

charge. All quotations are from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.

JESUS SAID, "BEWARE OF FALSE PROPHETS"

"INTERNATIONAL CHURCHES OF CHRIST" is a group that arose out of what was known as the "Crossroads Movement," a "discipling ministry" begun by Chuck Lucus about 1967 in Gainesville, FL. Later "Crossroads" under the leadership of Kip McKeen in Boston, MA morphed into the "Boston Movement," and began to spread rapidly due to their rigid control methods of converts; new "disciples" were strictly ruled by whomsoever "discipled" them.

Often those who had been baptized scripturally on the confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (cf., Luke 1:32; Matt. 3:17; 16:16; John 1:34,49; 11:27; Acts 8:37) were required to be re-immersed on a confession that, "Jesus is Lord."

It was insisted that only one "Church of Christ" should exist in each city. Thus you had the "Nashville Church of Christ," even though there were over one hundred churches of Christ in Metro Nashville; the Atlanta Church of Christ," etc. In 1993 the Boston movement adopted the name: "International Church of Christ," (ICC) and moved its headquarters to Los Angeles, CA.

Eventually Kip McKeen gave up the headship of the movement and left. At this present time the ICC by their own admission has lost membership and income, thus they are scrambling to shore up the movement. This they are doing by going to places in the U.S. and abroad and persuading churches of Christ and Christian Churches to sign up with them. Their report for 2005 listed 543 congregations that had joined their movement from 159 countries (www.incocinfo.org/contacts.html). Their web page shows leadership groups among them in India using horns and drums. Those working on a foreign field should alert the local brethren to the "cultishness" of this group. (JW)

JEFF WALLING'S SPEECH

The above named brother spoke at a Campus Ministry Seminar in Memphis in 1995. Thanks to brother Don Blackwell of Summerville, SC, that speech has been put in CD format. It demonstrates in brother Walling's own words, his ridicule and crude humor as he deals with sacred things. He took a word from Paul's writings and made it appear that it applied to a part of the apostle's anatomy. He clearly shows his antipathy to seeking the old paths of the gospel. If you would like a copy of the CD and a

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ATHEISM'S ULTIMATE PROBLEM

"EXPLAINING EXISTENCE"

Jon Gary Williams

Could there have ever been a point at which absolutely nothing existed? Could there have ever been non-existence? Is non-existence possible? The obvious answer to these questions is: If there ever was absolute non-existence, the only logical conclusion is that there could never be anything. Or, one must accept the notion of something coming from nothing, *i.e.*, "existence arising from non-existence."

However, surprising as it may seem, many who hold the philosophy of atheism feel compelled to answer yes to these questions; for atheism, by its very nature, demands that non-existence is as possible as existence. Why? Because if existence is merely an accident (a basic requirement of atheism) then non-existence would have to be the logical alternative. Therefore, atheists are forced to agree that if existence never happened, the only thing left is non-existence. They face a very, very serious problem.

On one hand, the logical prediction of atheistic materialism is the possibility that at some point there could have been non-existence, a point at which there was nothing, nothing at all. Yet, on the other hand, the idea of absolute nothingness leads to a logical dead end. To begin with zero, ends with zero.

So, atheists find themselves in a precarious circumstance. First, they realize their materialistic view (that existence is an accident) forces them to concede that ultimately there could have been non-existence. Yet, second, they know the idea of something coming from nothing is totally illogical, contradicting even common sense.

Hence, squeezed between these two mutually exclusive positions, what are atheists to do? Believe it or not, many have launched out on a "something from nothing" venture, a venture into absurdity. But, the painful truth for atheism is either accept the something from nothing theory or face the idea that something is eternal.

However, atheists find it very difficult to deal with the concept of eternal existence, that is something which never had a beginning. Why is this so difficult? Simply because atheists adhere to only a material

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(physical) existence. Yet, how can matter, of itself, be eternal? There is no logic in this. How is it possible for lifeless matter to somehow, somehow be self-existent, never having had a beginning? This really makes no sense and atheists realizes it.

But atheists also know there is an alternative offered by many to the question of what it is that could be eternal; that is, something not confined to the natural, something beyond the natural, something supra-natural. The alternative? Mind! However, for atheists, entertaining the idea of an eternal mind is unacceptable, for this infers the existence of an eternal intelligence. To them this will never do and must be rejected at all cost.

Where does this leave the atheists? For them only one avenue is open, but one that is logically impossible; existence coming from non-existence or something coming from nothing. Yet, for atheism there is really nowhere else to turn.

Consequently, many have actually taken the giant step of attempting to rationalize the irrationality of existence coming from non-existence. Really? Yes! And this is not altogether new. Over two decades ago the something from nothing fantasy was seen cloaked in a so-called scientific format. In 1984 *Scientific American* published the following statement:

“...probably the most revolutionary model is the notion that all matter and energy in the observable universe may have emerged from almost nothing. The inflationary model of the universe provides a possible mechanism by which the observed universe could have evolved from an infinitesimal region. It is then tempting to go one step further and speculate that the entire universe evolved from literally nothing” (p.128).

So, there it is, existence from non-existence. Presumably, this is supposed to erase their dilemma? Hardly. It only shows the foolish extent to which some will go in their defense of atheistic materialism.

