



The Sword & The Plow

Newsletter of the Bimillennial Preterist Association

Vol. VI, No. 1 – January 2004

The Great Red Dragon

By

Kurt M. Simmons

"And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was about to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born."

Rev. 12:3, 4

After God and Christ, Revelation's great red Dragon is, perhaps, *the* leading figure in the book. The Dragon is the arch enemy and adversary of Christ and the church; he tries to devour the Christ-child and persecutes the mother church. The Dragon is the animating power behind the Beast; the Beast is the Dragon's *alter ego* (Latin, "*other I*"); the Dragon acts through the Beast to make war against the saints and gather the kings of the earth together in battle against the Lamb. (Rev. 16:13, 14) In Revelation twenty, the Dragon's demise receives especial emphasis by treating it last, the final enemy to be destroyed before the resurrection of the dead. Moreover, the binding of the Dragon is central to the imagery of Revelation twenty, perhaps the most difficult and elusive chapter in the whole Bible. Whole schools of interpretation have grown up around the imagery of Revelation twenty and the binding of the Dragon; Pre-, Post-, and A-millennialism define the "millennial reign" of Christ and the saints by Dragon's binding. Given the prominence of the Dragon in the book of Revelation, it is critical to our interpretation of the book, and

Since the text calls the Dragon "the Devil and Satan" the assumption is that a demonic or other personal being is contemplated by the text. Use

chapter twenty in particular, to have a firm handle upon the identity and significance of this character. We will be well served to establish the identity of this figure from the very outset.

The War with Michael and His Angels

The majority of expositors hold that the Dragon is a fallen angel or demonic being called the Devil and Satan. Indeed, Rev. 12:7-9 would seem to indicate as much:

"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels with him."

of the pronouns "he" and "him" and "his" in reference to the Dragon seem to confirm this conclusion. However, this is to greatly mistake

the case. Revelation is a book of prophecy; the language of the prophets is poetic and figurative, impressed with metaphors and other literary devices. Like parables, the imagery conveys basic spiritual truths through word pictures. However, whereas parables employ the familiar, mundane characters and circumstances of every day life, prophecy, especially *apocalyptic* prophecy, employs fantastical, preternatural characters and circumstances to convey its message. Thus, whereas Jesus' parables evoked images of day to day life in first century Palestine - images of vineyards, wine fats, agriculture and animal husbandry, Revelation employs images of heavenly apparitions, angelic beings, fabulous beasts, and plagues completely beyond the experience of mankind.

The chapter opens with a woman, clothed in the royal attire of the sun, adorned with a crown of twelve stars and the moon under her feet. She is great with child and cries out in travail, pained to be delivered. Before her is the Dragon, poised to devour her child as soon as it is born. She gives birth to a man child who is to rule the nations with a rod of iron. The man child is caught up to the throne of God and its mother flees into the wilderness from the face of the Dragon. This imagery is a clear reference to the birth of the Christ; he is the man child ordained to rule the nations with a rod of iron. (Ps. 2:7-9; *cf.* Rev. 2:27) The woman is the Old Testament church, Israel, the bride of God; not apostate, national Israel, ruled and corrupted by men of violence who had seized it by force (Matt. 11:12), but the faithful who groaned in travail, looking for the adoption and redemption promised from the very fall of the race itself. (Gen. 3:15) The Dragon's attempt to devour the child refers to the Slaughter of the Innocents by Herod the Great (Matt. 2:16-18), a usurper of the Davidic throne made king by the Roman Senate at the instance of Mark Anthony.¹

The woman's flight into the wilderness refers to the scattering of the church upon the arrest and crucifixion of Christ, his ascension, and the persecution that arose over Stephen. (Matt. 26:31; Jno. 16:32; Acts 8:1, 4; *cf.* Zech. 13:7) However, the reference here to the ascension of Christ and the woman's flight is anticipatory; Christ does not ascend nor the woman flee until

after the battle of Michael and his angels. (Rev. 12:13, 14) Michael, the Archangel, is none other than Christ; his angels are the disciples; the battle with the Dragon portrays the earthly ministry of Christ. It is characterized as being in heaven because Christ's work on earth was a spiritual battle, not a contest for a temporal throne. Christ was tempted with a temporal throne during his fast in the wilderness (Matt 4:8-10; Lk. 4:5-8), but he renounced self and submitted to the will of God, looking to the heavenly kingdom, the church. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:9-11) Rev. 12:11 indicates that the battle of Michael and his angels was clinched by the Son of God's death: "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death." This is echoed by Colossians, which says Christ spoiled principalities and powers in his cross; he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. (Col. 2:15)

