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# Sanctification, Ecstasy, and War : the Development of American Pentecostal Eschatology, 1898-1950

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SANCTIFICATION, ECSTASY, AND WAR:  
THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN PENTECOSTAL ESCHATOLOGY  
1898-1950

by  
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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CMA	Christian Missionary Alliance
COGIC	Church of God in Christ
PAOC	Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada
PAW	Pentecostal Assemblies of the World

## INTRODUCTION

### **The Case for Pentecostal Historicity**

The study of the origins of the Pentecostal movement has been afflicted by both the casual surveyor and the sympathetic observer. Eager to draw a clean timeline, the casual surveyor is often content to date the origin of Pentecostalism to January 1, 1901.<sup>1</sup> On this date, a group of bible school students in Topeka, Kansas claimed to experience “The Baptism in the Holy Spirit,” which was evidenced by speaking in other tongues. Similar to the first day of Pentecost in the book of Acts, a single date suffices to mark the birth of the movement. In an effort to validate the movement’s supernatural origin, sympathetic observers often downplay or ignore the role that historical figures played in Pentecostalism’s emergence. Racial factors also contribute to this revisionist history. The mass of white Pentecostals have historically overlooked or denied the interracial origin of their unique form of Christianity, instead, as Iain MacRobert claims, “...pointing heavenward when challenged on the question of origins.”<sup>2</sup> Critical historians must look beyond such simplifications in an effort to determine the terrestrial factors that gave rise to this movement. A careful investigation of the theological and social situations in which Pentecostalism emerged reveals both the innovations of this movement, and the debt it owes its forebears.

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<sup>1</sup> Larry Martin makes such an assertion in his preface to the series in *The Words that Changed the World: The Azusa Street Sermons* (Joplin, MO: Christian Life Books, 1999), 11.

<sup>2</sup> Iain MacRobert, *Black Roots and White Racism of Early Pentecostalism in the USA* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1988), 76.

When it appeared in full force in 1906, Pentecostalism was marked by both innovation and continuity with the religious climate of its day. Its emergence created an either-or reaction within the Holiness movement, whose adherents either flocked to what they perceived as the natural progression of their beliefs, or strongly denounced the movement. Whatever Pentecostalism was, it was neither completely new, nor a simple rephrasing of contemporary practices and beliefs.

### **Eschatology at the Center of Early Pentecostal Thought**

The study of Pentecostal theology has traditionally focused on speaking in tongues, or glossolalia. While this phenomenon was certainly an important component of Pentecostalism, it was not, during the first decade of the movement, the center of the Pentecostal message. Perhaps due to the unique insistence on this experience did glossolalia overshadow the true focus of the movement.<sup>3</sup> As Robert Mapes Anderson writes, “The only aberrant feature of the Pentecostal myth was speaking in tongues.”<sup>4</sup> For this reason, the theological integrity of Pentecostalism has often been sacrificed at the altar of glossolalia. Culprits of this crime have come from both inside and outside the movement. To understand correctly the appeal and the form of early Pentecostal theology, one must identify its central theme. Early Pentecostalism’s strongest message, and the force that, more than any other drove it forward, was eschatology. Though influenced by the dispensationalist theories of John Nelson Darby and the Scofield

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<sup>3</sup> Robert Mapes Anderson in *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 96-7, argues that while the Second Coming was the center of early Pentecostal teaching, it was replaced by greater emphasis on glossolalia as eschatological hopes waned beginning around 1908.

<sup>4</sup> Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited*, 81.

Reference Bible,<sup>5</sup> early Pentecostals were not beholden to any one eschatological system. The key feature was simply the imminent return of Christ. George B. Studd, a prominent member of the Azusa Street Mission, referred to “Jesus is coming so soon” as the “watchword” that was uttered “when God blessed any one.”<sup>6</sup> In 1914, the Pentecostal convention in Hot Springs, Arkansas, declared “Jesus is coming soon” to be “the prophecy which has been predominant in all the great outpouring.”<sup>7</sup> Historian D. William Faupel writes, “The second coming of Jesus was the central concern of the initial Pentecostal message.”<sup>8</sup> Especially in its early years, Pentecostalism was a millenarian movement, focused intensely on the premillennial Second Coming of Christ. All other beliefs and practices were peripheral to this core message. Eschatological hopes gave meaning to Pentecostals’ ecstatic experiences,<sup>9</sup> their rejection by the larger Christian community, and their often low social status.<sup>10</sup>

Chapter One will explore the development of Pentecostal eschatology from its embryonic stages in the late Holiness movement, through the early innovations of the Apostolic Faith Movement and the first broad Pentecostal revival at Azusa Street, and finally to its mature articulation at the end of the first decade of the twentieth century. These four periods will be explored through the work of four representative leaders,

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<sup>5</sup> John Nelson Darby (1800-1882) was a British evangelist most known for his dispensational eschatology, which famously contributed the notion of a secret Rapture. His theories were popularized by C.I. Scofield (1843-1921) in the Scofield Reference Bible, first published in 1909. The Darby-Scofield system became known as “classical” dispensationalism, which is how the term will be used here.

<sup>6</sup> Cited in Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited*, 80.

<sup>7</sup> Cited in Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited*, 79.

<sup>8</sup> D. William Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel: The Significance of Eschatology in the Development of Pentecostal Thought* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 20.

<sup>9</sup> Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited*, 92.

<sup>10</sup> Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited*, 199, 228-9; Edith Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 89.

Martin Wells Knapp, Charles Fox Parham, William J. Seymour, and D. Wesley Myland, respectively.

Through the writings and sermons of these four key figures, the main themes and developments of early Pentecostal eschatology can be traced. Martin Wells Knapp's work in 1898 represents the Holiness theology that had an immediate influence on early Pentecostals. Charles Fox Parham's writing in 1902 demonstrates the earliest theological articulation of the Pentecostal movement. William J. Seymour's sermons from 1906-1909 provide the voice for Pentecostal theology as it grew into a national phenomenon. Finally, D. Wesley Myland's work in 1910 displays the self-conscious theology of the movement following the fervor of Azusa Street.

Chapter Two will trace Pentecostal eschatology as the movement coalesced into denominations with distinct statements of faith. By World War I, the movement divided itself roughly into three major camps, Wesleyan, non-Wesleyan,<sup>11</sup> and Oneness. The Church of God in Christ and Assemblies of God will provide the lens through which to view the Wesleyan and non-Wesleyan groups, respectively. The Oneness movement will be addressed as a whole, due to its more complex denominational history. For each of these groups, eschatology remained a foundational tenet upon which preaching and ethics was built. The respective theological, social, and racial concerns of these groups, however, altered the intensity and nuance of their distinct eschatological messages.

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<sup>11</sup> While it may be said that all Pentecostals are Wesleyan broadly speaking, the designations used throughout this work refer specifically to the respective groups' stance on Wesley's teaching of sanctification, particularly as it was taught by the dominant Wesleyan Holiness movement of the late-nineteenth century. "Wesleyan" therefore refers to the acceptance of sanctification as a separate work of grace in the believer's life following conversion. "Non-Wesleyan" refers to the rejection of this view of sanctification.

## CHAPTER 1

### CHARACTERS, CHARISMA, AND THE END OF THE AGE

#### **The Study of Early Pentecostal Eschatology through Four Leaders**

On January 1, 1901, a small group of students at Charles Fox Parham's Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas claimed to experience a unique outpouring of God's Spirit. The manifestations of this outpouring were in themselves not unusual in Holiness and revivalist circles of that time, which often included speaking in tongues (glossolalia), laughing, dancing, or singing "in the Spirit," and feelings of ecstasy and intense closeness with God. Yet the meaning given to this experience was entirely new under Parham's instruction, and centered on and contributed to Parham's eschatological beliefs. Like all spiritual innovators, Parham did not operate in a vacuum, and was strongly influenced by the social and religious currents of his day—most importantly the Wesleyan Holiness movement that emerged in the wake of the Civil War. It would be over a decade after the Topeka outpouring before Pentecostal denominations emerged and began to officially articulate their beliefs. The origins and development of early Pentecostalism are therefore best investigated through the charismatic leaders who contributed most to the movement.

Martin Wells Knapp emerged in the late nineteenth century as an influential Holiness thinker. His hermeneutical style, his premillennial beliefs, and his propensity for racial integration at once distanced him from his Methodist roots and anticipated much of the later Pentecostal ethos. In particular, his *typological* approach to biblical

interpretation had a profound impact on later Pentecostal thinkers. Of particular importance to this study is Knapp's premillennial doctrine as discussed in his work *Lightning Bolts from Pentecostal Skies; or, Devices of the Devil Unmasked*. His interaction with William J. Seymour of the Azusa Street revival, and his mission work in Cincinnati, will provide insight into Knapp's influence on the emerging Pentecostal movement.

Charles Fox Parham was of greater significance than any other single source for the development and articulation of Pentecostalism. Although estranged from the movement less than a year after the Azusa Street outpouring began, Pentecostalism owes a debt to Parham's thought and practice that it has yet to fully appreciate. Parham may be seen not only as one important intersection between the Methodist Holiness tradition and Pentecostalism, but also as the main innovator in a spiritual movement known for its novelty.

Although Parham is rightly identified as the single most influential personality of the early Pentecostal movement, it is William J. Seymour who stands center stage in the Pentecostal drama of the early twentieth century.<sup>1</sup> Seymour's connections to the other characters in this investigation give him a dominant role in the plot of early Pentecostalism, especially in light of the all-important events at the Azusa Street Mission in 1906. It was under Seymour's leadership in Los Angeles that Parham's doctrines of

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<sup>1</sup> Pentecostal scholars have not reached consensus as to whether Parham or Seymour is rightly identified as the founder of Pentecostalism. James R. Goff in *Fields White Unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 1988) argues for Parham to hold this title, while Iain MacRobert in *Black Roots and White Racism* argues for Seymour. It might be prudent to advocate a mediating stance, identifying Parham as the doctrinal founder and Seymour as the social founder of the movement. See also Walter J. Hollenweger, "Black Roots of Pentecostalism," in *Pentecostals After a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, ed. Allan H. Andersson and Walter J. Hollenweger, (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 42-3.

Spirit-baptism, glossolalia, and eschatology were promulgated on a wider scale. Although Parham was still the source of much of what happened at Azusa Street, it took a more irenic and humble character to see the movement through to its next phase. For these reasons, Seymour's eschatological views, as expressed in his sermons, will be considered alongside the other leaders' more thoroughly articulated systems.

While Pentecostalism as a popular movement grew exponentially under Seymour's leadership, it was up to others to articulate a more complete and mature theology. Widely recognized as the classical statement of early Pentecostal faith, D. Wesley Myland's work, *The Latter Rain Covenant*, provides insight into the foundations of this emerging, yet vulnerable movement. Written prior to the General Council of 1914, this work stands as a landmark of mature Pentecostal faith as yet unhindered by denominational allegiance. At the center of this series of sermons was the Pentecostal motif of "Latter Rain," which created for Myland the eschatological framework for the Pentecostal experience.

**Martin Wells Knapp: *Lightning Bolts from Pentecostal Skies: or Devices of the Devil Unmasked***

The influential Holiness preacher Martin Wells Knapp (1853-1901) personifies the intersection of Holiness and Pentecostal thought. Knapp was born to a farming family in Michigan. Although his father was a Methodist class leader, as a child Knapp had little interest in the church. His wife Lucy Glenn, whom he met while studying at Albion College, was a strong Methodist, and helped lead Knapp to a conversion experience around 1877. Sensing a call to preach, Knapp joined the Methodist Episcopal Church and served a number of churches before a sanctification experience in the 1880s led to his

growing involvement in the Holiness movement. In 1897, Knapp founded the International Holiness Union and Prayer League, and began facing reprimands from his denomination, which was distancing itself from the Holiness movement.<sup>2</sup> Chief among the denomination's complaints were Knapp's interracial meetings and his premillennial eschatology. In Cincinnati in 1900, Knapp came into contact with William Seymour, the black preacher trained by Parham who would oversee the Azusa Street revival in 1906, and on whom Knapp made a significant impact.

