



The Sword & The Plow

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Preston-Simmons Debate

Where was Sin Defeated? The Cross or AD 70?

Second Affirmative

By Don Preston

My worst fears have been realized. I shared with some close friends that I was concerned that my friend Kurt would not actually engage in a debate, following my affirmatives as a negative is pledged to do, but, would simply use this to promote his personal agenda. Lamentably, this is precisely what has happened. Kurt spent *five pages* presenting material that is *totally irrelevant* to responding to my affirmative arguments, in spite of the fact that he signed rules not to introduce material not "directly relevant to proving or disproving the respective positions!" *Five pages of irrelevant material!*

Take note that each of us signed rules for the debate. One of those rules reads: "Each man agrees to answer the other man's arguments directly, without obfuscation or evasion, to the full extent of their ability and knowledge."
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Second Negative

By Kurt Simmons

I always smile when I recall the folksy saying the Texas preacher used after stepping on someone's toes in a Sunday sermon: "*Throw a rock at a bunch of dogs; the one that screams is the one that's hit.*" Apparently, Don has been hit because he sure is screaming! Accusations are flying! Don protests I am not keeping to the terms of the debate. He says my first negative has five pages of irrelevant material! Really? What could be more relevant to a debate about Covenant Eschatology than to provide the reader with facts about the origin of the doctrine and the man who authored it? What could be more relevant in a debate about Covenant Eschatology than to tell the reader that this doctrine has led its author into the false gospel of Universalism?

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(Don's Second Affirmative Cont'd from page 1)

What does my friend do? He gave an *affirmative presentation*, that has the appearance of being *pre-prepared*. *He did not follow my arguments!* Then he says: "I am sure Don would like me to take the bait and use up my allotted space following him down all sorts of rabbit trails, answering questions, and interacting with his affirmative. Why should I?" He even asks: "Why should I involve myself in discussion about the proper exegesis of Isaiah 26, 27 and 59 and what light that may or may not throw on Rom. 11:25-27 if Don cannot produce even ONE VERSE to show the debt of sin still hung over the saints from and after the cross?"

Well, Kurt, here are just a *few* of the reasons you should follow my affirmative arguments:

- 1.) *You gave your word to do so!* Is that not enough?
- 2.) Because my arguments— in spite of your declarations to the contrary— prove my position!
- 3.) Because your failure to follow my arguments will demonstrate irrefutably your *inability* to answer my arguments.

Why should my friend involve himself, "in discussion about the proper exegesis of Isaiah 26, 27 and 59 and what light that may or may not throw on Rom. 11:25-27"? Well, he should do so, because if he does not properly exegete Isaiah 27 / 59, and I do, then I have proven my point in regard to Romans 11, and at the same time falsified my friend's entire rejection of Covenant Eschatology!

With that in mind let me offer here *three more affirmative arguments* from the prophetic source of Romans 11. We will see if Kurt will ignore these new arguments.

#1— ISAIAH 26-27 AND THE SALVATION OF "ISRAEL"

Re: Romans 11:26f— The coming of the Lord to take away Israel's sin is the coming of the Lord to take

away Israel's sin foretold by Isaiah 26-27 / Isaiah 59. But note this...

Kurt claims that Romans 11:26f predicts the salvation of individual Jews, via obedience to the gospel, throughout the entirety of the endless Christian age. [This is a totally false claim. I believe no such thing. Let Don produce the quote.]

This *demands* that Isaiah 26-27 / 59 predicted the salvation of individual Jews, via obedience to the gospel, throughout the entirety of the endless Christian age.

But, Isaiah 26-27 / 59 *does not predict* the salvation of individual Jews, via obedience to the gospel, throughout the entirety of the endless Christian age.

Isaiah 26-27 / 59 predicted the salvation of Israel at the coming of the Lord in judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood. This is irrefutably true, and Kurt has totally ignored it. [Bare assertion. If bare assertion is sufficient to sustain a proposition, then bare assertion is sufficient to negative it]

Therefore, the prediction of the coming of the Lord in Romans 11:26f is not the prediction of the salvation of individual Jews, via obedience to the gospel, throughout the entirety of the endless Christian age.

Kurt simply must deal with this! He pledged himself to follow my arguments. This argument alone proves my affirmative. But there is more.

#2— ROMANS 11:26-27 AND THE SALVATION OF THE *REMNANT*

When Paul discusses the salvation of "all Israel" he actually has *the salvation of the remnant* in mind (see Romans 11:1-11). This is affirmed in the prophetic passages he cites (cf. Isaiah 27:12-13; 59:18-20). Now watch this!

Romans 11:26-27 is *the salvation of the remnant of Israel* (Kurt, is it the salvation of only a *remnant of*

the church?) at the coming of the Lord foretold in Isaiah 26-27 / 59.

In Romans 9:25-28 Paul (citing other OT prophecies of the salvation of the remnant of Israel) says: "Though the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea the remnant will be saved. For He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness because the Lord will make a short work on the earth."

Here is the argument:

The salvation of Israel in Romans 11:26f is the salvation of Israel in Romans 9:28.

But, the salvation of Israel in Romans 9:28 would be finished in a short time.

Therefore, the salvation of Israel in Romans 11:26f would be finished in a short time.

But this can't be, per Kurt, for he demands that Romans 11:26f is the continuing salvation of Jews *throughout the entirety of the endless Christian age!* [This is a totally false claim. I believe no such thing. Let Don produce the quote.]

Kurt's position denies what Paul (and Isaiah) had to say about the salvation of the remnant.

Unless Kurt can prove that the salvation of "all Israel" is to be divorced from Paul's discussion of *the salvation of the remnant of Israel*, then my affirmative is established beyond dispute. And of course, Kurt cannot prove this.

#3- ROMANS 11--ISAIAH 27 AND THE SALVATION OF THE REMNANT AT THE SOUNDING OF THE GREAT TRUMPET AT THE RESURRECTION

Please follow this carefully.

The coming of the Lord to take away Israel's sin in Romans 11:26f is the coming of the Lord at his coming in judgment of Israel foretold by Isaiah 26-27, when He would call the dead--those scattered to the four winds-- to Him (i.e. the *resurrection*) by the sounding of the Great Trumpet (Isaiah 27:13).

Jesus said that the calling of the remnant, those scattered to the four winds-- would be at his coming in judgment of Israel-- at the sounding of the Great Trumpet-- (Matthew 24:30-31) *the time of the resurrection per my friend Kurt Simmons-- in AD 70.*

Therefore, the coming of the Lord to take away Israel's sin of Romans 11:26 was to be (it was) at the coming of the Lord in judgment of Israel-- the time of the resurrection at the sounding of the Great Trumpet-- per my friend Kurt Simmons-- in AD 70. (The coming of the Lord in Romans 11 is not the individual conversion of Jews throughout the endless Christian age).

I proved that the coming of the Lord in Romans is the coming of the Lord of Isaiah 26-27, which is the coming of the Lord at the *resurrection*. Kurt says the resurrection was in AD 70. Therefore, the coming of the Lord in Romans 11 was in AD 70. I likewise proved that Isaiah 27 (thus Romans 11) foretold the defeat of Satan at the parousia. Kurt admits the defeat of Satan was in AD 70! Therefore, Romans 11 must be AD 70. *Kurt ignored these arguments!* My affirmative is established.

I have proven beyond any doubt that Isaiah 26-27 / 59 and thus Romans 11:26-27 fit, *very firmly*, in Kurt's box.

As I pointed out several times in my first affirmative, this debate is about *proper hermeneutic*. Kurt, proper exegesis of scripture is *the only way that you can prove your point*, and negate mine! Thus, refusal to even mention my arguments about the prophetic background of Romans 11 is a tacit surrender of your negative. You have virtually admitted that you cannot deal with the exegetical material I presented. You refused to answer my questions based directly on the text (Yet, interestingly, you asked me questions, *expecting an answer!*) And you question what relationship proper exegesis of those prophetic texts would have on this discussion!

THE ABIDING (VALIDITY) IMPOSITION OF TORAH UNTIL AD 70

Let me now prove my point about the continuing validity of Torah until AD 70. I will prove this from both scripture and Kurt Simmons' own statements.

In my first affirmative, *I asked Kurt eight questions that he totally ignored*. The last question was at the end of my affirmative. I specifically asked my friend to answer the question in his first negative. He refused to do so until I pressed him to do so in private email. Here is that final question: "If a law or covenant has been abrogated, are any of the provisions of that covenant, i.e. its mandates, its promises or penalties (positive or negative) still binding and valid (imposed)? Please answer specifically, clearly, without evasion."

I can establish the truth of my affirmative on the *correct* answer of this question. Sadly, Kurt refused to give the correct answer to the question! Here is his answer: "I guess that would depend upon the terms and conditions of the covenant and which party was in violation. The breaching party forfeits the benefit of the bargain. The non-breaching party is still entitled to the benefit of the bargain; the penalty provisions, incidental and consequential damages, etc, are therefore still valid. If a king made a covenant with another nation or kingdom that the latter would pay tribute, and the latter then broke that covenant, the former would be entitled to come and lay siege against the breaching kingdom..."

Somebody call the fire department! I have never seen so much *smoke!* (That is my attempt at a bit of levity, DKP). My friend's lawyerese came shining through on this, *didn't* it? Now, the observant reader will realize *immediately* that *Kurt did not answer the question directly, without evasion or obfuscation!* In fact, he ignored *the real question*. My friend knows full well that to answer this question *directly and correctly* establishes that the Torah remained valid until AD 70!

Kurt says that the "non-breaching party is still entitled to the benefit of the bargain." But that is only true if the bargain (covenant) *is still in effect!* Likewise, per Kurt, if a nation broke the covenant then the king would come and "lay siege against the breaching kingdom," But again, this would only be *true if that covenant was still in effect!* *The entirety of Kurt's "answer" assiduously avoids my question!* Kurt knows that provisions of a covenant can only be applied *if that covenant is still binding*. I know it, and every reader of this debate knows it! Let me illustrate.

The law of East Berlin ended in 1990 when the Wall and government came crashing down. But, suppose someone arrested a former member of East Berlin—although they were now living in West Berlin— and charged them with violation of the former (dead) Communist government law. What would happen? The case would summarily be dismissed, and everyone knows it! Why? Because the law of East Berlin has no continuing validity! This is beyond dispute. But, let's take a look at Torah shall we?

Kurt says the Torah legally *died* at the Cross. But, if Torah died at the Cross, and no longer had legal power, *how in the world could the provisions of Torah be imposed and fulfilled in the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70*, as Kurt Simmons, and most importantly scripture, affirms?

