

# Over-anticipating the kingdom

## Introduction

There has been a repeated characteristic in the eschatology<sup>1</sup> of the church for centuries, leading to serious problems and often resulting in fanaticism. This feature revolves around the tendency to claim that certain aspects of the kingdom of God are fulfilled today, when they are actually reserved for the period after the return of Christ when salvation is consummated and God's decree fulfilled. In other words, aspects of salvation that are reserved for the period when heaven is on earth and a new world is prepared for the perfected elect are claimed to be applicable now.

Thus prophecies relating to the full manifestation of God's glory in a restored world, after the resurrection, are claimed to be relevant to our present estate. This is variously called 'Kingdom Now Theology', 'Restorationism' or 'realised eschatology'.<sup>2</sup>

In fact the key thing to understand about the kingdom blessings is that they are only available today in part; Scripture calls this a foretaste of the things to come.<sup>3</sup> Thus the kingdom is 'now and not yet' at the same time. One writer calls this '*the presence of the future*'.<sup>4</sup>

Regarding the individual, we have previously explained that sanctification is expressed in tenses. There is a past tense whereby our spirit has been regenerated and a new heart given us. There is a present tense whereby we gradually progress in sanctification as we put off our old nature more and more; but the fulness of sanctification is reserved for the future when we are given a glorified body and are finally perfected. Perfection cannot be achieved now because we have an old nature that sins and a body that needs resurrection. The full manifestation of our salvation is reserved for the Second Coming of the Lord. To understand sanctification we must understand that the consummation of salvation is future when God's kingdom is manifested; similarly, the full manifestation of the kingdom.

If we fail to appreciate that the fulness of the promises regarding the kingdom are only appropriate for the end we will make a disaster of our Christian life and fall for all sorts of deceit. I will give some examples of subjects where this foolishness prevails.

## Abundant life

I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

Jn 10:10

How often has this promise been pressed upon unbelievers, in the preaching of the Gospel, with the claim that all sorts of earthly blessings and human satisfaction are part of salvation to be enjoyed now? Such affirmations are rampant today, usually associated with testimonies from people who have actually enjoyed such hedonism after their conversion.

It is ironic that, in many cases, the people who testified of this in the past have today apostatised and are no longer in the church at all. The earthly blessings they claimed did them no good at all.

Is it true that Christ promises earthly blessings and satisfaction—a life of ease—in the Gospel? Clearly it is not since Christ himself actually said the opposite.

Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes. A disciple is not above *his* teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more *will they call* those of his household!

Matt 10:21–25

In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

Jn 16:33

### ***The Christian will experience tribulation, not a life of ease***

Surely this is obvious? If the world is God's enemy, and is under the usurped governance of Satan, then those who seek to glorify God and live righteously will not be tolerated and pampered. Furthermore, God expects his children to work assiduously to function in the church and testify to Christ. The Christian life is not an easy joyride.

Scripture tells us in many places that suffering and tribulation is the norm for true believers.

We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.

Acts 14:22

If children, then heirs -- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*.

Rm 8:17

We told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know.

1 Thess 3:4

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God.

2 Tim 1:8

All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

2 Tim 3:12

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you.

1 Pt 4:12

Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer.

Rev 2:10

We cannot escape it; suffering is entirely normal for the believer and the abundant life that Jesus promised is not a ticket for an easy life.

### ***So what is abundant life?***

The abundant life which Jesus promised is literally 'something more', 'something surpassing' ordinary human life. It is eternal life which he promised many times (Jn 3:15, 6:54, 68, 10:28).

Abundant life is spiritual life of the sort Jesus has with the Father. It is heavenly life; it is life of a different quality to human life.

The life of ease that people claim is promised in **John 10:10** is interpreted as hedonistic earthly life, successful earthly life, rich earthly life and healthy earthly life; but abundant life is none of these things. Abundant life is not earthly at all but a different type of life altogether.

Jesus came to earth manifesting divine life and this life was the light of men which shone in the darkness. Jesus' life was set in contradistinction to human life, as light is different to darkness. This is so because man's life in sin is so deficient from God's perspective that it is actually death. Since the fall of Adam man has been in death towards God and under a curse. This is not life at all.