Written in 1898, *Lightning Bolts from Pentecostal Skies* used Pentecostal terminology to speak of the judgment, punishment, and purification of the church. Although predating Pentecostalism proper, Knapp's work was obsessed with Pentecostal language, themes, and images. The "sham religion," and pervasive sin of the church convinced Knapp that the primary work of the Holy Spirit was to

cause the multitudes to rush from the old candle-lighted stage coaches of forms and ceremonies and dry creeds and crooked experiences into the brilliantly lighted, swiftly propelled cars of full salvation..."<sup>3</sup>

The Pentecostal experience was a corporate portent and corrective to the sin and lethargy of God's people. According to Knapp, the Spirit was at work in order to "startle," "awaken," and "shock."

But the work of the Spirit was also more than a divine response to human frailty; it was an integral part of God's over-arching plan.

Someone has said there is a scarlet thread running clear through the Bible, and that this thread is the blood of Jesus. There is another thread running through it. It is the white one of the promise of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Ghost.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Gordon Melton, ed., *Religious Leaders of America*, 2nd. ed., (Detroit: The Gale Group, 1999), s.v. "Knapp, Martin Wells."

<sup>3</sup> Martin Wells Knapp, *Lightning Bolts from Pentecostal Skies; or Devices of the Devil Unmasked* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Office of the Revivalist, 1898.), 7.

<sup>4</sup> Knapp, *Lightning Bolts from Pentecostal Skies*, 13.

For Knapp, the significance of the Pentecostal experience was on par with the work of Calvary itself.

Knapp's eschatology was fueled by practical pastoral concerns. He firmly believed that the church behaved most morally, lovingly and evangelistically when expecting Christ's imminent return. "[He] who constantly expects the coming of the Bridegroom," he wrote, "will see that no sin-stains be found on bridal robes, and that slumbering souls be awakened and prepared."<sup>5</sup> Postmillennialism, lamented Knapp, put Christ's return at a distant future, preceded by humanity's spiritual and moral progression.

[Satan] has succeeded in filling men's minds with vague, misty notions of a post-millennial coming, which magnifies the church and human achievements, attributing to it the work which only our returning Lord can do...<sup>6</sup>

Based on biblical evidence that the early church was an expectant church, Knapp taught that expectancy was an indispensable element of the Christian experience. "This expectancy," wrote Knapp, "characterized the early Church, and as the church to-day becomes more like her Pentecostal model, we find similar longing and looking taking possession of her."<sup>7</sup> Knapp made a distinct connection between the Pentecostal experience and the expectancy of Christ's imminent return, claiming that premillennialism occupied a "vital place" in Pentecostal doctrine.<sup>8</sup> This intense "longing and looking" was absent in the postmillennial eschatology that was still common in conservative Holiness groups and non-Holiness Methodism.

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<sup>5</sup> Knapp, *Lightning Bolts from Pentecostal Skies*, 137.

<sup>6</sup> Knapp, *Lightning Bolts from Pentecostal Skies*, 136.

<sup>7</sup> Knapp, *Lightning Bolts from Pentecostal Skies*, 136.

<sup>8</sup> Knapp, *Lightning Bolts from Pentecostal Skies*, 137.

In his discussion of premillennialism, Knapp adopted John Nelson Darby's basic model of historical dispensations. The current dispensation, called "The Pentecostal Period," begins with the coming of the Spirit in Acts 2 and ends with the Rapture of the church. The Rapture occupies a place of extreme importance in Knapp's theology, for it is only those who are so "caught up" who will escape the horrors of the Tribulation. Only those who are truly sanctified will take part in the Rapture. Knapp went on to declare that Pentecostal baptism "is essential to final glorification."<sup>9</sup> He claimed that it is impossible for Christ to quicken the physical body of one in whom the Spirit does not dwell.

Sanctification, the central teaching of the Holiness movement, was equated with the Pentecostal baptism by Knapp. He wrote, "All who have this baptism have Pentecostal sanctification; all who have Pentecostal sanctification have this baptism."<sup>10</sup> The sanctification not only enriched the present Christian experience with all its attendant gifts, joys, and empowerment, but also ensured that one be numbered among God's people upon Christ's return. "Fearful will be the fate of those who are found without the wedding garments of holiness and whose lamps are not filled with the oil of the Spirit."<sup>11</sup>

In the closing pages of the chapter "The Pentecostal Expectancy of Christ's Return," Knapp ran a flowing list of the "advantages [of premillennialism] over the idea that defers Christ's coming to misty, indefinite future."<sup>12</sup> Among these are its harmony with Scripture, its "incentive" for holiness, "watchfulness," and warning others, and its rejection of undue humanistic optimism. In hailing premillennialism, Knapp brought

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<sup>9</sup> Knapp, *Lightning Bolts from Pentecostal Skies*, 23.

<sup>10</sup> Knapp, *Lightning Bolts from Pentecostal Skies*, 33.

<sup>11</sup> Knapp, *Lightning Bolts from Pentecostal Skies*, 153.

<sup>12</sup> Knapp, *Lightning Bolts from Pentecostal Skies*, 153.

together his concern for holiness, his hermeneutic tendencies, and his experience of the world around him.

While much of what Knapp taught was common Holiness doctrine dressed in Pentecostal language, his identification of the early church as a Spirit-filled *and* expectant church is both innovative for his time and instructive for this study. The Pentecostal movement shared with Knapp the twofold insistence upon the normative quality of the early church and the obsession with the Second Coming. In Knapp's thought, these themes are not unrelated, but correlative. This logic would strike a chord with Knapp's Holiness audience, and with the developers and adherents of the Pentecostal movement. Knapp made a logical and passionate case for premillennial eschatology from a Holiness perspective, dispelling the myth that it detracts from personal morality while arguing for the supreme agency of God. His preoccupation with the nature of the Rapture led him to discuss at length what the truly sanctified, Pentecostal-baptized life looked like. Knapp addressed exactly those issues that came to dominate the discussion in Pentecostal circles in the coming decade, yet his answers to them were found lacking. Searching for "uniform evidence" of the Pentecostal baptism became the driving force of early Pentecostalism, which was indebted to Knapp for articulating the issue in its eschatological significance.

The most direct historical link that can be asserted between Knapp and Pentecostalism is his interactions with the black preacher William Seymour in Cincinnati in 1900-1902. Knapp led interracial meetings, and gave a forum for both blacks and whites in his influential periodical *God's Revivalist*. The connection between premillennialism and Christian unity had a profound impact on Seymour and the

movement he led in Los Angeles. While Knapp's work cannot be asserted to have *led* to the advent of Pentecostalism, he clearly represents that branch of the Holiness movement most pregnant with the Pentecostal seed.

**Charles Fox Parham: *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, and *The Everlasting Gospel***

The person who capitalized most on the pentecostal implications of the Holiness tradition represented by Knapp was Charles F. Parham (1873-1929). Born in Muscatine, Iowa, to a farming family, Parham experienced a religious conversion at age 13. He was active in the Methodist church, leading meetings as early as age 15. He went to Southwest Kansas University to study for the Methodist ministry. Although he did not graduate, he received his Methodist preaching license in 1893. He was never content with denominational "shackles," however, and resigned from the church two years later to enter independent Holiness ministry. He claimed to preach a "full gospel" that had not had a hearing since the early days of Christianity.<sup>13</sup>

Parham burst onto the stage of the Pentecostal drama following the outpouring of the Spirit at his Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas, in the first few days of 1901. According to Parham, he had advised his students to search the scriptures for the "Bible evidence" of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. When his students unanimously declared that glossolalia was this sign, he and his students set themselves to the task of attaining the experience. The result was Agnes Ozman speaking in tongues on January 1, 1901, followed by similar experiences among other students, and eventually, by Parham himself. In his two major works, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness* (1902) and *The*

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<sup>13</sup> Edward L. Queen II, Stephen R. Prothero, and Gardiner H. Shattuck, Jr., eds., *Encyclopedia of American Religious History*, revised ed., (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 2001), s.v. "Parham, Charles Fox," by Gardiner H. Shattuck.

*Everlasting Gospel* (1911), Parham's views on the church, eschatology, and salvation are discussed in light of this dramatic event.

Parham prided himself on eschewing the influence of institutional Christianity. "Preachers are born, not manufactured,"<sup>14</sup> he wrote. Churchly institutions and leaders do not mediate Pentecostal experience. "This sealing is not accomplished by man or water baptism, or the following of certain leaders," said Parham, "but is accomplished by the Baptism of the Holy Ghost as recorded in Acts 2."<sup>15</sup> Neither do such institutions mediate biblical interpretation. He claimed to interpret the Bible "with no preconceived ideas, with no knowledge of what creeds and doctrines meant, not having any traditional spectacles upon the eyes to see through..."<sup>16</sup> This defensiveness seemed to indicate that Parham was aware that many of his exegetical theories were controversial.

Eschatological themes were scattered throughout his books. Parham's entire theology was eschatological in the sense that he only discussed issues of significance in the grand biblical narrative. Leslie D. Callahan is correct in claiming, "Judging by the number of pages he wrote and the sermons he gave, nothing seemed more vital to Parham than the end of time and the prophecy concerning it."<sup>17</sup> Parham's sermons sometimes read like a commentary on Revelation. This heavy reliance on scripture did not overshadow Parham's distinct voice and vision, however. He made a number of unique contributions to the study of biblical prophecy, some which were integrated into the Pentecostalism, and some which were completely ignored.

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<sup>14</sup> Charles F. Parham, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness* (1902; reprint, New York: Garland, 1985), 11.

<sup>15</sup> Parham, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, 27.

<sup>16</sup> Parham, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, 12.

<sup>17</sup> Leslie D. Callahan "Redeemed or Destroyed: Re-evaluating the Social Dimension of Bodily Destiny in the Thought of Charles Parham," *Pneuma: The Journal for the Society of Pentecostal Studies* 28.2 (2006): 204.

Martin W. Knapp declared that those who were baptized in the Spirit would escape the horrors of the Tribulation, and wrote a long list of attributes that accompanied the Spirit-sealed life. Parham held similar views on the importance of Spirit-baptism for avoiding the wrath of the end times,<sup>18</sup> yet was not convinced that its evidence could be found in a loose configuration of life virtues or ecstatic experiences.

Now all Christians credit the fact that we are to be the recipients of the Holy Spirit, but each have their private interpretations as to His visible manifestations; some claim shouting, leaping, jumping, and falling in trances, while others inspirations, unction and divine revelation.<sup>19</sup>

For Parham, there is no room for equivocation. Spiritual ecstasy alone had no eschatological import. In a theological move that would come to characterize Pentecostalism, Parham showed preference for narrative over hortative in his biblical source material. Donald Dayton has referred to this “Pentecostal hermeneutic” as a move from the Pauline theology of magisterial Protestantism to a new reliance upon Lukan texts.<sup>20</sup> From Acts 2, 9 and 19 he declares that tongues was “the only Bible sign given as the evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost.”<sup>21</sup>

The imminence of Christ’s return added intensity to Parham’s teaching on Spirit-baptism. Parham had biblical and pastoral reasons for anticipating the imminent parousia, and for urging this expectancy upon believers. Like Knapp, he believed that expectancy is a necessary trait of the Spirit-filled believer.

There are many converted and sanctified people who are not looking for or expecting their Lord’s return, and no one who does not have this hope in them will purify themselves, even as He is pure, thereby escaping all the things that shall come upon the earth.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Parham, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, 26.

<sup>19</sup> Parham, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, 27-8.

<sup>20</sup> Donald Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1987), 23.

<sup>21</sup> Parham, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, 38.

<sup>22</sup> Parham, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, 124.

Adopting the basic outlines of premillennialism, Parham insisted that postmillennialism was both unscriptural and morally counterproductive. “The Post Millennial theory of Christ’s coming” he wrote, “has little effect to better the condition of the Church.”<sup>23</sup> By expecting Christ at any moment, the church would not only improve morally, but would also be incited to seek assurance of safety in the harsh end times.

The activity of the Holy Spirit in the church not only safeguarded those awaiting the Second Coming, it in itself signified the last days. “The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is especially given now as a sealing. Therefore the sureness of the last days.”<sup>24</sup> With God as the supreme mover of history, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit both signified and is signified by the end times. In this climate of anxiety concerning personal destiny, Parham offered the comforting promise that “the sealed ones escape the plagues and wraths of the last days,”<sup>25</sup> with “tongues as the authoritative evidence”<sup>26</sup> of this sealing.

Glossolalia operated for Parham in a twofold manner, both ways eschatological.

