


## I King's First Affirmative First Night



### I Gus Nichols and Max R. King Debate

1973

YouTube Narration <https://youtu.be/C9eI6XZMMxo>

Brother Waller, brother Nichols, brethren and friends: I appreciate the privilege and the responsibility that is mine this evening. I feel that it is always a privilege to engage in an open discussion of the Word of God. I am also aware of the fact that with this privilege there is also great responsibility. And it is in keeping with this responsibility that we shall try to make it our aim this evening, and each evening of this discussion, to make the truth the main objective of our being here. I can assure you that we are not here to win a debate. But we are here to discuss the truth, to learn the truth, and to come to love and appreciate it more than we have in the past. Neither are we here to exalt or to de-grade brethren. But we are here to honour Jesus Christ, Who is the Source of our life, and Who is the Sum and Substance of all truth that we have in this life. And it is my sincere prayer that each participant in this discussion tonight, and each night of this week, whether it be as speaker or as listener, will pledge his mind to an open and unbiased study of the scriptures in the spirit of Christ, and with the disposition and attitude of a Christian.

Now, we have a long way to go as you can see from the proposition, and there is a lot of scriptural territory that needs covering. So, I am not going to engage in lengthy introductory remarks, except to say that I welcome to this discussion as my opponent, brother Gus Nichols, of Jasper, Alabama, and also his moderator and son, brother Flavil Nichols. I appreciate the interest and the concern that brother Nichols has in the things wherein we differ. Brother Nichols has not only expressed his difference on different occasions,

but has also consented to become involved in resolving in the light of the truth, the questions, the problems, the issues that are before us tonight. And this is the thing that I appreciate most: that Christian disposition and that Christian attitude to not only differ, but also be willing to discuss those differences in the light of the truth of God's word. And in my judgment, this is the difference in being one's friend, and being one's enemy. And I look upon brother Nichols this evening as being my friend, as well as a brother in Christ. I appreciate the knowledge, the ability, and the experience that he brings to this discussion.

The proposition before us is this: "The Holy Scriptures teach that the second coming of Christ, including the establishment of the eternal kingdom, the day of judgment, the end of the world, and the resurrection of the dead, occurred with the fall of Judaism in 70 A.D."

I shall be affirming this proposition tonight and tomorrow night, Lord willing.

First, let us see the areas of agreement, that we might clarify the issues before us. Brother Nichols and I are in perfect agreement that the scriptures are inspired of God, and that they constitute the only source of divine authority that we have in matters religious. Also, I firmly believe that the scriptures teach the second coming of Christ. I believe that the scriptures teach the establishment of the eternal kingdom, the day of judgment, the end of the world, and the resurrection of the dead. I feel that I believe these scriptures to the same degree of faith as anyone else. And so you may say, "What, then, is the area of difference?"

Basically, it is in the field of the time wherein these things were to have their fulfillment, and the manner in which these things were to have their fulfillment. In other words, the issues that are before us tonight have to do with the subject of eschatology - the time of it and the events involved in it.

### **Eschatology**

First, let us define eschatology that we may have a working knowledge of it throughout this discussion. This term comes from a compound word in the Greek, eschatos, which means, "last," "later," or "further," and logos, which means, "discussion," or "doctrine." Hence, in combined form we have, "the doctrine or discussion of last things." And so, whenever we speak of eschatology, we are talking about "the doctrine of last things."

I believe all of us stand agreed tonight that the Bible has a doctrine of last things. All throughout the scriptures we find prophecies, types, and shadows of things to come in the end-time period. The scriptures are replete with such terms and expressions as "the last days," "the day of the Lord," "the last hour," "the time of the end." And I would like to emphasize just here

that this is what I am talking about, “THE TIME OF THE END. We are not talking about, “the end of time.” but “the time of the end.” And you note there is a difference.

Traditionally speaking, there is a phraseology among us or terminology, that says, “the end of time.” Now, if that is a scriptural term, and if that is in the scriptures. I have failed to find it and I am sure that my opponent will be more than happy to call it to my attention. But we are speaking in this discussion of “the time of the end.” or “the end-time.” not “the end of time.”