Kurt tells us he no longer holds to some of the positions in his books. So, I will give the citation from Kurt's books. If he no longer believes what he wrote, *he will have to formally recant that position for us*. The trouble is, if he renounces the positions that I will cite, *he will be rejecting the truth!*

In his comments on Revelation 15:8, Kurt says: "The angels emerge from the tabernacle of the testimony with *the covenantal curses and plagues*" (*Consummation*, 292, my emphasis). As he comments on the judgment of Babylon he says: "The threefold judgments of death (pestilence) mourning, and famine were foretold by Moses: And I will bring a sword upon you, ***that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy...(Leviticus 26:25, 26, 29-32).***" **In addition, commenting on Revelation 16:19, and how Babylon was "remembered" before God, Kurt says, "'Remembrance' is a uniquely covenantal term" (*Consummation*, 313, my emphasis, DKP). Well said, my friend!** [A king makes a treaty with another king or kingdom. The terms say the latter will pay tribute; in exchange, the former covenants to protect and defend the latter. If the latter breaks the terms of the covenant, the former is certainly entitled to come and lay siege to the other kingdom. His making war in no way depends upon the continuing validity of the covenant. Just the opposite, it is because it is broken that the latter is entitled to make

war! So with the Jews, they broke the covenant and God cast them away. They were no longer under his protection, but became his enemies. Hence, he came and avenged the violation of the covenant.]

So, what do we have? We have Kurt affirming that the Mosaic Covenant provisions of wrath (for violation of *Torah*), were still alive in AD 70! He has the covenantal provisions of wrath applied 40 years after the violations of that Covenant, and 40 years after that Covenant supposedly died!

Now, Kurt's statements about Revelation and the covenant provisions of wrath are true beyond dispute, but, nonetheless, we will ask Kurt: **Do you still affirm these statements? Yes or No?** Let me frame my argument like this:

The provisions of a covenant are only applicable while that covenant remains binding.

But, the provisions of wrath found in the Mosaic Covenant were still applicable in AD 70 (Kurt Simmons, Revelation 15-18). [Provisions of wrath are not proof the covenant is still valid. Quote Don: Destruction of Jerusalem shows covenant is broken, invalid. If a person is out of marriage, the marriage is ended, the covenant is null.]

Therefore, the Mosaic Covenant remained binding in AD 70.

This argument establishes my affirmative **100%, and it means that the coming of the Lord in Romans 11 was the AD 70 coming of Christ!** As we have shown, *Romans 11* was the coming of the Lord in AD 70, in application of Covenantal wrath on Jerusalem! It thus goes in Kurt's box, along with the rest of the passages I have discussed. That box is filling up!

THE TRANSFIGURATION AND THE END OF MOSAIC COVENANT

Building on the argument above, let me offer another affirmative argument. The Transfiguration of Jesus is one of the most incredible events in the Bible. It unequivocally identifies the time of the passing of the Torah, and it was not the cross! Please pay close attention to this material.

The Transfiguration was a vision of the second coming of Christ.

This is what Peter affirms in 2 Peter 1:16f: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming (parousia, DKP) of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount."

Let me recount that marvelous scene. If I say anything in error, I will expect Kurt to correct it with *text and context*. Simple denials will not suffice, however.

On the mount, Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus.

Moses and Elijah represented the Law and the Prophets— i.e. *the Mosaic Covenant*.

Peter wanted to build three tabernacles, one for each of the three, but, Moses and Elijah *disappear*, and the Voice of God says of Jesus, "This my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear him!"

The Transfiguration is therefore a vision of the transformation from the Mosaic Covenant glory to the New Covenant glory of Jesus!

(And remember that Paul said in 2 Corinthians 3:16f that the transformation was taking place in his ministry! It had not already happened!). The implications of this are astounding.

If the Mosaic Covenant was abrogated at the cross, as Kurt claims, then *the Transfiguration should have been a vision of the cross*. But, the Transfiguration was patently not a vision of the cross. And this is what is so critical.

Peter undeniably said that the Transfiguration was a vision of the *parousia* (2 Peter 1:16f)!

Let me express my argument like this:

The Transfiguration was a vision of the Second Coming of Christ (2 Peter 1:16f).

But, the Transfiguration was a vision of the end of the Mosaic Covenant and the establishment of the New Covenant of Christ.

Therefore, the end of the Mosaic Covenant was at the Second Coming of Christ (which Kurt agrees was in AD 70!

Kurt, my friend, I am going to ask that you address this argument directly, without evasion, without obfuscation. Deal with it contextually, hermeneutically and logically, if you can.

KURT'S ALL OR NOTHING ARGUMENT

Kurt makes some very illogical statements. Here is one of them: "But if the cross did not *triumph* over the law at Calvary, if man had to wait until the law was *removed* to be justified from sin, then *nothing* happened at the cross." I must say, I was shocked at the profound illogic of this claim. Let me illustrate the problem, by simply changing the story a bit.

If Israel did not fully receive her deliverance from Egypt *at the very moment* of the slaying of the Passover lamb, then *nothing* happened at the slaying of the Passover lamb!" Or...

If Israel did not *fully receive her inheritance* at the *very moment* she left Egypt, then "*absolutely nothing* happened the night of the crossing of the Red Sea!" Or...

If a *temple* is not completed, at *the very moment* the foundation is laid, then *absolutely nothing* happened when the foundation was laid. (Compare Ephesians 2:19f; 1 Peter 2:4f!). Or...

If the adoption of a child is not completed *at the very moment* of the declaration of the intent to adopt then *absolutely nothing* has happened when the declaration to adopt is made. (But, take a look at Romans 8:14-23)! Or...

If the marriage is not completed at *the very moment* of the betrothal, then *absolutely nothing* happened at the moment of betrothal!

The logical fallacy of such claims is clear to *anyone*. And, given that the NT story is based on the Passover / Exodus i.e. Christ was the Passover (1 Corinthians 5:5f, and the Second Moses (Hebrews 3-4), and that the first century saints were still waiting on their "redemption" (Luke 21:28; Ephesians 4:30– a word taken directly from the Exodus / Passover story), perhaps Kurt can tell us why he can justify such an illogical claim. Kurt's claim is specious at the very least.

KURT'S BOX CHALLENGE– GLADLY ACCEPTED!

Kurt denies that forgiveness was still a future hope prior to AD 70. No less than six times he says I did not produce "one verse" affirming the futurity of redemption, salvation, atonement, forgiveness.

This is a smoke screen and nothing else. Let me illustrate how proper logic works by means of a hypothetical syllogism:

If it is the case that the coming of Christ to take away sin in Romans 11:26 was the AD 70 coming of Christ, then it must be true that forgiveness was not an objective, fully given reality in Romans 11:26.

It is the case that the coming of Christ to take away sin in Romans 11:26 was the AD 70 coming of Christ (Isaiah 26-27 / 59, Hebrews 9:15-28, and more).

Therefore, it must be true that forgiveness was not an objective, fully given reality in Romans 11:26.

Kurt has *totally ignored* my affirmative evidence. Having ignored it, and *petitio principii*, (assuming without proof) that he is correct, he claims that I cannot offer "one single verse" to prove my case! The truth is that *every verse I presented proves my case!* Kurt's box is *full, and getting fuller!*

ON THE MHP...AGAIN AND STILL

You simply must catch what Kurt has done. He has entangled himself even deeper in contradiction.

On the one hand, in both of his books, he affirmed that entrance into the MHP was not until AD 70.

Now, he claims that the saints *could* enter the MHP prior to AD 70!

It seems my friend has forgotten *Revelation 15:8*! Or, perhaps he has renounced his position on Revelation 15. If he has, we will insist that he tell us. The trouble is, if he has renounced his statements on Revelation 15:8 *he has renounced the Truth!*

Remember that Revelation 15:8 affirms unequivocally that entrance into the MHP could not take place until God's wrath on Babylon (Jerusalem) was fulfilled (in AD 70). And here is what Kurt said about Revelation 15 and Hebrews 9: "The way into heaven was not opened until God's wrath upon Jerusalem is fulfilled. The way into the holiest was not yet manifested while the first tabernacle was yet standing (Hebrews 9:8)"(*Consummation*, 2003, p. 292).

Kurt, which part of that quote do you now renounce as false doctrine, and what is your exegetical justification? Could man enter the MHP before God's wrath was completed? If so, prove it!

Revelation 15 and Hebrews 9:6-10 undeniably speak of *the same time, and the same event*- entrance into the presence of God. Kurt himself made these events synchronous!

Yet, now, Kurt affirms that the saints did in fact enter into the MHP prior to AD 70! Kurt, how could the saints enter the MHP before the judgment (*the time of reward*) and completion of wrath on the "ministration of death"? (The reader will note that Kurt *totally ignored my material* on the indisputable fact that AD 70 was the judgment of the Old Covenant and its failure to justify).

Kurt, tell us plainly, **did the saints enter the MHP before God's wrath was completed in the**

destruction of Jerusalem? YES or NO? Do not evade or ignore this question!

Furthermore, in our negotiations for this debate, *in November, 2009*, my friend wanted to affirm the following (remember that this was only *a couple of months ago!*):

"Resolved: The general, eschatological resurrection consisted exclusively in the release of souls/spirits from Hades to their eternal reward in heaven/Gehenna."

Let the readers take careful note of the following: Just *one month* before drafting that proposition, my friend wrote (*Sword and Plow*, Oct. 2009, p. 2)- "The soul could not enter the presence of God in heaven without the atoning sacrifice of Christ, so, the dead were sequestered in Hades until the general resurrection." So, *just a few months ago* Kurt argued that the saints could not enter the MHP until AD 70 because they did not have the forgiveness of their sins. This absolutely affirms that salvation was not perfected at the cross. Kurt, *actually wanted to affirm that as his proposition!*

Let me frame my argument based on Kurt's comments:

The souls in Hades could not enter heaven until they received the benefits of Christ's atoning blood (Kurt Simmons, October, 2009- Is this true or false, Kurt?)

But, the souls in Hades could not enter heaven until the resurrection in AD 70 (KS, November, 2009- True or False, Kurt?).

Therefore, the souls in Hades did not receive the benefits of Christ's atoning blood until AD 70.

[false the souls of men made perfect!] A condition , but certainly not the only condition

AFFIRMATIVE ARGUMENT ON HADES

Hades was the place of separation from God, even for the righteous, until the time of the resurrection when sin would be overcome through forgiveness and

salvation (1 Corinthians 15:54-56; Revelation 20:10ff). **The only reason Hades existed was because there was no forgiveness of sin.**

Kurt believes that Hades was not destroyed until AD 70, and the souls in Hades did not enter their reward until AD 70.

The existence of Hades until AD 70 as Kurt affirms, is prima facie proof that neither the living or the dead entered the MHP until the resurrection. After all, the living saints could not bypass Hades when they died before the resurrection. So, until the resurrection in AD 70 neither the living or the dead saints could enter the MHP, and Kurt's assertions to the contrary are falsified.

But since Hades existed until AD 70 then Torah remained binding until AD 70! Remember that Paul said there could be no access to the MHP while Torah remained binding!

The destruction of Hades is when man could enter the MHP. Hades and Torah were coexistent! Remember Luke 16– "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them"! As long as Torah stood valid there was no forgiveness and thus, no entrance into MHP. As long as Hades—which existed because of no forgiveness-- remained there was no entrance into the MHP. Kurt Simmons says that Hades was not destroyed until AD 70. Therefore, Torah remained binding until AD 70. (Because Torah could not provide forgiveness!)

