

A Summary of Inmillennialism

by Mike Rogers

Introduction

This paper summarizes the development of inmillennialism, a framework for the interpretation of biblical prophecy.

The existing prophetic models—historic premillennialism, dispensational premillennialism, postmillennialism, and amillennialism—are inadequate. They do not explain the Bible’s entire prophetic message.

One problem involves prophetic time statements. For example, Jesus said, “There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom” (Matt 16:28). And, he placed his *parousia*—which current prophetic models call his *second coming*—in his generation (Matt 24:3, 27, 34, 37, 39). Such statements present problems for the current frameworks.

Atheists attack Christianity at this point. For example, Bertrand Russell’s first objection to Christianity involved Matt 16:28. Jesus failed to return as he predicted. So, he was not divine.¹

Christian writers sometimes say the same things about passages like this. The “*prediction was not fulfilled*, and later Christians found it necessary to explain that it was metaphorical and had been fulfilled at Pentecost.”² “*The prediction did not happen*, requiring clarification or even revision.”³ These statements destroy the inspiration of Scripture (2 Tim 3:16).

Conservative writers wish to avoid such conclusions, but the available prophetic models fail them. These writers have invented questionable interpretive devices to help explain these time statements. *Elastic time* comes from a misuse of Peter’s teachings. Yes, “one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (2 Pet 3:8). But, this truth does not allow us to dismiss difficult time statements. *Dual fulfillment* also comes into play. A prophecy constrained by a clear time statement can, if needed, have two or more fulfillments. At least one of them will fit the writer’s prophetic system. *Prophetic perspective* can also help. Using it, commentators put prophecies with imminent timestamps in the distant future. They only

1. Bertrand Russell, *Why I Am Not a Christian: And Other Essays on Religion and Related Subjects*, trans. Paul Edwards (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1957).

2. Sherman E. Johnson, “The Gospel According to St. Matthew,” in *The Interpreter’s Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (Nashville: Abingdon, 1951), 457. Emphasis added.

3. Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 435. Emphasis added.

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appeared near to the prophet because he could not see intervening periods. Users of these devices do not explain the parameters that govern their use. Their chief criterion seems to be, “when all else fails, use these.”

The current prophetic models resemble Ptolemy’s geocentric model of the solar system. The results it produced kept it alive for more than a millennium. But, its fundamental flaw—the wrong center—created problems. Discrepancies between its predictions and actual observations accumulated. The system required corrective devices to account for these differences. Ptolemaic astronomers invented *epicycles*, “*eccentric*” *positions*, and *equants*. They needed them to explain the phenomena. None of these contrivances were intuitive. None came from observations. The astronomers invented them to make a flawed system viable. *Elastic time*, *dual fulfillment*, and *prophetic perspective* are their prophetic equivalents.

Copernicus challenged the prevailing astronomical model. He presented a simple, intuitive, and elegant model. It required no corrective devices. Copernicus’s major challenge was the monumental shift in perspective his system required.

Like astronomers needed heliocentricity, Christians need a new prophetic framework. Our existing options do not explain the Scriptural phenomena. I am not the theological equal to Copernicus. Still, I wish to present inmillennialism as a more satisfactory prophetic system. It explains Scripture better than the existing options, including the difficult time statements. Like the Copernican model, it needs no corrective devices.

The major challenge for inmillennialism is the shift in prophetic perspective it requires. My justification for making this shift follows.

Method

Here are assumptions built into my method. *Authority*. I assume the verbal, plenary inspiration of Scripture (2 Tim 3:16). The Bible is God-breathed and authoritative. “The Old Testament in Hebrew, and the New Testament in Greek . . . [are] immediately inspired by God. . . . In all controversies of religion, the church is finally to appeal to them.”⁴

4. *The Baptist Confession of Faith & the Baptist Catechism* (Birmingham, AL: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2010), 1:8.

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Hermeneutics. Authorial intent—human and divine—is critical to the proper understanding of a passage. Context is the most important factor in determining that intent. Previous usage often determines the meaning of prophetic images.