The question before us tonight, then, is this: What is the end- time of God’s eternal purpose?” Toward what end did God move through the prophets of the Old Testament? To what end were the types and shadows of the law directed? That is the question and the issue that is before us tonight, and I believe a very important one because a proper concept of the time of the end, and the events that are to transpire in that end-time, are very important matters in the proper interpretation and application of predictive statements in the Bible.

I believe a fundamental error of pre-millennialism is that of making the eschatological statements of prophecies of the Bible, the types and shadows of me Bible, point to something beyond the New Testament itself, not to the New Testament time itself, but to a time beyond the New Testament. And one of the reasons they do this is that they have a concept of how these things are to be fulfilled that will not allow them to see that these have already had their fulfillment under the gospel of Jesus Christ. There fore, they must place them in the future. But it is my firm conviction that all of the prophecies and types of the Bible are centered in Jesus Christ, and in Him they found their complete and total fulfillment. I believe that all predictive language, that all the predictive statement in the Bible, were directed toward Jesus Christ, and in and through Him they have come to their fulfillment. And this fulfillment was accomplished during the period of His TOTAL ministry. Let me stress this tonight: His TOTAL ministry. In just a few minutes I hope to explain what I mean by His total ministry.

First, let us begin with a text from I Peter 1, beginning with verse nine. We shall use this as our basic scripture for this first discussion this evening: “Receiving the end of- your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have

preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into. Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope unto the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

First, let us look at verse eleven, where Peter states that the prophets of old who predicted these things to come, “searched diligently.” For what? To know the time or the manner of time in which these predictive statements or utterances were to come to pass. However, they were not permitted to see because the time of fulfillment was beyond their day. The time, however, we believe was to come, when all of the predictive statements of the Old Testament - whether it be direct prophecy, or whether it be through the types or the shadows of that system would have their fulfillment. When was this? We affirm that it had its beginning with the ministry of Jesus Christ upon this earth.

Let us go now to Matthew 5, beginning with verse seventeen. Jesus said, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I have not come to destroy but to fulfill. Verily, I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, not one jot or one tittle shall pass from the law till all be fulfilled.”

Here, then, is a statement, first, concerning the beginning of the fulfillment of all things preached or taught in the law and the prophets. Jesus said, “I have come to fulfill, not to destroy.” (Later in this debate we are going to show how the law could have been destroyed, and we hope this evening to introduce the idea of how and when it was fulfilled.) But, the express ministry of Jesus was to fulfill the law. He put a time limitation upon it. He said. “Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” Or, “until the end of all things,” the Today’s English Version has. So here is a time limitation. “I have come to fulfill,” and not one jot or tittle shall fail or pass from the law till it is done, and the passing of heaven and earth is the time specified for the completion of that fulfillment. Therefore, the period of fulfillment extends beyond the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ.

A while ago, if you remember, I mentioned about fulfillment coming during the period of His total ministry. And the total ministry of Jesus is not confined to His earthly ministry; for the whole ministry of Jesus extends throughout that of the Holy Spirit, as given in miraculous form, to the apostles and other inspired men of the New Testament. The work of the Holy Spirit was the work of Jesus Christ. And so the spokesman of God, Jesus Christ, covers a period of time which the Bible designates as the “last days” (Hebrews 1:1, 2). And this time period constitutes the total ministry of Jesus Christ. He said in John 16:7 that it is necessary that I go away that I might

send you the Spirit, and we will get to that in just a minute to show why the Spirit was to come and Jesus was to leave.

First, let us see that the fulfillment of all things was not accomplished during the earthly ministry of Jesus. In the book of Acts, chapter one and verse six, as Jesus left the apostles and went into heaven, this is what they questioned about: "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" He answered and said, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has put in His own power." So here is a question indicating that the restoration work is not yet complete: "Are you going to restore the kingdom at this time?" And Jesus said, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has put in His own power." So the time of restoration, the time of fulfilling, is to be continued. How long? To what time?

The third chapter of Acts, now, beginning with verse 19: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And He shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution (or restoration) of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

Now here is another time statement, with respect to the fulfillment of things spoken of God by the mouth of His holy prophets. Peter said heaven must receive Christ until the times of the restoration, and it is the same word as in Acts 1:6 - "will you restore the kingdom at this time?" "Until the time of the restoration of all things spoken by God through the holy prophets." And so I affirm this evening that the period of fulfillment continued through the earthly ministry of Jesus, and on through the spiritual ministry of the Holy Spirit (which was also the ministry of Christ), and continued until the time of the fulfillment of all things spoken by God by the mouth of His holy prophets.