There are two things, then, that come to you in Pentecost: The power for the witnessing in your own or any language of the world in this world-wide missionary effort—for this Gospel of the Kingdom must be speedily preached to every nation, *as a witness only*, and we need for that purpose the sign of believers and the sign to unbelievers—and last and best of all, it seals you unto the day of redemption.<sup>27</sup> (italics added)

Not only did the gift of tongues provide authoritative evidence of the sealing of the Spirit and the escape from the wrath to come, it also served to fulfill the end times imperative of the evangelization of all nations. Motivated more by the unfolding of prophecy than

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<sup>23</sup> Parham, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, 124.

<sup>24</sup> Parham, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, 32.

<sup>25</sup> Parham, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, 26.

<sup>26</sup> Parham, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, 35.

<sup>27</sup> Charles F. Parham, *The Everlasting Gospel*, (1911; reprint, New York: Garland, 1985), 69.

concern for those who have not heard the gospel, Parham insisted upon evangelism to speed Christ's return.<sup>28</sup>

While Parham's discussion of "sealing" the Bride can be seen as a continuation of the issues raised by Knapp, his specific timeline for eschatological events bore much less affinity with his Holiness contemporary. Parham's chronology and cast of characters was complex even by the popular dispensationalist standards of his day. He painted a picture that was not always internally consistent, nor did it give adequate explanations of some of its most distinct characteristics. Mixing British Israelism, dispensationalism, Zionism, and Quakerism, Parham devised an eschatology that was truly his own. For him, biblical imagery was rarely metaphorical, and he assigned a literal counterpart to every fantastical image of the Apocalypse. In order of blessedness, Parham listed four categories of the "saved:" the saints, the Church, the Bride, and the Man-Child. The Bride and the Man-Child were increasingly exclusive subsets of the Church, and it was only these who through Spirit-baptism escape the wrath to come. The explanations of these different groups were, as Douglas Jacobsen admits, "haphazard." Jacobsen writes, "The distinctions between these groups were distinctions among those who were already members of the Christian elite."<sup>29</sup> It seemed, however, that it is only the Man-Child that participates in the Rapture.<sup>30</sup> The Rapture occupied a less pivotal role for Parham's drama, and its common significance in initiating the end of the age was replaced by the redemption of believers. Other aberrant features include Parham's belief that Anglo-

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<sup>28</sup> For more on the distinction between "converting" and "evangelizing" the world, see Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel*, 21.

<sup>29</sup> Douglas Gordon Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit: Theologies of the Early Pentecostal Movement* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 44.

<sup>30</sup> Parham, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, 90.

Saxons were descendents of the lost Ten Tribes of Israel, and his belief that the wicked do not experience eternal torment, but complete annihilation.

The finer points of Parham's eschatology may have been lost on average Pentecostal adherents, but a few of its features survived not only as doctrinal points, but as central forces of the movement. Parham's eschatology seems to be as much influenced by his Pentecostal experience as by his general penchant for prophetic speculation. These elements that captured the imagination of his students in those fateful first days of 1901 would also foretell the thrust of Parham's legacy for the Pentecostal movement. While it was widely agreed that the baptism in the Holy Spirit enabled one to escape the wrath of the end times, there was less consensus on how one could immediately recognize this baptism in one's self and others, until Parham and his students proclaimed glossolalia to be precisely the evidence they sought.

### **William J. Seymour: Selected Sermons**

As a theologian, William Seymour (1870-1922) is not known as an innovator, epitomizer, or scandal-maker. Yet the central place he occupies in the story of early Pentecostalism requires that his theological views be taken seriously. Seymour was born in Centerville, Louisiana, the son of freed slaves. Little is known about his childhood. He moved to Cincinnati in 1900, where he became involved in the Holiness movement, and soon began wrestling with a calling to preach. He was particularly influenced by the interracial meetings of the Revivalist Chapel, a downtown mission led by Martin. W. Knapp, and The Evening Light Saints, a Holiness restorationist group led by Daniel S.

Warner. After a bout with smallpox, Seymour made the decision to enter the ministry. He was ordained by The Evening Light Saints in late 1900.<sup>31</sup>

Knapp influenced Seymour's ideas on both eschatology and ecclesiology. Knapp's premillennial views squared with Seymour's pastoral concern. From Knapp Seymour learned to use the message of Jesus' imminent return to urge his audiences to faithfulness. Likewise, Knapp's interracial ministry in Cincinnati shaped the landscape of early Azusa Street. Knapp's immense influence on Seymour's ministry was rivaled, however, by Charles Parham.

While serving the Houston area as an itinerant preacher, Seymour learned of Parham's teaching on the Spirit. Seymour enrolled in Parham's Houston Bible School, where he learned Parham's distinct teaching of glossalalia as the initial evidence for Spirit-baptism. After less than a semester, Seymour accepted an invitation to preach at a mission in Los Angeles. Parham was disappointed that Seymour was not setting out to work among the blacks of Houston, but blessed Seymour in the venture nonetheless. When Seymour arrived in Los Angeles, the mission to which he had been sent objected to his Pentecostal teachings, and he began leading services in the home of one of his few supporters. This small gathering quickly outgrew its setting, and the group moved into an abandoned African Methodist Episcopal church on 312 Azusa Street. This site would become the pilgrimage destination for a generation of Pentecostals, and all major Pentecostal denominations in America would later trace their roots to the revival that continued for three years at Azusa Street.

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<sup>31</sup>Edward L. Queen II, Stephen R. Prothero, and Gardiner H. Shattuck, Jr. eds., *Encyclopedia of American Religious History*, revised ed., (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 2001), s.v. "Seymour, William Joseph" by Gardiner H. Shattuck.

Seymour's eschatology bore the distinct imprint of both Knapp and Parham, yet in both cases it worked in service to his specific pastoral concerns. In basic structure, he accepted the premillennial Second Coming, with the moral implications it implied.<sup>32</sup> In his published sermons, five aspects of his eschatology emerge as fruitful for this discussion.

First, Seymour was convinced that Jesus was coming soon. As a warning to the unconverted, an admonition to the unsanctified, and an invitation to the un-Spirit-baptized, Seymour constantly reminded his flock of the imminence of Christ's return. "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!" said Seymour, "O the time is very near. All the testimonies of His coming that have been going on for months are a witness that He is coming soon."<sup>33</sup> Seymour taught that the expectancy of the Church was a barometer of her faithfulness. Those who look for the coming of Christ will be those for whom Christ's descent is a blessing; those who "are not looking for the return of their Lord... will be found in the same condition as the five foolish virgins."<sup>34</sup> Seymour's eschatology was wrapped in his understanding of the work of the Spirit. The outpouring moved individual hearts to expect Christ's return, and signified a shift in the grand narrative. "Now we are living in the eventide of this dispensation," he declared, "when the Holy Spirit is leading us, Christ's Bride, to meet Him in the clouds."<sup>35</sup>

Second, "baptism in the Holy Ghost" was a theme that pervaded Seymour's sermons. For Seymour every topic, from money, to marriage, to atonement occasioned a reference to this all-important event in the believer's life. Seymour promulgated

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<sup>32</sup> Martin and Seymour, *The Words that Changed the World: Azusa Street Sermons*. (Originally printed in *Apostolic Faith*, 1906-1908; reprint, Joplin, MO: Christian Life Books, 1999), 81-2.

<sup>33</sup> Martin and Seymour, *The Words that Changed the World*, 45.

<sup>34</sup> Martin and Seymour, *The Words that Changed the World*, 44.

<sup>35</sup> Martin and Seymour, *The Words that Changed the World*, 62.

Parham's basic teaching on tongues speech. "So, beloved," preached Seymour, "when you get your personal Pentecost, the signs will follow in speaking with tongues as the Spirit gives utterance."<sup>36</sup> Seymour's teaching came not only from the theories of his teachers, but from his own experience as well. Although he moved to Los Angeles before he had experienced Spirit-baptism (which concerned Parham), by the end of his first year at the Azusa Street Mission, he was able to speak boldly of his own experience.

Third, Seymour declared that Spirit-baptism gained one access into the elite group known as the Bride of Christ, who, by virtue of their Spirit-baptism, avoid the plagues of the end times. It is only members of the Bride who are caught up in the Rapture and who enjoy the eschatological marriage feast.<sup>37</sup> While the Spirit-baptized believers are not the only ones who will be saved, Seymour suggested that it will go especially well for this group when Christ returns. "Above all, we want to get the oil, the Holy Ghost. Every Christian must be baptized with the Holy Ghost for himself. Many poor souls in that day will be awfully disappointed."<sup>38</sup> Because they lack Spirit-baptism, the post-Rapture Christians will have to endure the Tribulation and will likely be martyred.<sup>39</sup>

Fourth, Seymour identified the Bride as being a subset of the sanctified Church. Although his groupings were not as complicated as that of Parham, he seems to have accepted Parham's basic assertion that Spirit-baptism represents matriculation into an elite category of believer. "There will be many that will be saved but will not be full overcomers to reign on this earth with our Lord."<sup>40</sup> Seymour reiterated a biblical analogy of which Parham was fond. In the end times scheme, Christ will seek for himself a Bride

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<sup>36</sup> Martin and Seymour, *The Words that Changed the World* 110.

<sup>37</sup> Martin and Seymour, *The Words that Changed the World* 46.

<sup>38</sup> Martin and Seymour, *The Words that Changed the World*, 46.

<sup>39</sup> Martin and Seymour, *The Words that Changed the World* 46.

<sup>40</sup> Martin and Seymour, *The Words that Changed the World*, 95.

“among His kindred,”<sup>41</sup> that is, the sanctified. The type for this is found in the Old Testament story of Isaac’s betrothal to Rebecca. Abraham’s servant Eliezer was instructed to retrieve a bride for Isaac from among Abraham’s kin. Noting Rebecca’s virginity, Seymour marked a parallel to the “purity” of the sanctified soul. Seymour resolutely declared that baptism of the Holy Ghost gains one entry into the preferable state as the Bride. “He is seeking a bride among His brethren, the sanctified.”<sup>42</sup>

Finally, Seymour insisted that Spirit-baptism has the added eschatological significance of “endowment with power.” Along with Parham and over against Knapp, Seymour declared that Spirit-baptism cannot be attested to by a laundry list of virtues or experiences. “Many people today are filled with joy and gladness, but they are far from the endowment of power.”<sup>43</sup> He further differentiated the sanctified from the Spirit-baptized:

There is a great difference between a sanctified person and one that is baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire. A sanctified person is cleansed and filled with divine love, but the one that is baptized with the Holy Ghost has the power of God on his soul and has power with God and men, power over all the kingdoms of Satan and over all his emissaries.<sup>44</sup>

Nor was this “power” a vague, unfocused force. It was intrinsically tied to evangelization, for which tongues were in service. “Every man and woman that receives the baptism of the Holy Ghost is the bride of Christ. They have a missionary spirit for saving souls.”<sup>45</sup>

Yet Seymour’s break with Parham was signified by setting tongues in perspective.

“Tongues are one of the signs that go with every baptized person, but it is not the real

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<sup>41</sup> Martin and Seymour, *The Words that Changed the World*, 57.

<sup>42</sup> Martin and Seymour, *The Words that Changed the World*, 58.

<sup>43</sup> Martin and Seymour, *The Words that Changed the World*, 51.

<sup>44</sup> Martin and Seymour, *The Words that Changed the World*, 108.

<sup>45</sup> Martin and Seymour, *The Words that Changed the World*, 115.

evidence of the baptism in every day life...”<sup>46</sup> This declaration revealed Seymour’s concern for personal edification over doctrinal formulations. He was much more concerned with the unity, spiritual power, and victorious life that came with “personal Pentecost.” While he accepted Parham’s basic schema of “bible evidence” regarding Spirit-baptism and its eschatological significance, he did not endorse Parham’s theology in its entirety. Seymour saw in the Pentecostal experience a unique opportunity for Christian unity that empowered missionary activity and signaled Christ’s return.<sup>47</sup> The distinctions between Parham and Seymour show the tension between glossolalia on one hand, and unity and power on the other that were each to be the legacy of the Pentecostal movement.

#### **D. Wesley Myland: *The Latter Rain Covenant***

D. Wesley Myland (1858-1943) is distinct in a story full of unconventional characters. Myland initially received a call to ministry from his mother, who laid hands on him and dedicated him to ministry on her deathbed. For a time, he was content to work in the family retail business. As the business began to fail, however, he turned to preaching, beginning his ministry as a Methodist. Many life tragedies and illnesses led him to a more robust faith, however, which he found in the Christian Missionary Alliance. He joined the CMA in 1890, although he attempted to remain on good terms with his Methodist colleagues. In 1891, Myland claimed a religious experience that he called “the beginning” of his baptism in the Spirit. The consummation of this event came

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<sup>46</sup> W.J. Seymour, “The Church Question,” *The Apostolic Faith* (Los Angeles) 1 (January 1907), 2.

