

A.D. 70 DOCTRINE (OVERVIEW)

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The A.D. 70 doctrine was introduced into the churches of Christ by Max King in Warren, Ohio in 1971. Since that time, this movement has gained followers throughout America and around the world, particularly in recent years. This is not an “innocent” doctrine, or one which we can tolerantly overlook. This doctrine subverts souls and overthrows faith in exactly the same manner which Hymeneus and Philetus were doing in 2 Timothy 2:16-18, because the A.D. 70 doctrine also says that the resurrection is past already. We all need to be prepared to recognize and refute this error when we see it.

Summary of the A.D. 70 doctrine

Here is a brief summary of this very strange and very false doctrine. The A.D. 70 doctrine is centered in two erroneous views derived through misunderstanding Revelation. 1) The advocates of this doctrine emphasize a figurative “manner” of prophecy. Revelation 19:10 says, *“And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”* The A.D. 70 people say this verse is talking about the nature of prophecy. They say the “spirit of prophecy” means that all prophecy is “spiritual” in nature, which they say is in harmony with the spiritual work of Christ. Thus, they argue that *all* prophecies of the New Testament have been fulfilled in a non-material, figurative manner. To them, absolutely no prophecy has a literal fulfillment. They say that an “allegorical method” must be employed to understand any and all New Testament prophecy. To the A.D. 70 people, anyone who believes in a literal manner of fulfillment of any prophecy is thinking in a “fleshly,” non-spiritual way. 2) This doctrine also heavily emphasizes the “time” of prophecy. Revelation 1:1-3 does indeed say that Revelation shows things “which must shortly come to pass,” but the A.D. 70 people say that this means that *everything* in Revelation and every other book of the Bible would be fulfilled in every respect by the year A.D. 70. There is strong evidence that Revelation was written around 96 A.D., but the A.D. 70 people insist that Revelation was written in the time of the Roman emperor Nero, somewhere around 67 or 68 A.D. And they say that everything in

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Revelation had to be fulfilled within a *very* short amount of time, meaning that all of Revelation (along with the entire Bible) was completely fulfilled by A.D. 70.

Alleged primacy of the year A.D. 70

The reason this doctrine is called the “A.D. 70 doctrine” is that the doctrine holds the year A.D. 70 to be the center and heart of prophecy. Those who believe this doctrine say that A.D. 70 is when Judaism (Ishmael) was cast out, and when Christianity (Isaac) received a “spiritual,” non-literal inheritance. They believe this is the fulfillment of the prophecies about our eternal inheritance in heaven! Furthermore, they believe that the resurrection of Christ introduced the time of the end which was finished by the year 70 A.D. To these people, the second coming of Christ and judgment day was a figurative coming of God’s judgment against Jerusalem. Thus, they say that the Lord “came” against Jerusalem and “judged” it when it was destroyed in A.D. 70. They do not believe the Lord will ever literally come again. Nor do they believe there will ever be a literal day of judgment. They also say that the end of the world was the end of the *Jewish* world in A.D. 70, and that the “new heavens and new earth” refer to Christianity, which they say only truly began in A.D. 70. They say this marks the beginning of eternal life. Like Hymeneus and Philetus, the A.D. 70 doctrine says that the resurrection was only figurative and is now past. This doctrine says that the “dead in Christ” are the physical Jews who had been spiritually dead, and in A.D. 70, many of them were converted to Christ (resurrected) and joined the other Christians, those who were already alive spiritually, and this is all there is to the resurrection. Rather than being literally resurrected to be with Christ forever in heaven, they say all Christians have been “resurrected” from spiritual death and will forever be with Christ in the church. Remember, to them no New Testament prophecy is literal, and that means there will be no literal second coming of Christ, no literal judgment day, no literal resurrection, no literal end of this world, and no literal heaven as our eternal reward. Anyone who believes in these things they regard as thinking “fleshly.”