

“Then Cometh The End ...”

“... when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign until he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death. For He put all things in subjection under his feet” (1 Cor. 15:24-27).

Having affirmed that Jesus is the “firstfruits” of them that sleep, the apostle cites two events which follow “Christ the firstfruits of them that sleep.” The first of these is “then they that are Christ’s, at his coming” (1 Cor. 15:21). Then follows the words “then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God the Father.” In fairness to Premillennials (who affirm a 1,000 year separation between the resurrection of the righteous and the resurrection of the wicked), we must acknowledge that almost 2,000 years have lapsed between the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of those who are Christ, so, were it not for other factors, we would be constrained to concede the possibility of a time factor between the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked. Such a concession we are not willing to make, however, for Jesus was very specific: the good and evil will both be raised the same hour (Jn. 5:28); on the last day for the righteous will be raised on the last day, therefore the wicked must be raised the same time (Jn. 6:39, 40, 44). So while two millennia have lapsed between the resurrection of Christ the firstfruits and His second coming; the second coming of Christ and the resurrection of all dead will occur at the same time: there will be no time lapse between the resurrection of the righteous and the resurrection of the wicked.

Paul’s words concerning Christ that he would have all things put in subjection under his feet and the last enemy to be put under his feet is an allusion to perhaps two of David’s psalms. The first is Psalms 8; the second is Psalms 110:1. Most certainly Psalms 110:1 was in Paul’s mind and the expression “he put all things in subjection under his feet” is likely a reference to Psalms 8:6. If it is, it proves to be another indication that Hebrews was authored by the same writer for no other New Testament author cites Psalms 8 as a reference to Jesus.

That Psalm 110:1 was definitely in the apostle’s mind is seen from the fact that he identifies death as the last enemy to be put under the feet of Jesus. True, Psalms 8 declares that “he put all things in subjection under his feet” but that Psalm makes no specific reference that “all enemies” were to be put under him.

Psalms 110:1 is obviously a Messianic prophecy and was referenced by Jesus, Peter, the Hebrew writer, and Paul. Jesus used the passage to silence forever the questions of religious leaders in His day. Having heard their response to His question, "What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?" (they said, "The son of David"), Jesus then asked, "How then doth David in the Spirit call him Lord, saying 'the Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand till I put all thine enemies underneath thy feet'? If David called him Lord, how is he his son?" (Mt. 22:43-46). No response was ventured. From that day hence all questioning ceased.

Peter referenced Psalm 110:1 in his Pentecost sermon (Acts 2:34-35). By it he showed that David had not ascended in heaven but that His Son had and had, that day, began His reign at the Father's right hand, a reign which continues to our present day.

The Hebrew writer quotes Psalm 110:1 to show the superior nature of the Son over angels. Never had God, at any time, said to any angel "Sit thou at my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Heb. 1:13). Yet, while God never said such to any angel, He did say these words to His Son.

Paul, in the Corinthian text, does not quote so specifically Psalm 110:1 as do other New Testament references, yet that he had Psalm 110:1 in mind is undeniable. The allusion to all enemies being subjected to the Son spells out Psalm 110:1 as its source. Yet Paul adds one thrilling thought the Psalmist did not mention. He adds that among all the enemies of the Messiah (varied and in difference forms and natures) which will be subdued by the Son, the last enemy to lay conquered at the Messiah's feet will be death. When death is abolished, then the kingdom will be returned to the Father, to whom the Son also will subject Himself, that God be all in all (1 Cor. 15:28).

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