overcome Satan and the beast through the Lamb’s sacrificial death and their faithful witness (Rev. 12.11; 15.2).

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<sup>193</sup> Koester, *Revelation*, p. 126.

<sup>194</sup> John’s first readers may have been reminded here of the legend that Nero, who was notorious as a ruthless tyrant against the early Christians, was still alive and in hiding and would return to the Empire to claim the throne. Cf. Koester, *Revelation*, p. 128. Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, pp. 414-31, distinguishes three forms of this legend in the Jewish Sibylline Oracles and asserts that John uses two distinct forms of the legend in Revelation 13 and 17 respectively.

The authority of the beast over the people of the earth and its parody of Christ become more convoluted with the arrival of a second beast, who exercises all the authority of the first beast (Rev. 13.11-12), suggesting that this second beast is acting in mockery of the Holy Spirit.<sup>195</sup> This is confirmed in its determination to make the earth-dwellers worship the first beast, a parody of the Holy Spirit's witness of Jesus. Further, through miraculous signs that mimic the OT prophet Elijah (1 Kgs 18.38) and the two witnesses (Rev. 11. 5), this archetypal 'false prophet' (cf. Rev. 19.20) deceives the inhabitants of the earth into making an image of the first beast, which is then given breath and the ability to speak by the false prophet. This image turns against the earth's inhabitants, demanding that everyone worship this image or face death (Rev. 13.13-15). To enforce this worship, the image of the beast<sup>196</sup> devises a mark that will identify those who worship the beast's image and stipulates that anyone who does not receive this mark cannot buy or sell (Rev. 13.16-17).<sup>197</sup> In this way the earth's inhabitants participate in their own demise by making an image of the beast, which 'takes on a life of its own', forcing its makers to worship it! Of course, this would cause great concern to the followers of the Lamb who are trapped by the deceitful web of tyranny created by the false prophet. They will not participate in making an image of the *true* God much less make and worship an image of a *false* one (Exod. 20.3-4; Deut. 4.16-19)! And to receive the beast's mark would signify their ownership by the beast and their commitment to it, something they would never accept.<sup>198</sup> Thus, the beast achieves its goal of eliminating the saints either through direct slaughter (Rev. 13.10) or through forced poverty and starvation.

The triumvirate of evil (the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet), who parodies and distorts the purposes of the Triune God (the Father, the Lamb, and the Spirit), forces all the earth's inhabitants to decide whom they will worship! There is no middle ground. To refuse to worship the beast and receive its mark is to be killed or cut off from the economic network that sustains physical life. But

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<sup>195</sup> Thomas, 'Pneumatic Discernment: The Image of the Beast and His Number – Revelation 13.11-18', p. 107.

<sup>196</sup> The text in Rev. 13.6 also allows that the second beast is the one who devises the mark of the beast.

<sup>197</sup> Revelation 17–18 describes the economic aspects of the beast's rule in greater detail, through the image of the city of Babylon and its downfall.

<sup>198</sup> For an extended discerning reflection on the significance of the mark of the beast, cf. Thomas, 'Pneumatic Discernment: The Image of the Beast and His Number – Revelation 13.11-18', pp. 112-23. Cf. also Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, pp. 384-407.

to commit to the beast is to pledge allegiance to a gross distortion of the Lamb who saves through sacrificial love. Those who serve the true God and follow the Lamb are encouraged because they have been sealed in their foreheads with the seal of God, a 'mark' that signifies their commitment to God and protects them as God's own (Rev. 7.3; 22.4); they have been measured off in the protection of the inner sanctuary as worshippers of God (Rev. 11.1); and their names have been written in the Lamb's book of life, an action that speaks of their trust in the Lamb's sacrificial death as the only source of salvation (Rev. 13.8). Though they may face slaughter at the hands of the beast and its convoluted mechanism of authority and thus outwardly appear defeated, they know that remaining true to their witness of the Lamb even unto death means ultimate victory and vindication (Rev. 7.9-17; 12.10; 14.1-5; 15.2), resulting in resurrection, reigning with Christ upon the earth, and life forever in the new creation (Rev. 20.4-6; 21.1-22.5). Such glory far outweighs any suffering that they might incur in their struggle against the beast! What is required, then, is 'the endurance and the faith of the saints' (Rev. 13.10)!

