

# Summary of ‘The Restoration of All Things’ as it Currently Stands

## Background

The term ‘Restoration of All Things’ comes from the Greek word *apocatastasis* (ἀποκατάστασις) meaning ‘reconstitution’, ‘restitution’, or ‘restoration to the original or primordial condition’.<sup>1</sup> This was a concept in early Christianity, as well as Greek stoicism and Zoroastrianism. Because of the link with the latter two of these, many fundamental Christians regard any reference to it as a heresy. This is why it is rejected out-of-hand today by 21<sup>st</sup> century evangelicals, from my experience.

The word, *apokatastasis*, appears only once in the New Testament – “until the time comes for God to **restore** everything”<sup>2</sup> / “until the times of **restitution** of all things”<sup>3</sup>. This is where the Kingdom concept comes from. Yes, a single verse has produced a church doctrine, something abhorred by theologians.<sup>4</sup> However, how should we interpret this Greek statement?

*“Grammatically, the relative pronoun "ὧν" ("of which", genitive plural), could refer either to "χρόνων" ("of times") or to "πάντων" ("of all" or "of all things"), which means that it is either the times of which God spoke or the all things of which God spoke.”<sup>5</sup>*

This indicates that theologians and bible translations disagree about what was actually meant by Peter. The view normally taken by those who accept the term ‘Restoration of All Things’ is that it refers to either the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel and/or the Garden of Eden, but not all things that ever existed.<sup>6</sup>

## History

Historically, six main theological schools which were based on *apokatastasis* have been identified among Christians in the first 600 years of Christianity. Four of them were Universalists, one taught 'conditional immortality' and the fourth taught 'eternal hell'. Many of the early 'Church Fathers' have been quoted as either embracing the ultimate reconciliation of God with His creation, or hoping for it to eventuate. Augustine and others, who did not embrace this teaching, acknowledged that it was a common belief among Christians of their day. For example, there was great appeal in the East during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries of a sub-concept ‘the final restoration of all souls’.

The period between the Reformation (16<sup>th</sup> century) and the Age of Enlightenment (17<sup>th</sup> century) saw the focus switch to debates about salvation and hell. The main controversy during this period was between the majority, who believed in the 'immortal soul' and 'eternal punishment' in hell (such as Calvin), and a minority (including Luther), who believed in 'soul sleep'. Christian Universalism made a resurgence in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. For example: Jeremiah White, chaplain to Oliver Cromwell, wrote the book "The Restoration of All Things" which was published posthumously in 1712 after his death in 1707.

Note that *apocatastasis* is connected with universalism. Christian Universalism is a school of Christian theology which focuses around the doctrine of 'universal reconciliation' – the view that all human beings will ultimately be saved and restored to a right relationship with God. It is this form of *apocatastasis* that has been prominent since the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The heyday of Christian Universalism is considered to have been the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

---

1 – [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apocatastasis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apocatastasis)

2 – Acts 3:21 (NIV)

3 – Acts 3:21 (KJV)

4 – It was examined in my teaching “Will Only a Few be Saved?” (INVESTIGATION: What is Salvation #5) [canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/INVESTIGATION-What-is-Salvation5.pdf](https://canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/INVESTIGATION-What-is-Salvation5.pdf)

5 – [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apocatastasis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apocatastasis)

6 – [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apocatastasis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apocatastasis)

Even today, Christian Universalism has its proponents:

*“Two Christian theologians of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries who wrote in support of universalism and have received major notice are also J.A.T. Robinson and John Hick. Both argued for universalism as coming from God's nature as being of omnipotent love and stated that as time went on after death, some would temporarily refuse to repent, but none would refuse to repent forever. Hick, in particular, stated that the seemingly contradictory nature of the Bible's references to damnation came about because the warnings of hell are conditional to warn men men about eternal suffering if they permanently refuse to repent, but nobody would actually make that choice.”<sup>7</sup>*

For this teaching article, the concept of the **universal salvation** of every person is a subject for another time.

Today, The Restoration of All Things is not a theological argument. It's the strategy that our King is putting in place at this time in history – in this new era of the Kingdom<sup>8</sup> – so we need to understand what it is so we don't reject it. If we reject it, we reject him as ruler of the cosmos.

## **Summary**

Here's a reasonably easy-to-read summary of The Restoration of All Things, in point form.

It may help you overcome any negativity towards this metamorphic process which has come from pulpit teaching. Many don't understand this concept because mainstream evangelical Christendom, of all persuasions, haven't taught on the subject for the past 1,500 years.

- **“Changing the World to the Kingdom of God - part 6” (Ron McGatlin)**  
[canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Changing-the-World-to-the-Kingdom-of-God-part-6-McGatlin.pdf](http://canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Changing-the-World-to-the-Kingdom-of-God-part-6-McGatlin.pdf)

You can get a **sample** of Jeremiah White's 1712 book "The Restoration of All Things" if you email me

Laurence

22-8-2020

([www.CanberraForerunners.org](http://www.CanberraForerunners.org))

### COPYRIGHT

*Quotes are the copyright of their authors.*

*Free graphics are from [www.elker.com](http://www.elker.com) & free photos are from [commons.wikimedia.org](http://commons.wikimedia.org) unless otherwise credited.*

*This document is free to copy, republish and distribute, but only 'as is'. It is free to quote from at length.*

*All Canberra Forerunners' documents are licensed under*

*Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License*

(Readers will need to look up for themselves any scriptures alluded to in this document)

7 – [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apocatastasis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apocatastasis)

8 – “A New Era in the Kingdom”

[canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/MESSAGE-A-New-Era-in-the-Kingdom-21-11-2018.pdf](http://canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/MESSAGE-A-New-Era-in-the-Kingdom-21-11-2018.pdf)