Make no mistake, Kurt affirms repeatedly that the resurrection, when Hades was destroyed, occurred in AD 70. So, here is what we have.

Kurt affirmed, October / November 2009, that the saints could not enter the MHP "without the atoning sacrifice of Christ, so, the dead were sequestered in Hades until the general resurrection." (Notice that highly significant "so" in Kurt's comments). He still affirms– don't you, Kurt?– that the dead saints could not enter heaven until AD 70 and the "general resurrection"? Don't fail to answer this, my friend! This is crucial! You owe it to the readers of this debate to address this argument without evasion or obfuscation, as you promised to do when you signed the debate rules.

You have stated that the dead saints could not enter the MHP without the atoning work of Christ, and you unequivocally tied that entrance to AD 70! [They were sequestered in Hades waiting for the atonement; but were not resurrected because Hadean death was the last enemy]

There could not be a clearer demonstration of my affirmative, or rejection of Kurt's new theology. Kurt, do you now renounce as false teaching, what you wrote in October of 2009, and the proposition that just last November you wanted to affirm concerning the resurrection and Hades? We will eagerly await your response. But we are not done. We are going to fill Kurt's box to overflowing!

HEBREWS 9, TORAH, REMISSION OF SIN, HADES AND THE MOST HOLY PLACE

"And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance." (Hebrews 9:15).

Notice what the text says:

Christ died for the remission (redemption) of sins committed under Torah. I affirm this! The Cross was for redemption! It does not, however, say that redemption occurred at the Cross. Follow closely:

Those under the first covenant were dead Old Covenant saints that Jesus died to give forgiveness. But, remember that Kurt wanted to affirm in this debate that the resurrection was exclusively the entrance of the souls in Hades into the MHP, i.e. the dead Old Covenant saints! But, if the dead OT saints could not enter the MHP until AD 70, then it is undeniably true that they did not yet have the remission of sins that Jesus died to give them. The one thing– and the only thing –that kept man out of the MHP was sin!

If, as my friend affirms, remission of sins was objectively applied from Pentecost onward, then those OT saints should have entered the MHP at the moment of the Cross. But no, Kurt wanted to affirm in this debate –that the dead saints could not enter the MHP until AD 70!

Thus, they were still awaiting their forgiveness purchased through Christ's death. They would not have the benefits of Christ's atoning blood until the resurrection. **Kurt, do you now affirm that the OT saints entered the MHP at the time of the Cross / Pentecost? Yes or No? Do you affirm that those in Hades entered the MHP before Hades was conquered in AD 70? Yes or No? If you so, you are in denial of Revelation 15:8 and Revelation 20!**

Hebrews 11:40 relates to this issue. Paul, speaking of the dead OT saints said, "They without us cannot be made perfect." Kurt claims (by misusing Hebrews 10:19f) that the living saints were able to enter the MHP from Pentecost onward. Yet, he wanted to affirm in this debate that the OT saints could not enter until AD 70! That would mean that the living NT saints could enter the MHP before the OT saints. But there is a problem! Paul said that the New Covenant saints would not precede the OT saints (1 Thessalonians 4:15f)! [Don simply misunderstands me here. The Hebrew writer told the Hebrew saint to enter. He said it! Not I. Let us boldly enter. Where they going in actually and spatially? No. They were entering legally and covenantally (which is all we can do this side of death anyhow). But the point remains that by urging them to enter, by affirming that the way into God's presence was legally and covenantally open in Christ, shows that the atonement was complete!]

According to Paul, the OT saints could not enter into the "better resurrection" (Hebrews 11:35f, without the NT saints, and, the NT saints could not enter before the OT saints. In other words, OT and NT saints would enter into the MHP together, at the same time! So, the proposition that Kurt wanted to affirm in this debate, that the dead saints would enter the MHP in AD 70, winds up proving my proposition, and destroying Kurt's!

Kurt believes that the resurrection was in AD 70. He believes the resurrection was exclusively the raising of the dead out of Hades into heaven. But this demands that the OT saints remained in Hades, unforgiven, until AD 70! And if those in Hades could not enter the MHP until AD 70, it is irrefutably true that the living could not enter until AD 70! The living, when they died, had to go to Hades, before the time of the resurrection!

If the dead OT saints were objectively forgiven at Pentecost onward there was no reason for them to remain in Hades. This is especially true if, as Kurt claims, AD 70 had no redemptive relevance! If AD 70 had no redemptive significance, and if forgiveness was an objective reality prior to AD 70, then again, there was no reason whatsoever for the dead saints to remain in Hades.

Kurt's insistence that the saints entered the MHP before AD 70 demands that Hades was emptied before the resurrection, or that the resurrection occurred at the time of the Cross / Pentecost, since per Kurt, forgiveness and redemption was completed at that point. Remember the living and the dead would receive their reward at the same time (Matthew 16:27-28; 1 Peter 4:5).

Yet, Revelation 15:8 is unequivocal. There was no entrance into the MHP until the supposedly "irrelevant event" of the judgment of Old Covenant Babylon! This is why Kurt's statement—whether he now recants it or not-- stands true: "Christ tied the judgment to the end of the Mosaic age and the destruction of Jerusalem" (Consummation, 2003, p. 229).

Jesus said he was coming in judgment "to reward every man" (Matthew 16:27-28; Revelation 22:12). The reward Jesus was going to give was the incorruptible inheritance and salvation (1 Peter 1:3f; Hebrews 9:28; 10:35f, etc.). But, Kurt is now arguing that the saints received their reward (entrance into the MHP / salvation) before Christ came in judgment to give the reward! This is clearly untenable.

THE HOLY SPIRIT— THE EARNEST OF THE REDEMPTION--AD 70

Let me introduce some more affirmative arguments based on the work of the Spirit. Remember that Kurt admits that the charismata were given as the earnest (guarantee) of the finished work of Christ (i.e. redemption, Ephesians 1:13-14). The truth is that the Spirit was the guarantee of all of the still future promises contained in the NT! (Note how Kurt ignored my referent to Philippians 1:6f).

Paul said that the Spirit— the charismata— was given as an Earnest of the Inheritance / Resurrection (2

Corinthians 5:5; Ephesians). This means that the Earnest of the Spirit was given to living people, who, according to Kurt, already had the very thing that the Spirit was given to guarantee— Salvation, redemption, forgiveness! Why did living people need to be given the Earnest (the guarantee) of what they already possessed?

The Spirit was given to guarantee the resurrection. Deliverance from Hades. The resurrection was exclusively for the dead (per KS). Thus, the charismata was given to the living, but had no redemptive significance for them. It did not guarantee them anything. It simply guaranteed the dead something that had no redemptive significance! (As if release from Hades into the presence of God had no redemptive significance!) [Can the earnest of the Spirit not be given to a living person in token of God's promise to raise him when he dies?]

I must be brief, but I want to make an affirmative in regard to the Spirit and resurrection.

The promise of the Spirit was made to Israel to raise her from the dead (Ezekiel 37:10-14).

This "death" from which Israel was to be raised was not physical death, but covenantal death (Isaiah 24:4f; Hosea 5-6; 13:1-2). Living people were called dead, but they continued to "sin more and more" (Hosea 13:1-2). Biologically dead people cannot do this! This is spiritual death- alienation from God— as a result of sin (Isaiah 59:1-2--The sin that needed to be removed at the coming of the Lord, Isaiah 59:20f--Romans 11!). Sin brought death. Thus, forgiveness would bring resurrection (cf. Acts 26:17-18)!

This resurrection, guaranteed by the Spirit, would be Israel's salvation (Isaiah 25:8-9). This is the resurrection promise of 1 Corinthians 15 when sin, the sting of death, would be overcome (1 Corinthians 15:54-56— Romans 11:26-27). In other words:

1 Corinthians 15 foretold the resurrection (when sin would be put away), predicted by Isaiah 25.

The resurrection of Isaiah 25 is the resurrection of Isaiah 26-27 (and thus, Romans 11:26-27), which would occur at the coming of the Lord in judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood.

But, the coming of the Lord -- at the resurrection to put away sin-- of Isaiah 25-27 / 1 Corinthians 15-- would be the coming of the Lord in judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood.

Therefore, the coming of the Lord of Romans 11 to take away Israel's sin-- to bring her salvation-- is the coming of the Lord at the time of the resurrection, in judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood, i.e. AD 70.

You cannot divorce the resurrection of 1 Corinthians 15 from that in Isaiah 25-27. But again, the resurrection of Isaiah 25-27 is the coming of the Lord for the salvation of Israel in Romans 11. Therefore, the coming of the Lord for the salvation of Israel in Romans 11 is the time of the coming of the Lord for the resurrection (the salvation of Israel), in 1 Corinthians 15. This is inescapable.

Let me express this simply:

The resurrection is when sin, the sting of death was to be overcome, (1 Corinthians 15:54-56).

The miraculous gifts of the Spirit were the guarantee of that resurrection (2 Corinthians 5:5; Ephesians 1:13).

Therefore, the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were the guarantee of the overcoming of sin!

That is exactly opposite of Acts 2:38 where you receive remission of sins FIRST then the gift of the Holy Ghost as evidence that you had been redeemed!

This proves, prima facie that while the cross was the power for the putting away of sin, that the work of the cross was not completed until the parousia / resurrection in AD 70. It proves that AD 70 was redemptively critical.

Since the Spirit was the guarantee of the resurrection, (in AD 70 per KS!), the time when sin, the sting of death would be overcome, it therefore follows that the coming of the Lord to put away sin in Romans 11:26f was the time of the resurrection in AD 70. Thus, these verses go in Kurt's box.

THE TIME OF REFORMATION AND KURT'S ATTEMPT AT LOGIC

My friend has a difficult time dealing with logical syllogisms. He refused to comment on even one of my seven syllogisms. (Refutation of a syllogism demands that a person analyze and refute the major premise, or the minor premise, proving with evidence that they affirm something that is untrue. One can also show that the conclusion does not follow from the premises. Ignoring a syllogism does not refute the arguments, and Kurt did not offer a syllable of analysis!

I took note, in over six pages of argumentation, with careful attention to the Greek tenses and the actual wording of the text, that the time of reformation would fully come at Christ's AD 70 parousia. Kurt ignored all of this. Go back and refresh your memory of what all I wrote, and then carefully consider Kurt's total silence.

He ignored the present tenses of Hebrews 9:6f (insisting on the other hand that we consider some of the past tenses as the final word, forgetting the proleptic nature of those statements and the work of the Spirit to guarantee the completion). He ignored the grammar of the text that declares Jesus' coming to be necessary to fulfill the typological nature of the OT which was, when Paul wrote, still a shadow of good things about to come (Hebrews 9:28-10:1). He ignored all of this!

I offered the following: Kurt admits that entrance into the MHP was at the second coming in AD 70. (Of course, he wants now to deny this, except in regard to the dead saints, but, as proven above, this does not help him).