How does a discerning approach to eschatology help to interpret the portrayal of the beast of the Apocalypse? By entering into the symbolic world of the book of Revelation, believers are equipped pneumatically to discern truth in the contemporary world.<sup>199</sup> These symbols that are *already interpreted* within the Apocalypse become paradigms of truth, allowing believers to sort through the many trajectories of their commitments and to discover the ultimate end of each. By engaging with the spiritual truth to which the images of the Apocalypse point, we become aware of the spiritual truth that exists within our own flesh-and-blood world.<sup>200</sup> The Apocalypse preserves the balance inherent in this truth between the symbolic and the literal that we also experience in the 'real world'. This is why

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<sup>199</sup> Kuzmič, 'History and Eschatology', pp. 157-58, states: 'God's eschatological Kingdom is a radical critique of the present state of things in the world.' Further, he notes, 'While Christian ethics should be an ethics of change, the evangelical ethics often suffers a serious defect in this respect whenever it is nurtured by an other-worldly distortion that conceives salvation as an escape from this world to life in another. Such a view blesses the status quo due to a pessimism about this world. To be eschatologically significant, we must regain the vision of both proclamation and action.'

<sup>200</sup> H. Zegwaart, 'Apocalyptic Eschatology and Pentecostalism: The Relevance of John's Millennium for Today', *Pneuma* 10.1 (Spring, 1988), pp. 23-25, is concerned to make 'the eschatological images [in the Apocalypse] relevant for Christian existence'. Specifically, Zegwaart notes that the images generate hope, reveal the lordship of Christ, show 'a great fidelity to the earth', and serve as 'a model for discipleship'.

our comprehension of eschatological reality can be literal only to a point, and conversely, symbolic only to a point. To reduce the book of Revelation to a literal map of the future (i.e. history written in advance) is to reduce spiritual truth to an impersonal, mechanistic (perhaps even Gnostic) plan of redemption, by which we trade lived faith for bland certainty.

By engaging with the image of the beast in the Apocalypse, believers are called to recognize the influence of Satan both in direct opposition to the Church as well as in the more subtle ways in which the distortions of the gospel are made to appeal to the unsuspecting world as true sources of salvation.<sup>201</sup> The multiple layers of deception evident in Revelation 13 where the *dragon* calls forth the *beast*, whose power is exercised by the *false prophet*, who deceives the world into making an *image of the beast*, who finally demands and enforces its own worship, should alert believers that falsehood is not always easy to discern. This portrayal of Satan's influence matches the complexity of the contemporary world in its swift movement toward globalization and economic interdependence, which brings both challenges and opportunities for the Church's faithful witness.

So where is the beast? The beast is in the nations of the world where Christians are either routinely slaughtered or systematically (whether openly or subtly) oppressed. Where is the beast? The beast is all around us, beckoning us to take its mark and acknowledge the salvific qualities of its promises that political power and the pursuit of wealth is the path to ultimate salvation. Where is the beast? The beast is within our own tradition, perhaps even within our own hearts,<sup>202</sup> in the construction of 'Christian' empires built without regard for the poor and in the exaltation of personalities which we have been eager to worship. To identify the beast uncritically in a single person<sup>203</sup> or movement is to avoid turning any discerning reflection upon ourselves. Ultimately, in its call to both challenge and encourage the Church, the book of Revelation asks where our loyalties lie. Neutrality is not an option. 'The one having an ear, let that one hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches' (Rev. 2.7).

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<sup>201</sup> Macchia, 'The Struggle for Global Witness', p. 23, notes that the apocalyptic nature of early Pentecostal eschatology implied 'a prophetic judgment upon the powers-that-be as temporal, relative, and even contrary to the will of God. The "critical function" of apocalypticism inspired the early Pentecostal refusal to bow to the gods of sexism, racism, and wealth.'

<sup>202</sup> Cf. the perceptive poem by R.H. Gause, 'The Day Star from on High', *JPT* 11.1 (2002), pp. 143-44.

<sup>203</sup> It is significant that the beast is no where called the Antichrist in the Apocalypse.

## Chapter 6

### Conclusion: Contributions and Implications

#### I. Contributions

This research makes several contributions to the study of eschatology in the Pentecostal movement.