Perspicuity. God intends for his people to understand the Scriptures. He hid some mysteries until the Messianic Age. In the New Testament, he revealed them “unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit” (Eph 3:5). Some things are difficult to decipher (2 Pet 3:16). Yet with study and the illumination of the Holy Spirit we can rightly divide the word of truth (2 Tim 2:15). Understanding prophecy is possible.

The analogy of faith. To discover the prophetic model built into Scripture, we must risk something. We must acknowledge our preconceptions and biases. A text’s meaning cannot rest on its conformity to our previous assumptions. Scripture must interpret Scripture and tradition must give way to the Word of God.

Beginning points. Inmillennialism rests on two passages, the Olivet Discourse and First Corinthians 15. The reasons for this are few and simple.

Paul said, “the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations . . . now is made manifest to his saints” (Col 1:26). We begin in the New Testament because it reveals the mystery.

The Olivet Discourse (Matt 24–25; Mark 13; Luke 21:5–36) is our starting point. It is the second longest prophetic passage in the New Testament. The longest, Revelation, is not best because of its challenging signs (Rev 1:1). The Olivet Discourse contains few such signs (e.g., Matt 24:29). It comprises clear declarative statements. This encourages us to start our prophetic model here.

The Olivet Discourse accounts for the last days of the Mosaic Age, the generation before the Temple’s fall. These were also the first days of the Messianic Age. First Corinthians 15 connects events during the last days of the Mosaic Age to the end of the Messianic Age. Specifically, it connects the resurrection of Christ to the final resurrection. This fact allows us to extend our model to the end of history. This chapter also comprises clear declarative statements.

These two passages provide the basis of inmillennialism. Other passages provide details, but do not alter the model.

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The Olivet Discourse

We will use Matthew as our primary account of the Olivet Discourse. It is longer and more structured than the versions in Mark and Luke. Here is Matthew's chiastic structure:

- A. Exhortation: observe!—the Temple will be destroyed (Matt 24:1–2).
- B. *When* question: what will be the time? (Matt 24:3a)
- C. *Sign* question: what will be the sign? (Matt 24:3b)
- C.* *Sign* answer: the signs of associated events, symbols (Matt 24:4–31)
- B.* *When* answer: this is the time (Matt 24:32–36)
- A.* Exhortation: observe! (Matt 24:37–25:46); watch! (Matt 24:42, 43; 25:13)

The Discourse begins with Jesus's prophecy of the Temple's fall. The disciples ask questions about this event. Jesus responds. No other subject enters the discussion.

Most interpreters disagree with this assessment. They find the end of the cosmos in the Olivet Discourse. This is a mistake generated by assumptions in their prophetic frameworks.

The following paragraphs will show everything in the Olivet Discourse pertains to the Temple's fall.

The Opening Exhortation

“And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down” (Matt 24:1–2).

A few hours earlier, Jesus had foretold the Temple's desolation in his generation (Matt 23:36, 39). “This the disciples observing, and being intent on the outward splendour, and worldly grandeur of it, were concerned that so beautiful a structure should be deserted; and almost thought it incredible, that so strong, and firm a building could be destroyed.”⁵ When the disciples

5. John Gill, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, of *The Baptist Commentary Series*, (Paris, AR: The Baptist Standard Bearer, 1989), 7:284.

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called Jesus’s attention to the physical structure, he reiterated the prophecy. Not one Temple-stone would be left upon another.

The Disciples’ Questions

The disciples asked a *when* question about Jesus’s prophecy. Matthew, Mark, and Luke use similar words. “And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, *when shall these things be?*” (Matt 24:3). “Tell us, *when shall these things be?*” (Mark 13:4). “And they asked him, saying, Master, but *when shall these things be?*” (Luke 21:7).

“These things” in this question refers to the events surrounding the Temple’s fall. The text gives no sign they were thinking of anything else.

The disciples also asked a *sign* question. It involved the same subject as their *when* question. Mark and Luke make this clear. “Tell us . . . what shall be *the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?*” (Mark 13:4). “And they asked him . . . *what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?*” (Luke 21:7). “These things” means the Temple’s desolation. There is no shift of topic.

