

Kingdom of Grace and Kingdom of Glory: A Reassessment of Historic Views of Christ's Kingdom

Zach Doppelt

KEY WORDS

| Historic Premillennialism | Dispensationalism | Kingdom of Grace | Kingdom of Grace |
| Kingdom of Glory | Patristics | Reformation | *Eschaton* |

ABSTRACT

Those who hold to a premillennial hermeneutic of the *eschaton* have espoused two main interpretations, dispensationalism and historic premillennialism, with the former largely displaced by the latter.

This article presents the case that a third option deserves attention as the true “historic” premillennial interpretation (and even connects to certain amillennial thought processes). And, based on the language of various authors, this interpretation may be called the “kingdom of grace/kingdom of glory” paradigm.

In order to demonstrate this thesis, the article will begin with a description of historic premillennialism as the main view considered as that of premillennial writers throughout the ages, then the article will then evaluate extensive quotations of post reformation and patristic authors. Finally, key biblical citations will be evaluated briefly. Within the thematic material of these quotations, contrasts from other premillennial views will be noted.

INTRODUCTION

The question of the messianic kingdom in both scholarly and popular literature is well documented. Classic categories of the millennium are generally included in the discussion¹, but scholars have further clarified details within these perspectives. For those who hold a conviction that the kingdom is best understood in terms of premillennialism, dispensationalism was the driving force for much of contemporary evangelicalism during the latter part of the Nineteenth century into the Twentieth century.²³ However, this trend

was not well received among the scholarly community save a few examples.⁴ Yet, in the latter part of the Twentieth century a resurgence of premillennialism as a viable eschatological option resurfaced among scholars, especially with the further advancement of Biblical theology in evangelical thought. Thus, scholars have re-examined premillennial views in contrast to popular level dispensational premillennialism that are academic, historic and Biblical. However, most scholars have focused almost exclusively on a view called “historic premillennialism.”⁵

1 By this I simply mean the discussion of pre, a, and post millennial ideas.

2 For an analysis concerning dispensational premillennialism and its impact on contemporary Christian thought, see “R. Todd Mangum, Mark S. Sweetnam. *The Scofield Bible: Its History and Impact on the Evangelical Church* (Colorado Springs: Paternoster Publishing, 2009).”

3 See also “Paul Wilkinson. *For Zion's Sake: Christian Zionism and the Role of John Nelson Darby* (*Studies in*

Evangelical History and Thought) (Bletchley: Paternoster Publishing, 2007).”

4 Certain schools such as Dallas Theological Seminary were created to fit this need, yet were likely in the minority of theological discourse.

5 See “Craig L. Blomberg, Sung Wook Chung, eds. *A Case for historic premillennialism: An Alternative to 'Left*

I believe there may be a different view of the kingdom that is neither dispensational nor “historic premillennial”(yet contains elements both) within the Patristic writings as well as the post Reformation period, and may do more justice to the Biblical text. Furthermore, I believe this view is actually simpler and less systematized. This view may be termed “The kingdom of grace/kingdom of glory”⁶ paradigm.⁷

Thus, the purpose of this essay is first to describe “historic premillennialism” as it is the default premillennial view among scholars. Next, I will describe the “kingdom of grace/kingdom of glory” view in its recent forms from the Protestant Reformation onward, specifically noting 19th century premillennial thought. I will then seek to trace elements of this view within the writings of the Patristics.⁸ Finally, I will conclude with an examination of relevant Biblical texts. Throughout this essay I will be contrasting the “kingdom of grace/kingdom of glory” view with “historic premillennialism.”

Behind Eschatology’ (Grand Rapids: Baker. 2009).

6 I have chosen this language drawing from relevant historic commentaries.

7 Here is where a point of clarification is necessary. I do embrace many elements of the kingdom that are now. In fact, in many ways this is precisely my point. Where I believe history and theology support my thesis is on this simplicity, for the inaugurated kingdom hermeneutic places so much emphasis on the physical manifestations here and now. Thus, there are hybrid positions that may be posited further between that of say, Russell Moore and the thesis of this essay. For a potential example, see “Graeme Goldsworthy, ‘The Kingdom of God as Hermeneutic Grid,’ *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* (SBJT 12:1 Spring 2008). p. 4. Accessed Online October 12, 2017 via Galaxie Journals.