First, Chapter 2 offers the most comprehensive review of contemporary scholarly contributions to the study of Pentecostal eschatology to date. These contributions were categorized generally as historical, biblical, and theological. It was discovered that though most historians of the movement agreed that classical dispensationalism influenced early Pentecostal eschatology, further research was needed on the earliest period of the Pentecostal movement to clarify this influence. The survey of current biblical and theological contributions revealed three trajectories of thought. First, the eschatology offered by those contributors that do not take distinct Pentecostal beliefs into account is routinely indistinguishable from classical dispensationalism. Second, those contributions that embrace classical dispensationalism while also promoting distinct Pentecostal beliefs are characterized by unresolved theological tension. Third, those contributors who are intentional about allowing distinct Pentecostal beliefs to shape their eschatology display little affinity with classical dispensationalism.

Second, this study offers the first theological analysis of the perspectives on eschatology in the periodical literature that was generated in North America during the earliest years of the Pentecostal movement (1906 to c. 1923). Filled with sermons, testimonies, poetry, mission reports, and articles from both clergy and laity, this literature allows the researcher to gain a broad understanding of the theological perceptions of the movement at a grassroots level. It was important to allow each of the periodicals to define their own terms, as it were, rather than to read current perceptions into them. Thus, an effort was made to take account of the larger theological framework and spiritual ethos in which eschatological themes were articulated. My findings traced the development of eschatological thought within the two major streams of the movement, following roughly the historical development of the various Pentecostal groups within these streams.

Third, one of the most significant contributions of this study was the discovery of a variety of views concerning eschatology within the Wesleyan Holiness stream of the early Pentecostal movement. This variety was systemic, involving hermeneutical methods and underlying theological presuppositions. Put succinctly, not all early Pentecostals were dispensational. This major finding calls into question the sweeping generalizations of most Pentecostal historians that all early Pentecostals were (modified) dispensationalists, and supports the suggestion of Donald Dayton that early Pentecostal eschatology developed more alongside of dispensational thought rather than within it.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, this study shows that classical dispensationalism was the only model of eschatology articulated in the early Finished Work stream of the movement. Granted, minor differences did occur within these articulations of dispensationalism, and modifications were made with regard to Spirit baptism, but no variations on a systemic level appeared.

Fourth, the relationship between the dynamic spirituality of the early Pentecostals and their articulations of eschatology was seen to center in a discerning process that grew out of the eschatological significance of Spirit baptism. Such discernment was most operative in the earliest years of the movement and allowed for the variety of views within the Wesleyan Holiness stream, sometimes within the same issue of a periodical! Discernment was restricted to varying degrees within some periodicals, the *Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* being the most aggressive. Where discernment thrived, the open conversation was often enhanced by the inclusion of outside contributors, most often voicing a dispensational viewpoint. In the Wesleyan Holiness stream, J.A. Seiss, and not C.I. Scofield as many have supposed, was the most influential of these voices. In fact, I did not discover a single advertisement for the *Scofield Reference Bible* in the Wesleyan Holiness periodicals that I examined.<sup>2</sup> The assumption that this widely distributed Study Bible was promoted equally among all early Pentecostals needs to be corrected in the light of this finding.

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<sup>1</sup> Dayton, *Theological Roots*, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> The isolated references to Scofield in this stream include F.J. Lee's mention of the Scofield Study Bible (*COGE* 12.45 [Nov 12, 1921], p. 2), and a favorable reference to 'The Scofield Bible Correspondence Course' by a contributor to the *Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* (2.41 [Feb 6, 1919], p. 15).

Fifth, this study shows that underlying theological presuppositions and hermeneutical approaches accompanied the different eschatological views of the early Pentecostals. This was most apparent in the Finished Work stream where a tightly expressed soteriological narrative (compressed from the original fivefold to the fourfold gospel) was put forward as the basis for eschatological fulfillment. Specifically, discernment was focused on applying the theological implications of the finished work of Christ to all areas of doctrine and practice, including eschatology. Warnings against an over-realized eschatology, though not common, were certainly present. The fact that classical dispensationalism was the only model articulated in this stream suggests that Finished Work soteriology is inherently compatible with a dispensational eschatology.