Matthew gives the *sign* question in two parts. The disciples ask for “the *sign* of thy coming (Gk. *parousia*)” and “the *sign* . . . of the end of the world (Gk. *aiōn*)?” (Matt 24:3). Young’s Literal Translation (YLT) has: “what is the sign of thy *presence*, and of the full end of the *age?*” (Matt 24:3).

The following table summarizes the subject of the disciples’ two questions.

Gospel Account	<i>When</i> Question	<i>Sign</i> Question
Mark	“These things”	“These things”
Luke	“These things”	“These things”
Matthew	“These things”	“End of the age,” “ <i>Parousia</i> ”

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Inmillennialism teaches the subject is the same in each instance. Matthew's *sign* question focused on the *results* of the Temple's fall. The disciples associated the Temple's demise with both the Lord's "*parousia*" (presence) and the "end of the age." They were right to do so. Jesus did not correct their question, nor the assumptions built into it.

This explanation differs from that of the existing prophetic frameworks. To justify it, let's begin with the "end of the age," since it is less controversial than the "*parousia*."

The Sign of the End of the Age

The disciples connected the Temple's fall with the end of an age. We should remember how they viewed history. "The Jews divided history into 'the present age' and 'the age to come.' They expected their Messiah to usher in the age to come or the Messianic age. . . . The early Christians accepted Jesus as the Messiah; therefore, they believed that he ushered in the age to come and settled the doom of the old."⁶

The Temple was the preeminent symbol of the pre-Messianic, or Mosaic Age. The disciples knew the prophecies about the daily sacrifices ceasing forever (e.g., Dan 9:26–27; 12:11). They surmised that the Temple's destruction would fulfill those prophecies. There was no promise of restoration for the desolation Jesus foretold (Matt 24:15).

The disciples were grappling with the implications of Jesus's prophecy. If the Temple fell, the Mosaic age would end. They asked for a sign related to "the full end of the age" in which they were living. The "these things" of which Jesus spoke would end the Mosaic Age. There is no need to charge the disciples with confusion. Their question did not introduce another topic.

The Sign of Jesus's Parousia

The end of the Mosaic Age implied the beginning of the Messianic Age. The disciples understood the prophecies associated with the new age. Jesus had taught them for three and a half years. He had instructed them to "preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt 10:7). The disciples knew the transition to the Messianic Age was underway.

6. Ray Frank Robbins, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Nashville: Broadman, 1975), 222.

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They knew about God’s presence with Israel in the Mosaic Age. God had said, “I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God” (Exod 29:45). They also knew God’s presence in the Messianic Age would be more glorious. His promise was, “My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. . . . And the name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there” (Ezek 48:27, 35; cp. Jer 31:33; et al.).

This accounts for the disciples’ use of the word *parousia* in Matt 24:3. “Parousia literally signifies ‘a being with,’ ‘a presence.’ Not infrequently it is so rendered. *It thus denotes a state, not an action. We never read of a parousia to, always of a parousia with.*”⁷ It means “*the state of being present at a place, presence;*”⁸ “to be present.”⁹ The “state” of interest to the disciples was the Messianic age that would replace the Mosaic age. Jesus’s *presence* would be with them when as few as two or three of them gathered in his name (Matt 18:20).

Antonyms often help clarify word meanings. The opposite of *parousia* is not “going” as opposed to “coming,” but “absence” versus “presence.” Paul shows this by placing his “presence” (*parousia*) in opposition to his “absence” (*apousia*; Phil 2:12). His contrast was not between two point-in-time verbs—“coming” and “going”—but between two states of being designated by the nouns “presence” and “absence.” This conforms well to what Milton Terry says: “The word [*parousia*] . . . means presence as opposed to absence.”¹⁰

Some literal translations of the Scriptures recognize this definition. They translate *parousia* as “presence.” The McReynolds English Interlinear supplies “presence” for every occurrence of *parousia*. “The Revised Version, in every instance where it does not put *presence*

7. W. E. Vine, *Collected Writings of W. E. Vine*, (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1996), 5:149. Emphasis added.

8. Frederick W. Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 780. Emphasis added.

9. Albrecht Oepke, “Παρουσία κτλ,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-76), 5:859.

10. Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Apocalypics: A Study of the Most Notable Revelations of God and of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 246.