8 Perhaps in future articles I will contrast this view more thoroughly from the other two views mentioned in this introduction, utilizing key Biblical passages.

“HISTORIC PREMILLENNIALISM”

Within this field of study, much of the research has relied on a particular stream of thought, specifically relying on the already/not yet paradigm first developed in seed form in the writings of C.H. Dodd and further developed by George Eldon Ladd. The uniqueness of this view was dependant on the concept that the kingdom in its messianic form was inaugurated at Jesus first coming. Ladd elaborates on this inauguration aspect of Dodd when he writes that he “conceives of the kingdom as the absolute, the ‘wholly other’ which has entered into time and space in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.”⁹ However, he makes it clear that Dodd did not go far enough in anticipating the future *eschaton* in the New Testament writings¹⁰, thus leading Ladd to develop an “already/not yet” paradigm. It is statements such as the following that clarify Ladd’s meaning:

Jesus power over demons was the disclosure that the powers of the Age to Come have invaded the present evil Age. It was the proof that the Kingdom of God, which belongs to age of the future when Christ comes in glory, has already penetrated this age.”¹¹

It is in Ladd’s overlap of the future *eschaton* of glory with Christ’s first coming that gives this “inaugurated eschatological” view its substance as well as its newness in kingdom interpretation, yet this perspective quickly became the

9 George Eldon Ladd, *The Gospel of the Kingdom: Scriptural Studies in the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1959.)p. 15.

10 For further elaboration on the continuity and discontinuity with Dodd and his “realized eschatology”, see, George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974.)pp. 56. It may be of note that Dodd is quoted quite frequently in Ladd’s theological work.

11 Ladd *Op cit.* p. 48

predominant view of the kingdom among scholars espousing a premillennial perspective. So pervasive in evangelical thought, it is widely considered to be the historic premillennial view of the Patristic writers and Reformational premillennialists. Thus it has been identified as "historic premillennialism," primarily in contrast with dispensational premillennialism.¹² Further, Ladd's views have given rise to various forms of "kingdom now" views within the Charismatic movement. It is Ladd's expression that "men may already experience the powers of The Age to Come"¹³ that has fuelled much of dominionist "kingdom now" expressions, specifically in Charismatic circles. For example, Wimber writes concerning Ladd, "I realized how his work on the kingdom of God formed a theological basis for power evangelism."¹⁴ This should be no surprise as Ladd was influenced by Dodd, a functional postmillennialist.¹⁵

However, the question may be raised whether this view is indeed worthy of its name "historic premillennialism," given recent clarification. Is it, in fact, the view of the early church fathers or even any premillennialist at the time of the Reformation?¹⁶ Some scholars, (though in favour of the developments by Ladd, Vos and others) recognize it as just that, a development. Moore favourably writes:

12 See "Craig L. Blomberg, Sung Wook Chung, eds. *A Case for historic premillennialism: An Alternative to 'Left Behind Eschatology'* (Grand Rapids: Baker. 2009).

13 *Ibid.*

14 John Wimber, Kevin Springer. *Power Evangelism* (Ventura: Regal. 2009). p. 19. I am aware that a quote does not necessitate a connection, but the consistency between interpretations is striking.

15 For a helpful analysis of Dodd's eschatological views, see "Anthony Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans. 1979). pp. 294-297." To call Dodd a "functional postmillennialist" is an exaggeration on my part, but in fairness his view on the *eschaton* was overtly present, even denying the second coming of Jesus. Though Ladd acknowledges disagreement, influence cannot be denied.

16 *Ibid.* See introduction.