<sup>47</sup> Martin and Seymour, *The Words that Changed the World*, 107.

in 1906, when he claimed to experience the “fullness of Pentecost.”<sup>48</sup> Although neither his conversion nor his Spirit-baptism was associated with Azusa Street or any of the major leaders of the Pentecostal movement, he authored the work that many early Pentecostals would claim as one of the most articulate expressions of the faith.

*The Latter Rain Covenant* had its genesis in a series of lectures given by Myland at a convention at the Stone Church in Chicago in 1909. William Piper of the Stone Church said the work “ought to be a required part of the curriculum of every really Pentecostal school.”<sup>49</sup> Although Myland never visited the revival at Azusa Street, a few years after the revival, Myland’s treatise was something of a focusing lens for the disparate groups across the country that had been birthed by Azusa.

To a greater degree than Parham or Seymour, Myland’s theology and preaching were shaped by his personal experiences. Myland and George Floyd Taylor were the first to publish book-length expositions of Pentecostal theology following the events at Azusa Street. In contrast to Taylor’s logical precision, Myland insisted that God dealt with each person differently. Douglas Jacobsen writes, “Myland approached theology as an art.”<sup>50</sup> Previously outspoken against the doctrine of divine healing, Myland’s own healing in 1888 of paralysis probably related to a stroke caused him to have a change of heart and denomination. Myland joined the CMA in 1890, a decision based in part on the organization’s stance on divine healing. When the CMA parted ways with the Pentecostal movement in 1912, Myland left the organization. Myland was most concerned with being in the midst of what he sensed to be God’s movement, and for this reason was perhaps

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<sup>48</sup> Douglas Jacobsen, ed., *A Reader in Pentecostal Theology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 71-72.

<sup>49</sup> Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 112.

<sup>50</sup> Jacobsen, *A Reader in Pentecostal Theology*, 12.

the most thoroughly “Pentecostal” thinker in this study. He eschewed the detailed theologies of Spirit-baptism, sanctification, and healing that were often preached in Pentecostal circles. He believed that God maintained sovereignty and prerogative in dealing with humans; God may work with each believer as God chooses.

Despite his reluctance to subscribe to scrupulous doctrines, Myland freely incorporated the dominant Pentecostal eschatology into his thinking. Like other Pentecostal thinkers, he believed that Jesus was coming soon, and that the imminent Second Coming was signified by the Pentecostal experience itself, as well as by international political events, and biblical interpretation. With little exegesis or explanation, Myland accepted and propagated the teachings of premillennialism current in the Pentecostal movement. While eschatology was not the focus of Myland’s theology—he was much more concerned with the individual experience of Holy Spirit—it permeated his entire message.

The title of Myland’s major work, “The Latter Rain Covenant” implied a dispensationalist view of history that had a clear beginning and end. For Myland, the end was imminent. He declared that Pentecost recorded in Acts 2 was precisely the former rain that necessitated the latter rain, which was being brought about in his time. There was not one historical Pentecost, but two, and the second had immediate eschatological significance. “Now we are in the Gentile Pentecost;” said Myland, “the first Pentecost *started* the church, the body of Christ, and this, the second Pentecost, *unites* and *perfects* the church unto the coming of our Lord.”<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> D. Wesley Myland, *The Latter Rain Covenant*, (1910; reprint, Springfield, MO: Temple Press, 1973), 34.

Myland grounded his “latter rain” teaching firmly in scripture, with Deuteronomy 11:10-21 as his cornerstone passage. He interpreted the “latter rain covenant” established with the Israelites at the foot of the Promised Land in three ways: “the literal,” referring to the actual rainfall upon Palestine, “the typical,” referring to the individual Christian experience, and “the prophetic” (or dispensational), referring to the grand narrative of God’s actions in history. Myland said of this prophetic application,

[It is] in the preparation of God’s people in the different ages, thus bringing in the perfect age when there shall be what this Latter Rain Covenant eventuates in, the perfect millennial age, ‘the days of heaven on earth.’<sup>52</sup>

Just as the physical latter rain prepares the final crops for harvest, the spiritual latter rain “is to ripen the *spiritual crop*, the Bride.”<sup>53</sup> Like Parham and Seymour, Myland viewed the Bride as a subset of a greater throng who will be saved.<sup>54</sup> The personal experience of the Spirit took on dispensational significance through the power of the latter rain metaphor.

Along with Parham, Myland spoke of a strict differentiation between Israel and the Church, one being the “terrestrial” bride and the other the “celestial.” Like Parham, Myland fully accepted the notion that Israel’s returning to Palestine signified the last days, and in conjunction with the Latter Rain outpouring of the Spirit, marked the dawn of the eschaton.

We have literal Israel returning to their land at the same time that the literal latter rain is coming to its normal fall upon that land. This together with the spiritual latter rain falling upon God’s spiritual Israel today, betokens in a remarkable way that the closing days of the Dispensation are upon us.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Myland, *The Latter Rain Covenant*, 23.

<sup>53</sup> Myland, *The Latter Rain Covenant*, 116.

<sup>54</sup> Myland, *The Latter Rain Covenant*, 86.

<sup>55</sup> Myland, *The Latter Rain Covenant*, 106.

Myland articulated the timeline of the eschaton with less finesse but no less vigor. By this time in Pentecostal circles, as in the majority of conservative revivalist groups, premillennial theories were taken for granted,<sup>56</sup> and exegesis was done in deference to these core principles. Myland is a perfect example.

Now you see right following this outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the “latter rain” time, is the gathering of God’s people, this quickening of His people, bringing them into unity for His last work, and immediately following that comes the tribulation. Don’t you see that the tribulation comes before ‘the great and terrible day of the Lord?’ ‘The day of the Lord is the *epiphany* when Christ comes back *with* His Bride, having already at the *parousia* come for her. The seven years that intervene between the *epiphany* and the *parousia* are the time of Jacob’s trouble, the great tribulation, but the *day of the Lord* is the *epiphany*, the appearing of Jesus, when He introduces the millennium...<sup>57</sup>

According to Myland, sanctification was the only way to gain entry into the company of the Bride, the most coveted position in the millennial reign. He was not as exact as Seymour in differentiating between Spirit-baptism and sanctification, and at times seemed to equate the two. Like Parham and Seymour, however, Myland made allowances for the “deliverance” of believers who do not belong to these elite categories.

It is very doubtful whether many or any will be converted during the tribulation, but those that have been converted before and have not been sanctified and thus made members of the Bride of Christ may, by calling on the name of the Lord, be delivered.<sup>58</sup>

A clear distinction remained between the Bride and the “delivered.” The Bride got the pleasure of escaping the tribulation through a secret Rapture.

He will come to spiritual Israel, the Bride, in the *parousia*, secretly, to catch them away. Spiritual Israel won’t know much about the dark of the night, that will come in the time of Jacob’s trouble, the seven years, but Christ will come at the end of the seven years in His *epiphany*...<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, 163.

<sup>57</sup> Myland, *The Latter Rain Covenant*, 35.

<sup>58</sup> Myland, *The Latter Rain Covenant*, 36.

<sup>59</sup> Myland, *The Latter Rain Covenant*, 109.

Although Myland was certainly an individual thinker, his eschatology bears the strong imprint of Parham's thought. In 1902, Parham made a causal link between the Spirit's work and the imminence of Christ's return, saying, "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is especially given now as the sealing. Therefore the sureness of the last days."<sup>60</sup> Myland built upon this link with his extended latter rain metaphor, declaring "...the latter rain is coming to the church of God...to unite and empower her...to aid in God's last work...to bring about the unity of the body,...and the catching away of spiritual Israel, the Bride of Christ."<sup>61</sup> Glossolalia remained for Myland "the advance agent, the telltale of Pentecost,"<sup>62</sup> but he was also "careful not [to] magnify tongues out of its legitimate place."<sup>63</sup> Additionally, the strict separation of Israel and the church also bore resemblance to Parham's teaching. Those who continued to be influenced by Myland's work made up much of what became the Pentecostal mainstream of the following decade.

### **Conclusion: An Emerging Consensus?**

Like many innovative movements, Pentecostal thought was dominated by the magnetic personalities of a few early leaders. Charles F. Parham gave Pentecostalism its most distinctive belief: glossolalia as the "bible evidence" for Spirit-baptism. Yet many of Parham's teachings were discarded as too complex, offensive, or unnecessary as Pentecostalism developed in its first decade. While none of the preceding figures' teachings were accepted wholesale as Pentecostal doctrine, their main concerns, terminology, and methods shed indispensable light on the early development of Pentecostal thought.

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<sup>60</sup> Parham, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, 32.

<sup>61</sup> Myland, *The Latter Rain Covenant*, 79.

<sup>62</sup> Myland, *The Latter Rain Covenant*, 93.

<sup>63</sup> Myland, *The Latter Rain Covenant*, 89.

In particular, the eschatological teachings of early Pentecostal theologians are a fertile ground for the exploration of how this movement developed. Eschatology was both a driving force of early Pentecostalism as well as its main theological framework. Those who contributed to the movement shared many views regarding the eschaton, while also disagreeing on a number of issues. However, the four leaders investigated here all agreed that Jesus' return was imminent, and that the Holy Spirit performed a work in the believer that both signified the approaching end times and shielded one from its horrors. Following Knapp's insistence that Spirit-baptism "sealed" the believer, pentecostally-inclined thinkers sought to more precisely define the evidence and parameters of this experience. Onto this scene stepped Charles Parham, who put a greater significance, eschatological or otherwise, on glossolalia than any theologian before him. His unique teachings were strengthened by the reports coming from his meetings of an unprecedented outpouring of God's Spirit, including speaking in tongues.

Seymour and Myland set in perspective of the proper place of tongues, suggesting that this feature had caused havoc and become a misguided focus of devotion. The popular enchantment with tongues that is evident in these warnings bespeaks the direction that Pentecostal thought would eventually take. Anderson refers to this as the "exchange of roles" between eschatology and glossolalia that occurred when eschatological hopes began to subside.<sup>64</sup> Although for later Pentecostals glossolalia enjoyed a prominent, if not central position, these early leaders clearly saw eschatology as the main theme and motivator of the movement, and sought to dethrone all that would take its place, including speaking in tongues.

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<sup>64</sup> Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited*, 96-7.

A simplified progression of eschatology in these four leaders might go like this: Knapp recognized and articulated the eschatological importance of Spirit-baptism in sealing the Bride of Christ within the dominant premillennial scheme, yet failed to offer concrete parameters for the experience; Parham offered such parameters in the form glossolalia, yet waxed speculative on the finer details of the eschaton; Seymour adopted Parham's "authoritative evidence" thesis and facilitated a movement at Azusa Street that focused less on cosmic circumstances than on individual experience, although the basic outlines of premillennialism and the eschatological significance of tongues remained intact; Myland combined Parham's exegetical interest with Seymour's pastoral concerns, rooting eschatology squarely in the realm of experience and avoiding speculation.

The eschatology that emerged from the first decade of Pentecostalism was dispensational and premillennial. Yet it differed from Darby's classical dispensationalism in a number of significant ways.<sup>65</sup> For instance, it generally classified history into three epochs, (instead of seven) each associated with a person of the Trinity, and it did not consider the spiritual gifts of the New Testament to belong exclusively to the early church. From the contributions of Knapp, Parham, Seymour, and Myland, Pentecostals developed an eschatology that, as Dayton claims, "has its own integrity,"<sup>66</sup> This eschatology centered on the imminence of the parousia, and served pastoral as well as theological concerns. Pastorally, the immediacy of Christ's return encouraged morality, as the Bride was exhorted to prepare herself for the coming of the Bridegroom.

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<sup>65</sup> See Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 253-5; also Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, 145; the ongoing tension between Pentecostal eschatology and classical dispensationalism is also attested by mid-century Pentecostals' preference for the Dake Reference Bible (first published in 1961) over the Scofield Reference Bible, the former being less speculative regarding the fulfillment of end times prophecies, and emphatically affirming the spiritual gifts.

<sup>66</sup> Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, 145.