So, in John 16:7, Jesus said, "It is expedient that I go away, for if I go not away the Spirit will not come." Why didn't Jesus stay? Evidently, the ministry of the Holy Spirit was to be in a field in which the physical presence of Christ itself would be detrimental, had He remained to finish His ministry. The nature of the work, and the nature of the fulfillment that was yet to come, necessitated the work of the Holy Spirit, and laid the foundation for the return of Jesus Christ after the true fashion designed of God in His eternal purpose, and that we shall notice later this evening.

In Ephesians four, verse eight, Paul said, "When he ascended on high, he gave gifts unto men." For what purpose? Verse ten - "that he might fulfill all things." The purpose of giving these miraculous gifts was to fulfill, and the

rest of the text reveals that this was the ministry of the Holy Spirit. He gave some to be apostles, and prophets, etc., for the perfecting of the saints, till we come to the unity of this faith, and unto the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man. That was the ministry of Jesus, which was designed to fulfill the law, not destroy, and to bring it to completion.

Paul said in I Corinthians 2:9: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." So now the things the prophets could not see, and could not know, are being revealed. It is my conviction that the Holy Spirit was not removed in his ministry until every prophecy, type, shadow, and figure reached its complete fulfillment, bringing at last, "that which is perfect," of which Christ Himself is the very Sum and Substance (2 Corinthians 3:17, 18).

Now when was this time? Our proposition affirms that it was at the end, the consummation, the complete transition, the restitution, or the regeneration period of time, which was at the end of fleshly Israel, as represented in the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. Because it was to her the prophets spoke, and it was through her that the prophecies and the types were carried along until the time of fulfillment in those last days. The ministry of the Holy Spirit was to be extended, then, until all was fulfilled.

Now let us go to Peter in I Peter 4:7. The end of Israel had not yet arrived when Peter wrote; they were waiting for the revelation of Jesus; they had a hope to this end. But Peter wrote in chapter 4:7 that the end of all things was "at hand." Is at hand. What? The "end of all things." And that is what Jesus said: "Heaven and earth shall not pass till all be fulfilled;" not "till the end of all things." And it was "at hand" when Peter wrote.

Second Peter 1.19 - the day was dawning, and they were to give heed to the prophecy until the day star would arise in their hearts, and that day would dawn.

In Romans 13:11, 12, Paul said, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand," and upon that basis said, "Now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed."

Now let us go to the other part of our statement in the text, concerning that which they wanted to know of the times and the manner of times concerning the suffering of Christ, and the glory that should follow. When would the glory follow? This is the question for now. We know when the suffering was; when would the glory follow?

Turn with me now to Matthew, chapter twenty-four; and this, of course, is an eschatology chapter, because it deals with last things as indicated in verse three and the three-fold question of the disciples - "What shall be the

sign of these things?” or, “when shall these things be?” (That is, the destruction of the temple) and, “what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” And Jesus gave them the signs in answer to their question, throughout the chapter, speaking of when these things would take place, and said in verse 34: “Verily I say unto you this generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled.” He didn’t say one-third of them. He didn’t say two-thirds of them. He said, till ALL THESE THINGS be fulfilled. These are related events, all related to the same time, to which Luke adds two; the coming of the kingdom (Luke 21:31), and the redemption of the saints (Luke 21:28).

Thus, we have five related things that were going to be fulfilled in the span of that generation. Therefore, there is no process of exegesis, no logical exegesis, that can separate these questions and these events time-wise and event-wise. They are related. They stand together. The whole context shows this, as well as other related scriptures, and no one can divide the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew and the questions of the apostles, and separate them by two thousand years in time. They belong to THAT GENERATION, and in THAT GENERATION they came to pass, and in that generation came the end time. In THAT GENERATION we have, then, the fulfilling of all things written in the law and in the prophets. THEN heaven and earth passed away, referring of course to Judaism, which is a very logical symbol. (Time called.)