And yet, following Ladd's lead, evangelical theology and biblical scholarship has made great strides over the past century toward the development of a Kingdom ecclesiology. Indeed, evangelical theology has moved toward a virtual consensus of the Kingdom as both "already" and "not yet," with the church as the initial manifestation of the Kingdom of God, thus eschewing such ideas as, on the one hand, the concept of the church as synonymous with the Kingdom, and, on the other, the concept of the church as a parenthesis in God's Kingdom program.¹⁷

One challenge in differentiating between "historic premillennialism" and the kingdom of grace/kingdom of glory paradigm is the idea of futurism. The resurgence of futurism in the 19th century has been rightly attributed to "S.R. Maitland, James Todd, and William Burgh"¹⁸ and possibly "the first scholar in relatively modern times who returned to the patristic futuristic interpretation was a Spanish Jesuit names Ribera"¹⁹ However, one's view of the interpretation of Revelation does not necessitate similarity, for both dispensationalists and historic premillennialists alike share this trait with the Patristics. The real question lies in the essence of the views at hand. As I progress through this article, the Futurist interpretation, while important, will be emphasized less than the real substance of the various kingdom views. I believe this is indeed a secondary issue to separation of grace and glory.

17 Russell D. Moore, Robert E. Sagers. "The Kingdom of God and the Church: A Baptist Reassessment," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology (SBJT)* 12:1 Spring 2008). p. 71 Accessed Online September 29, 2017 via Galaxie Journals.

18 George Eldon Ladd, *The Blessed Hope: A Biblical Study of the Second Advent and the Rapture* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956.) p. 37.

19 *Ibid.*

20 See also Wilkinson *Op cit.* p. 188-189 where a strong case for Manuel Lacunza is made via Irving.

POST REFORMATION

Three influential commentators of post reformation England are Matthew Poole, John Gill and John Bunyan. Gill and Bunyan were premillennialists²¹ while Matthew Poole was an amillennialist. However, all three described Christ's kingdom in the language of "kingdom of grace/kingdom of glory" with a particular note of division. It is this distinct division between the two phases of Christ's kingdom that sets their views apart from contemporary "historic premillennialism." Gill writes in his commentary on Matthew:

"the good seed are the children of the kingdom: they which are designed by the good seed, are such, for whom the kingdom of heaven is prepared, to whom it is bequeathed, and who are appointed to it; who are possessed of the kingdom of grace here, and are heirs of the kingdom of glory; and have both a meetness for it, and a right unto it, being the children of God by adoption, and that appearing by regeneration"²²

Yet, in terms of the kingdom of grace he makes it clear that "and concerning the kingdom of grace, which is spiritual and internal, and which lies not in external things, as meat and drink, but in righteousness, peace, and joy; and concerning the kingdom of glory"²³ And he further clarifies in his commentary on Revelation 1:

The saints are made "kings" by Christ; they are so now; they have received a kingdom of grace, which cannot be taken away; and they have the power of kings over sin, Satan, and the world, and all

their enemies; and they live and fare like kings, and are clothed like them, in rich apparel, the righteousness of Christ; and are attended as kings, angels being their lifeguards; and they will appear much more so hereafter, when they shall reign on earth with Christ a thousand years, shall sit upon the same throne, and have a crown of life and righteousness given them, and at last be introduced into the kingdom of glory. And they become such by being the sons of God, which power and privilege they receive from Christ, and so are heirs of God, and joint heirs with him, and by being united to him. And he also makes them "priests" to offer up the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, and those of a broken heart, and of a contrite spirit, and even their souls and bodies, as a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice unto God, by anointing and sanctifying them by his Spirit: and they are made such by him.

What is important to note is the simple division between the present *spiritual* aspects of Christ's kingdom vs. the coming glory. For Gill, the language of "*power over kings*" and "*clothed with rich apparel*" is to be understood as "*the righteousness of Christ*." Though one might argue that Gill sees overlap throughout his commentary, the difference between his words and Ladd's are striking, as Ladd says, "this deliverance is accomplished the power of the future kingdom of glory has come upon men in a secret, quiet form to work in their midst."²⁴ It is this subtle difference of language that separates the kingdom of grace/kingdom of glory paradigm from Ladd's inaugurated eschatology, or from Dodd's realized eschatology.