Despite being full of eternal life while he was a man on earth, Jesus suffered continually from the hands of men. He suffered hunger, thirst, tiredness, loneliness, taunts, accusations, slander, physical attacks, rejection from his brethren, treachery, seizure, imprisonment, flogging, scourging, humiliation, torture and finally slow death on a cross. If Jesus endured such suffering, despite having abundant life, why do we think that we shall escape it and have a life of luxury and ease?

The abundant life that Jesus promised is not the hedonistic success that modern preachers claim is the kingdom experienced now. It is life of spiritual quality that enables us to fellowship with God by his Spirit.

## **Physical healing**

It is extremely odd that modern Charismatics make such a fuss about physical healing being a blessing for all to enjoy and a powerful evangelistic tool. It is also odd that Classical Pentecostals claim that healing is an automatic benefit of the atonement. The reason why it is odd is that there is not a single case of a believer being healed in the apostolic letters or the Acts, but many examples of believers, including apostles and apostolic delegates, being sick.<sup>5</sup> This is another case of people over anticipating the blessings of the consummated kingdom.

The typical position of Pentecostals and Charismatics on this matter is as follows:

- The Bible teaches that Christ bore the sicknesses of mankind vicariously, just as he did the sins of mankind. This is called 'Healing in the atonement'.
- That part of Christ's sufferings associated with healing was his scourging before the cross, by his stripes we are healed.<sup>6</sup>
- Therefore, it is possible to secure divine healing by faith, just as we secure forgiveness from sins by faith.
- Christians with faith for supernatural healing should refuse medical science and natural remedies and seek only answer to prayers for healing. This includes rejecting existing medications and removing spectacles.<sup>7</sup>
- Since the time of the American healer Dr Price, being slain in the Spirit (falling backwards) has been a major method of imparting this healing.<sup>8</sup>

Against this we can say:

- There is no Scripture that plainly teaches ‘healing in the atonement’. There is no indication that sickness needs atoning.
- The apostles and their delegates (though gifted with miraculous power) did not experience such automatic healing; indeed they were often sick.
- It is Christ’s life given up in death (‘shed blood’) which secures atonement, not his earlier sufferings, such as, being whipped. Christ’s sufferings before the cross were a part of the humiliation experienced throughout his entire life.
- The appropriation of justification (pardon from sins) is not by human faith worked up but is the gift of God, which is given as faith and repentance ([Eph 2:8](#)). This faith is given to secure justification and adoption.
- The apostles never brought healing by making a man fall over backwards.

The following texts are usually claimed as the basis of such over anticipation of the kingdom.

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with loving-kindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good *things*, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. The LORD executes righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed.

Ps 103:2–5

As always, verses and parts of verses must be interpreted in context so that their meaning is not twisted to mean something else. Charismatics constantly twist verse three to teach that God heals all our diseases.

Firstly, it cannot mean that God heals all our diseases in this present age since that would contradict both apostolic teaching and experience. Paul was sick, his chief apostolic delegate Timothy was sick; his key associate workers Trophimus and Epaphroditus were sick. If all diseases are automatically healed then Paul knew nothing about it. So the Charismatic interpretation of this verse flatly contradicts the NT.

Also bear in mind that the verse says all your diseases. This promise is not about a few serious maladies but every single aspect of sickness. This would include minor illnesses, such as a cold, reactions to vaccinations, hay-fever, headaches, sunburn and the need for spectacles. Not even Charismatics claim this; so they do not interpret the verse correctly.

Secondly, we have to ascertain what these verses are focused on. The psalm is a broad-based ode of thanksgiving for the wide scope of God’s salvation. In these verses in particular the psalmist has in mind the fulness of God’s salvation which is not operative until the end. It is a list of the benefits of full salvation.

Note for instance: when is our life saved from destruction? It is when Christ returns and not before. When are we crowned? It is at the end. When is our mouth fully satisfied? It is in heaven; were not many saints in history starving? When is our youth renewed? It is when we are resurrected in the body. When does the Lord execute justice for all who are oppressed? It is at the Day of Judgment; many are oppressed throughout earthly history.

In the same manner, all our diseases are healed when we have a new resurrection body and live in a new restored world where heaven and earth co-exist. Then there will be no sickness and no sorrow; but not before.

God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.

Rev 21:4

This occurs after:

Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev 21:1–2

There is no way that [Psalm 103:3](#) can be taken out of context and applied to the time on earth now. This is a false interpretation.