Sixth, my research revealed that the marriage of a Finished Work view of salvation with a dispensational view of eschatology began prior to the explosive ministry of William Durham, most notably in the periodical edited by Carrie Judd Montgomery whose advocacy of both views predates Durham by several years.<sup>3</sup> Further, A.S. Copley, and J. Roswell Flower, both advocates of dispensationalism, also made appeals to the finished work of Christ prior to Durham. At the other end of the historical spectrum, Oneness Pentecostalism, which grew out of the Finished Work stream and compressed the soteriological narrative even further, continued to promote the classical dispensational model. C.I. Scofield was a prominent outside voice in this stream, and the *Scofield Reference Bible* was promoted heavily in the literature.

Seventh, my research within the Wesleyan Holiness stream revealed a more open atmosphere of discernment regarding eschatology, attributable perhaps to a more process-oriented soteriological foundation. This openness was evident in the discovery of three trajectories of thought that mirrored the three trajectories found within the current contributions to Pentecostal eschatology surveyed in Chapter 2. Generally, the *less* that the dynamic spirituality of the movement (i.e. the eschatological implications of Spirit baptism applied to theology and practice) was granted a place in the conversation, the *more* that the eschatology leaned toward classical dispensationalism, and vice versa. As with the current contributions, theological tension abounded in those trajectories that attempted to

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<sup>3</sup> Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing*, p. 227, points out that Montgomery integrated her belief in a Finished Work soteriology into a Pentecostal doctrine of healing two years prior to Durham.

embrace a dispensational view while simultaneously promoting core Pentecostal beliefs. At the same time, current attempts to revision Pentecostal eschatology find support among those early adherents who incorporated the dynamic spirituality of the movement into their articulations of eschatology. These early Pentecostal interpreters approached Scripture with a hermeneutic that allowed particular biblical texts commonly relegated to the future to have current applicability.<sup>4</sup>

Eighth, the discovery of such a promising trajectory within the early Pentecostal movement became the basis for the development of the methodology of discernment utilized in the constructive portion of this study, thus providing a way to articulate a contemporary Pentecostal eschatology that is compatible with the dynamic spirituality characteristic of the heart of the movement, without becoming beholden to the particular conclusions of the early Pentecostals. This methodology grants priority both to the discerning spirituality inherent in a Pentecostal hermeneutic and to the process-oriented fivefold narrative of soteriology which gave (and gives) such discernment theological room to function. The method is also cognizant of the integration of biblical study and theological construction inherent in a Pentecostal hermeneutic. In terms of dialogue partners within the movement, it grants priority to those contributions that reflect the full incorporation of Pentecostal spirituality, and it favors those outside dialogue partners who are sympathetic to the Pentecostal movement or whose works show a similar regard for a discerning methodology.

Ninth, utilizing the methodology of discernment, this study offers the first articulation of Pentecostal eschatology framed around the fivefold gospel. It was observed that the fivefold gospel is becoming increasingly recognized as the theological heart of Pentecostalism, being utilized most recently to explore a Pentecostal ecclesiology.<sup>5</sup> This study makes a significant contribution to the larger theological conversation in Pentecostal studies devoted to the fivefold gospel. As one voice among many Pentecostal interpreters, this contribution is intended to pick up the conversation that was discovered in the early Pentecostal

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<sup>4</sup> A prime example of this occurs in the writings of A.J. Tomlinson and his colleagues in the *Church of God Evangel*. Surprisingly, this periodical also contains some of the strongest arguments in favor of classical dispensationalism to appear in this stream of the movement, most notably in the writings of F.J. Lee. Cf. Chapter 3 above.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas (ed.), *Toward a Pentecostal Ecclesiology*.

movement and invite future dialogue in the ongoing process of discernment concerning eschatology in the contemporary global Pentecostal movement.

Tenth, the primary biblical texts from the book of Revelation chosen as entry points into the discussion of eschatology in this study gives voice to the growing interest in the Apocalypse in Pentecostal studies. This contribution offers a noteworthy addition to this trend. Significantly, the book of Revelation is beginning to be recognized as a rich source of pneumatology,<sup>6</sup> and its appreciation by Pentecostals will complement the prior focus on the pneumatologies of Luke and Paul. The self-designation of the Apocalypse as a prophecy easily lends itself to Pentecostal categories of epistemology and hermeneutics. Its visionary character certainly should not be foreign to Pentecostal ways of knowing (Joel 2.28)! The constructive contribution that is offered in this study is an invitation for others to join in the feast of theological and spiritual sustenance that this ‘climax of prophecy’<sup>7</sup> provides.