Poole²⁵ utilizes similar language concerning Matthew chapter 3:2. This further demonstrating

21 While some have argued Gill was a Postmillennialist or at least added Postmillennial elements, his commentary on Revelation, specifically chapter 20 makes it clear he espoused premillennialism.

22 John Gill, "Matthew 13:38" *John Gill Commentary* (electronic ed. Igor Apps.)

23 *Ibid* Acts 8:12

24 Ladd *Op Cit.* p. 67.

25 It must be noted that by this point in Poole's commentary Poole has passed away and the work was completed by various nonconformist editors. Nonetheless, the spirit and mindset of the earlier books he had completed remained consistent through the hand of the later commentators.

this simple division between the phases of the kingdom (first in Gospel grace, then of glory):

For the kingdom of heaven is at hand; that blessed state of the church (foretold by the prophets) under the Messiah, wherein God will exhibit his Son as the King in Zion, and exert his power and kingdom, both extensively, subduing all nations to the obedience of his gospel, and intensively, in all the administrations of his government; for the kingdom of heaven is **not to be understood here of the kingdom of glory, but of the kingdom of grace** (emphasis mine), in all the administrations of it. This passage containeth the argument upon which the Baptist in his sermons pressed, repentance and faith, and obedience to the will of God revealed.²⁶

And:

[k]ingdom of God; by which some understand the kingdom of his glory (as the phrase is used, Luke 18:24,25); others understand it of the manifestation of Christ under the gospel state, or the vigour, power, and effect of the gospel, and the grace thereof. By seeing of it, is meant enjoying, and being made partakers of it, as the term is used, Psalms 16:10 John 16:10 Revelation 18:7. The Jews promised their whole nation a place in the kingdom of the Messiah, as they were born of Abraham, Matthew 3:9; and the Pharisees promised themselves much from their observation of the law, &c. Christ lets them know neither of these would do, but unless they were wholly changed in their hearts and principles (for so much being born again signifieth; not some partial change as to some things, and in some parts) they could never have any true share, either in the kingdom of grace in this life, or in the kingdom of glory in that life which is to come. It is usual by the civil laws of countries, that none enters into the possession of an earthly kingdom but by the right of birth; and for the obtaining the kingdom of heaven, there must be a

new birth, a heavenly renovation of the whole man, soul, body, and spirit, to give him a title, by the wise and unchangeable constitution of God in the gospel, and to qualify him for the enjoyment of it.²⁷

Even Bunyan writes, "As the glory of the grace of God will, at this day, be wonderfully manifest in and over his city; so also at that day will be seen the glory of his power."²⁸ In Bunyan's case his language is valuable. For, his influences were undoubtedly contemporary Puritanism blended with the Reformer's doctrine before him (thus demonstrating his views weren't created in a vacuum). English writers such as he and Thomas Hayne for example, should be understood differently from such views as overtly influenced by Rabbi Elias, such as the German writer Johann Heinrich Alsted.^{29,30,31} Thus, Bunyan's millenarianism is best understood as a development, yet continuation of the Christian (reformation and pre-reformation) ideas before him.

Therefore, based on the language of these

27 *Ibid.* pp. 289-290.

28 John Bunyan, "The Holy City or New Jerusalem" *The Works of John Bunyan: Allegorical, Figurative, and Symbolical* (Glasgow: W.G. Blackie & Sons. 1853). p. 406.

29 Crawford Gribben. *The Puritan Millennium: Literature and Theology, 1550-1682* (Revised Edition) (Eugene: Wipf and Stock., 2008). pp. 22,144.

30 This differentiation must be noted, for though Owen, Gill etc. were Hebraists in their own right, the influence of Cabbalistic and mystical Jewish interpretations are found throughout Alsted's writings. Further, it is clear that Alsted was heavily influenced by metaphysical speculation that I believe was lacking in some of the English writers mentioned. For a discussion on Alsted and other metaphysicians see "Lynne Courter Boughton. 'Supralapsarianism and the Role of Metaphysics in Sixteenth-Century Reformed Theology' *Westminster Theological Journal* (WTJ) 48:1 Spring 1986).