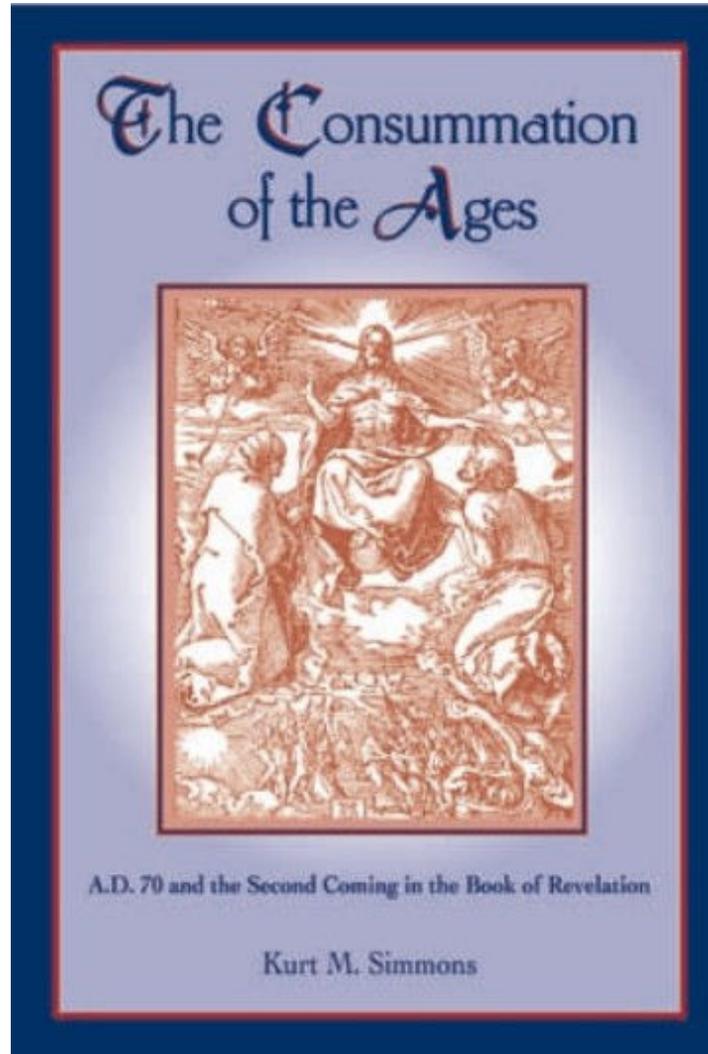
The Prince of this World

In Jno. 12:31, 32, speaking of his death, Jesus said, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." This answers to the imagery in Rev. 12:9, saying the Dragon was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. In Jno. 13:31, Jesus gives a further indication who or what the "prince of this world" was when he says, "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." Jesus here refers to the bereavement the disciples would suffer upon his death, followed by his resurrection and ascension to the Father. The "prince" that was coming for Jesus was death itself; sin and death were the principalities and powers Christ vanquished in his cross. Sin and death reigned from Adam unto Moses. (Rom. 5:14, 17, 21; *cf.* Heb. 2:14) The whole creation was subjected to vanity; every people and language groaned and travailed together in pain to be delivered, waiting for the adoption and manifestation of the sons of God, the redemption of their collective body (Rom. 8:19-23; *cf.* Eccl. 3:18-20) when they would be

(Cont'd page six)

¹ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XIV, xiv, 4; *Wars of the Jews*, I, xiv, 4.

Its Here!



*"Best Commentary on Revelation EVER Written!" Todd
Dennis, PreteristArchive.com*

486 pages, Hardcover

\$34.95 plus \$3.00 shipping & handling

Order on line at www.preteristcentral.com or send check or money order to Kurt Simmons, 10710 W. McCoy Road,
Partridge, KS 67566 – (620) 567-2355

The U.S. Supreme Court, Homosexual Sodomy, And The Moral Will To Say “NO!”