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into the text as the representative of *parousia*, inserts the marginal note, ‘Gr. *presence*,’ thus affirming that such is its real meaning.”¹¹

The word *parousia* accounts for God’s presence with his people during the Messianic Age. W. E. Vine says,

Cramer quotes some suggestive words from Ewald to the effect that the Parousia of Christ corresponds perfectly with the Shekinah of God in the Old Testament. For him also the doctrine of the Coming of Christ is obscured because he attaches a meaning to *parousia* which does not in fact belong to it. It seems too obvious to say that the usage of the word should regulate the theology, and not the theology prescribe the meaning of the word. Yet the neglect of the simple law of exegesis is responsible for some at least of the confusion into which the Hope of the Gospel has been thrown in the minds of many Christians.¹²

When the Temple fell, Christ’s *parousia* (presence) had replaced the Old Testament Shekinah.

This word can represent the reign of a ruler. “In Greece a new era was reckoned from the *parousia* of Hadrian, and special advent coins were struck, in various places to commemorate the *parousia* of an emperor.”¹³ In the Olivet Discourse, *parousia* represents the new era of Christ’s reign during the Messianic Age. This is the long-anticipated, new-covenant arrival and “presence” of God with his people. This well-documented meaning fits the disciples’ question and Jesus’s response.

This understanding of *parousia* is a distinguishing mark of inmillennialism. The existing prophetic frameworks insist on translating *parousia* as “coming.” As we said above, this creates problems. Jesus associated his *parousia* with the Temple’s destruction (Matt 24:3, 27, 37, 39). The apostles linked it to the bodily resurrection at the end of the Messianic Age (e.g., 1 Cor

11. Israel P. Warren, *The Parousia: A Critical Study of the Scripture Doctrines of Christ’s Coming; His Reign as King; the Resurrection of the Dead; and the General Judgment* (Portland, ME: Hoyt, Fogg & Dunham, 1884), 24–25.

12. Vine, “Writings,” 5:149n.

13. Georg Braumann, “*Παρουσία*,” in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 2:898.

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15:23). A punctiliar meaning for *parousia*—such as the “coming” of most translations—will not allow both to be true.

The solution is to allow *parousia* to represent a state of being. It signifies Christ’s *presence* with his church during the Messianic Age. It includes the Temple’s fall and the resurrection. The disciples understood this and asked an appropriate *sign* question. Paraphrasing, we can say they requested signs of Jesus’s Messianic-Age *presence* and the end of the Mosaic Age (Matt 24:3).

A failure to recognize the significance of the disciples’ sign question in Matthew will lead us to a faulty prophetic framework. Their question in Matthew has the same subject as it does in Mark and Luke.

Nothing in the disciples’ *when* and *sign* questions shows they were thinking of another subject. They wanted to know about the Temple’s fall, not the end of history.

Jesus’s Answers

Jesus answered the disciples’ questions. He did not embed revelations about a different subject. We do not need special interpretive devices—like *elastic time*, *dual fulfillment*, or *prophetic perspective*—to understand his responses.

Answers to the Sign Question

We will put Jesus’s *signs* into four sets. The *first* set of signs (Matt 24:4–8) characterized the period between the Olivet Discourse and the Temple’s destruction. These signs were *not* signs of the end of the (Mosaic) age. They would happen, “but the end is not yet” (Matt 24:6).

The *second* set of signs (Matt 24:9–14) affected the disciples’ ministry during this period. The New Testament shows they suffered Jewish persecution (Matt 24:9; cp. Luke 21:12; Acts 9:23; 12:3, 11; 13:45; *passim*). It confirms they saw the apostasy Jesus predicted (Matt 24:10–13; cp. 2 Tim 1:15). And, it shows they preached the gospel to all nations (Matt 24:14; cp. Rom 16:26, et al.).

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Jesus's *third* set of signs described events closer to the Temple's fall (Matt 24:15–26). They included the “great tribulation” (Matt 24:21). The New Testament does not show the fulfillment of these signs, but reliable historians (Josephus, et al.) confirm they occurred.