But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

Isa 53:5

Charismatics fail to see that Isaiah is using Hebrew parallelism in this verse, which is about a single subject—namely, forgiveness of sins. The verse mentions sins as transgressions of the law and iniquities which example corruption of nature. There is a double parallelism: Jesus was ‘wounded for our transgressions’, paralleled as, ‘bruised for our iniquities’; followed by his ‘chastisement for our peace’, paralleled as, ‘by his stripes we are healed’. All these speak about the deliverance from sin. The healing mentioned has nothing to do with physical healing from sickness, but is here an illustration of being delivered from the sickness of sin.

The next verse continues this theme, All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Both verse 5 and verse 6 are talking about sin. It is folly to consider that the prophet interrupts his argument within a verse to introduce a foreign subject and then return to his argument.

But just in case we failed to see this in Isaiah, the Spirit gives us an apostolic commentary to make the interpretation certain. Peter tells us, who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness -- by whose stripes you were healed ([1 Pt 2:24](#)). Without any doubt Peter applies by whose stripes we are healed to the healing from the effects of sin.

### ***What about Matthew?***

The use of [Isaiah 53:5](#) by [Matthew 8:17](#) is illustrative. Matthew uses different Greek words to Peter and Isaiah<sup>9</sup> and quotes the spiritual features of Isaiah illustratively of the physical healings of Christ and carefully changes the language in doing this. Matthew saw, in Christ’s healings, a fulfilment in the physical sphere what Isaiah applied to the spiritual realm of forgiveness of sins. The physical healing was a picture of what Christ would do in dealing with sin.

Furthermore, if Christ’s healing in [Matthew 8:17](#) is the actual fulfilment of [Isaiah 53:5](#) (which is claimed) then Pentecostals have a serious problem. They want to claim that healing is produced by the atonement, but [Matthew 8:17](#) occurred in Capernaum ([Matt 8:5](#)) three years before the

cross. To use this verse Pentecostals have to claim that Christ's life was an atonement without blood; this is a heresy too far which they do not promote. So using [Matthew 8:17](#) is a contradiction of healing in the atonement.

There is no way that [Isaiah 53:5](#) can be applied to teach that there is an automatic healing of physical sickness included in the atonement. In any case it would contradict apostolic teaching which denies such a claim.

It is also noteworthy that there are many recorded cases of sick people claiming Charismatic healing who later died or became sick again. There are also cases that people who refused necessary medication on the instruction of a Charismatic preacher (based upon [Matt 8:17](#) & [2 Chron 16:12<sup>10</sup>](#)) have also died, proving that this interpretation is false.

He sent His word and healed them, and delivered *them* from their destructions.

[Ps 107:20](#)

This is from a passage which refers to benefits God provided during the history of Israel and particularly regarding period when the children of Israel were being led through the wilderness. In that time God performed many miracles in order to keep them sustained, such as providing manna from heaven, bringing water out of rocks and sending quails to fall on the camp.

Now if we are going to claim that the way God dealt miraculously with Israel in the wilderness is a pattern for every believer today, then we must also claim that our clothes will never wear out:

Your garments did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years.

[Deut 8:4](#)

And I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet.

[Deut 29:5](#)

However, I know of no Charismatic or Pentecostal that dares to make such a claim.

However, the verse specifically says that this healing was by God's word and that it saved them from destruction. The immediate context is again sin, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, [they] were afflicted (v17). In fact their sickness was self-imposed due to distress, '[they] abhorred all manner of food, and they drew near to the gates of death' (v18). This was Because they rebelled against the words of God, and despised the counsel of the Most High (v10).

It seems clear that this is referring to the various times that Israel rejected God, committed idolatry which led to God's judgment via political problems, such as an invasion. This then led to distress and sickness, followed by repentance (usually after a prophetic word) and then God healed the consequences of sin.

Thus the healing here is not specifically referring to the normal contraction of a disease by an individual but to the healing of the nation of Israel from rebelling against God and committing national sin. There is no way that this can be twisted into an apologetic for automatic physical healing for the believer today.

None of these passages give any suggestion to support the modern Charismatic notions of healing, which are claimed by various groups. These folk have over-anticipated the future benefits of the kingdom.