Theologically, the imminence of the Second Coming created the search for evidence of Spirit-baptism, which “sealed” Christ’s Bride for his return. This search climaxed in Parham’s doctrine of glossolalia. The experience of Spirit-baptism that was encouraged by Parham’s teaching in turn fueled eschatological hopes. Myland’s address in 1909 signaled an emerging consensus by reiterating the themes of our other leaders that linked Spirit-baptism to eschatology. Spirit-baptism (and its attendant spiritual gifts) signaled the Lord’s imminent return, provided assurance of personal participation in the Rapture, and also furnished the power to speed the Second Coming through evangelism.

Pentecostals took the basic dispensational framework of the late-nineteenth century popular bible camp eschatology, and changed its emphases.<sup>67</sup> The common thread running through these teachers is the insistence upon a real and realized connection between the Holy Spirit and the end times. Whereas earlier millennial movements were fueled by Christology, soteriology and/or human progressivism, early Pentecostal eschatology ran on the power of the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>67</sup> See Callahan, “Redeemed or Destroyed,” 205-6.

CHAPTER 2  
DENOMINATIONS, DOCTRINE AND ESCHATOLOGY

**The Major Strands of American Pentecostalism**

Since the Azusa Street revival, American Pentecostalism has developed along three main historical routes: Wesleyan, non-Wesleyan (or Reformed),<sup>1</sup> and Oneness. Each of these groups traces its identification over against the others as a result of a specific controversy in the first decade of Pentecostalism. Robert Mapes Anderson claims that far from being detrimental to infant Pentecostalism, “controversy became the very life and breath of the Pentecostal Movement,”<sup>2</sup> contributing to its vigor and theological development. The Wesleyan and non-Wesleyan groups formulated in response to what is known as the “Finished Work” controversy, the most prominent spokesperson of which was William Durham. This issue was most fiercely debated from 1911-1914. The two largest denominations recognized by the distinctions that arose from this controversy are the Assemblies of God in the non-Wesleyan camp, and The Church of God in Christ in the Wesleyan camp.

The Oneness controversy followed closely on the heels of the Finished Work debate, and had its climax in the 1916 General Council of the Assemblies of God. Primarily a dispute among Assemblies of God adherents (who had established their fellowship at the first General Council in 1914), the Oneness controversy split the

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<sup>1</sup> See note on p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited*, 193.

fellowship in two, and resulted in the departure of about a quarter of its ministers. The two largest groups of Oneness Pentecostalism today are the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, and the United Pentecostal Church.

The eschatology of these Pentecostal groups during the period of 1911-1950 will be explored through a number of sources. The non-Wesleyan branch will be investigated through the Assemblies of God, as represented in their official organ *The Pentecostal Evangel*, and the writings of one of its first systematic theologians, Myer Pearlman. The Wesleyan branch will be investigated through the Church of God in Christ, primarily by means of the writings of its founder and first superintendent, Charles H. Mason. The Oneness branch presents a more difficult task historically, because continual mergers have confounded the lineage of many of the denominations in this camp. Because of this difficulty, and the availability of sources, this investigation will be confined to three early Oneness leaders: A.D. Urshan, Frank Ewart, and G.T. Haywood. The only Oneness denomination to have retained a consistent identity since the time of the controversy is the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World (PAW). Haywood, as the founder and chief spokesperson of the PAW, will provide particularly helpful insight into Oneness Pentecostalism as whole. Each of these groups was chosen for its direct contact with Azusa Street, the availability of primary source material, and its representative status for the respective strands of American Pentecostalism.

### **Early Crisis: The “Finished Work” Controversy**

Charles Parham’s claim to authority over the Pentecostal movement effectively ended after his confrontation with William Seymour at Azusa Street. Although he

continued to lead Apostolic Faith groups in the Midwest, he passed quickly into derision, and then obscurity. Any hope for Parham's resurgence in power or prestige in the movement was dashed by a homosexuality scandal in 1907 and by a bungled trip to the Middle East to recover Noah's Ark. Seymour proved to be the leader with the charisma, conciliation, and charm to see Pentecostalism to its next phase. Until 1911, Los Angeles was the world capital of Pentecostalism, and Seymour's style of racial unification, evangelism, and relentless pursuit of spiritual experience reigned supreme.

William Durham, an influential independent minister in Chicago, received news of the Azusa Mission in 1906, giving the revival movement initial high marks. He did not, however, accept the doctrine of glossolalia, and steadily opposed what he considered a fanatical teaching. Yet his resistance did not last long, as Spirit-baptized members of his congregation convinced him of the power and authenticity of the Pentecostal experience. Durham traveled to Los Angeles in 1907 to witness firsthand the goings-on at Seymour's mission. He returned to Chicago a firm believer in the Pentecostal message, having himself received the definitive "Baptism in the Spirit," with attendant glossolalia.

Although fully convinced of the Pentecostal experience of the Spirit, Durham obstinately rejected the dominant doctrine on sanctification. This teaching, a gift from Pentecostalism's Wesleyan heritage, categorized sanctification as a distinct crisis experience, known generally as the "second work of grace." Durham instead insisted that Christ accomplished both justification and sanctification in his single act on the cross, and thus both were available to each believer upon conversion. This "finished work" teaching resulted in an understanding that sanctification was given at conversion and appropriated over the life of the believer, instead of a single moment subsequent to

justification. Though his teaching created a significant frenzy, Durham should not be seen as a renegade or a prophetic pioneer in Pentecostalism. Many scholars argue that Durham's Finished Work teaching was a resurgence of the Reformed (i.e. Keswick) understanding of sanctification that had been overwhelmed by the Wesleyan-holiness currents of the Azusa Street Revival.<sup>3</sup> Durham traveled again to Los Angeles during Seymour's extended absence in 1911, this time not to receive Pentecost, but to preach his particular understanding of it. Seymour returned to see his mission split by Durham's teaching. Differing from Durham theologically, and resenting the coup d'état, Seymour opposed Durham and his message, locking him out of the mission. Durham continued teaching, attracting numerous supporters, many of whom, not surprisingly, had roots in the Reformed wing of evangelical Protestantism.<sup>4</sup>

### **The Assemblies of God**

Durham would not live to see either the full extent of division that his doctrine caused or the unity that it inspired in those who rallied to his message, as he died of tuberculosis during the summer of 1912. Charles Parham, who also vehemently opposed Durham's teaching, later claimed Durham's death as an act of God's judgment. Primary among those who had been won over to the Finished Work doctrine was Howard A. Goss, an associate of Durham who had been converted to Pentecostalism by Parham in Zion City, Illinois. By 1913, Goss began an effort to organize the disparate groups that Azusa had birthed, an effort that led to the first General Council of the Assemblies of God in 1914. With Goss as organizer, the commencement address to these Pentecostals

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<sup>3</sup> Thomas G. Farkas, "William Durham and the Sanctification Controversy in Early Pentecostalism," (paper presented at the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting Society for Pentecostal Studies, Southeastern College, Lakeland, Florida, Nov 7-9, 1991), 30; see also Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited*, 168-175.

<sup>4</sup> Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited*, 168-175.

gathered at Hot Springs Arkansas, given by Mack M. Pinson, was titled “The Finished Work of Calvary.” This appropriately signaled the doctrinal direction this group was to take. Although the language of “Entire Sanctification” was not dropped from the Fundamental Truths until 1961, the Assemblies of God clearly rejected the “second work of grace.”<sup>5</sup>

The formation of the Assemblies of God marked a formal split from Wesleyan views on sanctification, but also from Seymour’s more irenic spirit and approach to theology, preaching, and eschatology. Whereas Seymour tended to avoid strict language demarcating the Spirit-baptized from the non-Spirit-baptized, this Finished Work group reiterated Parham’s hard line on glossolalia (although leaving behind Parham’s teaching on xenoglossa) as the initial and only true, evidence of Spirit-baptism. Seymour thought of glossolalia as but one form of evidence of Spirit-baptism. The Assemblies of God formalized their strict view in their Statement of Fundamental Truths in 1916.

**THE FULL CONSUMMATION OF THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY GHOST.**

The full consummation of the baptism of believers in the holy Ghost [*sic*] and fire, is indicated by the initial sign of speaking in tongues, as the spirit of God gives utterance. Acts 2:4. This wonderful experience is distinct form and subsequent to the experience of the new birth. Acts 10:44-46; 15:8,9.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to the doctrinal rift that Durham’s teaching imposed upon early Pentecostalism, a racial division, roughly along these doctrinal lines, may be seen. Iain MacRobert points out that upon Seymour’s rejection of the Finished Work teaching, Durham rallied a predominantly white group that left no room for disagreement on the “Finished Work” issue.<sup>7</sup> This racial divide could be seen clearly in the General Council in

<sup>5</sup> Farkas, “William Durham and the Sanctification Controversy in Early Pentecostalism,” 35.

<sup>6</sup> Assemblies of God, Statement of Fundamental Truths, 1916.

<sup>7</sup> MacRobert, *The Black Roots and White Racism*, 63.

April of 1914 to which, as Vinson Synan notes, “as far as we know, no negroes were invited.”<sup>8</sup> The creation of this predominantly white fellowship was balanced by the reorganization and coalescence of The Church of God in Christ, a predominantly black Pentecostal organization with Wesleyan views on sanctification.

### Assemblies of God Eschatology

Edith Blumhofer has suggested two phenomena in the history of the Assemblies of God that demonstrated its evolving relation to culture, or as she puts it, their “dual allegiance” to the kingdom of the world and the kingdom of God.<sup>9</sup> In attitudes toward war, and in the role of women in ministry, the Assemblies of God revealed a gradual shift in theology and popular ideology. Ever more concerned with cultural appeal and respectability, the Assemblies lost much of what could be called their cutting edge in the years between the wars. The impact of the larger fundamentalist culture on Pentecostalism should not be underestimated. The steady gravitation towards fundamentalism by Pentecostals was consummated in 1943 when the Assemblies of God became a member of the National Association of Evangelicals. During the first forty years of the denomination, the numbers of women in ministry declined, and pacifism steadily gave way to patriotism. In particular, Assemblies of God attitudes toward war may shed light on the development of eschatology in a movement that did not often systematically articulate its beliefs.

The popular reaction to the events of World War I, shown clearly in the Assemblies’ official organ, *The Christian Evangel* (later known as *The Weekly Evangel*

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<sup>8</sup> Cited in MacRobert, *Black Roots and White Racism*, 64.

<sup>9</sup> Edith Blumhofer, *The Assemblies of God: A Chapter in American Pentecostalism, Volume 1-To 1941*. (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1989), 343-72.

and *The Pentecostal Evangel*), reveal the group's preference for eschatological rhetoric. At the outset of the war, articles on the Second Coming of Jesus appeared weekly for two months.<sup>10</sup> During the climax and final year of the war in 1917, hardly an edition passed without reference to Jesus' immediate coming, with titles like "Times of the End,"<sup>11</sup> "Signs of the Approaching End,"<sup>12</sup> and "He is Near."<sup>13</sup>

The war provided for many Pentecostals a concrete example of the "signs of the times," as they revealed God's end time plan for human history. The first Pentecostals rallied around the belief in an immediate, premillennial Second Coming of Christ, and this hope was sustained by the First World War. The chaos and tumult caused by the war allowed many Pentecostals to maintain a fervent hope in the Advent of Christ despite increasing organizationalism.

Although most were content to admit that no one would know the day or the hour of Jesus' arrival, some were more speculative, hinting that 1917 was in fact the cataclysmic year that would bring about the end. Some maneuvered around the traditional teaching that humans will not know the hour of the Second Coming by pointing out that the disciples were given this injunction prior to receiving the Spirit. "The fault of the disciples was that they were enquiring into future events without the unction and guidance of the Holy Ghost."<sup>14</sup>

For many, the nearness of the end evidenced by the war was a call to be separate from the world's turmoil. In 1916, *The Weekly Evangel*, in its effort to assert the heavenly citizenship of its readers in the last days, declared that "there is not, and never has been,

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<sup>10</sup> *Christian Evangel*, September 12-October 24, 1914.

<sup>11</sup> "Times of the End," *Weekly Evangel*, 28 July, 1917, 5.

<sup>12</sup> "Signs of the Approaching End," *Weekly Evangel*, 8 September, 1917, 8.

<sup>13</sup> William J. Taylor, "He is Near," *Weekly Evangel*, 25 August, 1917, 1.