But the time of reformation is when man could enter the MHP (Hebrews 9:10).

Thus, the time of reformation did not fully arrive until the second coming AD 70.

This means that Torah remained imposed until AD 70, because Torah would stand "until the time of reformation" (Hebrews 9:10).

I noted that in 2 Corinthians 3-6 Paul affirmed that the work of the Spirit, in and through his ministry, was the transformation from the Old Covenant glory to the New (2 Corinthians 3:16f). Thus, the work of the Spirit was the guarantee of Covenant transformation! Kurt insists however, that this transformation, the time of reformation allowing man into the MHP, was at the Cross / Pentecost. Trouble is, Paul said the ministry of Covenantal transformation was his ministry!

In a vain attempt to counter my arguments, Kurt offered a syllogism that is rife with error:

The ceremonial law was imposed until the time of reformation.

The time of reformation was marked by the ministry of the Spirit.

But the ministry of the Spirit began immediately following the cross.

Therefore, the ceremonial law was imposed only until the cross.

Kurt is guilty of the "law of the excluded middle." In other words, he left out a bunch of critical stuff! He is likewise guilty of anachronism. The ministry of the Spirit did not begin for 40 days after the cross. Yet, Kurt says that the law ended before the Spirit even began his work! The reformation did not come at the cross! (Note also that he limits definition of "the law" to the "ceremonial law." This is a false dichotomization of Torah, and we will prove this as we proceed).

Kurt's syllogism is fundamentally flawed because of the "Law of Excluded Middle." He leaves out several significant facts. He claims that the time of reformation fully arrived at the moment of the initiation of the Spirit's work of reformation—actually before. See above! This denies Paul's statement that the Spirit was working through his ministry to bring about Covenant transformation. Thus, Kurt's "conclusion" fails to honor the on-going work of Covenant transformation—the work that was not finished when the Spirit was given! Kurt even admits this, but then tries to deny it (or wrongly apply it) all at the same time! Read what he said in his first

negative: "It is clear that the time of reformation began at the cross. The gifts of the Holy Ghost led the apostles into all truth for the specific purpose of affecting reform (Jn. 16:13). When the gifts ceased, the time of reformation was over, not begun." My friend keeps contradicting himself, and scripture.

The time of the reformation— at the end of Torah— is when man could enter the MHP. Kurt says the time of reformation was at the cross / Pentecost, and was "over, not begun" when the gifts ceased (i.e. in AD 70). Well, my friend, if the time of reformation was over (terminated, not perfected), then the time when man could enter the MHP ended in AD 70! Your position demands that the time of reformation— when man could enter the MHP— only lasted forty years and then "was over, not begun!" Where does that leave us today? We all know that you believe the believer enters the MHP today, thus, the forty year transformational work of the Spirit was to bring the time of reformation to perfection! The only solution to your self contradiction is to accept my affirmative and return to the position you have abandoned: the work of the Spirit initiated the time of reformation, the parousia perfected the time of reformation. Your view of Hades, the resurrection and the charisma logically demand this.

So, the time of reformation was not completed when the Spirit was given, as Kurt claims. You cannot have the time of reformation completed before Paul (and the Spirit through Paul) began his work of Covenant transformation. The time of reformation fully arrived when the Spirit finished His work, and that was when man could enter the MHP, which by Kurt's own admissions was in AD 70! So, just as we have affirmed from the beginning, the work of salvation was a process begun at the Cross, and consummated at the parousia. The next point confirms this even more. [Don misrepresents me here. I did not say that the reformation was complete when the spirit was given, I said it began. It is Don who said the time of reformation began when the spirit's work was done!]

MORE ON THE ATONEMENT AND KURT'S AMAZING ARGUMENT

I offered a number of arguments based on the actual text and the present tenses of the Greek— all ignored by Kurt— on the necessity for Christ to fulfill the

typology of the Day of Atonement, when the high priest killed the sacrifice, entered the MHP, and then came out to announce salvation to the worshipers. I must admit that I was staggered by Kurt's attempt at refutation. I have never read or heard anyone, in any commentary, at any time, make such an argument! Here is what he said:

"Don assumes that Christ's ascension equals the High Priest entering the Most Holy Place, thus postponing completion of the Atonement ritual until Christ emerged at his second coming. Don forgets that the High Priest entered the Most Holy Place twice (Lev. 16:14, 15). Yes, TWICE! There were two sacrifices in the atonement ritual: a bull and a goat; blood was carried in twice, once for each sacrifice. But Jesus died only once; he made a once-for-all sacrifice when he died on the Calvary. We believe that the typology of sprinkling the blood before the Mercy Seat was fulfilled when Jesus died. The Hebrew writer agrees, saying that Jesus opened the way into the Most Holy Place through his FLESH (Heb. 10:20)." No, Kurt, the Hebrews writer does not agree with you! But, does the reader of this debate catch what Kurt has done? This is simply amazing!

Notice just some of the problems with Kurt's proposal.

1.) Kurt argues that since, under Torah, the High Priest had to enter the MHP TWICE, Jesus likewise had to do so. This is unbelievable! Why did the high priest have to enter the MHP TWICE? Why were there two sacrifices, Kurt? Answer: The priest had to enter twice because the first time was when he offered blood for his own sins (Leviticus 16:1-6; Hebrews 5)! Kurt, my friend, your insistence on Christ entering the MHP TWICE, means that Christ offered his own blood to atone for his own sin. That is the only reason why Christ would have to enter the MHP TWICE That is the typology that you are appealing to!

But once again, we have the refutation of Kurt Simmons from Kurt's own keyboard! In *Adumbrations*, (2009, p. 168) Kurt wrote: "At his resurrection Jesus made it very plain to Mary that he had 'not yet ascended' unto the Father in heaven" (John 20:17). Peter expressly states that Jesus was in Hades prior to his resurrection (Acts 2:22-32)." So,

Jesus did not enter the MHP on the Cross, or while in Hades! Kurt's argument is destroyed.

2.) The sacrifice was always killed outside the MHP and then offered in the MHP (Leviticus 16)! Yet Kurt says Jesus entered the MHP while he was on the cross! The mercy seat was within the veil, not outside. Your argument violates the type / antitype, and your own words.

3.) Of course, Kurt then violates his own argument by admitting (tacitly of course), that Jesus did enter the MHP at his ascension! Okay, so Kurt has Jesus entering the MHP while on the cross. Then, he has Jesus entering the MHP when he ascended! There is no logical harmony here.

4.) Notice Hebrews 9:12– Christ "entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood." Per Kurt, the author should have said Jesus had entered twice!

All of this establishes the point I made earlier. The cross, as stand alone event, did not complete salvation. I argued that Kurt's own position demanded that Jesus enter the MHP to fulfill the Atonement typology. Now, he has tacitly admitted it, while seeking desperately to deny it! He claims, without a syllable of proof, that Jesus entered the MHP while hanging on the cross, but then, while arguing for Jesus to enter the MHP TWICE, admits that Jesus had to enter the MHP at his ascension! This proves my point that the typological aspects of Torah were not fulfilled at the cross, and nullifies Kurt's claims, *prima facie*!

KURT'S QUESTIONS TO ME

Although Kurt refused to answer any of my questions, he posed two questions to me and in private correspondence said that he would only answer my final question if I answered these: 1) Did the cross cancel the debt of sin under the law?

Response: Kurt's problem is that he reads "at the cross" into the texts that speak of the Cross initiating the redemptive process! But those texts speak of Christ cancelling the debt (not the law itself!) through the cross. Kurt's questions are based on faulty premises and presuppositions.

2) Does the cross (grace) triumph over law, or did law have to be removed for man to be justified?

Response: The cross did triumph over law. However, Kurt fails, sadly, to differentiate between the process begun– that I have demonstrated definitively in my comments on Hebrews 9:15– and process finished. Likewise, Kurt fails to consider the difference between the objective passing of the Law itself– which did not happen at the Cross (Hebrews 8:13), and what happened when a person died to the law by the body of Christ, receiving the earnest of the Spirit as the guarantee of the transformation from the Old Covenant glory to the New.

This last point is critical. The Law itself was not nullified at the cross. As believers came into Christ, "the veil was taken away" (2 Corinthians 3:10f). Yet the Law itself, not just an outer manifestation of the law, as Kurt falsely claims, was "ready to vanish away" (Hebrews 8:13). Remember, it was the Spirit's work to bring that covenantal transformation to completion. It was the Spirit's work to apply the power of the cross and bring that foundational work to completion.

As noted above, Kurt, in violation of the rules he signed, engaged in an affirmative presentation, which I am under no obligation to even mention since I am in the affirmative. He spent a good long time on Matthew 5:17-18 claiming to falsify the preterist paradigm in regard to that text. I am going to ask my friend to please use that argument in his affirmative presentations! I promise to demonstrate, definitively, the fallacy of the argument.

In this second affirmative I have totally rebuffed all of Kurt's few attempts to negate my arguments. I have buttressed my arguments with solid exegesis, sound hermeneutic and logic. I have added new arguments that prove, *prima facie* that Torah was not nullified at the cross, and that salvation was perfected at Christ's parousia in AD 70. My affirmative is established beyond any ability of Kurt to rebut, but, we will see what he has to offer.

A final question: Kurt, tell us plainly, What was "the power of the holy people" mentioned in Daniel 12:7? Please, do not ignore this. Clearly define Israel's power.

(Simmons Second Negative, Cont'd from page 1)

What could be more relevant to a debate in which Don affirms that sin was *not* blotted out at Calvary than some explanatory material about how Covenant Eschatology denies the cross of Christ? In his first affirmative, Don said “this debate is not about the cross.” But as we have seen, that is EXACTLY what this debate is about! If Don asserts the debate is not about the cross, am I not entitled to show the reader that in fact it is? Of course I am!

Don complains I have not answered his arguments about Isaiah 26, 27, and 59. Really? Did I sign a proposition to negative Don’s *arguments*? No! I signed a debate to negative Don’s *proposition*! I am under NO obligation to answer even one of Don’s arguments. If I can negative Don’s proposition by marshalling dozens of verses showing the debt of sin was paid at the cross, if I can negative Don’s proposition by marshalling dozens of verses showing the law was fulfilled and abolished at the cross, is there any reason I should withhold these verses? Of course not! And if I can negative Don’s proposition by simply producing verses (and pointing out that he can marshal *none*) is there any reason I should waste time discussing Isaiah 25-27? Of course not. Even so, in this article, we will deal with many of Don’s arguments. We will show there is not *one particle* of credibility to his argument that Isaiah 27:7-11 is about AD 70. We also address his arguments based upon his misrepresentations of what I have said. Four times in his last affirmative he misrepresents me. He sets up “straw-man” arguments by putting words in my mouth then proceeds to tear them down. We will address these and other arguments of Don in their proper time and place. But first, let us make certain the reader understands exactly what this debate is about. The TWO most basic and important issues in this discussion are:

- When did the legal validity of the Old Testament cease? and
- When did the legal efficacy of Christ’s blood justify the saints? AD 33 at Calvary, or AD 70 at the fall of Jerusalem?