### ***The name of God***

Pentecostals and Charismatics make a great deal about a compound name of God variously transliterated as Jehovah Rapha, Jehovah Rophi or Jehovah Refikeh. The first instance of this covenant name appears here:

So he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. When he cast *it* into the waters, the waters were made sweet. There He made a statute and an ordinance for them. And there He tested them, 'If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I *am* the LORD who heals you.'

Ex 15:25–26

This is set in the context of the incident at the waters of Marah where a tree was thrown in to make the water sweet.

The first matter is to state what the name actually is. 'The Lord that heals', or that 'Lord that is healing', is '*Yahweh Rapha*'. The word, 'Jehovah' does not exist, is unbiblical and was made up originally by a Jesuit chaplain to the pope. It is a compound of the divine initials YHWH and the vowels added from *Adonai*. The best ancient Hebrew scholarship tells us that the name should be called '*Yahweh*'.<sup>11</sup>

The Pentecostal argument is as follows: since there is a name of God indicating that he is a healer, then we should expect constant healing since we are part of God.

The first thing to say is that God also heals sin; however, the full consummation of the deliverance from sin is not now but at the return of Christ when our old nature is removed and we are fully perfected. In the same way our deliverance from sickness is a future event. Another example is that Christ has triumphed over Satan and his works. However, Satan is still prowling around like a lion devouring people; his final destruction only occurs when he is thrown into the Lake of Fire after the Day of Judgment. Another example is that God's wrath and condemnation is already hanging over sinners who stand condemned already (Jn 3:18, 36); yet the sentence of this condemnation is only passed at the Day of Judgment.

A great irony of those who use this passage to claim constant divine healing as an automatic privilege and who discredit the use of means (such as medicine) ignore the fact that in this story God commanded the use of means—a tree thrown into the water to make it sweet.

Secondly, the promise of healing is conditional on the demand for obedience in keeping God's moral law (commandments) and laws governing Israel's physical condition as a corporate body (statutes). The Law of Moses identifies several aspects of such statutes, which reveal the way to good health:

- Sanitation (Ex 29:14; Deut 23:14).
- Sterilisation (Lev 11:32, 39, 40; Num 19:11, 31:22–23).
- Quarantine (Lev 13–14; Num 5:4).
- Good hygiene and nutrition (Lev 11; Ex 23:25).

- Physical exercise (Levites ministered for a few weeks at a time and then returned to cultivate the soil; [Jos 21:13–19](#); [Lk 1:8, 23](#). The whole nation had to trek to Jerusalem and camp out for two weeks in the Feats of the Tabernacles; [Deut 16:16](#). No one denies that exercise is a good rule for health.).
- Recuperation (The Sabbath was a rest day, as was the seventh week and the seventh month and seventh year.).

It was by obeying such laws that Moses kept the Israelites healthy in the desert.<sup>12</sup> Note that the ‘God who heals’ demanded that sick people were quarantined outside the camp and not healed immediately!

Breaching God’s law soemtimes results in sickness. Once cannot claim divine healing and at the same time be lawless. Sometimes God inflicts sickness upon those who break the moral law. The cure for the sickness is in applying the atonement of Christ to the sin not the sickness ([Jm 5:14–15](#)). Healing is not in the atonement, but the forgiveness of sin is. Many who seek healing today really need to get rid of their guilt by truly finding atonement in Christ. There are many Pentecostals and Charismatics who openly sin and yet strive and fail to find healing. The problem is their sin, not their lack of faith in a false gospel of healing. Note the effect of sin for the Israelites ([Num 16:41–50, 25:1–9](#)).

A corollary of the false idea that healing is in the atonement means that sickness separates the person from God. Thus great and godly saints throughout history who were often sick, or were sick for a long period of time, are classed as sinners by this false teaching.

### ***God uses sickness***

The classic case of this is Paul’s thorn in the flesh described in [2 Corinthians 12:7–10](#). Here we are told that God used this thorn (considered by most to be an eye disease) in order to train Paul and promote his growth in grace. In fact God told Paul that his power was made perfect in weakness ([2 Cor 12:9–10](#)). In other words, God could do more in Paul by making him sick than making him healthy; thus Paul boasted in his infirmities, not in his healings ([2 Cor 12:5](#)). This is the opposite of the Healing Gospel of Pentecostals.

Others were sick for God’s purpose, such as:

Now as *Jesus* passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ Jesus answered, ‘Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.’