Roman armies invaded the land of Israel and brought 3-1/2 years of “great tribulation” (AD 66–70).¹⁴ They compassed Jerusalem as Jesus predicted (Luke 21:20). This fulfilled his abomination of desolation prophecy (Matt 24:15–20). The Lord had told his disciples how to escape this devastation (Matt 24:22–26). Josephus describes the events that allowed them to obey his commands.¹⁵ William Whiston, the translator of Josephus's works, says the “Jewish Christians fled to the mountains of Perea, and escaped this destruction.”¹⁶

Jesus used the superlative degree but this does not mean he changed subjects. He said the “great tribulation” would be “such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matt 24:21). Jesus's “language . . . is appropriated in substance from Dan xii, 1, and may be regarded as hyperbolic.”¹⁷

E. W. Bullinger defined hyperbole as a figure of speech where “more is said than is meant to be literally understood, in order to heighten the sense.”¹⁸ Jesus did not expect his hearers to understand him literally.

Such hyperbolic language is a standard prophetic tool. Speaking of God's judgment in his day, Joel says, “the day of the LORD is coming; it is near, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness there is spread upon the mountains a great and powerful people; *their like has never been before, nor will be again after them through the years of all generations.*”¹⁹ (Joel 2:1–2, ESV; emphasis added)

Moses described the suffering that God would bring in the Exodus. “There shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, *such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more*” (Exod 11:6).

14. Flavius Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, trans. William Whiston (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1974).

15. Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, 2:19:7.

16. Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, 2:19:6, note.

17. Terry, *Biblical Apocalypics*, 235.

18. E. W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible Explained and Illustrated* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1968), 423.

19. The time indicator reads, literally, “till the years of generation and generation” (YLT).

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Jesus’s use of hyperbole was fitting. The Jews suffered to an almost indescribable degree. Josephus provided an eyewitness account of what happened when the Roman armies destroyed the Temple in AD 70. He described the massacres—Jew on Jew, and Roman on Jew—in great detail. He used almost the same language Jesus had used forty years earlier:

It is therefore impossible to go distinctly over every instance of these men’s iniquity. I shall therefore speak my mind here at once briefly:—That neither did any other city ever suffer such miseries, nor did any age ever breed a generation more fruitful in wickedness that this was, from the beginning of the world.²⁰

Jesus did not mean the “great tribulation” would statistically exceed all other catastrophes. He was using a recognized literary tool to describe suffering in the highest degree. His use of hyperbole does not show he has changed subjects. He is still giving the signs the disciples requested about “these things.” By ignoring hyperbole, existing prophetic models make Scripture contradict itself. There cannot be multiple events that produce the greatest suffering in history.

The signs in Jesus’s *fourth* set (Matt 24:27–31) focus on the Temple’s fall. They show the covenant significance of this event through standard prophetic imagery. The prophets used *lightning* (Matt 24:27) to portray God’s judgment against his enemies. When God judged Egypt, the voice of his “thunder was in the heaven: the *lightnings lightened the world*: the earth trembled and shook” (Psa 77:18; emphasis added). David used this imagery to describe his deliverance from Saul’s men. God “sent out arrows, and scattered them; *lightning*, and discomfited them” (2 Sam 22:15; emphasis added. Cp. Psa 18:14). In the Olivet Discourse, Jesus applied this imagery to God’s judgment of the Temple.

This judgment would end the Mosaic Age and establish the *parousia* (presence) of Christ during the Messianic Age (Matt 24:27). This sign reflects the disciples’ original question—“what shall be the sign of thy *parousia*?” (Matt 24:3). The traditional view of existing prophetic models—that *parousia* means the point-in-time “second coming”—is out of place here.

20. Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, 5.442.

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Jesus said, “Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather” (Matt 24:28, ESV). The prophets often used this imagery to describe God’s judgment of apostate Israel. Ahijah (1 Kings 14:11), Hosea (Hosea 8:1, ESV), and Jeremiah (Jer 34:2, 20) did so. Jesus continued this practice in the Olivet Discourse.