Dear reader, this is what this debate is about! Not the proper exegesis of Isaiah 25-27! Issues of Isaiah 27:7-11 are a distraction at best. They enter at all only because Don proposed the debate be framed around Rom. 11:25-27, and I accepted lest there be

no debate at all. Even so, we have signed the proposition and are willing to discuss all matters connected with Rom. 11:25-27, but issues of Isaiah are collateral at best compared with questions about the efficacy of Christ’s cross. My charge is that Covenant Eschatology *denies* the cross of Christ! I have shown that when you *spiritualize* (“figurize”) the resurrection and make it equal to *justification*, that when you argue justification occurred in AD 70 by *removal of the law rather than the addition of grace*, you OVERTHROW the cross of Christ. When you say that the saints languished under the *debt of sin* until the second coming, YOU OVERTHROW THE CROSS OF CHRIST! I said in my first negative,

If the cross did not triumph over the law at Calvary, if man had to wait until the law was purportedly removed in AD 70 to be justified from sin, then nothing happened at the cross.

Don claimed in his last affirmative that my argument was illogical, that my logic here is bad. Alright then, Don, tell us what happened at the cross! You *deny* that atonement was made there, that redemption happened there, that reconciliation happened there. You *deny* that salvation happened there, that the debt of sin was then and there blotted out. Tell us, please, what did happen at the cross? I said I could not find the cross in your system of soteriology/eschatology. I charged that the cross had dropped out of your theology of salvation. I charged that in a system which claims the law continued to hold man under the debt of sin until it was separately removed in AD 70, the cross cannot rationally be said to have triumphed over any thing. I invited you to explain to us where the cross fits in and what happened at Calvary, but you absolutely have not told us. So, I renew the invitation; tell us what *did* happen at the cross?

Don Gives Away the Debate

We asked Don two questions at the end of our first negative. Since the cross has come up, we might as well address this now, before moving on to Don’s argument about Isaiah. Here are the questions: 1) Did the cross cancel the debt of sin under the law? 2) Does the cross (grace) triumph over law, or did law have to be removed for man to be justified? I found Don’s answer to the second question particularly

interesting: Here, in pertinent part, is what Don said: “Response: The cross did triumph over law.”

Don affirms that the cross triumphed over the law! Good, that is the correct answer. But if the cross triumphed over the law, how could the law continue to hold the saints under bondage until AD 70? Fair question, right? If the Persians triumphed over the Babylonians, would Babylon still have power over the nations of its former empire? No, of course not, Persia would! If the Greeks triumphed over the Persians, would the Persians still have power over the nations of its former empire? No, of course not, the Greeks would! Yet, Don says the cross triumphed over the law, but the law still had power to keep the saints under condemnation until AD 70! Don, please explain to us how the cross can triumph over the law and not triumph over the law at the same time!

Dear reader, Don has given away the debate. Don argues that the law was valid, binding, and obligatory until AD 70. He argues that not until the law was taken out of the way in AD 70 could the saints be justified. Yet, here he admits the cross triumphed over the law! SOME TRIUMPH! A triumph that leaves the adversary still holding all the power! A triumph in which all the captives are still under the enemy’s command! But that is not what Paul said. NO! Paul said that *“When he ascended he led captivity captive”* (Eph. 4:8). Notice that Christ’s ascension was not to make the atonement and then return a second time to release the captives as my brother says. NO! Jesus led the captives of sin in triumph *at his ascension!* In other words, the victory was already won and the atonement complete! The triumphal parade was at the ascension, not the second coming! (Some affirm that the reference here is to the souls in Hades, but we do not share their view. Hadean death was the last enemy and the resurrection was not until AD 70.) The imagery in Ephesians is similar to the time when the Amalekites raided Ziklag and captured David’s wives and children and those of the men who were with him. David went, conquered the Amalekites, and led the captives back again. (See II Sam. 30.) That is what Paul says Jesus did at his ascension; he led those formerly under dominion to sin in triumphal procession! The victory was at *Calvary*, the triumphal parade at the *ascension*. AD 70 was a total irrelevancy in terms of redeeming man from sin.

Don’s Boxes

In our first negative, we made the charge that Don could not produce even one verse that plainly states the saints were under the dominion of sin until AD 70. We put a box on a page for Don to fill with *any verse* he could find that plainly taught that the saints were under the debt of sin from and after the cross. Let the record reflect that Don could not produce even ONE VERSE! We produced dozens of verses that plainly teach that the saints were fully and freely justified from and after the cross. We noted the verb tenses, and that the perfect tense, showing completed action in the past, occurred with stunning frequency. We said that when it was our turn to be in the affirmative we could produce *pages of verses*. Don could not produce even one! Don pretended three times to fill the box *with arguments*, but he never once produced a single “BOOK, CHAPTER, AND VERSE.”

<p>Don’s Box No. 1 Verses?</p>

It pains me to point this out for Don’s sake, it really does. I find this very distasteful; this debate would be easier if Don were a stranger rather than a beloved brother and friend. But the cross is too important to allow my love for Don to prevent me from pointing out his utter inability to sustain his case with a single verse. How many debates have there been when one party could not produce even one verse to establish his case? Arguments there are in abundance; logical syllogisms grow on trees. But verses! That is the foundation of our teaching, not argument. Every error in Christendom is build upon argument, deduction, and syllogisms. We all understand the plain testimony of verses, but when men start building doctrine based upon deductions, look out! “If this, then that. And if that, then this, and this, and this!” Before you know it we wake up to find that we cannot have blood transfusions, celebrate birthdays, Christ’s Nativity, or, what is more serious, the cross has dropped out of our soteriology!

Imagine, if you will, a man who says “I want to affirm in debate that the world’s sin was atoned for when the Moabite king offered his son upon the wall” (II Kings 3:26, 27). A strange proposition to be sure,

but we accept the challenge. The man then argues for 14 pages why the Moabite's sacrifice of his son paid the world's debt of sin. Then he argues for 18 pages more. He uses all sorts of wonderful, mystifying syllogisms and logical arguments. He often seems very persuasive! But after all is said and done, he *never can and never does* produce even one verse to sustain his position. We on the other hand have pages and pages of verses saying that the debt of sin was paid in full at the cross; we have pages and pages of verses saying the law was fulfilled and abolished in Jesus' death. Our opponent has not one verse he can bring forward. Has he sustained his proposition? Would you be willing to accept his view when he cannot even produce one verse in his own support? Of course not. Yet that is what Don is asking you to do.

Since we have given Don one box and he could not produce a verse to put in it, perhaps there is no point in giving him a second box to fill. Even so, here it is. I do not do this to "rub Don's nose in it," but to help the scales fall from his eyes. Don, it is your position that the law was "valid, binding, and obligatory" until AD 70 and that being so, the saints were purportedly under its condemnation until that time. It is therefore essential to your position to show that the saints were under obligation to *keep and observe* the whole law until AD 70, including the animal sacrifices, dietary restrictions, circumcision, and laws against keeping company with Gentiles. This is the logical implication of your position, and it is what you expressly state over and over again in your books. Based upon Matt. 5:18, you say "*all the law was valid until none of the law was valid.*" Therefore we are giving you another box to fill. Please provide us with any verse, even one, that plainly and expressly states that the saints (Jewish or Christian) were *bound and obligated* to keep the ceremonial law, the dietary law, circumcision, the laws forbidding associating with Gentiles, or *any other law* announced and enjoined by Moses (exclusive of the moral law, laws against idolatry, and eating of blood, etc., which never have and never will be annulled). Do not evade or obfuscate by trying to fill the box with arguments, just give us BOOK, CHAPTER, AND VERSE, if you please.

**Don's Box No. 2
Verses?**

We predict that as before Don will be unable to bring forward even one verse that plainly teaches the Christians were obligated to keep the ordinances of the Torah. But if they were not obligated to keep the Torah, the Torah could not be valid or binding. And if the Torah was not valid or binding, then the saints most certainly could not be under its power or the debt of sin from and after the cross. Therefore, Don's proposition is lost and Covenant Eschatology falsified.

Don's Fail-Safe Question

Don made much ado about the question he asked at the end of his first affirmative. He whipped up a zinger of a question and thinks that there is no answer that can be given but that it must prove his case. Here is Don's question:

"If a law or covenant has been abrogated, are any of the provisions of that covenant, i.e. its mandates, its promises or penalties (positive or negative) still binding and valid (imposed)?

Don says, "My friend knows full well that to answer this question *directly and correctly* establishes that the Torah remained valid until AD 70!" If the Torah was valid until AD 70, Don should have no problem putting one verse, only one, in our box, should he? But since he will invariably fail to bring forward a verse, we can rest assured that his question can be correctly answered without giving away the debate. I answered Don's question. Here is my answer in pertinent part, including the part Don withheld (Don mentioned the "entirety" of my answer, but did not publish all of it):

"If a king made a covenant with another nation or kingdom that the latter would pay tribute, and the latter then broke that covenant, the former would be entitled to come and lay siege against the breaching kingdom. But isn't it true that in this case we are dealing, not with the abrogation of a covenant, but its fulfillment? Jesus did not come to abrogate, but to fulfill, and, having fulfilled, took out of the way the types and shadows pointing to his work on the cross,

and the sundry incidental laws related thereto. The New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old Testament, so whatever benefits were promised under the old find fulfillment in the new, including remission of sins and eternal life.

Did you notice that Don does not want to deal with the fact that the New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old Testament, that whatever was promised under the Old is fulfilled in the New? Don argues that Old must be fulfilled before the New can come! He says that if there is even one promise still unfulfilled, then the Old Law is still valid. He even says that the resurrection had to happen under the Old Law before it could pass away! Yes, he says that!

“The Old Covenant could not pass away until it all was fulfilled. The resurrection was a part of the Old Covenant, as Paul expressly says. Therefore, unless the resurrection has happened, the Old Law has not yet been taken away.” (*Elements*, p. 115)

So, based upon Don’s interpretation of Matt. 5:18, resurrection had to occur BEFORE the Old Testament passed away! Resurrection UNDER THE LAW? But there could be no resurrection without forgiveness you said, and no forgiveness until the law was taken away. Here is what you said in our exchange last summer: “You cannot logically affirm the fulfillment of the resurrection in AD 70... and not affirm the end of whatever law it was that held the condemning power over man.” So, which is it? In one place Don says that resurrection had to occur BEFORE the law was taken away, in another he argues resurrection could not happen UNTIL it was taken away. Which is it? Both cannot be true.

Does the law being fulfilled and thus abolished prevent God from executing wrath upon Jerusalem in AD 70? Don thinks it does. He argues that God could not execute the “quarrel of his covenant” (Leviticus 26:25, 26, 29-32) if the covenant was no longer valid and binding. Don says, “Kurt says the Torah legally *died* at the Cross. But, if Torah died at the Cross, and no longer had legal power, *how in the world could the provisions of Torah be imposed and fulfilled in the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70?*” Don assumes without proof that the quarrel of God’s

covenant means the covenant is still valid! Don assumes the very point to be proved!

