

DR. KEN GENTRY AND PRETERISM SWALLOW A CAMEL
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Dr. Kenneth Gentry's extensive 2-volume commentary on Revelation entitled *The Divorce of Israel* has recently been released.¹ It elaborates on his partial preterist interpretation of Revelation. In order to avoid the alleged challenge of explaining the opening time indicator of "shortly come to pass" in terms of the way that the eternal God perceives human time ("a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past"), Dr. Gentry's preterism swallows the camel that Revelation 1:7 ("He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him.") is not referring to the future visible Second Coming of Christ but the 70 AD Roman siege and destruction of Jerusalem. Dr. Gentry has promoted this view before as follows:

"The cloud-coming of Christ in judgment is reminiscent of Old Testament cloud-comings of God in judgment upon ancient historical people and nations." [*He Shall Have Dominion* (Tyler, TX: ICE, 1992) 388-389]

"The final collapse of Jerusalem and the Temple.. Through these events the Jews were to "see" the Son of Man in His judgment-coming in terrifying cloud-glory: clouds are symbols of divine majesty often entailing stormy destruction. The members of the Sanhedrin and others would experience such in their life times (Matt. 26:64; Mark 9:1; cf. Rev 1:7 with Rev 1:1,3)." (*ibid.* 348)

"it is obvious that this coming is a judgment coming focusing upon first century Israel...In regard to the Jews (those who "pierced Christ," Rev. 1:7), the Jewish War with Rome from A.D. 67 to 70 brought about the deaths of tens of thousands of the Jews in Judea, and the enslavement of thousands upon thousands more." (p. 27) ²

The alleged challenge of the opening time indicator is imagined and not real. There are many time indicators in Revelation which make clear that the opening one should not be taken as literally true in human time: the various "beasts", representing kingdoms per Daniel's revelation; the 1,260 years per the year-day principle; the "thousand years" of Revelation 20; etc.

Dr. Gentry admits there is scriptural evidence for the future visible Second Coming of Christ, which is why he is partial preterist. Comparing scripture with scripture, the Revelation 1:7 matches with these other references to the future visible Second Coming of Christ. Dr. Gentry's full preterist critics are right to criticize Dr. Gentry for treating Revelation 1:7 as describing a different event from these other allusions to Christ's Second Coming.³

As Dr. Francis Nigel Lee has cogently argued, the Biblical prophecy in general, Revelation included, should be interpreted historicistically and not preteristically.⁴ The book ends of Revelation are the Apostolic era pre-70 AD and the future Second Coming of Christ, with its ushering in the new heaven and new earth. Everything in between is a prophetic outline of church history between these two book ends. Believing otherwise is another camel that preterists like Dr. Gentry want us to swallow. There is no good reason to believe it focuses on just one era of that time span.

The theme of Revelation as a whole is actually not the divorce of Israel, but the redemption of all the nations of the earth, including Israel of the Jews, after a prolonged period of strife between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan, with the Papal Anti-Christ located on the city of 7 hills being one of the primary tools of Satan. This historicistic interpretation is consistent with the historic Protestant confessions like the Westminster Standards, unlike Dr. Gentry's preterism. Dr. Gentry's preterism is not just eschatologically erroneous, but ecclesiastically damaging.

I realize some may be frustrated with a one-page dismissal of Dr. Gentry's two-volume book, but defense of truth can often be simple whereas defense of error must be voluminous.

¹ <https://chalcedon.edu/resources/books/divorce-of-israel-the>

² <https://preteristarchives.org/revelation-17-study-archive/>

³ <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/review-gentrys-divorce-of-israel/id1500969161?i=1000657151829>

⁴ <http://www.puritans.net/hrf/biblicalpredictions.pdf>