Israel’s world would collapse when the Temple fell. Jesus said, “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken” (Matt 24:29). This is also traditional prophetic imagery. “Nearly every expression will be found used of the Lord’s coming in terrible national judgments: as of Babylon (Isa 13:9–13); of Idumea (Isa 34:1, 2, 4, 8–10); of Egypt (Ezek 32:7, 8); compare also Psa 18:7–15; Isa 24:1, 17–19; Isa 24:1, 17–19, Joel 2:10, 11, &c.”²¹ God had established Israel’s heavens and earth during the Exodus (Isa 51:15–16). He would obliterate them when the Temple fell.

Jesus said the tribes of “the land of Judea”²² (Gk. *gē*) would “see” the coming of the Son of Man (Matt 24:30; cp. Luke 21:23). In Scripture, “seeing” is not just a physical sense. It often means “to understand” or “to perceive” (cf. Isa 6:10).

The prophets used this “seeing” metaphor in contexts like the Olivet Discourse. Of the end of Egypt’s world, Isaiah said, “Behold, the LORD rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt” (Isa 19:1). “Behold” is “an interjection demanding attention, ‘look!’ ‘see!’”²³ The Egyptians could not look into the sky and “see” the Lord with their physical eyes. But, they could “understand” that God was there because of the physical phenomena they saw. Their nation lay in ruins. In this manner the Jews would “see” the Son of Man in the clouds. They would “understand” Jesus had executed vengeance upon them.

As the Temple fell and the Mosaic Age ended, the Son of Man would send forth his angels (Matt 24:31). The promised Messianic Age gathering would ensue (cf. Gen 49:10; Psa 50:5; Isa 40:11; et al.). Christ would accomplish it through “men-angels, or messengers, the

21. Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *Matthew–John*, vol. 3 of *A commentary, critical, experimental and practical on the old and new testaments*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 3:1:194. Format of references changed to conform to current standards.

22. Gill, “Exposition,” 7:294–95.

23. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, (Chicago: Moody, 1980), 220.

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ministers and preachers of the Gospel, whom Christ would call, qualify, and send forth into all the world of the Gentiles, to preach his Gospel, and plant churches there still more, when that at Jerusalem was broken up and dissolved.”²⁴ This gathering would continue throughout the new age of Christ’s *parousia* (presence).

So, Jesus answered the disciples’ request for *signs* leading to the Temple’s fall. He did so systematically, starting with general signs and ending with traditional prophetic images to describe the event itself. Nothing shows he changed the subject—all his signs related to the end of the Mosaic Age and the beginning of the Messianic Age. The Temple’s fall would be the distinct demarcation between them.

Answer to the When Question

Jesus also answered the disciples’ *when* question (Matt 24:32–36). The signs he provided would show the approach of the Temple’s fall (Matt 24:32–33). This event would occur in their generation (Matt 24:34). This part of his answer provided a broad time boundary. The Jewish heaven and earth would end when the Temple fell (Matt 24:35). Jesus said he did not know and could not reveal the specific “day and hour” for these events (Matt 24:36).

Nothing in this answer shifts the subject away from the Temple’s fall.

The Closing Exhortations

The warnings in the Olivet Discourse (Matt 24:37–25:46) pertain to Israel at the end of the Mosaic Age. The *first* warning (Matt 24:37– 51) compares the “great tribulation” of that generation (Matt 24:21, 34) to the flood in Noah’s day. In it, Jesus mentions his *parousia* (presence) twice (Matt 24:37, 39). It would begin with his point-in-time coming to destroy the Temple (Gk. *erchomai*; Matt 24:42–44, 46, 48). The flood had taken all the wicked to destruction. Noah and his family were “left behind” to replenish the earth. Even so, God was about to take the wicked in Israel to destruction. The elect remnant would remain. This would occur in Jesus’s generation (Matt 24:1–3, 34).

24. Gill, “Exposition,” 7:295.

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The *second* warning concerns ten virgins (Matt 25:1–13). Only Israel comprised covenant virgins (e.g., Isa 37:22; Jer 14:17; 18:13), some of whom God would exclude from the kingdom. They alone possessed covenant oil and could say, “our lamps are going out” (Matt 25:8, YLT). Their covenant was “ready to vanish away” (Heb 8:13). This warning pertained to Israel in the “last days” (Heb 1:2) of the Mosaic Age. Applying this parable to any other historical context is problematic.