31 Rabbi Elias' influence over Alsted may be in question, but it is generally accepted that Alsted maintained hermetic or occultic philosophies. How much Cabbalism or gnosticism influenced his millennialism is an inquiry worthy of further elaboration. For an introductory analysis see, Howard Hotson, *Paradise Postponed: Johann Heinrich Alsted and the Birth of Calvinist Millenarianism* (Dordrecht: Springer Science & Business Media, 2013)pp. 1-23.

26 Matthew Poole. *A Commentary on the Holy Bible: Volume III: Matthew-Revelation* (Peabody: Hendrickson. 2010) p. 13.

various authors taken together as a whole, two phases of Christ's kingdom may be identified: the kingdom of grace now (spiritual) and the kingdom of glory later³²

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BRITISH AND IRISH APOCALYPTICISM

As noted earlier, futurism rose to prominence in the 19th century.³³ A futurist interpretation was further developed by Darby and the early Plymouth Brethren.³⁴ It is in this century that a pronounced intersection and interweaving of prophetic and millennial ideals takes place. Surprising to many, Edward Irving lies at the centre of much of the debate. It has been widely accepted that Irving translated the work of Manuel Lacunza³⁵, entitled "The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty." While Irving remained a historicist, his influence upon 19th century Millennialism is real. Many have attempted at making connections between him and dispensationalism,³⁶ but interestingly, he may have influenced Reformed premillennial thought even more.

While noting the errors of Irving's Christology, Bonar recounts M'Cheyne's fondness for Irving.³⁷ Further, it must be noted

Bonar's acceptance of premillennialism vis-a-vis Edward Irving, for "From the time Dr. Bonar this mode of prophetic interpretation as taught by Irving, it dominated and complexed all his views."^{38,39} In turn, Bonar was part of a greater milieu⁴⁰ that shared a great interest in the Jews, their eschatology and most importantly their reception of the Gospel.⁴¹ This expectancy is further clarified when he writes "the fullness of the Gentiles, will be the signal for the judgments which are to usher in crisis of earth's history, and the deliverance of Israel, and the long expected kingdom."⁴²

Within Bonar's writings, it becomes increasingly clear that he holds neither the optimism of "historic premillennialism" nor the radical distinction of the growing dispensational movement (for he remained a covenantal writer). However, his acceptance of a pessimistic end to this age preceding the coming kingdom is very akin to the dispensational mindset of the time.

Bonar was not alone in this. J.C. Ryle, the celebrated Anglican Evangelical wrote:

It is more than probable that they apply to a second siege of Jerusalem, which is yet to take place, when Israel has returned to their own land - and a second tribulation on the inhabitants thereof, which shall only

32 The inclusion of these quotes is not to suggest there is no overlap to the various phases of the kingdom. The point being made here is that a simple and distinct difference between the here and now seems prevalent in the minds of these authors.

33 *Op cit.* Ladd. p. 37

34 *Op cit.* Wilkinson pp. 199-201.

35 *Ibid.* pp. 186 ff.

36 *Ibid.* p. 185.

37 Robert Murray M'Cheyne, Andrew Alexander Bonar *Memoir and Remains of the Rev. Robert Murray M'Cheyne: Minister of St. Peter's Church, Dundee* (London: Hamilton, Adams & Co. J. Nisbet & Co. And J. Johnstone & Co. 1846.) p. 25.

38 Horatius Bonar *Horatius Bonar, DD.: A Memorial* (London: James Nisbet & Co. 1889). p. 99.

39 *Op cit.* Ladd p. 36.

40 Here it must be understood that the prophetic milieu of the 19th century is completely inter-related. Most *ad-hominem* arguments levelled against specific writers of this era fail to see to understand this.