Don, provisions of wrath recited in Leviticus are not proof the covenant is still valid when wrath is poured out. God called his covenant with Israel a marriage covenant (Jer. 2:1; 3:2; Ezek. 16:8). When God divorced Israel the covenant was broken, the marriage was ABOLISHED, NULLIFIED, NONEXISTANT. God, because of his promise to Abraham and his purpose to bring Christ into the world through Abraham’s seed, would renew the covenant by taking Israel back again for his wife, but while she was divorced the covenant was annulled. Did the fact the covenant was annulled stop God from punishing Israel and sending her into captivity in enemy lands? Of course not! A king makes a treaty with another king or kingdom. The terms say the latter will pay tribute; in exchange, the former covenants to protect and defend the latter. If the latter breaks the terms of the covenant, the former is certainly entitled to come and lay siege to the other kingdom. His making war in no way depends upon the continuing validity of the covenant. Just the opposite, it is because it is broken that the latter is entitled to make war! So with the Jews, they broke the covenant and God cast them away. They were no longer under his protection, but became his enemies. Hence, he came and avenged the violation (“quarrel”) of his covenant. Don says the very same thing himself:

“Here is the principle that that any destruction of Israel was proof that she was out of covenant relationship with Jehovah” (*Like Father, Like Son*, p. 175). “The old city had not only served its purpose, it had also become the enemy of God, by holding onto the Old Covenant” (*Ibid*, p. 193).

Thus, according to my brother, the very fact Israel was destroyed shows that the covenant was no longer valid! Yet, according to Don, God could not destroy Jerusalem unless the covenant was still in place! What a quandary Don has created for God! He cannot destroy the city unless the covenant is valid, but to destroy it the covenant must first be invalid! It is a good thing God does not subscribe to this logic and argumentation, or the Jews would be immune to wrath for there is no scenario according to Don that

permits God to act! But there is more! Don says the law was valid, binding and obligatory until AD 70. Yet, here we have Don telling us that in keeping the law Israel became God's enemy! So, God imposed the law until AD 70 per Don, but the Jews' obedience to what God imposed made them his enemies! I think we are beginning to get the picture that Don has involved himself in endless contradictions through Covenant Eschatology.

Don's Arguments from Isaiah

Don has several arguments from Isaiah. The first argument, the only one that really matters, is based upon Isa. 27:7-11. This passage is commonly (though not universally) believed to have been cited by Paul in Rom. 11:25-27. If Don cannot prove his point here, he cannot prove it anywhere and we will be free to pass on to other things. Don's argument goes like this: The salvation of Israel in Isa. 27:7-11 would be when God made all of the altar stones like chalk. But God made Israel's altar stones chalk in AD 70. Therefore, the salvation of Israel in Isa. 27:7-11 was in AD 70. Do you see the error in Don's reason? This argument is like the one we put forward about crows: "All crows are black. This bird is black. Therefore, this bird is a crow." The mistake in this syllogism is that it ignores or overlooks the fact that crows are not the only birds that are black! If the conclusion had been, "this bird MAYBE a crow" then it would at least be valid reasoning. But, like Don, it concludes with a positive identification where none is logically permitted or required. Don's argument assumes that "making the altar stones like chalk" refers to AD 70. He assumes the very point to be proved. And guess what? NOT ONE COMMENTATOR AGREES WITH HIM! Don proves the case for me himself. In his book *"Like Father, Like Son, On Clouds of Glory,"* Don makes use of his argument from Rom. 11:25-27 and Isaiah 27:7-11. Endnote 104, on page 89, states "*Many commentators believe this judgment refers to the Assyrian destruction of 721 B.C.*"

There you have it. Many commentators, indeed, every commentator I have ever read, considers this a prophecy of the coming national captivity under the Assyrians and Babylonians. The Pulpit Commentary states "Judah's chief smiters were Assyria and Babylon" (*in loc*). Homer Haley states, "The fruit or achievement of the severe judgment will be the

abolition of idolatry: through the judgment he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, pulverized and completely destroyed. Idolatry must be destroyed in Jacob as among the heathen...After the captivity, idolatry never appeared again among the people" (Homer Haley, Commentary on Isaiah, *in loc*). We could go on, but the result would be the same in the end. Nobody agrees with Don in applying Isa. 27:7-11 to AD 70. Here is a box for Don. We will ask him to produce any commentator (except Max King) that agrees with him that AD 70 is in view in Isa. 27:7-11.

Don's Box No. 3 Commentators?

In this case, Don may have more success. It is at least possible some commentator somewhere has once opined that Isa. 27:7-11 refers to AD 70. I don't think there is, but we'll let Don try. But even if he should find someone who agrees with him, that would no more prove the case than Don's belief about the passage does. The historical context of the passage is inescapable. In fact, the very verses that follow (vv. 12, 13) actually mention the re-gathering of the nation from Assyria and Egypt after the scattering, captivity, and destruction (see below)! Rome and AD 70 are nowhere in sight.

What about typological significance? Could there be a double meaning so that the "purging of Jacob's iniquity" looks ahead typologically to AD 70 and redemptive salvation from sin? NOT A CHANCE! The salvation Don is trying to prove in Rom. 11:25-27 is clearly redemptive; he says it is the atonement for sin that is completed and occurs when Jesus comes out of the Most Holy Place in AD 70. But the "purging" of Jacob's sin in Isa. 11:25-27 is not redemptive, but retributive justice! There is a huge difference! Redemptive salvation comes from Jesus' substitutionary death and atoning sacrifice. Retributive justice and purging of Jacob's sin was in punishment for iniquity, by annulling the covenant and sending the nation into captivity. Israel and Judah would "pay double" for their national sins (Isa. 40:2). When the 70-years captivity was fulfilled, God would then bring Judah and Israel back into their land and renew the covenant until it was done away

once and for all in the cross of Christ. Redemptive salvation simply is not part of Isaiah 27:7-11 and no amount of argument by Don can put it there. We hasten to point out that if redemptive salvation was somehow mysteriously wrought through retributive justice in AD 70, then national Israel should be restored, just like Isaiah promises! National Israel was re-gathered after the captivity in Assyrian and Babylon. If this is a type of AD 70, then Israel *must* be re-gathered after destruction by Rome. This is Premillennial Dispensationalism, not Preterism! If Don is correct, he has just won the debate for McArthur and Ice!

More from Isaiah

In Don's argument #1 – Isaiah 26-27 and the Salvation of "Israel," Don states, "*Kurt claims that Romans 11:26f predicts the salvation of individual Jews, via obedience to the gospel, throughout the entirety of the endless Christian age.*" Don then goes on to argue in his #2 that since God would make a "short work" on the earth and save only a remnant, that therefore I am wrong in saying Rom. 11:26 predicts the salvation of individual Jews throughout earth's continuing history. Don has one problem. ***I have never said any such thing!*** His claim is totally false. Don, produce the quote where I say this. You have set up a straw-man argument, innocently mistaking me I am sure, but a straw-man none the less. I agree with Don that the "short work" in Rom. 9:27-29 refers to national Israel. God gave the nation a 40 year grace period in which to obey the gospel, and then destroyed the nation for rejecting the Messiah and clinging to the law. However, I deny that Israel in Rom. 11:26 ("so all Israel shall be saved") refers to national Israel. Rather, it is true, spiritual Israel that is in view here.

Paul uses the imagery of a cultivated olive tree. Jesus is the root that sanctifies and sustains the whole. Unbelieving Jews are like branches broken off. Believing Gentiles are grafted into the tree in their place. Together, believing Jews and Gentiles constitute "true Israel." Paul thus concludes, "And so all Israel shall be saved." "So" here has the meaning of "in this way." That is, through the process of breaking off the unbelieving and grafting in Gentile believers, all spiritual Israel will be saved. Now, let us ask, Does the olive tree of God's faithful still

exist? Of course it does! Are people still being grafted into the tree, saved and sanctified by the "Root of Jesse"? Of course they are! Will true Israel ever cease to exist? No, of course not. As long as time continues, "in this manner, all Israel shall be saved." Nowhere at anytime did I say that national or ethnic Jews down through the ages would be saved or that Rom. 11:26 has them in view. They were cut off and the nation destroyed. Don's charge is reckless, and his argument is completely invalid.

Still More from Isaiah

What about Don's argument #3? In this case, Don argues that the resurrection of Isa. 26:19 was in AD 70 and therefore the coming of the Lord in Isa. 27:7-11 must be in AD 70. Don states: "The coming of the Lord to take away Israel's sin in Romans 11:26f is the coming of the Lord at his coming in judgment of Israel foretold by Isaiah 26-27, when He would call the dead—those scattered to the four winds-- to Him (i.e. the *resurrection*) by the sounding of the Great Trumpet (Isaiah 27:13)."

That is Don's major premise (notice his spiritualized resurrection). Here is his minor premise:

"Jesus said that the calling of the remnant, those scattered to the four winds— would be at his coming in judgment of Israel— at the sounding of the Great Trumpet— (Matthew 24:30-31) *the time of the resurrection per my friend Kurt Simmons— in AD 70.*"

Here is his conclusion:

"Therefore, the coming of the Lord to take away Israel's sin of Romans 11:26 was to be (it was) at the coming of the Lord in judgment of Israel— the time of the resurrection at the sounding of the Great Trumpet."

Do you spot the logical fallacies in this argument? First, Don assumes without proof that the coming of the Lord in Rom. 11:25-27 is in judgment upon Israel. He has no proof, he just asserts this as fact. Second, he asserts without proof that Rom. 11:25-27 equals the resurrection of Isa. 26. Don is building exegetical paradigms in the sky! He has not

established ANY CONNECTION between Rom. 11:25-27 and Isa. 26. NONE. He just asserts it! Third, he assumes Isa. 27:7-11 refers to AD 70. **Yet, we have already disproved this premise!** NOT ONE COMMENTATOR AGREES WITH HIM! For this argument to have ANY validity, Don must first find some commentator who agrees that Isa. 2:7-11 refers to AD 70. Don needs to put some references in the box first; otherwise he is building arguments upon unproved premises. The context of the passage is clearly the Assyrio-Babylonian captivity. The great trumpet is when God called them back from captivity, beginning with the decree of Cyrus in 539 BC:

“The great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the **land of Assyria** and the outcasts in the **land of Egypt**, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.” Isa. 27:13

Plainly, this is NOT AD 70! Roy Deaver once quipped, “Don Preston could find AD 70 in Genesis 1:1!” There was no malice in Brother Deaver’s comment. His point is valid. We must be careful not to let our hermeneutic *drive* our interpretation of scripture (and who hasn’t been guilty of that one time or another?). When we set out to prove something, we tend to press into our service passages that do not really teach what we employ them for. (This is especially true when we heap up deductions.) Don has done this very thing in the instant case. Don has completely ignored the plain language of the passage that establishes the historical context and has built his case on thin air. His major premise is totally unfounded. Isa. 27:7-11 is about the Assyrio-Babylonian captivity, not AD 70!