By

Kurt M. Simmons

The writer of Ecclesiastes stated that there is a time for everything under the sun, including a time for war. War in all of its horrors, destruction, and hellish reality has a place in human affairs that is affirmed by scripture and the word of God. War is a court of last resort for the resolution of otherwise irresolvable differences and disputes among men and nations. War is also vehicle of divine judgment and wrath; it is the visitation of Almighty God. “Thus saith the Lord God; Smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot, and say, Alas for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! For they shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence. He that is far off shall die of the pestilence; and he that is near shall fall by the sword; and he that remaineth and is besieged shall die by the famine: thus will I accomplish my fury upon them. (Ezek. 6:11, 12)

The visitation of the Almighty by war was not unique to Israel, but was common among *all* the nations of peoples. A brief of review of the minor prophets will confirm this. More to the point, it was not restricted to Old Testament times, as some would have us believe. God is changeless. “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to day and for ever.” (Heb. 13:8) The meek and mild Jesus of the gospels is the same Lord who, in A.D. 70, came in wrath against the nation of them that crucified him and persecuted his church. “And blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horses’ bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.” (Rev. 14:20) The images of Revelation show God in his anger, when his longsuffering was exhausted and his offer of mercy shunned. Indeed, there is a time for war. The Supreme Court’s recent decision bestowing the protection of law upon homosexual sodomy as a God-given right and corollary of the judge-made “right of privacy,” leads one can ask whether we are not fast approaching that time in America.

In his book *Slouching Towards Gomorrah*, former Supreme Court nominee, Robert H. Bork,

points out that there is no reason to throw constitutional protection around speech advocating violent revolution. He reasons that “In a republic, where the polls are open and elected representatives make the law, there can be no value in speech advocating the closing of the polls or nullifying the effect of laws democratically made.”² Granted. But what about where a people’s normal democratic processes, including the supporting structures of religion and morality, have been systematically subverted by a nonelected judiciary? Is the advocacy of violence warranted then? Consider Bork’s assessment of the United States judiciary:

“It is now clear that it is the courts that threaten our liberty – the liberty to govern ourselves – more profoundly than does any legislature...It is the judiciary’s assumption of power not rightfully its own that has weakened, indeed severely damaged, the constitutional structure of the nation...it is the courts that are not merely endangering our freedoms but actually depriving us of them, particularly our most precious freedom, the freedom to govern ourselves democratically unless the Constitution actually says otherwise...judges cannot be trusted with a written constitution and an unlimited and uncheckable power of judicial review...the upshot is that the democratic nation is helpless before an antidemocratic, indeed a despotic, judiciary. The American people seem, at the moment, to be submissive and without the political will to reclaim the liberty that is rightfully theirs.”³

Thus, according to Bork, the U.S. Supreme Court is the single greatest danger to our ordered liberties facing Americans today; one we are powerless to resist because they are immune to the vote and neither the president nor Congress can rein them in. But, it is Bork’s last comment that is most disturbing of all. In the face of its usurpations and outrages against God and decency *we are submissive*. However, it is not political will we lack, but MORAL will to reclaim the liberty that is rightfully ours. America is a nation of over two hundred and fifty millions of peoples. Should a majority of nine, nonelected judges decide matters of

² Robert H. Bork, *Slouching Towards Gomorrah* (ReganBooks, 1996), p. 102.

³ *Ibid*, pp. 115, 117, 119.

morality and culture for a whole nation? For three thousand years western civilization has deemed homosexuality immoral and punished it by law. Does it now fall to a majority of nine men to reverse 3,000 years of jurisprudence and history; nine men against the combined wisdom of all who have lived through all the long ages of Anglo-American history? The time was when usurpations and defiance of traditional, Biblical decency and morality of the like routinely handed down by the Court would have incited riots and the justices would scarce have escaped with their lives. Our nation's moral faculties were strong and well trained; we would not have accepted the Court's adventures into hedonism, immorality, and sexual license without a fight; state legislatures would have debated succeeding from the union; civil war might even have broken out. But today we are insensible and benumbed; we lack the moral alacrity to do more than simply groan and turn away; our only response is to hide from what is happening before our very eyes. We are indifferent toward evil and submissive to evil men.

Is there no point at which men will say, "Thus far and no farther?" Is there no point at which Godly fear and righteous indignation requires we do something more than look at one another with fear and amazement? Is our sense of moral rectitude so weakened or nonexistent that we are reduced to shameless servility? Where is the faith of our fathers that *died* in battle and *suffered* prison, dungeon, fire, and sword on behalf of what they believed? Has the cynicism of our day robbed us of all conviction? Has affluence and the soft life made us slaves to personal convenience and comfort? Can nothing move us?

