

Lesson Four

A.D. 70

The Old Disappears, the New Appears

The Temple and Jerusalem were destroyed in full accordance with God's will and purpose for the world.

*"And He who sits on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.'
And He said, 'Write, for these words are faithful and true'" [Revelation 21:5].*

At Pentecost, in AD 30, God did not make all things new. At AD 70, God did not make all things new. But during the time between AD 30 and AD 70 God was "making" (**present tense**) all things new. It was a gradual, moving process that spread itself over a Hebrew generation. The "making new" occurred during forty-years, a duration of time more important than the Exodus. Yet, many Christians are ignorant of it.

The Greek word translated "new" (Revelation 21:5) is one of **two** Greek biblical words translated "new." In English, "new" means one thing, but in the Greek language, the two words mean something different. The first Greek word is **NEOS** and means "new in respect of time, or that which is recent" (see W.E. Vine's *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, Vol. 3, page 110). NEOS carries the idea of "not having long been in existence." NEOS is used of the conversion of sinners ("put on the new" Col. 3:10).

But in Revelation 21:5 the Greek word **KAINOS** means not "new in time" as in "recent," but **new** as to **form or quality**, or new in something that has a different nature from what is contrasted as old (see W.E. Vine's *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, Vol. 3, page 109).

Principle: When God says that He was making all things "new," He was making all things "new" in respect to *form, quality, and nature*. God was taking the "old" things of the Mosaic system and changing their "*form, quality and nature.*" In the process of being changed, the quality of the things of the new covenant was much better than the quality of the things of the old covenant. T

I. The "New" includes a New Temple of God, New Worship of God, and New People of God.

All things in the Old Covenant was changing from temporal (Jerusalem) to eternal (New Covenant). From AD 30 to AD 70 God was "making" (present tense) all things new; two illustrations will suffice.

A. The Temple.

The physical, natural temple was being made new (**KAINOS**) – the temple of God was changing. It was changing its form into a spiritual temple. It was changing its nature into a spiritual, unseen temple. It was changing from the inferior quality of the seen temple into a much better quality in the unseen temple of God. God's dwelling place became identified with His people, not a building. "And don't you know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?" (I Cor. 3:16). The physical, natural temple was being made new (**KAINOS**) – the temple of God was changing.

B. The Law

"A new (**KAINOS**) commandment I give to you that you love one another as I have loved you" (John 13:34-35). This is a commandment of a different kind. The Old Law focused on the form and function of ritualistic sacrifice, festivals and feasts, and the regulated dietary, civil, and ceremonial law. But this is a "new kind" of commandment. It's a focus on the heart, not the hands. It is a law that causes us to think of the sacrificial love of Christ "as I have loved you" while at the same time causing us to think about our own sacrificial love for others (I Corinthians 13). Everything about God's agreement with national Israel was being "made" new (**KAINOS**) during (AD 30-AD 70).

II. Unfortunately, the Destruction of Jerusalem (Natural Israel) Has Been Downgraded Theologically.

Few Christians understand the importance of AD 70 because they see no significance to it in the Bible. N.T. Wright says, "One of the main reasons, I suppose, why the obvious way of reading Mark 13 and Matthew 24 and Luke 21 been ignored for so long must be the fact that in a good deal of Christian theology *the fall of Jerusalem has had no theological significance* (Jesus and Victory of God, p. 344).

The consequences of the destruction of Jerusalem are extremely more important than we have realized. Certainly, Jesus predicted that the city would be destroyed in the lifetime of some living in that generation, but He also said His "coming" and the "end of the age" would be at the same time. (Please read the following: Matthew 24:34; Matthew 16:27-28; James 5:8-9; and I John 2:17-18). Some use these verses to "prove" the Bible is not inspired and that Jesus is not who He says He is. They say that Jesus has still not come; therefore, when He said that some would not die till he had come (and since they are dead), that he was mistaken. They say that James also was mistaken, for "the coming of the Lord" has not happened yet, even though he said it "draweth near" two thousand years ago. And most certainly John was mistaken, for he said the "world is passing away," yet we still live in/on it. Could it be that "the end of the world" that was "drawing near" was the Old Covenant way of life, and that God was making a New way of life that was spiritual and eternal?

III. The End of the Age That Is Coming Was the End of the Old Covenant World in AD 70.

"And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him, saying, Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age" (Matthew 24:3). Every New Testament book was written prior to the end of the Old Covenant age, including the four Gospels where the most precise descriptions/prophecies of that end of the world are given. The writers of the books of the "New Testament" did not write about 70 A.D. as a past event, because all of the books were written by AD 68 (Lesson Six will be a detailed explanation of this).

"Are there still not things 'to come'"? Are there not future events predicted? Yes, there are. But the Bible reveals very little about these things. "The meek will inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5). N.T. Wright teaches (and I'm persuaded) that the afterlife will be a renewed, transformed planet earth called the New Heavens and New (**KAINOS**) Earth in Isaiah 65 – 66 and in Revelation 21-22.

While there are passages that refer to a future return of Christ and general resurrection (John 5:25-29; Phil 3:10, 20-21), 1 Cor. 15:20-26 is the passage that details the **future** general resurrection. "But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at His coming those who belong to Christ. Then **comes the end**, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father **after destroying every rule and every authority and power**. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death." This "coming" or "the end" in I Cor. 15 is NOT Christ's judgment upon Jerusalem or Matthew's "end of the age" mentioned earlier. This "coming" is Christ's physical return at the end of world history. **The end of the Old Testament age is not the only end that Bible prophecy predicts and discusses.** At the end of history, a physical resurrection of the dead will occur. **This is a physical resurrection, not a spiritual resurrection.** Though Christ was given all rule and authority at His resurrection and ascension, and now reigns from God's right hand (Eph 1:20-23), this is only inaugurated authority. As the writer of Hebrews explains (Hebrews 2:7-9), what was inaugurated in AD 70 (the kingdom) will be consummated at the end of history as all enemies are "put under His feet" and Christ reigns.