[Jn 9:1–3](#)

The result of this was the revelation of Jesus as the light of the world ([Jn 8:12, 9:5](#)). We are told specifically that this sickness was ordained by God so that Jesus could be glorified and testified to as God’s Son.

Now a certain *man* was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. ... When Jesus heard *that*, He said, ‘This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.’

[Jn 11:1, 4](#)

The result of this was the revelation of Jesus as the Lord of life and death.

*The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.*



Matt 11:5

The healing miracles of Jesus provided proof that he was the Messiah. Unless God allowed these people to be sick, there would not have been this proof.

The healing of Naaman (2 Kg 5:1–27) showed that the God of Israel was the only true God with real power; Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel, (verse 15).

These are sufficient examples. If God purposes some people to be sick to glorify him, then he cannot have ordained that all believers should be always healthy. Sickness is a common aspect of God's plan for us. Tell Job that he should not have been sick!

### ***Interim conclusion***

No Christian denies that God can heal people when he wants to, or that people have been healed of sickness in the Bible, both by Christ, the apostles and also to some people sovereignly. However, that is not a basis to claim that healing is in the Gospel; that it is an automatic by-product of the atonement and every believer can claim healing at any time. The NT plainly denies this since it talks a great deal about affliction being normal for believers, and even used by God to discipline his people. It also clearly shows that apostles and co-workers were often sick. Indeed, in the presentations of the Gospel by the apostles, including the whole of the book of Romans, there is no mention of healing being a part of the Gospel proclamation.

Furthermore, Scripture informs us that elders can pray for the sick and expect a recovery:

Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

Jm 5:14–15

If God's word specifically tells us that we normally need to seek healing in the church through the involvement of elders, then it cannot be automatic as a result of the atonement. If healing were an automatic Gospel benefit for all converts, these verses would not have been written since they would be unnecessary.

The Pentecostal 'Gospel of Healing' or 'Full-Gospel', is false.

## **Restorationism**

There have been various movements based upon restorationism throughout church history. The most recent in the UK was the Restorationist Movement, which was powerful in the 1980s and which hardened into several radical Charismatic denominations popular today, such as NFI and Pioneer People.

As in earlier cases,<sup>13</sup> this movement sought a restoration of spiritual gifts associated with the offices of apostle and prophet so that the church could function just like the apostolic church of the first century. One magazine called 'Restoration' used the quote from Acts 3:21 as a mission statement on every inside cover. Like all 'Kingdom Now' ministries teachers from this stable also frequently mentioned the idea of a postmillennial, global revival which would soon be ushered in where the church would dominate the world, which would be run by apostles and prophets.

All of this nonsense was but the parroting of the earlier outlawed Latter Rain Pentecostal ideas which arose in the 1940s in Canada and which have now become the dominant feature of modern apostate Charismaticism.

Without going into a long critique of these ideas, which I have done several times elsewhere, let's simply investigate the chief texts used to support such ideas of a realised kingdom now.

Whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.

[Acts 3:21](#)

This requires little exposition. Without any doubt what Peter is referring to is the restoration that occurs at the Second Coming when Christ fulfils all the prophetic utterances and consummates the salvation of his people and brings in the kingdom on a renewed earth. No serious commentator thinks otherwise. This restoration is the restoration of the world back to the condition of Eden and the salvation of God's children from the effects of the fall. It has nothing to do with spiritual gifts in the church today or the ministry of apostles.

Note also that the verse itself says that heaven must receive Christ until the time that this restoration occurs. In other words, it occurs when Christ returns to earth from heaven and not before. The time frame is the Second Coming. The application of this verse to Restorationists is long before the Second Coming; i.e. in the 1970s in the UK and in 1948 for Latter Rain adherents in the US and Canada. The Restoration interpretation of this verse is, simply, laughable.

For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

[Isa 11:9](#)

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

[Hab 2:14](#)

These prophecies will be fulfilled when God's kingdom is finally revealed at the Second Coming. Indeed, the Lord Jesus told us to pray every day for this to happen, In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven, ([Matt 6:9–10](#)).

It is impossible for God's kingdom to be fully revealed in the earth while sinners still live in it who are opposed to God's rule. The phrase, 'God's kingdom ruling on earth over sinners' is an oxymoronic statement. God's kingdom is where God's rule is fully obeyed; where God's will is always done; where God is king over all; where every subject is an elect, righteous person. This cannot occur before the Second Coming.