When Israel erred from God, it was the leaders' fault. The whole population of the nation was led astray because of leaders who rebelled against God. The sins of the leaders in departing from God brought about destruction of untold numbers of souls. What was true of Biblical Israel is true of every nation and people. *Souls are in the balance!* The immorality, lawlessness, and deviancy the U.S. Supreme Court is fastening on the American people by protecting homosexual sodomy, abortion, feminism, *etc.* is not only destroying our culture and civilization, it is speeding the destruction of untold millions of souls. Led astray by the leftist agenda of the court and liberal elite in media and academia,

hundreds of millions will suffer eternal loss. Fornication is rampant; virginity is extinct; illegitimacy abounds; violence fills our city streets. Sixty-eight percent of all blacks are born illegitimate, 22 percent of whites. Combined, 32 per cent of all children in America are born to single parent homes. ⁴ Love for the souls of those that will be lost through the wickedness of our nation's leadership requires that *something be done*. Nobody that loves the truth and hates evil can remain silent or uninvolved! Christians – American Christians – must find the MORAL will to reclaim the liberty that is lawfully theirs; they must find the MORAL will to fight to reestablish proper limits upon government and the rightful place of religion and morality in the public sphere. It is a shame and reproach upon the church when righteous men say and do nothing to resist the wickedness of those that hate God.

"There is a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; at time to break down, and a time to build up...a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; for war and a time for peace." (Eccl. 3:3-8) What time is it, O Christian, when evil men subvert the very foundations of family and society? What time is it, O Christian, when evil men climb on high and blaspheme Almighty God? What time is it, O Christian, when sodomy is enshrined as a national institution on a par with the family, protected by the law of the land? What time is it, O Christian, when the Ten Commandments are banished from places of public concourse? What time is it, O Christian, when the name of God is expunged from the nation's Pledge of Allegiance? What time is it, O Christian, for those that would play the men for our children and families, our communities and nation? What time is it, O man of God?



Pilgrims Going to Church

⁴ Robert H. Bork, *Slouching Toward Gomorrah*, p. 155.

(Cont'd from page two)

"reconciled both unto God in one body by the cross." (Eph. 2:16) This is the enemy Jesus came to destroy. Death had nothing in Jesus (no power over him) because he was sinless. The sting (venom) of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. (I Cor. 15:56) Because he was without sin, death could not hold him and had no power over him. "God loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." (Acts 2:24)

The battle of Michael and his angels against the Dragon and his angels was the redemptive work of Christ, beginning in his earthly ministry and consummating in his death, burial, and resurrection. By his death, Christ canceled the handwriting of ordinances against man (Col. 2:14), the debt and bond of sin; by his resurrection he vanquished death itself. Thus spoiling principalities and powers, Jesus could say "I have the keys of hell (hades) and of death...He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." (Rev. 1:18; 2:11) The legal dominion of sin and death were vanquished in Christ's cross, but it remained for his disciples to receive the adoption and manifestation of the sons of God, the redemption of their collective body at the "dispensation of the fulness of times" (Eph. 1:10), the "time of reformation" (Heb. 9:10), the "regeneration" (Matt. 19:28), and "restitution of all things." (Acts 3:21) The time of the great consummation was the close of the Mosaic age, marked by the destruction of the city and temple, when God would "cast out" the Jews, and give the kingdom to others. (Matt. 8:11, 12; cf. Gal. 4:30) However, prior to this the church had to wage spiritual battle; sin and death, acting through the children of disobedience, would persecute the church. Spiritual wickedness in high places (Eph. 6:12) in the form of kings and rulers of the Romans and Jews, would persecute the woman, seeking to retain the kingdom themselves. It is here that the great red Dragon assumes a double meaning, shifting from a symbol of sin and death to a symbol of men and governments engaged in mortal combat against Christ and the church.

The Old Serpent Called the Devil and Satan

The serpent is a familiar character in the Old Testament canon. Carrying its venom beneath its tongue, the serpent beguiled the woman in the garden. (Gen. 3:1-4) The serpent thence became

