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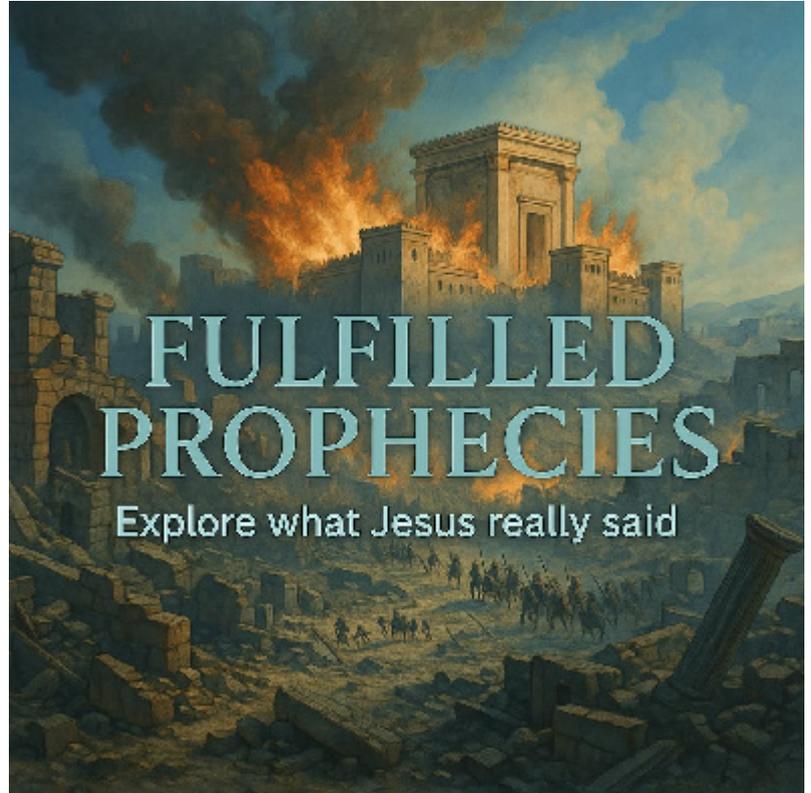
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Transition Period - The Transition Period



By Dan Maines

The Transition Period

The Transition Period began on Pentecost in A.D. 30, with the birth of the Church, and it ended at the destruction of the Jewish Temple in A.D. 70, which ended the Old Covenant Age. During the Transition Period the Church was growing from infancy to maturity. God worked in the growing Church through miraculous gifts and spoke to His prophets to bring His Church to maturity. A spiritual house was being built in which God would dwell. This was a time of change and growth, it was a time of transformation from the Old to the New. The old things of Judaism, the Old Covenant, faded out very slowly, and the New

Covenant gradually phased in. It was a changing of the ages.

All through the New Testament we see these two ages in contrast: "this age" and the "age to come":

"Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

Matthew 12:32 NASB

Jewish theology maintains that time was divided into two great periods, the Mosaic Age (olam hazeh) and the Messianic Age (olam haba). The Messiah was viewed as one who would bring in a new world. The period of the Messiah was, therefore, correctly characterized by the Synagogue as "olam haba," which means: "the world to come."

The word "come" at the end of the verse is the Greek word *mello*, which means: "about to be." We could translate this: "the age about to come" (in the first century) So the writers of the New Testament saw the "olam haba" as very near:

far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. Ephesians 1:21 NASB

So, the New Testament speaks of two ages, "this age" and "the age to come." The understanding of these two ages and when they changed is fundamental to interpreting the Bible. The ages didn't change over night, there was a Transition Period of forty years. During this forty years the "this age" was fading away and "the age to come" was developing.

The New Testament writers lived in the age that they called "this age." To the New Testament writers the "age to come" was future, but it was very near, because "this age" was about to

end:

Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 1 Corinthians 10:11 NASB

Paul said very plainly that the end of the ages was coming upon "them" (the first century saints). "This age" was about to end.

We now live in what was to the first century saints the "age to come." When most Christians read in the New Testament and see the words "the age to come," they think of a yet future (to us) age. But the New Testament writers were referring to the Christian Age. We live in what was to them the "age to come" (the New Covenant Age).

Since the "this age" of the Bible ended in A.D. 70 with the destruction of the Temple and the parousia, we now live in the "age to come." And since the "this age" ended in A.D. 70, there are things in the Bible that applied to the saints who lived in the Transition Period, but do not apply to us. Paul was writing to saints during the Transition Period.

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