In that short paragraph, describing a so-called inflationary model, notice these ambiguous remarks: “probably,” “notion,” “may have,” “possible,” “could have,” “tempting” and “speculate.” Notice also in the first sentence the universe came from “almost nothing,” however, in the second sentence the universe came from “literally nothing.” Now which is it, almost nothing or nothing? Such absurd and contradictory rhetoric shows the silliness and weakness of atheistic rationale.

The atheist claims there is no God. The fact of the matter is, this is something he cannot know. And, since to him there can be no consciousness after death, he could not know it then either. So, even if his view is right he could never know it! What an unenviable position of going through life promoting a view that, even if he were right, he would never know it! But this is the vulnerable and fatalistic outlook facing the atheistic mind. How true, indeed, the statement twice made by the Psalmist, *“The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God”* (Psa. 14:1; 53:1).

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Brentwood, TN 37027.

IS THE THOUSAND YEAR REIGN TO BE LITERAL?

Jim E. Waldron

The “Left Behind Series” is apocalyptic fiction by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins. It consists of a series of books that have been made into movies, videos and games. It is pure and simple premillennial hype - not to say hysteria. The writers claim that they give a “more literal” version of the Revelation, but in truth it is a misuse of that great book, especially chapter 20, to teach gross errors like the rapture and the literal one thousand year reign of Christ on earth. The best defense against such foolishness is to understand the Revelation in its Biblical context. On that point consider the following five questions taken from the commentary called, *The Lamb/The Lion*:

499. Of whom is the dragon a symbol? The text (Rev. 20:2) tells us plainly that he is “the devil and Satan,” “the serpent of old,” who disguised himself as a snake and deceived our mother Eve (Genesis 3:1-7). Often doctors of divinity and other theologians who teach in theological seminaries, divinity and graduate schools profess to be Christians, but they show themselves to be infidels when it comes to believing what is written. For example, many are fond of denying the historical nature of the first eleven chapters of Genesis.

One of their ploys to undermined the faith of the young people who sit at their feet is to say something on this order, “Adam and Eve may have been historical people; we just do not know.” Such is a calculated effort to create doubt and skepticism. Paul did not confess to any such ignorance about the old devil, who took the form of a snake in the garden. That apostle affirmed to the saints in Corinth, “But I fear, less somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ” (II Corinthians 11:3). Such seminaries ought to be called cemeteries, because the cynicism of the professors buries the faith of the youth, who come before them.

500. Discuss the binding of Satan. We must note the exact way John said that Satan was bound for we know he is not bound in a literal or complete sense. This we know because Peter wrote, “the devil walks about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour” (I Peter 5:8). The text before us (Rev. 20:3) says, “so that he should deceive the nations no more.” The word “nations” is the Greek, *ethnos*, and it has reference to the various and sundry tribes (ethnic groups) of Gentiles all over the planet at the close of the apostolic age. With the gospel completely revealed Satan’s supremacy over “all peoples, nations and languages” (See Daniel 7:14) was no longer unchecked. This curtailing of Satan’s complete dominance of the “nations” is symbolized as his being bound throughout the 1000 years.

501. What does the 1000 years symbolize? Just as other figures in this text, Rev. 20:1-4, (the key, the chain, the dragon and the thrones) are symbols so also is the one thousand years. It is a symbol of the period of time from the close of the apostolic age when the gospel was completed until a very short period just prior to the second coming of Jesus..

502. What was to happen at the end of the 1000-year reign? The text (Rev. 20:3) says Satan “must be released for a little while.” This tells us that for a very brief season just before the end of all things the old serpent will again have sway over the nations as he did prior to the world-

wide proclamation of the gospel.

510. When Satan is released from his prison after the 1000 years what will he do (Rev. 20:7-8)? (1) Satan’s binding was the restraint of his power over the nations of the earth, which resulted from the spread of the gospel during the apostolic age and its continual proclamation by those raised up in succeeding centuries. (2) Near the end of time he will again have brief control over the nations as he did before the completed gospel was spread abroad in the age of the apostles. (3) He will, through deceit, seek to destroy “the kingdom of Christ and God” (Ephesians 5:5) by using the nations of unbelievers. In other words, Satan with a passion hates the church of Christ, which is Jesus’ kingdom on planet earth, and he will, near the end of time, seek to finally remove every last vestige of it from this realm below.

At this point, someone may suggest that such control of the nations would be a sign of the end, but that will not be the case. We know that our Lord, in contrast to the signs he gave for the pending destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. (Matthew 24:3-34; Luke 21: 20), stated that no one would know the time of His second coming (Matthew 24:36), because no sign would be given. Someone may ask, how could Satan regain such control and it not indicate the time for the consummation of all things?

The answer to that is found in the words of our Lord, “But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be” (Matthew 24:37-39).

In other words the brief time in which Satan will have regained his authority over the nations will be so ordinary in the worldly affairs that humanity will not perceive of the impending destruction from heaven. The apostle Paul made this very point, “for you know perfectly well that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say peace and safety! Then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape” (I Thessalonians. 5:2-3).

There are 576 questions with answers in *The Lamb/The Lion*. Write for your copy: Randall Standefer at P. O. Box 123, Dunlap, TN 37327. No

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