Finally, this study demonstrates that Pentecostal eschatology is not so much concerned with mapping a script of the future as it is in discerning the Spirit of the future in our present life and witness. This testimony joins with the early Pentecostal testimonies and with John’s testimony in the Apocalypse that to know Jesus as Coming King is to anticipate his coming in the experiences of salvation, sanctification, Spirit baptism, and healing.

## **II. Implications for Future Research**

Occupied largely with an analysis of the periodical literature in the earliest years of the Pentecostal movement, this study joins that of Kimberly Alexander<sup>8</sup> in demonstrating the theological and spiritual richness of this literature. Other areas of inquiry pertinent to contemporary Pentecostalism could benefit from similar investigations. My study also raises the need to push further beyond the early 1920s to discover the reasons why classical dispensationalism finally became the single model of eschatology in those groups in which the discernment process was still ongoing. Among others, this would involve a study of the periodical literature produced by A.J. Tomlinson in the Church of God of Prophecy after

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<sup>6</sup> E.g. Waddell, *The Spirit of the Book of Revelation*.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*.

<sup>8</sup> Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing*.

1922. Further, the richness of the single extant issue of *The Whole Truth* (1911) begs for more archival documents to be forthcoming from the Church of God in Christ. A thorough analysis of the early eschatology of this group would add depth to the findings in this study.

Though this study touches briefly on the place of the modern State of Israel in a contemporary account of Pentecostal eschatology, more thought needs to be devoted to this area, especially in the light of the incendiary conflicts that surround Israel, both in political and theological discourse.<sup>9</sup> A way forward is to reflect on the significance of a proleptic eschatology for the covenantal theology of Israel. How does a view of the *future* breaking into the *present* relate to the continuous existence of the people of Israel whose covenant with God is grounded in the *past*?

The implications of the constructive portion of this study for Pentecostal hermeneutics call for further exploration, particularly for the integration of biblical and theological studies, demonstrated here and modeled after a similar integration in the early Pentecostal periodicals.

Pentecostals are just beginning to explore the depths of theological richness and spiritual nurture that the book of Revelation offers. Though some studies are in progress,<sup>10</sup> the field is open for explorations into many areas of theological inquiry.

Though this study draws heavily from the book of Revelation, other equally-relevant biblical texts await exploration in terms of the discerning methodology suggested here. Current studies in Pentecostal theology that take account of the fivefold gospel noted in this study point to the kingdom of God as an appropriate eschatological symbol.<sup>11</sup> A constructive contribution to Pentecostal eschatology could be offered with the themes of the kingdom of God articulated in the Synoptic Gospel narratives serving as the principal entry points into the eschatological dimensions of the fivefold gospel.

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<sup>9</sup> Steps in this direction are offered by Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, pp. 103-106, 350; and B. Charette, 'Restoring the Kingdom to Israel: Kingdom and Spirit in Luke's Thought', in Althouse and Waddell (eds.), *Perspectives in Pentecostal Eschatologies*, pp. 49-60.

<sup>10</sup> For example, the study of Melissa L. Archer, 'Worship Scenes of the Apocalypse' [working title] (PhD thesis; Bangor University, forthcoming), will help Pentecostals integrate the worship scenes in the book of Revelation into a theology of worship.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology*, pp. 223-24; Fee, 'The Kingdom of God and the Church's Global Mission', pp. 7-21.

In many ways, this study is a response to the call by Steven Land for the revisioning of Pentecostal eschatology within an integrative view of God's eschatological presence. The contribution offered here extends this invitation for ongoing discerning reflection upon the implications of the holistic spirituality of the movement for an authentic articulation of Pentecostal eschatology.

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*The Bridegroom's Messenger* (The Pentecostal Mission, Atlanta, GA)  
*The Christian Evangel* (Assemblies of God, Plainfield, IN; Findley, OH)  
*The Church of God Evangel* (Church of God, Cleveland, TN)  
*The Holiness Advocate* (The [Pentecostal] Holiness Church, Clinton, NC)  
*A Living Word* (H.O. Scott, St. Paul, MN)  
*Meat in Due Season* (F.W. Ewart, Los Angeles, CA)  
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*Word and Witness* (E.N. Bell, Malvern, AR; Findley, OH; St. Louis, MO)

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