Don’s minor premise is also unfounded. The assumption underlying this premise is that the trumpet in Matt. 24 is the SAME TRUMPET in Isa. 27:13. But as we have just seen, Isa. 27:13 is specifically about the captivity in Assyria and Babylon! There is no evidence that can possibly make these the same trumpet. Trumpets were widely used in Israel to announce feasts and assemblies and holy convocations of all sorts, particularly the Jubilee, which seems to be the allusion here – a time of freedom from the Assyrio-Babylonian captivity. Trumpets were also used to announce battle and call

the nation to arms. That trumpets occur in both passages in no way proves the same events are in view. There was a gathering after the captivity, and there would be a gathering of the saints when the gospel was carried to the known world. There was also a gathering into the kingdom by martyrdom (I Thess. 4:1 et seq. cf. Matt. 3:12; 13:30; Rev. 14:13-16). Clearly, the gathering in Isa. 27:13 is NOT the same gathering as Matt. 24:30-31 any more than it is the same as the gathering by martyrdom under Nero! Don’s minor premise assumes the fact to be proved and is invalid. Since BOTH Don’s major premise and minor premise are invalid and false, his conclusion is false as well.

Entering the Most Holy Place

Since the topic of Don’s misrepresenting me has come up, we might as well take these next. Don argues that I said the saints could enter – actually and spatially – heaven (the Most Holy Place) from and after the cross. Don charges that in both of my books I affirm, quote: “that entrance into the MHP was not until AD 70. Now, he claims that the saints *could* enter the MHP prior to AD 70! It seems my friend has forgotten Revelation 15:8! Or, perhaps he has renounced his position on Revelation 15.” Don states “Kurt affirms that the saints did in fact enter into the MHP prior to AD 70!” Don then parades before the reader places where I have denied this very thing in the past and makes me seem to contradict myself. The problem with this argument is that **I never said any such thing!** I never said the saints entered heaven before AD 70! Don, produce the quote! You have misrepresented me to the reader and set up a straw-man argument. Don knows I do not believe the saints went to heaven before AD 70 and the general resurrection. I know he knows this because he says so himself. Here is his argument, cut and pasted from his second affirmative:

The souls in Hades could not enter heaven until they received the benefits of Christ’s atoning blood (Kurt Simmons, October, 2009– Is this true or false, Kurt?) But, the souls in Hades could not enter heaven until the resurrection in AD 70 (KS, November, 2009– True or False, Kurt?). Therefore, the souls in Hades did not receive the benefits of Christ’s atoning blood until AD 70.

Notice that Don puts question marks after his major and minor premises. By this Don admits that he knows I do not hold the view he alleges. He affirms one minute that I say the saints were actually entering the Most Holy Place, then he asks me if I believe it or not. If he has to ask if I believe this why did he assert moments before that I do? Yes, why? I know Don knows I do not believe and have never said the saints went to heaven before AD 70 because three sentences later he says so himself! *“Kurt believes that Hades was not destroyed until AD 70, and the souls in Hades did not enter their reward until AD 70.”*

There you have it! Don knows very well I have never taught, said, or believed that the saints went to heaven before AD 70 and says so himself. So, why does he frame the argument pretending he believes I have changed? Yes, why? Here is what I said. You the reader may be the judge.

“This is why the veil was “rent in twain” from top to bottom when Jesus died, showing that the way was *now open* and the atonement COMPLETE (Matt. 27:51). The Hebrew writer thus urges Christians to ENTER the presence of God within the Most Holy Place – before AD 70! (Heb. 10:19-22; cf. 6:19). In other words, the legal barrier separating men from God was totally removed in the cross, almost 40 years before AD 70.”

Now, did I ever say or even suggest that the saints entered heaven before AD 70? No! I said the HEBREW WRITER URGES Christians to ENTER! “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus” (Heb. 10:19). BOLDNESS TO ENTER! It is not I, but the HEBREW WRITER who told the saints to enter in! Don wrongly puts words into my mouth.

The Hebrews were alive on this side of eternity. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven (I Cor. 15:50). How then could they enter the holiest still being alive? Legally and covenantally, of course! Here is what I said in my commentary (the part Don withheld):

“Man is restored to the **legal presence** of God by the sacrifice of Christ and is given boldness to enter into that which is within the veil (Heb. 6:19; 10:19).”

There it is, dear reader! Man is restored to the LEGAL PRESENCE of God by the sacrifice of Christ. The Hebrew writer had just taught in the preceding chapter that under the Old Testament system the “way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest,” while as yet the first tabernacle had *legal standing* (Heb.9:8). The Jewish Christians were under persecution, and being pressured by Jewish authorities to turn back to the law (this proves, parenthetically, that they had left the law and it was no longer legally imposed!). The writer shows them the futility of that system to save. He urges them to persevere the persecution of unbelieving Jews and to forsake the temple ritual. Indeed, the ritual, which Don claims was still valid and imposed, stood in very denial of Christ’s atoning sacrifice and was abominated by God as an apostate form of worship.

“Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool, where is the house that ye build unto me?...He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog’s neck: he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine’s blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.” Isa. 66:1-3

The following verses in Isaiah talk about the persecution of the church and the coming of the Lord to destroy the city and temple (Isa. 66:5, 6, 15), the very destruction that would shortly overtake the Jews and was held out to encourage the suffering Christian population of Palestine. This is the salvation Jesus would bring when he appeared “a second time without sin unto salvation” (Heb. 9:28). He was not coming back to deal with sin; he did that when he died upon the cross! NO! He was coming back to put his enemies beneath his feet and to save his bride from her persecutors.

The Hebrew writer says that the blood of bulls and goats could not cleanse or make pure, but that they had been PERFECTED FOREVER by the sacrifice of Christ (v. 14), and should therefore “boldly enter” (legally and covenantally) the presence of God within the veil (v. 19). Don knows this is what this passage teaches but if he admits it, he forfeits his case because this passage PROVES that the way into the Holiest was opened in Jesus’ death and the saints were justified from sin long before AD 70.

Souls in Hades Justified by the Blood

Having set up his straw-man argument, Don concludes that “the souls in Hades did not receive the benefits of Christ’s atoning blood until AD 70.” My friend is wrong! The Hebrew writer says otherwise! He says that in the gospel they had come to “God the Judge of all and the spirits of just men made perfect” (Heb. 12:23). THE SPIRITS OF JUST MEN MADE PERFECT! How were these souls in Hades made perfect? By the “blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.” (v. 24). This same lesson is shown in Revelation where the souls under the altar are given WHITE ROBES and told to rest a little while until the number of martyrs had reached its fill (Rev. 6:9-11). Don, what part of “made perfect” do you deny?

This also dispenses with Don’s argument that if sins were atoned for at the cross, then the spirits in Hades should *then and there* have entered heaven. The Hebrew writer calls them the “spirits of just men MADE PERFECT.” The law could not make the dead souls or spirits in Hades “perfect,” so what did? Clearly, the blood of Christ, for it is the only thing that can! Why didn’t they go to heaven then? God told them to “rest a little space” until the full number of martyrs was reached, then they would all be taken to glory together! This is what the Hebrew writer means when he says “And these all, having obtained a good report through faith received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect” (Heb. 11:39, 40). The promised eternal inheritance was not achieved by the Old Testament worthies, because it was God’s purpose that they without us not be complete! Death was the LAST ENEMY because it was also the ULTIMATE ENEMY. Sin was defeated at the cross. The resurrection waited until it did for no

more reason than it pleased God that it should be the last enemy put beneath Jesus’ feet. Don’s argument that they were made to remain in Hades because they were not yet justified is erroneous.

The Sprinkling of Blood and the Atonement Ritual

Max King invented the doctrine that justification was incomplete and the saints remained under bondage to sin until AD 70. One of his arguments for this was the atonement ritual, claiming (without warrant) that until the High Priest emerged from the Most Holy Place the atonement for sin was incomplete. I learned this error from King and repeated it in my commentary on Revelation, but I repudiate it now. (Contrary to what Don says, my commentary on Daniel does *not* teach this error, as when I wrote that book I had already learned better.) The Hebrew writer says that the two courts of the temple or tabernacle answer the two covenants. The outer court, where the priests “stood daily” offering sacrifices that could never save from sin, answered the Old Testament. The Most Holy Place within the veil answered the New Testament. The scripture says that as long as the first tabernacle and covenant had legal standing (not physical standing) the way into God’s presence within the veil was foreclosed. (See Heb. 9:1-10.) As we have already seen, after the death of his Son, God abominated the continuing temple ritual as an apostate form of worship, perpetuated in defiance of Jesus’ priesthood and sacrifice. As we have also seen, first century Christians were already soteriologically perfected by the sacrifice of Christ and urged to “boldly enter” within the veil through Jesus’ blood. In the words of Paul “Ye are complete in him” (Col. 2:10).

Notwithstanding all this, Don argues that the temple ritual was valid, binding, and obligatory (imposed) until AD 70. He says redemption came *through*, not *at* the cross! Don thinks that Christ’s appearing “a second time without sin unto salvation” is to save from sin, even though the passage expressly disclaims this very thing! “Apart from sin” means “apart from the problem of sin” or “apart from sacrifice for sin.” Jesus triumphed over sin in his cross and was not coming to address this problem a second time! Don says redemption could not happen at the cross because the blood had to be carried into

heaven, and this he claims did not happen until the ascension. Even if this were true it would not help Don. The ascension was in AD 33, not AD 70. Thus, either way Don's argument can not carry him far enough. He can get from Calvary to the ascension, but not to AD 70! However, we do not believe that Jesus carried his blood into heaven at his ascension. Rather, we believe that the blood was *received* by God within the veil at Jesus' death. This is why the veil was "rent in twain" when the Lord died (Matt. 27:51; Mk. 15:37). If this is not what the meaning of happened, then let Don explain what is. How he can argue that Christians were excluded from God's legal and covenantal presence within the veil until AD 70 is beyond me. Don, the Hebrew writer urges Christians to enter into the holiest. What does he mean? Please tell us.

We made the point in our first negative that the High Priest had to enter the Most Holy Place twice, once for himself and once for the sins of the people (Lev. 16:14, 15). Don, misrepresenting me yet a *third time* claims I said Jesus entered the Most Holy Place at his death. Did I ever say such a thing? Don, produce the quote! Here is what I wrote. You the reader be the judge:

We believe that the typology of sprinkling the blood before the Mercy Seat was fulfilled when Jesus died. The Hebrew writer agrees, saying that Jesus opened the way into the Most Holy Place through his FLESH (Heb. 10:20). That is, in his death Jesus pierced the legal veil separating man from God. This is why the veil was "rent in twain" from top to bottom when Jesus died, showing that the way was *now open* and the atonement COMPLETE (Matt. 27:51).