The same is true about the *third* warning—the parable of the talents (Matt 25:14–30). The Jews alone possessed kingdom treasure. But, in Jesus’s generation, God would take the kingdom from them (Matt 21:43). The Lord would go away, then come back (Gk. *erchomai*). A delay would precede his return, but it would occur within the lifetime of the servants to whom he spoke (Matt 25:19; cp. Matt 24:30, 34). Then, God would take the treasure from them and give it to others (Matt 25:28; cp. Matt 21:43b). This parable does not fit any other context.

Space will not allow a full explanation of the *fourth* warning. It includes the final judgment (Matt 25:31–46), but Jesus is describing an age-long judgment. He told his followers, “I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Luke 22:29–30). This kingdom-age judgment began during the “last days” of the Mosaic Age. It will culminate after the resurrection at the end of the Messianic Age. Then, God will conduct the final judgment. The Temple’s fall completed the transition from the Mosaic Age to this age of judgment. Jesus had not abandoned the subject of the Olivet Discourse.

Conclusion (Olivet Discourse)

Jesus’s disciples understood the significance of his prophecy about the Temple’s demise. This event would end the Mosaic Age and complete the transition to the Messianic Age. They used *parousia* (presence) to describe the latter. Jesus’s prophecy came true within the timeframe he specified. The Temple fell in AD 70.

Nothing in the Olivet Discourse shows Jesus introduced other topics.

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First Corinthians 15

The Olivet Discourse establishes the first part of inmillennialism. It describes the transition from the Mosaic Age to the Messianic (kingdom) Age. Paul provides the rest of the framework in 1 Cor 15. Below, I summarize the main points.

Paul explains our resurrection-hope by using a three-part prophetic model (1 Cor 15:12–28). 1.) Christ rose during the “last days” of the Mosaic Age. 2.) He reigns during the kingdom age. 3.) At the end of the kingdom age, Christ will overcome death in the resurrection.

Paul places the resurrection in the *parousia*—“in his presence” (1 Cor 15:23, YLT). As we have seen, the *parousia* began in the “last days” of the Mosaic Age. Here, Paul extends it to the end of the Messianic Age. So, the *parousia* of Christ extends from the “last days” (Heb 1:2) of the Mosaic Age to the “last day” of the Messianic Age (cp. John 6:39, 40, 44, 54).

In this chapter, Paul supplies another feature of our prophetic model. He says Jesus “must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (1 Cor 15:25–26). This is an allusion to Psa 110:1, the most-often-quoted Old Testament passage in the New Testament. The apostle gives an optimistic view of the kingdom in history. Christ overcomes all his enemies *during* his *parousia*-reign.

This perspective agrees with the prophets. The Messianic-Age kingdom will grow to become a mountain that fills the whole earth. It will destroy all other kingdoms (Dan 2:35, 45). Christ “shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him” (Psa 72:8–11).

The *parousia* (presence) of Christ with his church during the Messianic Age will enable her to “make disciples of all the nations” (Matt 28:18–19, NKJV).

Conclusion

Inmillennialism rests on the unbiased exegesis of two passages of Scripture. It takes words like *aiōn* (age) and *parousia* (presence) in their primary meaning. The Temple’s fall ended

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the Mosaic Age. It completed the transition to the age of Christ's new-covenant presence with his church—his *parousia*.

Jesus used prophetic symbols—lightning, vulture-feasts, cosmic collapse, et al. These traditional prophetic images describe God's judgments against a people. Here, they apply to apostate Israel.

Inmillennialism does not discover veiled references to other subjects in the Olivet Discourse. Jesus gave a simple prophecy. The disciples asked relevant questions about it. Jesus answered their questions. All is plain and simple.

Inmillennialism solves the problem we mentioned at the beginning. A major eschatological event was in the disciples' near future. This event would mark the full transition into the Messianic Age. They wrote as if this were the case. Time stamps of imminence abound in the New Testament. Their chronology was accurate and we should take their time markers at face value. Jesus and his disciples did not make prophetic mistakes; he came in his kingdom during the lifetime of some who heard him.