a figure for sin and death, the ultimate enemy of man. But God would provide a Redeemer. Death would strike at the promised seed in the crucifixion of Christ, but Christ would crush the serpent's head in his resurrection. (Gen.3:15; cf. I Cor. 15:56) Isaiah likens Israel's struggle for salvation to a woman in travail, unable to find deliverance. God promised deliverance, saying "thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise...In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea." (Isa. 26:17; 27:1) In its immediate context, the words of the prophet looked to the return of the captivity out of Babylon and the gathering of the Diaspora from Assyria and Egypt and the places where they had been scattered. Leviathan refers to the world civil powers that had afflicted and oppressed God's people, but the further, Messianic application to the resurrection and Christ's victory over sin and death are unmistakable. The serpent therefore stands at once for both sin and death and the enemies and adversaries of God; because of their subjection and obedience to sin and death, the imagery of the serpent is transferred and applied also to men and nations. Assyria is a serpent; from his root springs forth a cockatrice, "a fiery flying serpent" viz., the nation of Babylon. (Isa. 14:29; 27:1, 13 cf. Jer. 51:44) Leviathan, the great serpent, is put for Pharaoh and his armies. (Ps. 74:14; 104:26) Ezekiel calls Pharaoh a "great dragon." (Ezek. 29:3, 4; 32:2-6) Bel, the dragon-god of the Chaldeans, is put for Babylon (Jer. 51:44), and so forth. So here, in Revelation, the serpent is the incarnation of sin and death in the form of the world civil powers set in opposition to God. That the Dragon has seven heads wearing seven diadems speaks to the seven Caesars who sat upon the throne of the world until the time of the consummation and kingdom of Christ; the ten horns speak to the president and provincial governors of the ten provinces of Rome. (Rev. 17:16)

The serpent is also called the devil. Our English word "devil" generally signifies a demonic being. However, the Greek term whence our English word is derived has a different meaning entirely. The Greek term translated devil is *diabolos*, meaning an accuser, a slanderer. It is derived from the word *diabolo*, to accuse or malign. For maligning God and saying that "ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:4)

the serpent is thus called a devil. Numerous times *diabolos* is used of men who are slanderers and false accusers. Jesus called Judas Iscariot a "devil." (Jno. 6:70) In a similar manner, the high priests and elders of the Jews are probably in contemplation when it says that the "devil" put it into the heart of Judas to betray Christ for money. (Jno. 13:2) Paul warns that an elder's wife must not be a "*diabolos*," *viz.*, "slanderer." (I Tim. 3:11) In the latter days, Paul said men would be "*diabolo*" *viz.*, "false accusers" (II Tim. 3:3; Tit. 2:3) Elders must be above reproach lest they fall into the snare of the "devil," *viz.*, provide occasion to evil men and Jews who were maligners of the church. (I Tim. 3:7) Although the term can describe demons and unclean spirits, in all these cases *diabolos* refers strictly to men and governments. And this is how it is used in Revelation. "The accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." (Rev. 12:10) The Jews spread venomous lies against the church throughout the ancient world, seeking its destruction. For their slanders and accusations the Jews are described as the devil and his angels waging war with Christ and his disciples.

The term "Satan" is of Hebrew origin and signifies an "adversary." It first occurs in Num. 22:22 where it is used to describe the angel of the Lord who stood as an "adversary" (*Heb. satan*) to Balaam. It is also used men: I Sam. 29:4 - *David*; I Kng. 11:14 - *Hadad the Edomite*; I Kng. 11:23, 25 - *Rezon son of Eliadah*; Ester 7:6 - *Hamon*; Matt. 16:23 - *Peter*. (*Cf.* Ps. 38:20; 71:13; 109:4, 6, 20, 29) The term is employed to describe the Persian monarchy and enemies of the Jews who resisted their resettlement of the land after the captivity. (Zech. 3:1, 2; *cf.* Dan. 10:13) It is probably to the Philistines Chronicles refers when it says Satan "stood up against Israel," provoking David to number the host. (I Chrn. 21:1; *cf.* II Sam. 24:1) In Revelation, Imperial Rome and the Jews are the adversaries of the church. Hence, they are portrayed as a great red Dragon whose political powers consist of seven heads and ten horns. To apply this language to a demonic being is to deprive the whole book of intelligibility.

Destruction of the Dragon

The destruction of the Dragon is described by the metaphor of being cast alive into the lake of fire where it would be "tormented day and night

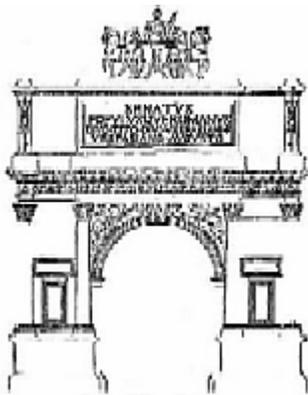
forever and ever." (Rev. 20:10; *cf.* 19:20) Individuals may be tormented, but governments by definition exist only in contemplation of law, consisting of the sum of the state's powers. The question therefore arises how a political entity like Rome can be tormented forever and ever. Isn't this proof that a personal being is contemplated by the text? We think not. The destruction of the Dragon is no more literal than the lake of fire itself; both are merely metaphors. The lake of fire is derived from Isa. 30:30-33 where it is used to describe the utter annihilation of the power and empire of Assyria:

"And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones. For through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod...For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it."