The essence of the kingdom is Christ himself; he is the only person who fully obeys the will of the Father, who always does what his Father is doing. Christ is not only the only begotten Son but also the faithful and true servant ([Rev 3:14,19:11](#)). The only perfectly righteous person and faithful testimony to the Father is Christ; he is the only one in whom God totally reigns.

Believers are part of God's kingdom because they are found in Christ. The unification of the elect in Christ, by the action of the baptism of the Spirit, not only makes them adopted sons of God but

also makes them heirs of the kingdom. Christians are part of the kingdom because they are in Christ.

Now this means that anyone outside of Christ is not part of the kingdom. Thus an earth that contains sinners, or even just one sinner, cannot be a manifestation of the kingdom. All sinners have to be removed from the earth for the kingdom to be manifest upon the earth.<sup>14</sup>

The prophetic verses cannot be construed to apply to a burgeoning Charismatic church that has a certain amount of power over the secular world, either by moral influence or authoritarian control. The verses refer to the period after the Second Coming and the rule of Christ over a new earth where heaven is centred.

## Conclusion

We have done enough to show that Charismatics, of all stripes, have an over-realised eschatology. This means that they over anticipate the eschatological kingdom and apply to themselves features that can only exist after the return of Christ the Lord. It is a teaching to be condemned that leads to many types of deceit and heresy.

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### Footnotes

1 The doctrine of end things.

2 Subsets of this were the 40s Latter Rain theology, the 50s Healing Movement, which flowed out of it, radical Pentecostalism, and radical Charismaticism (such as Word Faith). John Wimber's variation led to the 'Signs and Wonders Movement', which became the 'Third Wave' and then the 'New Apostolic Reformation' of C. Peter Wagner. In strict theological terms 'realised eschatology' refers to the teaching of liberal scholar CH Dodd, who claimed that Jesus did not teach any future, apocalyptic, ramifications of the kingdom; it was fulfilled in his earthly ministry. Another form is Preterism: the idea that the book of Revelation was completely fulfilled in the early church of the first century.

3 [Rm 8:38](#); [1 Tim 4:8](#); [Heb 9:11](#)

4 George Eldon Ladd, 'The Presence of the Future', SPCK, (1974). The author ably promotes the Historic Premillennial position on eschatology.

5 For example Timothy ([1 Tim 5:23](#)), Epaphroditus ([Phil 2:25-27](#)), Paul ([2 Cor 12:7-10](#)), Trophimus ([2 Tim 4:20](#)).

6 See for example the teachings of Aimee Semple McPherson.

7 This notion was most publicised by AB Simpson.

8 Contemporary physicians attending his meetings proved that the effect was caused by hypnotism. Most who fell over were not healed. An investigative committee of Christian professionals examined 350 cases of people healed by Price and found only five that had any measure of being cured, and these were cases where the patient was susceptible to cure by hypnotic suggestion. 39 died within six months of being healed. Five became insane and four other cases of insanity resulted from family disappointment at a lack of healing. Such results are common to all subsequent healing ministers to the present day. Similar results were found regarding John Wimber's healing crusade in Australia.

9 Matthew drops the substitutionary word for 'bear', which Isaiah uses. It is also different from the word Peter uses in 'bore our sins'. The word Matthew uses is a sympathetic bearing, which is never used in connection with the atonement. Peter uses the same word as Isaiah in the LXX Greek version of the OT. Peter also uses the same word as Isaiah for 'healing' while Matthew uses a different word, which is always associated with physical healing.

10 The case of Asa's illness had nothing to do with seeking the aid of doctors but of disobeying God and relying upon heathen men to fight a war (2 Chron 16:7). Israel's priests were God's appointed doctors (Deut 24:8) and it was not a sin to seek their help. This is the first mention of 'physicians' in Israel and most commentators think that heathen doctors are meant; which worsened Asa's trusting in men instead of God.

11 For more information on this see my paper, 'The names of God'.

12 I register my thanks for some thoughts from RV Bingham, The Bible & The Body, Marshall Morgan & Scott (1952), in this section. I recommend this book as an antidote for Charismatic teaching on healing.

13 For example the Irvingite movement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

14 This is also a key argument against all forms of Premillennialism, and especially Dispensational Premillennialism, which teaches an earthly, Jewish kingdom of God that rules from Jerusalem over many sinners.