Did I say Jesus went into heaven? Of course not. I said Jesus pierced the LEGAL VEIL when he died. Does that mean Jesus personally went to heaven? No, of course not, and no reasonable person would draw that meaning from what I said. I am sure Don has a good explanation for repeatedly misrepresenting me to the reader, and we will look for him to explain in his next affirmative. Meanwhile, let us hasten on.

Was our observation that the High Priest had to enter twice amiss of the mark? Not at all! Jesus died a sinner's death. "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3:13). "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6). This is why Jesus cried out upon the cross "Why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46). Bearing our sins upon the tree, the veil of separation came between Jesus and the Father and the horror of this isolation caused him to exclaim. Jesus could not carry his blood into the Holiest at his death because he was under imputation of sin. His entrance the first time therefore was *by and in* his own blood. "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. 9:12). ENTERED BY HIS BLOOD. Not "with" but "by" his blood! Jesus' blood entered at his death, he did not! Christ died a (righteous) sinner's death and descended to Hades, but his blood was received by God within the veil, terminating the legal separation of man (including Christ) from God, making the reconciliation. Hence, God himself tore the veil in two, from top to bottom, showing the act was God's, not man's.

When Jesus entered heaven at his ascension, it was not to carry his blood there. NO! The atonement was already complete! We *never*, ever see an image of Christ carrying his blood into heaven nor are we shown images of him standing sprinkling his blood. Never! What we see instead is that Jesus receives the coronation as King and sits down at God's right hand! What is the significance of Jesus' sitting down? The Hebrew writer makes very clear that it shows the atonement is *complete*. The priests "stood daily" offering sacrifices, but Jesus "sat down."

"Every priest **standeth daily** ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But his man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, **sat down** on the right had of God, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he **hath perfected for ever** them that are sanctified." Heb. 10:11-14.

Notice the verb tenses here. Don, what part of "perfected for ever" do you deny? Don, did the High Priest sit down in the Most Holy Place within the

temple? Why is Jesus then shown seated and not shown standing sprinkling his blood? Please explain. But just to be sure there is no misunderstanding and that the atonement was complete before AD 70, Paul states

“For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.” Rom. 5:10, 11

Notice the verb tenses. “WERE RECONCILED,” “BEING RECONCILED,” HAVE NOW RECEIVED THE ATONEMENT.” Don, what part of “now received” do you deny? You say the atonement was not complete until AD 70. Paul says otherwise. Please reconcile these claims.

The Resurrection of Jesus: God’s Objective Proof that Atonement was Complete

The quote above states we were reconciled by Jesus’ death, and saved by his life. What does this signify? What does he mean “saved by his life”? Simply this, Jesus’ resurrection and ascension are God’s objective proof that the promises were all fulfilled. *“And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again” (Acts 13:32, 33).* Jesus died a sinner’s death upon the tree. “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin” (II Cor. 5:21). *The bonds and fetters of sin having been clasped upon Christ, Jesus was as much under the law’s condemnation as any man, and therefore could not be raised and enter the presence of God in heaven unless and until he was justified from the sin imputed unto him by God on our behalf.* His resurrection therefore is God’s testimony that the sacrifice was *accepted*, the law *satisfied* (fulfilled), the debt of sin *paid*, its power *broken*, and the atonement *complete!* This is why Paul says Jesus was “delivered for our offenses, but raised for our justification” (Rom. 5:14). In raising Jesus, God showed that man was now justified. In declaring the debt of sin paid and freeing Jesus from its power, God freed all who come to Christ! Hence, Paul says “If Christ be not raised,

your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins” (I Cor. 15:17). But Christ was raised, therefore we are NOT in our sins, nor were any of the saints, living or dead, from and after the cross. To deny the saints were fully justified before AD 70, Don would have to put Jesus back in the grave.

Validity of the Law and the Time of Reformation

In my first negative, I showed how Don says the ministry of the Spirit marked the time of transformation following the cross. I noted that “transformation” is identical to “reformation” and that, therefore, the time of reformation mentioned by the writer of Hebrews was marked by the ministry of the Spirit following the cross. Don, misrepresenting me a *fourth time* (count them, four!), mocks and ridicules my “attempt at logic” saying that I argued that the time of reformation *concluded* at the cross. Yet, I did not say the time of reformation concluded at the cross, I said it *began* there. Don again falsely puts words into my mouth. Here is a “cut and paste” from his second affirmative: You be the judge what I said:

The ceremonial law was imposed until the time of reformation.

The time of reformation was marked by the ministry of the Spirit.

But the ministry of the Spirit began immediately following the cross.

Therefore, the ceremonial law was imposed only until the cross [when the transforming ministry of the spirit began]

I have added the bracketed information to make the syllogism more complete, even though it is not necessary to be correct. Recall that I equate the transforming work of the Spirit with the time of reformation. Although the law was terminated at the cross and the gospel was ratified and came into full force and effect, there was a period and process of transformation as the doctrine of the New Testament was revealed and the canon of scripture reduced to writing. Now here is what Don says I said:

“So, the time of reformation was not completed when the Spirit was given, as Kurt claims.”

Did I claim the time of reformation was “completed” when the Spirit was given? Did I not say it *began* when the Spirit was given? Don even quotes me “When the gifts ceased, the time of reformation was over, not begun.” Thus, I say the time of reformation was *marked* by the gifts of the Spirit (though in reality it began at the cross, the gift of the Spirit was merely the objective evidence of that fact). When the gifts of the Spirit ceased, the time of reformation was complete and not before. How can Don claim I said the time of reformation was “complete” when the Spirit was given? Don has misrepresented me again. At least he is consistent!

But while I say the time of reformation began with the cross and outpouring of the Spirit, Don says that the time of reformation began when the gifts of the Spirit ceased! The gifts had ceased by AD 70, yet that is when Don says the time of reformation started up. How can that be? Did the Protestant Reformation begin when the transforming work Luther and others was finished? NO! The Reformation began when the work of change and transformation began, not when it was complete. Don has it backward! But that the law was invalidated by the cross, that it was NOT valid when Hebrews was composed, and that the time of reformation was then and there a present fact virtually all commentators agree. Regarding Heb. 9:9, Franz Delitzsch (Epistle to the Hebrews, 1882) states:

“For though the present tense, *prospherontai*, certainly implies the continuance of the Levitical sacrifices in the writer’s own time, it is certain that he regarded them as *no longer having any validity*. The Levitical priesthood was now *virtually abolished*, and its symbolical office as *no more*.” (Emphasis added.)

Regarding Heb. 8:13 (“that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away”), Delitzsch states:

“The temple service, though to continue it may be a few years longer in **outward**

splendour, is only a bed of state, on which a **lifeless corpse** is lying.”

Regarding Heb. 9:9, Hagner (New International Biblical Commentary, 1983, 1990) states (emphasis added):

“It is finally to be stressed that these regulations are only temporary, applying (lit. “being imposed”) only until the time of the new order. It is clear from what he has already written that our author regards that new order as **already existing**. The time of fulfillment has **already come** through the work of Christ. If this is true, then the whole levitical system and Mosaic legislation upon which it rests has **come to an end**. This conclusion is indeed inescapable given the conclusions drawn in 8:13...The Old covenant stipulations are displaced when the new covenant with its new order comes into existence...**The new era, the time of reformation and fulfillment, has arrived.**”

II Peter & the Transformation of Christ

Don asked that I respond to his argument about the transfiguration. I consider this one of his weaker arguments and was not going to bother answering it. However, since I have a little space left here at the end, I will answer it briefly (we had agreed to a 14 page limit; Don took 17, so I suppose I am entitled to do the same). Don argues that Peter appeals to the transfiguration of Christ as proof of his imminent return. “For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made know unto the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty; etc” (II Pet. 1:16-18). Don argues that the transfiguration is, therefore, a vision of the second coming. But as Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus on the mount, the transfiguration is also a vision of the end of the Mosaic Covenant. Don thus concludes, “If the Mosaic Covenant was abrogated at the cross, as Kurt claims, then *the Transfiguration should have been a vision of the cross*. But, the Transfiguration was patently not a vision of the cross.”

Dear reader, do you see the second coming in the transfiguration? Do you see Jerusalem besieged, or

the legions of Vespasian and Titus? Do you see the temple burning? What about the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream? Do you see Christ striking Rome in the year of Four Emperors? What about the destruction of the fourth beast of Daniel, or the beast of Revelation 13? Do you see any of this in the transfiguration of Christ? No, of course you don't. These are the things that we are taught by scripture that the second coming consisted in. Yet, none of them are in the transfiguration, not even one. But the cross that Don says is not there...look again!

“And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.”

There it is! Don says that the transfiguration is about the end of the Mosaic covenant and that it should therefore be impressed with images of that event. For Don, that means the second coming. But is the second coming anywhere in the transfiguration? No, of course not. Is the cross present, yes! **“They spake of Jesus' decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.”** Jesus was going to Jerusalem to die upon a Roman cross.

At the cross, the Savior bore our iniquity.
At the cross, God heaped upon him the sins of the world.
At the cross, the redeeming blood the Lamb was shed.
At the cross, the debt of sin was paid and blotted out.
At the cross, the handwriting of ordinances that was against us was taken out of the way.
At the cross, Jesus triumphed over the law.
At the cross, the law was fulfilled.
At the cross, Jesus cried out “It is finished!”
At the cross, the veil was rent in twain.

At the cross, not AD 70! The cross, YES, AD 70, NO!

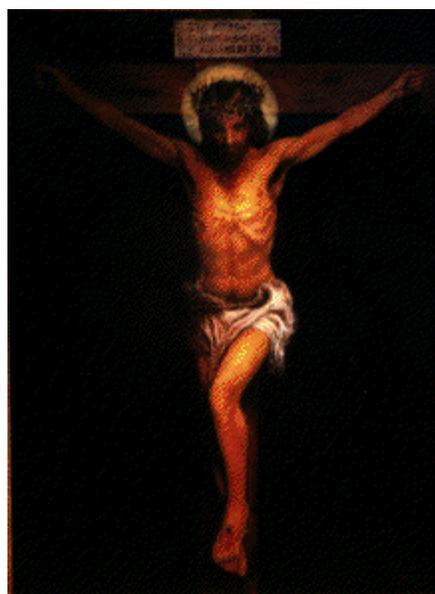
Conclusion

- Don cannot produce a single commentator who agrees that Isa. 27:7-11 refers to AD 70
- Don cannot produce a single verse that plainly states or teaches the saints were

under the debt of sin from and after the cross.

- Don cannot produce a single verse that plainly states or teaches the law was valid, binding, and obligatory until AD 70.
- Don cannot produce a single verse that plainly states or teaches that the saints were obligated to keep the law until AD 70.
- Don cannot produce a single verse that plainly states or teaches justification occurred in AD 70.

Don needs to concede the debate. Don is a great arguer, but the verses just are not there. Don should renounce “Covenant Eschatology” as a cross-denying doctrine that has served as a font and source of Universalism among Preterists. I did it; he can too.



“God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ” Gal. 6:14