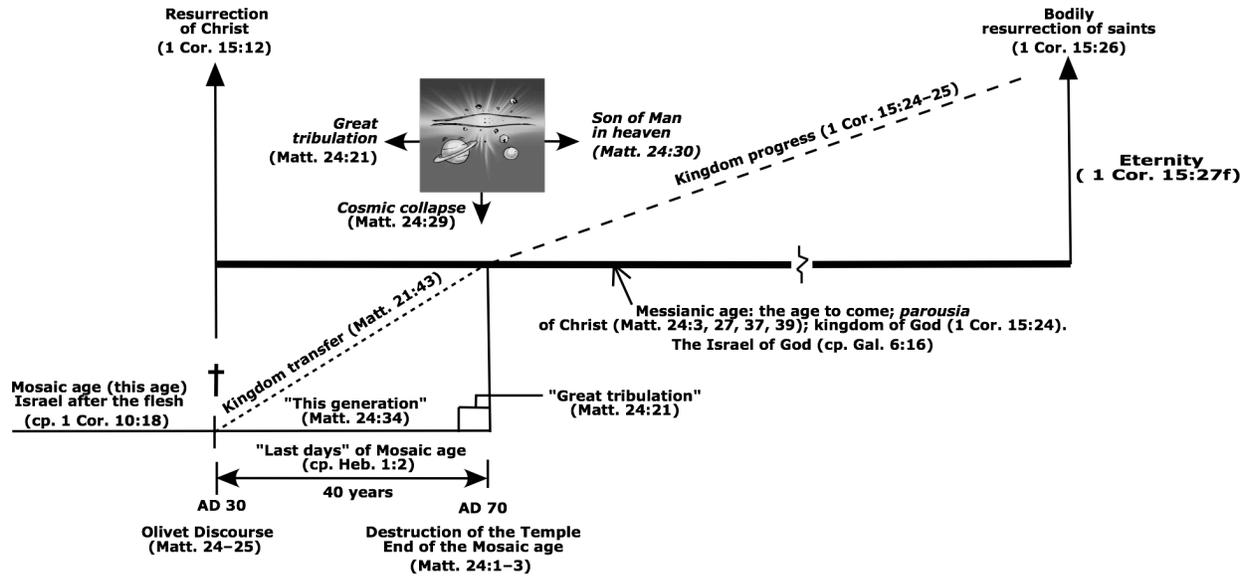
Accepting inmillennialism requires a shift in perspective. This will challenge some of our long-held beliefs and interpretations. But making the shift allows us to understand the Scriptures better. As a result, we can preach the kingdom with more accuracy and not compromise with enemies of the gospel (cf. Mark 1:14–15).

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Bonus Material

Here is a diagram of inmillennialism.



My blog shows more details. It also applies this model to Hebrews and Revelation. I suggest starting on the “Start Reading Here” page.²⁵

Key Points

1. The term “last days” and its equivalents almost always refer to the end of the Mosaic Age. The term “last day” usually stands for the end of the Messianic Age.
2. *Parousia* usually means “presence” and refers to a state of being. It does not refer to a point-in-time action (e.g., a “coming”) apart from the condition it produces.
3. The *parousia* of Christ is his “presence” with the church in the Messianic Age.
4. The New Testament retains the two-age model of the Old Testament.
5. The Olivet Discourse pertains to events in Jesus’s generation.
6. The bodily resurrection will occur at the end of Christ’s *parousia*.
7. During Christ’s kingdom-age *parousia*, he will progressively defeat all his enemies. Death is the last enemy he will destroy. This agrees with postmillennialism.

25. <https://www.mikerogersad70.com/start-reading-here/>.

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8. Ethnic Israel does not have a special covenant relationship with God in this age. This agrees with the other prophetic frameworks, except dispensationalism.
9. The “thousand years” of Rev 20 is a figure that represents the Messianic Age. Here, inmillennialism agrees with amillennialism and modern forms of postmillennialism.
10. Christ destroyed the Temple in his first-century judgment “coming” (Gk. *erchomai*). This coming was “premillennial,” but not in the traditional sense.