41 For a further description of the interrelated nature of the prophetic movement as it related to the Jews, see, Crawford Gribben, *Evangelical Millennialism in the Trans-Atlantic World, 1500-2000* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan. 2011). pp. 85-87.

42 Barry Horner, *Future Israel: Why Christian Anti-Judaism Must be Challenged* (Nashville: B&H Academic, n.d.) p. 10; H. Bonar, "The Jew" *The Quarterly Journal of Prophecy* (July, 1870):209-211.

be stopped by the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁴³

Here Ryle maintains a strong emphasis on the Jewish people, including but not limited to a time of tribulation at the close of this age. This is actually quite consistent with both "historic premillennialism" as well as dispensationalism; however, in his comments on the Lord's prayer he states:

By His kingdom we mean first, the kingdom of grace which God sets up and maintains in the hearts of all living members of Christ, by His Spirit and word. But we mean chiefly, the kingdom of glory which shall one day be set up, when Jesus shall come the second time, and "all men shall know Him from the least to the greatest."⁴⁴

And,

He shall come the second time as the King of all the earth, with all royal majesty. The princes and great men of this world shall themselves stand before His throne to receive an eternal sentence.⁴⁵

With even more clarity, Ryle urges his readers to understand that "so surely He shall come with clouds in glory, and reign on earth as king."⁴⁶ Ryle further explains "that Christ is to one day have a complete kingdom in this world, - that His kingdom **is not yet set up**, - but that it will be set up in the day of His return (emphasis mine)"⁴⁷ Here is where we must come back to an understanding of influence and historic context. Often various forms of covenantal premillennialism that are

43 John Charles Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: St. Matthew* (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1860), pp. 317-318.

44 *Ibid.* p. 51.

45 *Ibid.* p. 322.

46 J.C. Ryle. *Coming Events and Present Duties* (London: William Hunt and Company, 1867) p. 56

47 *Ibid.*

not dispensational in nature are equated with "historic premillennialism;" however, it must be noted that men like Ryle, Spurgeon and Bonar were well acquainted with earlier premillennial writers (long before Dodd and Ladd existed) and their language reveals and reiterates this common theme: The Lord's kingdom of grace is now, and primarily in the "hearts of all living members of Christ,"⁴⁸ while the kingdom of glory will arrive when Jesus returns *in glory*. The influence of earlier theologians, combined with these renewed emphases reveals their hermeneutic of the *eschaton* to be a continuation of the particular kingdom view of those before. The temptation might be to compare language of these writers with those such as Ladd, and find similarities, yet taking a step back, one can see a differing emphasis and greater discontinuity than Ladd. In contrast, Ladd, the author of "historic premillennialism" blends and morphs the two phases of the kingdom.

THE PATRISTICS

As in other eras, it is essential to consider the historic milieu when examining the early church fathers. Often one's view is superimposed upon their writings without taking note of the issues they were dealing with and the questions they were attempting to answer. Otherwise, one can make the Patristics fit into any sort of theological construct one desires. Earlier, I noted that the "kingdom of grace/kingdom of glory" eschatological view is actually simpler

48 Note that to some extent this understanding of the present form of the kingdom is what Goldsworthy argues against, yet it also must be understood that Goldsworthy specifically had in view the moderately quietistic/Keswick influences on modern evangelicalism when he wrote "The principal focus becomes 'Jesus living in me,' rather than the historic gospel of Jesus in his life, death, and resurrection for me," and "The evangelical propensity to focus on the work of God in us is sometimes expressed as the reigning of Jesus in our hearts." See Goldsworthy *Op cit.*

than both “historic premillennialism” and dispensationalism. This is where I believe the Patristics support the thesis of this article.

The assumption made is that “The already/not yet structure of the Kingdom ... was not new, ... in the Patristic era, Justin Martyr, for example, appealed to the already/not yet Kingdom fulfilment as his hermeneutical key in his famous dialogue with Trypho.”⁴⁹ But I believe a careful examination of their writings demonstrates a greater dichotomy.