<sup>14</sup> "Signs of the Approaching End," *Weekly Evangel*, 8 September, 1917, 8.

such a company of people as a CHRISTIAN NATION, and never will be until the Lord comes.”<sup>15</sup> In 1917, the Assemblies of God adopted an official pacifist stance, stating:

...we, as a body of Christians, while proposing to fulfill all the obligations of loyal citizenship, are nevertheless constrained to declare we cannot conscientiously participate in war and armed resistance, since this is contrary to our view of the clear teachings of the inspired Word of God, which is the sole basis for our faith.<sup>16</sup>

Frank Bartleman, preeminent witness and commentator on all things Pentecostal from the early days of Azusa Street, took a staunch pacifistic stance, and published profusely against Christian involvement in the war. Pacifism was not universally accepted, however, as certain responses to Bartleman demonstrate.<sup>17</sup>

World War II reveals a sharp contrast to the prevailing pacifism of the previous generation. In 1945, prominent teacher Ralph M. Riggs’ article “The Spiritual Significance of V-E Day,” reveals a stiff reversal of the pilgrim motif. He writes, “God loves America and has doubtless chosen her for a special mission in these last days.”<sup>18</sup> This was a stark shift from the spiritual distance fostered during World War I, during which Stanley Frodsham wrote, “...national pride, like every other form of pride, is an abomination in the sight of God.”<sup>19</sup> Although the Assemblies of God would not abandon their official pacifist position until 1967, it is clear that a shift in attitudes toward war was occurring.

The theme of the imminence of Christ’s return was also affected by World War II. In the years immediately following World War II, the theme of the Second Coming did

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<sup>15</sup> Leonard Newby, “Light on the Present Crisis,” *Weekly Evangel*, 1 July, 1916, 6.

<sup>16</sup> Cited in Jay Beaman, *Pentecostal Pacifism: The Origin, Development, and Rejection of Pacific Beliefs Among the Pentecostals*. (Hillsboro, KS: The Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1989), 24.

<sup>17</sup> See Frank Bartleman, “What Will the Harvest Be?” *Weekly Evangel*, 7 August, 1915, 1; and J. Roswell Flower, “What Will the Harvest Be article in Last Week’s *Evangel* Receiving Just Criticism.” *Weekly Evangel*, 14 August, 1915, 2.

<sup>18</sup> Ralph M. Riggs, “The Spiritual Significance of V-E Day,” *Pentecostal Evangel*, 2 June, 1945, 1.

<sup>19</sup> Stanley H. Frodsham, “Our Heavenly Citizenship,” *Weekly Evangel*, 11 September, 1915, 3.

not disappear, but received a different nuance. The Blessed Hope became an encouragement to the weak in faith, focusing more on the needs of the waiting saint than the glory of the Coming King.<sup>20</sup>

The first major doctrinal work of the Assemblies of God came from the pen of Myer Pearlman. Jewish by birth, Pearlman was converted to Pentecostal Christianity in the early 1920s. His fluency in no less than six languages, including Hebrew, helped him garnish quickly a status as influential teacher and theologian. *Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible* (1937) was an immensely popular work of theology for a group that tended to vehemently reject dogma and the theological profession in general. Pearlman defended the cause of theological inquiry in his introduction:

We confidently expect that theology or doctrine will find its deserved place in religious thought and education. Whatever has been said, in recent years, derogatory to this branch of study, has been ill-timed in view of the world's great need of sober and satisfying truth.<sup>21</sup>

In contrast to the speculation of the first generation of Pentecostals, Pearlman took a more balanced stance. “Attempts have been made,” he wrote, “to calculate the time of Christ’s coming, but each time the Lord has failed to keep the appointment!”<sup>22</sup> In the finer points of the chronology of eschatological events, Pearlman was less given to elaboration than many of his Pentecostal predecessors. Strangely, he said very little of the Rapture, which was so vitally important for early Pentecostals. In fact, it is not clear from Pearlman’s description of the Rapture whether or not Christians will therewith escape the Great Tribulation, and at times even suggests that they will not.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> See Myer Pearlman, “Watchful Waiting,” *Pentecostal Evangel*, 8 March, 1947, 2.

<sup>21</sup> Myer Pearlman, *Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible*. (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1937), reprinted 1981, 7.

<sup>22</sup> Pearlman, *Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible*, 388.

<sup>23</sup> Pearlman, *Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible*, 390.

Pearlman's characteristic avoidance of speculation on the end times suggests the path that Pentecostal eschatology would take as it entered the second half of the twentieth century. In the foreword to *Windows into the Future: Devotional Studies in the Book of Revelation*, Pearlman wrote: "May we all be so busy doing God's will that there will be no time for barren disputes about the details of his program!"<sup>24</sup> This is a far cry from Parham's sustained and imaginative speculations on all things pertaining to the eschaton; Pearlman was apparently no more concerned with the details of the eschaton than the majority of his contemporary Protestant theologians.

This is not to suggest that Pearlman did not take seriously Darby's dispensationalism, which so greatly influenced Pentecostal eschatology. Like all dispensationalists, he speaks of the Church age as the great parenthesis in which the "prophetic clock" has stopped ticking.<sup>25</sup> He emphasized the separate identities of the Church and Israel in relation to Christ at his coming.<sup>26</sup> Yet Pearlman's dispensationalism was not always consistent. Gerald T. Sheppard has demonstrated that many early Pentecostals accepted the basic tenets of dispensational eschatology, without implementing, or perhaps understanding, the full ecclesiastical implications of this system.<sup>27</sup> Darby's dispensationalism held a strict view of the distinction between the Church and Israel. In fact, Darby built his entire system of biblical interpretation upon the premise that certain promises belonged only to the earthly nation of Israel, and others only to Christians. Assemblies of God theologians, such as Pearlman, Ralph M. Riggs,

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<sup>24</sup> Myer Pearlman, *Windows into the Future: Devotional Studies in the Book of Revelation*. (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1941), 6.

<sup>25</sup> Pearlman, *Windows into the Future*, 94.

<sup>26</sup> Pearlman, *Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible*, 391.

<sup>27</sup> Gerald T. Sheppard, "Pentecostals and the Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism: The Anatomy of an Uneasy Relationship," *Pneuma: The Journal for the Society of Pentecostal Studies* 6.2 (1984): 5-33.

and E.E.S. Williams were at best equivocal on the issue of the separation of the Church and Israel, and at times denied it altogether.<sup>28</sup> The later complete embrace of Darby's dispensationalism by the Assemblies of God presents a number of theological problems, not least of which is the tension with the common dispensational/fundamentalist teaching of the cessation of the spiritual gifts.<sup>29</sup>

Although always a significant current of Pentecostal teaching, the doctrine of a pre-tribulational Rapture was not explicitly adopted by the Assemblies of God until 1935. In fact, earlier eschatological statements produced by the General Council lacked the terms "Rapture" "premillennial" or "pre-tribulation." So great were these ambiguities that a number of Assemblies of God adherents felt comfortable teaching a post-tribulational Rapture. This prompted the response of 1935, which was a full adoption of pre-tribulational Rapture, and an injunction on disseminating post-tribulational views.

Myer Pearlman clearly embraced, and even expanded on the dispensational rhetoric of his day, relying generally on the threefold dispensational model, as opposed to the more classical sevenfold model. In an innovative reinterpretation of Christ's offices of ministry, he wrote:

There are three stages to Christ's work as Mediator: His work as Prophet, accomplished during his earthly ministry; his work as Priest begun at the cross and continued during this age; His work as King beginning at His coming and continuing throughout the Millennium."<sup>30</sup>

Despite frequent appeals to dispensational rhetoric, one gets the impression that such eschatological theories had become more of a hermeneutical tool than an active reality

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<sup>28</sup> Sheppard, "Pentecostals and the Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism."

<sup>29</sup> See Sheppard, "Pentecostals and the Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism,"; and Peter Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days: Pentecostal Eschatology in Conversation with Jürgen Moltman* (London: T & T Clark International, 2003), 36-7.

<sup>30</sup> Pearlman, *Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible*, 394.

for this generation of Assemblies of God theologians—and even as a hermeneutical tool, it was not consistently applied. Eschatological themes aided in articulating doctrine, but no longer offered the excitement, hope, or immediacy seen in the early days of the movement.

### Summary

The Pentecostal movement was conceived as a cultural alternative, calling a “sealed” membership out from dead denominations and the unbelieving world. Early crises forced Pentecostals to organize and cohere, as well as expel dissidents. The Assemblies of God emerged as a vital force in early Pentecostalism, representing Trinitarian, non-Wesleyan, predominantly white Pentecostalism. In harmony with the pervasive pilgrim identity of the movement, the Assemblies of God exhibited a primarily pacifist stance during World War I. This reflected the eschatology of the fellowship, which held to the dispensational premillennialism that had characterized its earliest founders. This eschatology carried with it the distinction that baptism in the Holy Spirit ensured participation in the Rapture, thereby avoiding the Great Tribulation of the end times.

It is likely that the earliest Pentecostals, such as Parham and Seymour, could not conceive of a second decade of their movement, let alone a second generation, so near did they feel Christ’s Second Coming to be. It may be precisely because of this fact that they were both discarded as the movement matured. Although World War I provided a means to extend this eschatological expectancy, it did not last long. By World War II, these pilgrims were right at home. World War II did not provide a platform for warning of Earth’s destruction, but for celebrating the cause and triumphs of a Christian nation.

Eschatology had become more a doctrine, and less an experience. The theology of Myer Pearlman bears this out, as even before World War II the wane of eschatological expectancy becomes apparent. Although “The Blessed Hope” and “The Imminent and Millennial Reign of Jesus” remained as fundamental truths, these statements clearly carried a different meaning in 1945 than in 1916.

### **The Church of God in Christ**

One of the prominent organizations that resisted the Finished Work doctrine was the predominantly black Church of God in Christ. COGIC was originally a Holiness church founded in the late 1890s, by Charles H. Mason and Charles P. Jones. In 1907, Mason visited the Azusa Street revival, and was converted to the Pentecostal message. He entered into sharp disagreement with Jones over the teaching, and the two went their separate ways. Mason continued his Pentecostal organization under the name Church of God in Christ, and Jones operated under the name Church of God in Christ (Holiness).

At the time of the First General Council of the Assemblies of God in 1914, many white Pentecostal preachers had obtained their ministerial credentials through Mason’s organization. This alliance was nothing more than pragmatic however, as Pentecostals leaders at this time had few options for obtaining the legal credentials that allowed them to perform weddings and funerals, and to receive rail discounts. There is no evidence to suggest that these white ministers were under any kind of authority of COGIC, and Mason seemed to have preferred it this way. The General Council incorporated the Assemblies of God, and most of these ministers were soon credentialed with the new predominantly white organization.

Mason's group remained firmly within the Wesleyan camp on the issue of sanctification. Although he blessed the newly formed Assemblies of God, it is clear that not only a new entity, but a separate Pentecostal identity, had been formed.

#### Church of God in Christ Eschatology

Peter Althouse is correct in observing that, "The difference between black and white Christianity was that, while whites were anticipating the Second Advent, blacks were seeking a solution to American inequality,"<sup>31</sup> It then comes as no surprise that COGIC documented little of their eschatological beliefs. Representative of black Wesleyan Pentecostalism, it may be safe to infer that eschatological currents in COGIC in the first half of the century resembled that of Seymour. If this is the case, COGIC eschatology would be focused primarily on the expectant joy of the last day. Eschatology was a blanket referential for all that was hoped for and thought to be lacking in the present age, including racial unification, perfect brotherly love, and the eradication of inequality.

While dispensationalism was the uncertain undercurrent of early Assemblies of God eschatology, it is completely lacking in any official documentation of early COGIC. Reference to dispensationalism is completely absent in the 1920 official handbook of the church.<sup>32</sup> Again, the Official manual of COGIC published in 1957 is similarly taciturn on the subject:

#### **The Second Coming**

We believe in the Second Coming of Christ and that the Church, the bride, the Lamb's wife will be caught up to meet him in the air.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days*, 32.

<sup>32</sup> Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days*, 39.

<sup>33</sup> Ozro T. Jones and J.E. Bryant, eds., *Official Manual of the Church of God in Christ, Seventh Edition*. 1957, 62.