Tophet is the valley of Gehenna, a figure for the second death. Whilst encamped before Jerusalem to lay siege, the angel of the Lord smote the Assyrian host, killing 185,000 with a deadly plague. The bodies apparently were burned and buried in Tophet. The image of Tophet stacked with wood probably refers to the funeral pyres used to burn the corpses. However, the destruction of the Assyrian host did not spell the end of Assyria as a nation; it merely pointed to its complete defeat *vis-à-vis* God's people at that particular moment in history. From the Assyrians would arise the Babylonians who would later burn the city and temple and carry the nation into captivity. In Revelation, casting into the lake of fire likely refers to the civil wars that wasted the empire after the death of Nero. Josephus reports that 100,000 Romans died in the contest between Vitellius and Vespasian alone.⁵ In a single, decisive battle between Otho and Vitellius, forty

⁵ Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, IV, xi, 3, 4; *cf.* Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, LXIV, xv, 2; LXIV, xix, 3.

thousand were slain on each side;⁶ “Many thousands” of soldiers were put to death by Galba for participation in a mutiny under Nymphidius.⁷ This is in addition to the plagues and pestilence that ravished Rome under Nero, killing tens of thousands.⁸ The torments are symbolic descriptions of the plagues and strokes with which God would afflict the nations of them that refuse to serve and obey him: “And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth...And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.” (Zech. 14:12, 17) The torments assume they do not repent; hence they are portrayed as perpetual and everlasting. Imperial Rome no longer exists, but, where ever men and governments resist Christ and oppose his people, there Leviathan the serpent exists. Because the Dragon thus lives forever, it will be tormented forever, suffering the perpetual strokes and wrath of God when ever and where ever it raises its ugly head.



Bimillennial Preterist Assoc.
10710 W. McCoy Road
Partridge, KS 67566

Questions & Answers

Q: Are we living in the “latter days?”

A: No. The phrase “the latter days” is used exclusively of the period culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jewish state, and the Mosaic age in A.D. 70. This is easily demonstrated by resort to Old Testament usage of the term. Without fail, the “last days,” or “latter days” was used in reference to the destruction of national Israel. Thus, Jacob foretold the end of the 12 tribes using this term (Gen. 49:1 *et seq.*), Balaam foretold the destruction of “Heber” (the Hebrews) by ships from “Chittim” (Rome), placing it in the “latter days” (Num. 24:14 *et seq.*), and Daniel was told what would “befall thy people in the latter days.” (Dan. 10:14) Use of the term in the New Testament (*e.g.*, Tim. 4:1) must be read in the context of the impending destruction of the Jewish state and consummation of the ages when Jesus would come in power and glory as he foretold the Sanhedrin. (Mk. 14:62; *cf.* 9:1; Matt. 16:27, 28) There simply is no scriptural premise upon which to base application of the term “latter days” to the present era. Christians live in the new heavens and earth, the “age of ages” and a “world without end.” (Eph. 3:21) Milton Terry’s comments on the term are worth considering:

“The seventh trumpet, as we understand this book, is the symbolic signal of the end of the old dispensation and the consequent beginning of the new era of the kingdom of Christ on earth (comp. xi, 15). But the Old Testament prophets contemplated the appearance of the Messiah and the going forth of the new word of Jehovah as occurring “in the end of the days” – that is, the last days of the eon or dispensation under which they were living...This “end of the times” belongs, not to the era of the new dispensation, but to the concluding days of the old...It is a serious error, therefore, when learned exegetes persist in assuming that the phrase “the last days,” as employed in the Scriptures, means the period of the new Christian dispensation.” (Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Apocalypics*, p. 361)

⁶ Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, LXIII, 10, 3; *cf.* Tacitus, *Histories*, II, xlv.

⁷ Tacitus, *Histories*, I, v, vi; *cf.* I, xxxvii.

⁸ Tacitus, *Annals*, XVI, xii; Loeb ed.