In a brief comment on Isaiah 66, the author of 2 Clement speaks of the “day of his appearing”⁵⁰ and “the unbelievers will see his glory and might... when they see the kingdom of this world belongs to Jesus.”⁵¹ Further, the author of 1 Clement writes of the kingdom as yet future at the time of the appearance saints “who will be revealed when the kingdom of Christ visits us.”⁵² Yet for the author μετανοιας χαρις seems to be the emphasis of the present age.⁵⁴ H. Wayne House also noted future kingdom expectancy in the author of 2 Clement as “Clement of Rome wrote, ‘Let us expect, therefore, hour by hour, the kingdom of God . . . since we know not the day of the appearing of God.’”⁵⁵

In like manner Eusebius recounts the ideas of Papias who “said there would be a corporeal

reign of Christ on this very earth”⁵⁶

Justin Martyr writes concerning the prophet Isaiah that

“[s]ome have reference to the first advent of Christ, in which He is preached as inglorious, obscure, and of mortal appearance: but others had reference to His second advent, when He shall appear in glory and above the clouds”⁵⁷

For Justin, there is a very clear line of demarcation between the two advents. Though he does describe Jesus power over demons, he continues to demonstrate the differing purposes for these two advents “that He shall be first humble as a man, and then exalted.”⁵⁸ This first advent of humiliation and salvation, then of glory is what Justin uses to demonstrate the fulfilment of the prophets’ words in the person and work of the Messiah Jesus. Though Justin Martyr does interpret the promises to Abraham (Gen. 12ff.) as something that will be obtained by the Church:

and along with Abraham we shall inherit the holy land, when we shall receive the inheritance for an endless eternity, being children of Abraham through the like faith.⁵⁹

There is a yet future emphasis.

49 Moore *Op cit.* p. 75.

50 Michael W. Holmes, ed. “2 Clement,” *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and Translations* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007) p. 161.

51 *Ibid.*

52 I believe the emphasis by the author on unbelievers seeing “δοξαν αυτου και το κρατος” at the time of His coming is further evidence of the future nature of the glory of Messiah.

53 “1 Clement,” Michael W. Holmes, ed. *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and Translations* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007) p. 113.

54 *Ibid.* p. 54.

55 H. Wayne House. “Premillennialism in The Ante-Nicene Church” *Bibliotheca Sacra* (BSAC 169:675 July 2012). p. 274. Accessed Online October 12, 2017 via Galaxie Journals.

56 Eusebius, *Eusebius Ecclesiastical History* trans. by C.F. Cruse (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998) p. 105. The benefit of such a quote is to reinforce the idea of glorious premillennial coming with subsequent reigning of the saints clearly separate from this present age.

57 Justin Martyr “Dialogue with Trypho” Schaff, Roberts, Donaldson eds. *Ante-Nicene Fathers Volume 1: The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus* (electronic ed. CCEL). p. 968.

58 *Ibid.* p. 1016.

59 Justin Martyr, “Christians are the Holy People Promised to Abraham. They Have Been Called Like Abraham” *Dialogue with Trypho Trans.* (electronic ed. Crosswire Bible Society).

BIBLICAL EXAMINATION

In dealing with relevant biblical texts, it must be insured that context is taken into consideration to avoid mere “proof-texting” based on shared terms. The question must be asked, “What do these words mean?”

The overall premise that I have set forth in this article is quite simple. The historic eschatological view is less complex than proponents of the various modern viewpoints would have you believe. The kingdom is best understood in terms of spiritual and soteriological now (grace), while Jesus's second coming inaugurates a visible, physical manifestation of the kingdom (glory) later. I believe the conclusions of those cited earlier is consistent with the simplicity of the biblical text.