Charles H. Mason wrote and spoke on eschatological issues, but only as needed to refute erroneous teachings. In particular, he found himself confronted with a peculiar teaching in 1914 regarding the nature of death and resurrection for the believer. A certain Elder Smith was propagating a doctrine that taught that “born again” Christians need not experience physical death, for they had already received their glorified bodies. Mason refuted this teaching with an appeal to scripture and orthodox belief.

“None of us as yet has the flesh that cannot die, for that which cannot die is not natural but spiritual. Our verile [*sic*] or natural bodies will be changed at the coming of the Lord from heaven.”<sup>34</sup>

Mason, like all Pentecostals, understood there to be a significant connection between Spirit-baptism and the coming of the Lord. However, this connection was for Mason more revelatory or psychological than dispensational.

The word giveth light and understanding that all may be baptized with this baptism of the Holy Ghost. He will show us than [*sic*] Christ is coming soon again to the earth. Prepare to meet your God for His Glory.<sup>35</sup>

Charles Mason often preached a message of pacifism. In 1918 he was jailed for his stance on World War I.<sup>36</sup> His organization, too, took a clearly pacifist stance.<sup>37</sup> Whether this pacifism was fueled by eschatological expectation is difficult to determine, but Mason certainly maintains that tragic world events signaled the end times. Elder William B. Holt remarks that during a sermon, Mason “declared the Kaiser to be the war beast of Revelation 13.”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Mary Mason, compiler, *The History and Life Work of Elder Charles H. Mason, Chief Apostle and His Co-Laborers*, 1924, recompiled in 1987, 62-3.

<sup>35</sup> Mason, *The History and Life Work of Elder Charles H. Mason*, 59.

<sup>36</sup> Beaman, *Pentecostal Pacifism*, 100; Mason, *The History and Life of Elder Charles H. Mason*, 33.

<sup>37</sup> Beaman, *Pentecostal Pacifism*, 26-7.

<sup>38</sup> Mason, *The History and Life Work of Elder Charles H. Mason*, 37.

## Summary

A survey of the available literature from The Church of God in Christ confirms Peter Althouse's theory regarding eschatology and race. Mason's organization was not unconcerned with matters of doctrine, but took an occasional approach to its articulation. On a certain level, it may be inadequate to make conclusions about the eschatology of COGIC on the basis of its printed literature. While the group was not adverse to the printed word, black religion in general has carried with it a preference for oral tradition that white groups generally do not share. Still, from the available documents, cautious conclusions can be made. COGIC believed in a link between Pentecostal spirit-baptism and the expectancy of Christ's coming, they were pacifists who clearly understood world events to be the fulfillment of Scripture's end time drama, they did not care much to speculate on the events of the eschaton, but upheld only that for which there was direct Scriptural support, and they believed in some sort of Rapture on the basis of 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.

### **Early Crisis: The "New Issue" Controversy**

To label the controversy that split the embryonic Assemblies of God fellowship in 1916 the "New Issue" is ironic. By the estimation of its detractors it was not "new" at all, but the revivification of a centuries-old heresy known as Sabellianism. For its proponents, Oneness theology was the reintroduction of true apostolic practice, which had lain dormant since New Testament times.

William Durham's death in 1912 did not extinguish the flames of the controversy he had created, but it did leave the loosely organized Finished Work camp without strong leadership. Theologically, Durham had reintroduced a strong christocentricism that

seemed to be absent in the broader Pentecostal movement. By reestablishing a biblical doctrine of full salvation completed in the work of the cross, Durham disposed of what he felt were unnecessary steps of additional works of grace. What was earlier understood as the “full” or “fourfold” gospel was now interpreted by Durham’s disciples as the “simple” gospel of Christ and him crucified. The Oneness doctrine arose out of the vacuum created by Durham’s death, and took his christocentrism a step farther within the Finished Work ranks. David A. Reed claims that this development was the natural consummation of Durham’s Finished Work teaching, which was denied full treatment due to his untimely death.<sup>39</sup> For Oneness Pentecostals, not only was full salvation encompassed within Christ’s work on the cross, but the full deity was encompassed within the person of Jesus Christ.

A months-long revival headlined by newly-Pentecostal Maria Woodworth-Etter in Dallas in 1912 stirred one who attended, R.J. Scott, to replicate the revival in the Los Angeles area. Conceived as a meeting to undo the disunity created by Durham’s message, this “worldwide” camp meeting in Arroyo Secco, just outside Los Angeles, proved to do anything but unite. The calling of such an important meeting to the Los Angeles area suggests that at this time the city was still revered as an important center of the Pentecostal movement. During the meeting, a Finished Work preacher from Canada, R.E. McAlister, preached a sermon in which he noted that the apostles baptized “in Jesus’ name,” as opposed to the Trinitarian formula of Matthew 28:19. Early the next morning, a participant at the meeting named John G. Schaepe ran through the camp declaring to have received a revelation by which God had shown him the truth of baptizing in Jesus’

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<sup>39</sup> David A Reed, *‘In Jesus’ Name:’ The History and Beliefs of Oneness Pentecostals* (Dorset, UK: Deo Publishing, 2008), 135.

name, and the need for rebaptism for all who had been baptized with the Trinitarian formula.

The most influential Pentecostal to be persuaded by this revelation was Frank Ewart, a close associate of Durham and his successor in Los Angeles. Ewart spent the year following the 1913 meeting studying the Scriptures on the New Issue. In 1914, he made his adherence to the new issue clear by being rebaptized, along with another influential Finished Work Pentecostal, Glenn Cook. Ewart was to give the new doctrine full theological treatment and disseminate the teaching through his periodical, *Meat in Due Season*. Alongside Ewart in a publication frenzy to dispense the Oneness doctrine was G.T. Haywood, a prominent black Pentecostal based in Indiana, and the only influential black minister in the Finished Work camp. What began as a dispute over the proper formula for water baptism soon became a battle over the biblical conception of the Godhead. Soon these Oneness leaders were preaching against the classical doctrine of the Trinity, declaring that in Jesus, the fullness of the Godhead was pleased to dwell. They rejected the notion of God “in three persons,” claiming that Jesus was the complete manifestation of God for the current dispensation. In 1916, the New Issue had made enough noise to force the General Council of the Assemblies of God to address it outright with a formal set of beliefs. Trinitarian stalwart J. Roswell Flowers convened a committee to draft a Statement of Fundamental Truths that officially renounced the Oneness teaching by making explicit the doctrine of the Trinity. With the approval of the Statement, 156 of the 585 credentialed ministers in the Assemblies of God chose or were forced to leave the fellowship.

## Oneness Eschatology

Oneness adherents shared many theological concerns with their Trinitarian counterparts. Like all Pentecostals, this group believed strongly in the imminence of Christ's Second Coming and in their own pivotal role in the last days. G.T. Haywood believed that the restoration of the Oneness teaching signaled the end times.

Now you can begin to see how 'the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world,' in the heart and foreknowledge of God; also how he has chosen us according to this plan which he ordained to come to pass in these *last days*, whereby we should be saved.<sup>40</sup> (italics added)

Their unique beliefs were in fact justified in part on eschatological grounds. Like all restorationist groups, they looked to New Testament practice as their rule of faith. All other beliefs and conventions, including the doctrine of the Trinity (which, they relished in pointing out, was not explicitly found in Scripture) were held under suspicion, if not flatly rejected. The restoration of apostolic faith was for Oneness Pentecostals a sign of the end times, a continuation of the "Latter Rain" motif developed so well by Myland and others. The end times would bring a restoration of apostolic power not only in terms of evangelism and miracles, but of doctrine as well. The "crisis" over doctrine thus signaled the eschatological times for Oneness leaders. Frank J. Ewart wrote, "The last great crisis is now upon us. God is moving for the complete restoration of His Holy Church... What He commanded in the beginning of the church is true at the end of the church age."<sup>41</sup> Restoration of true teaching was most often described as "revelation." David A. Reed notes, "Revelation was not something new, independent of the objective truth of scripture. It was the progressive unfolding in history of God's act of restoring apostolic

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<sup>40</sup> G.T. Haywood, *The Victim of the Flaming Sword*, (n.d.), 34, reprinted in Donald W. Dayton, *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1985).

<sup>41</sup> Frank J. Ewart, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, (St. Louis, MO: Pentecostal Publishing House, n.d.), reprinted in Donald W. Dayton, *Seven 'Jesus Only' Tracts*, (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1985).

Christianity.”<sup>42</sup> Oneness adherents did not differ from other Pentecostals in their understanding of a progressive revelation of truth leading up to the last day. Trinitarians simply disagreed with the specific revelation Oneness Pentecostals claimed to receive. G.T. Haywood wrote often about revelation, stating of Oneness teaching: “The mystery of God [is] known only by revelation.”<sup>43</sup> With the end times quickly approaching, revelation was the only means by which God could quickly disseminate the pure gospel message.

Haywood also differed from Darby’s classical dispensationalism on his understanding of Israel. Like so many dispensationalists of his time, he understood the restoration of the nation of Israel to be a sign of the imminent return of Jesus,<sup>44</sup> though he did not seem to acknowledge a true eschatological separation of the Church and Israel, as Darby had taught. After recounting many biblical passages in which the universal offer of salvation is spoken to both Jews and Gentiles, Haywood asked: “Could there be anything plainer than this to show that there is no difference in the method by which God saves the Jews and the way by which He saves the Gentiles?”<sup>45</sup>

A.D. Urshan, a Persian with a Presbyterian background, converted to Pentecostalism in 1908, and was ordained at Durham’s Mission in 1910. Urshan attended the 1913 meeting in Arroyo Secco, and soon became an influential worldwide advocate of the Oneness teaching. Like many Pentecostals of his day, both Trinitarian and Oneness, Urshan attached spiritual significance to World War I. Immediately following

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<sup>42</sup> Reed, *In Jesus’ Name*, 171.

<sup>43</sup> Haywood, *The Victim of the Flaming Sword*, 46.

<sup>44</sup> G.T. Haywood, *The Finest of the Wheat*, (n.d.), 31, reprinted in Donald W. Dayton, *Seven ‘Jesus Only’ Tracts*, (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1985).

<sup>45</sup> G.T. Haywood, *The Birth of the Spirit in the Days of the Apostles*, (n.d.), 29-30, reprinted in Donald W. Dayton, *Seven ‘Jesus Only’ Tracts*, (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1985).

the war, he wrote, “The great war of the so-called civilized nations which took place during the last four years was a war of man against God’s WORD and God’s plan.”<sup>46</sup> The war was not a conflict of “nations against nations,” but “a conflict to upset God’s plan for the human race.”<sup>47</sup> While he admitted that God used the Allies to defeat the Central Powers, he did not go so far as to claim that America or the Allies were specially chosen by God. In fact, he decried the League of Nations, asserting that its aims (lasting peace, law of justice, and ultimate human brotherhood) could not be attained without the personal reign of Christ.<sup>48</sup> The charges become more scathing and eschatological: “The outcome of all such leagues will be a preparation for the ‘man of sin,’ who will soon appear to be head of most of the nations of the earth, whose name is Anti-Christ.”<sup>49</sup> Urshan included the ecumenical “world-wide Church Federation” among those human institutions that heralded the end, and made straight the way for Anti-Christ and the Beast of Revelation.<sup>50</sup>

Without any discussion, Urshan identified his affinity with common dispensationalist ideas regarding the political destiny of Israel. Speaking of God’s work through World War I, he wrote, “...He also fulfilled some of His promises concerning the Holy Land.”<sup>51</sup>

Urshan took up the familiar Pentecostal distinctions between levels of believers regarding their end time fate. Despite his antipathies toward almost all other Christians

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<sup>46</sup> A.D. Urshan, *Almighty God in the Lord Jesus Christ*, (1919), 59, reprinted in Donald W. Dayton, *Seven ‘Jesus Only’ Tracts*, (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1985).

<sup>47</sup> Urshan, *Almighty God in the Lord Jesus Christ*, p. 59.

<sup>48</sup> Urshan, *Almighty God in the Lord Jesus Christ*, 60-1.

<sup>49</sup> Urshan, *Almighty God in the Lord Jesus Christ*, 61.

<sup>50</sup> Urshan, *Almighty God in the Lord Jesus Christ*, 63.

<sup>51</sup> Urshan, *Almighty God in the Lord Jesus Christ*, 60.

(especially Trinitarian Pentecostals), Urshan did not deny “lukewarm Christians” a seat in heaven.

...the fate of the lukewarm Christians and the foolish virgins, although it will not be as hard as that of the higher critics, yet it will be sad enough when they miss the rapture of the saints and the marriage supper of the Lamb, and the great rewards of the eternal King who shall decorate His heroes, even those who fought not against Him and His WORD, but who fought a **good fight of faith** and kept his WORD and denied not His Holy and Sacred NAME.<sup>52</sup>

Interestingly, when meting out the rewards and punishments in his eschatological scheme, in particular relating to the Rapture, Urshan did not appeal to the familiar Pentecostal “seal” of the Spirit: speaking in tongues.

### Summary

The early Oneness writers were certainly more concerned with the task of apologetics and spreading their unique message than they were with articulating a systematic doctrine. They agreed with other Pentecostals and dispensationalists that world events signaled the end times, yet they seemed less given to speculation about these events than Assemblies of God adherents.

Oneness attitudes regarding mainstream religion, baptism in the Spirit, speaking in tongues, and eschatology did not differ greatly from other Pentecostals. The key feature of their eschatological teaching was that it was subsumed within their broader agenda of the revelation of Oneness theology. They viewed their doctrine of God as the restoration of true apostolic teaching, a theme which ultimately had eschatological justification and implications. In the last days, God would restore not only apostolic practices such as speaking in tongues, healing, and evangelism, but also pure doctrine.

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<sup>52</sup> Urshan, *Almighty God in Jesus Christ*, 67.

Thus the extremeness of their doctrine, which to any other group would be a liability, was to them an eschatological asset. It may be for this reason that Edith Blumhofer claims,

Oneness Pentecostals were more zealously restorationist, more doggedly congregational, and more Christo-centrally spiritual—in short, in some important ways more essentially Pentecostal than the mainstream.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Blumhofer, *The Assemblies of God*, 238.

## CONCLUSION

Whether the greatest impetus for the emergence of Pentecostalism was social disenfranchisement,<sup>1</sup> syncretism of Western theology and West African spirituality,<sup>2</sup> or the theological trajectory of the late nineteenth century Wesleyan Holiness movement,<sup>3</sup> it is certain that eschatology played a central role. Martin Wells Knapp, taught by his Holiness background to expect Christ's imminent premillennial Second Coming, betrayed a concern for how one could be certain of participation in the Rapture. The final rubric on which he settled was the experience of Spirit-baptism, but he did not satisfactorily describe how one might be assured of this experience. The growing ideology that Knapp represents kindled in Charles Parham an obsession with discovering the evidence for Spirit-baptism. When his students unanimously declared that speaking in tongues was the initial evidence of Spirit-baptism, which "sealed" one from the horrors of the Tribulation, it became a self-fulfilling prophesy; they were privileged to experience the exact manifestation they discerned, and the Pentecostal movement was born.

Thus eschatology provided Parham the language with which to articulate the manifestations of the Spirit he and his followers experienced. With the discovery of tongues as the initial evidence, Spirit-baptism assumed a threefold eschatological significance: it sealed one for a positive end time fate, it signified the latter rain outpouring of the Spirit that God had promised would precede Christ's Advent, and the

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<sup>1</sup> Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited*.

<sup>2</sup> MacRobert, *Black Roots and White Racism*, 2-3.

<sup>3</sup> Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*.

accompanying tongues-speech would enable the greatest evangelization effort in history, which was also believed to precede Jesus' coming.

William J. Seymour popularized the movement that Parham had initiated, and aided its rapid growth with his irenic spirit. Eschatology was no less important for Seymour than for Parham, but Seymour was much less concerned with articulating the details of the end times. He tended to generally accept Parham's view on glossolalia, but also stressed the eschatological significance of racial reconciliation and other spiritual gifts, exercised in love.

D. Wesley Myland was one of the many influential Pentecostal leaders who stepped into the spotlight as Parham slipped into obscurity and Seymour into irrelevance. His exposition of the latter rain doctrine provided Pentecostals with a stable biblical foundation, which borrowed much rhetoric from Darby's classical dispensationalism, but distinguished itself by a unique understanding of the importance and normative quality of Acts 2.

As internal controversies forced further articulation of doctrines, fellowships and denominations began to emerge. The debate over sanctification wrought by William Durham created social rifts that had been latent in the first five years of the interracial movement. This resulted in the official separation of the Assemblies of God, a predominantly white, non-Wesleyan group, from The Church of God in Christ, a predominantly black Wesleyan group. These separate groups also trace separate trajectories of the development of eschatology within Pentecostalism.

Assemblies of God adherents maintained an active belief in the nearness of Christ's coming, aided primarily by World War I. The chaotic global events were

interpreted by these Pentecostals as sure signs of the end times. Their eschatology was no less vigorous than that of Pentecostals prior to their denomination's founding, but it began to take on a different nuance. The outpouring of spiritual gifts was less frequently cited as the reason to expect the coming kingdom, and in its place began to appear strong appeals to the end time chronology of wars, famines, the rise of Anti-Christ, and the like. A strong, though not unanimous sentiment of pacifism held sway over the denomination during World War I, probably attributable in large part to their understanding of the nearness of God's kingdom, and the consequent call to separate from worldly affairs. In the years between the wars, a minor controversy over the order of end time events resulted in the official adoption of pretribulationism by the Assemblies of God in 1935. Where the earlier generation had left such details open for interpretation and private conviction, the second generation asserted that pretribulationism was the most appropriate way to preserve the imminence of Christ's coming. Yet the theological significance of the Rapture in Pentecostal eschatology seemed to decrease, as seen in the work of Myer Pearlman. During World War II, the Assemblies of God seemed much less concerned with predicting the end of the world, and a patriotic streak became detectable. The war signified not the end times, but the triumph of righteousness over evil in the earthly realm. At the same time that they began to adopt this more involved stance on worldly affairs, they paradoxically began to solidify their premillennial dispensationalist views. By the early 1950s, the Assemblies of God fully endorsed dispensationalism, despite its incongruencies with Pentecostal ecclesiology and pneumatology.

The predominantly black Church of God in Christ had much less to say about eschatology than their white, non-Wesleyan counterpart. The denomination had been in

existence since before either Azusa Street or Parham's Apostolic Faith movement, and embraced the Pentecostal message in 1907. This theological move does not seem to have had a significant impact on their eschatology. Although sources are fewer and more difficult to obtain for this group than for the Assemblies of God, a careful read suggests that neither this denomination nor its founder, Charles H. Mason, cared much to speculate on the end times. They were unwilling to commit to writing anything further regarding eschatology than a citation and paraphrase of 1 Thessalonians 4:17. Mason and his group was officially pacifist, however, which may indicate separatism related to eschatology. Additionally, Mason was not averse to speaking of World War I in Apocalyptic terms, suggesting at least the peripheral influence of fundamentalist dispensationism.

The New Issue controversy that rent the Assemblies of God in 1916 produced a third major force in Pentecostalism: Oneness. This group's apology for a distinctive anti-Trinitarian theology had a particular eschatological theory as its backdrop. Just as the spiritual gifts were restored to the end times church, causing it to ever be more like its apostolic counterpart, true New Testament doctrine was also being restored to the church in the revelation of Jesus' name. Oneness theologians such as G. T. Haywood and A.D. Urshan appealed to the Pentecostal sensitivities regarding the expectation of God's continually unfolding work in the latter days. Although this group had historically been more concerned theologically with articulating and defending its peculiar anti-Trinitarian doctrine, an eschatological framework underlying it can be perceived. This group too felt that world events, especially World War I, pointed to the end times. Yet like COGIC, Oneness Pentecostals were less given to speculation regarding these things than the Assemblies of God. It should be noted that Oneness Pentecostals have a significant black

population,<sup>4</sup> which, in keeping with Althouse's theory about eschatology and race, may explain Oneness taciturnity on the subject.

Of all these groups, the Assemblies of God seemed most explicitly concerned with eschatological issues, although COGIG and Oneness groups were deeply affected theologically and socially by their beliefs regarding the eschaton. To some degree, eschatology is a uniquely foundational aspect of all Pentecostal theology, not just the groups investigated here. Although intense eschatological expectancies have waned in proportion to the groups' longevity, eschatology still provides a spiritual framework by which few Pentecostal practices and beliefs are unaffected. Regrettably, those Pentecostals who were most vocal on eschatological issues increasingly adopted a less-Pentecostal fundamentalist eschatological rhetoric.

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<sup>4</sup> By some estimates, nearly half of Oneness Pentecostals are black, see David A. Reed, *In Jesus' Name*, 145, n.

## EPILOGUE: THE LATTER RAIN CONTROVERSY

In the late 1940s, the Assemblies of God found themselves challenged by a fringe movement that called itself the Latter Rain Revival. Beginning in a Bible school in Saskatchewan, this movement was led by George and Ernest Hawtin and Percy Hunt, former leaders in the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (the Assemblies of God counterpart in Canada). George Hawtin had resigned from PAOC in 1947 over a dispute with the organization regarding the erection of a building which had not received PAOC approval. The Hawthins and Hunt joined Herrick Holt in a nearby independent Bible school.

Hawtin's school soon displayed many of the practices common in early Pentecostal Bible schools: fasting, long hours in prayers, and intense study of the Scriptures. In 1948, they believed they had received a revelation from God regarding the outpouring of latter rain—the early days of Pentecostalism being downgraded to “early rain.” Along with this conviction was a renewed interest in the practice of laying on of hands, which they believed imparted Spirit-baptism, and a range of spiritual gifts and offices.

On the face of it, this renewal movement within Pentecostalism seemed harmless. These believers were merely reemphasizing elements of Pentecostalism that had waned over the years. Yet their message was more than a revival of certain practices; it was a direct attack on the confining structures, practices, and doctrines of the Assemblies of

God. As such, it created outrage and opposition perhaps out of proportion to its social strength.

As an extreme restorationist movement, the Latter Rain Revival declared that the Bible taught a strict congregationalist polity. Members of the Latter Rain Revival believed that apostolic offices had been restored to the church, making denominational hierarchies both useless and harmful. Instead of being subject to the oversight of a larger organization, they believed God himself would rule through apostolic offices such as apostle, prophet, and teacher. In an effort to gain credibility, the movement looked to the anti-denominational writings of Charles Parham and William Durham, which had, not surprisingly, gone unnoticed for years.

Like the Pentecostal movement itself, the Latter Rain Revival was articulated in eschatological terms. The last days were truly at hand, as the considerable outpouring of God's Spirit attested. The notion of the link between corporate spiritual experiences and the imminence of Christ's coming was the distinct element of Pentecostal eschatology, dating back to Parham's connection of glossolalia and being "sealed" in the Spirit. Major denominations, including most importantly, the Assemblies of God, rejected completely this new movement, and distanced themselves from all of its core teachings. Hawtin, the movement's chief spokesperson, held a classical sevenfold dispensational eschatology with one important revision: the saints would not escape the tribulation. Hawtin rejected the pretribulational Rapture. "The possessing of the Kingdom of Heaven by the saints of the most high is not going to be a mere 'push-over' but through MUCH TRIBULATION we will enter it."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days*, 46.

The Assemblies of God rejected Hawtin's eschatology along with his anti-denominationalism, teaching on apostolic office, and the importance of laying on of hands. The desire to set the Latter Rain Revival at a distance caused the Assemblies of God to run headlong into the arms of fundamentalist dispensationalism of Darby, with which it had flirted for many years. By the early 1950s, the work of major Assemblies of God theologians such as Frank M. Boyd marked this shift. In doing so, the Pentecostal denomination turned its back on the distinctive element of Pentecostal eschatology, namely the linkage of the manifestation of the Spirit with the close of the age. Peter Althouse refers to this controversy as "the proverbial final nail in the coffin"<sup>2</sup> of a more authentic Pentecostal eschatology. Where once the felt nearness of God intimated the nearness of His coming kingdom, now complex timetables, charts and convoluted biblical interpretations told the people when to expect His coming. This loss of a distinctive "pentecostal" eschatology has been the source of growing scholarly concern in recent years.<sup>3</sup> The final departure from latter rain eschatology can be traced to this Latter Rain Revival and the opposition it engendered.

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<sup>2</sup> Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days*, 36.

<sup>3</sup> Restoring a more authentically "pentecostal" eschatology to the Pentecostal church is the explicit task of Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days*, and Matthew K. Thompson, *Kingdom Come: Revisioning Pentecostal Eschatology*, (Blandford Forum, UK: Deo Publishing, forthcoming).

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