For example, in 1 Peter chapter 1, Peter⁶⁰ uses grace and glory in regard to both the first and second coming of Christ. While holiness in the midst of trials and suffering are laid out as applicable themes, I agree with Williams when he writes, “ who are being kept by the power of God for an eschatological salvation that has invaded this present evil age and that will be revealed on the last day.”⁶¹

It is within this eschatological context, then, that the language of grace and glory are used almost interchangeably, yet still maintain a definite and distinct locus of meaning. Note Peter's language in verse 11, “προμαρτυρόμενον τὰ εἰς Χριστὸν παθήματα καὶ τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας” Peter draws on the Messianic prophetic motif in both letters, utilizing the language of

Isaiah 53 and the suffering Messiah. Here we see suffering, then glory. Peter just noted the prophetic implications of the grace that would come at Jesus' first coming in verse 10, before proceeding to the noted suffering and the following glory.

Now, it must be observed, that for Peter the sufferings of Christ are connected to the salvific plan of grace (specifically born out in chapter 3)

This motif is then continued, though with some interchanging of these elements are play, Peter continues this theme:

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; 13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation (1 Pet. 4:12 NASB).”

In the Gospel accounts, the glory is often set on the future elements of the *eschaton*. Two such examples are found in Matt. 24:30 “And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (AV),” and in Matt. 25:31 “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory (AV).”⁶² This concept is further elaborated in Luke 19:11 “Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately.”

A first century Jew likely would have understood these statements as having specific

⁶⁰ I assume Petrine authorship here, yet to defend this point is outside the scope of this article.

⁶¹ Jarvis J. Williams. “Sermon: ‘Don't Be Surprised When You Suffer For Christ, But Rejoice!’” *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* (SBJT 18:1 Spring 2014). p. 145. Accessed Online February 6, 2018 via Galaxie Journals.

⁶² Compare Matt. 19:28 and Rev. 20:4-6 and a future reign (kingdom language) while Christ rules on His glorious throne (language of glory) is almost indisputable. The only questions that remain are the classic debates on the length and type of millennial kingdom.

application toward the glorious messianic kingdom in which they longed,⁶³ yet the Gospel of John states, “grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, (Jn. 1:17 AV).”

Finally, in Rom. 5:20-21 we read “The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (NASB)”

Here, Paul speaks of the gospel in terms of grace “reigning.” This language alludes to a kingdom motif, specifically in terms of the gospel of grace reigning through righteousness. However; Paul, as his teaching progresses to the present circumstances of the believer, makes this poignant statement:

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the **glory** that will be revealed in us. 19 For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and **glory** of the children of God (Rom. 8:18-21 NIV emphasis mine).

While it is true that the subject of kingdom and reigning are not specified here, a distinct break between the present realm of suffering with the next phase of glory is brought forth by the apostle.

63 For an interesting look at the views of the kingdom prevalent in Second Temple Judaism see “David Flusser, *Judaism of the Second Temple Period: Sages and Literature* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 2009). p. 259. It is interesting to note that Flusser places Jesus squarely within the “kingdom now” views of the sages as opposed to the apocalyptic zealots. I contend that Jesus’ spiritual kingdom falls within the sphere of the sages views, while his kingdom of glory fits within the eschatological expectancy of the zealots.

Finally, I close with the following passage.

Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound! Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. The saying is trustworthy, for:

If we have died with him, we will also live with him;

if we endure, we will also reign with him;

if we deny him, he also will deny us;

if we are faithless, he remains faithful—

for he cannot deny himself

(2 Tim. 2:8-13 ESV)

While I admittedly string quotations to demonstrate certain language used by the various authors mentioned, as well as giving brief examinations concerning biblical texts, I believe taking a step back we can see that a simple, clear eschatology may be the standard within historic orthodoxy, and that divergent eschatological schemes have simply over complicated plain exegesis. In reviewing just a handful of relevant biblical texts, this simple kingdom of grace/kingdom of glory paradigm so often quoted throughout history seems evident. However; further evaluations are needed to ascertain if the kingdom of grace/kingdom of glory paradigm merits a place as a (if not the) stand-alone Biblical eschatological hermeneutic.

Zach Doppelt

Zach Doppelt is a Pastor and Church Planter. He resides with his wife and four children in Roanoke, VA (US).