END-TIME MYTHS

15 Myths of Modern Day Bible Prophecy

Michael Gordon
End-Time Myths: 15 Myths of Modern Day Bible Prophecy
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# End-Time Myths

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MYTHS

15 Myths of Modern Day
Bible Prophecy
INTRODUCTION

WHY I LEFT THE RAPTURE BEHIND

Myth: A widely-held but false belief or idea; a misrepresentation of the truth.

There was once a young pastor who thought he had the future figured out. He thought he knew all about the rapture, the tribulation period, and the antichrist. He preached about the millennial reign and the ashes of a red heifer. He was excited because of reports that Levitical priests were being ordained, that the furniture of the temple was being built, and that there were plans to rebuild the temple. He was excited about living in the “end times” as he went to yearly prophecy conferences, read monthly prophecy magazines he had subscribed to, and bought every end-times prophecy teaching he could find. He was a full-fledged dispensationalist.

That young pastor was me: the one who has written this book about all of the “myths” and misconceptions that I used to believe and preach. So you may ask: what happened to you? That’s a fair question. I wasn’t looking to not believe in the futurist dispensational view I had always known. I wasn’t trying to buck the
system or be a rebel. It might sound simplistic, but I just began to study the Bible for myself.

**What Is Dispensationalism?**

Many people have beliefs about the end times such as the rapture, a seven-year tribulation period, the antichrist, and the millennial reign, etc., but they don’t understand these individual beliefs are part of a large theological system called “dispensationalism.” Many people believe there’s going to be a rapture, but don’t know why there will be one. Or many people believe there will be a seven-year tribulation period, but don’t know what the purpose of a tribulation period is. To help understand the system of dispensationalism, following are several of its key teachings:

- There is a distinction between two covenant people: Israel and the church. God set Israel aside at the cross to work through the church.

- The Jews rejected Jesus and the kingdom, so the kingdom offer was withdrawn and delayed until the future millennial reign.

- There is a “gap” in Daniel’s prophecy in Daniel 9. This gap postpones the last seven years of Daniel’s prophecy thousands of years into the future, setting up a future seven-year tribulation period.

- The church will be raptured from the earth prior to this tribulation period in order for God to restore the nation of Israel and fulfill His promises to it.
• Israel has to rebuild the temple and reinstitute animal sacrifices and the antichrist will make a seven-year peace treaty with Israel but break it during the middle of the tribulation when he walks into the temple and causes the sacrifice to cease.

• Jesus will physically return to earth, set up a 1,000-year kingdom, and reign from David’s throne in Jerusalem.

This is the view I was taught and which is widely proclaimed on Christian television, radio, and in bookstores. For many it is the gospel and there is no other truth or way to view the scriptures and future. However, I began to see these things in a different light.

During my time of searching, I learned about the different views of eschatology that the church has believed and taught throughout its history that I never knew existed, those of Amillennialists, Historic Premillennialists, Postmillennialists, Historicists, Preterists and Idealists. I was shocked! You may have never heard of any other views before, but the church has not always believed the dispensational view; in fact, of all the views of eschatology, it is the youngest.

I began to see that the Bible was not dispensational, but covenantal, and it revolved around the different covenants God made with various people. I also began to see that most of the biblical passages that many see as future were fulfilled in the first century. This is the view I have come to understand that the scriptures teach: a “covenant eschatology.”

As I began to study these things and seek for myself the truth of what the Bible teaches concerning the last days, there were four major keys that had a hand in my journey from being a dispensationalist (the theological name for the popular modern view
of prophecy) to accepting more of a preterist (or covenant eschatology) view: (1) the biblical last days (2) biblical hermeneutics, (3) the present reality of the kingdom of God and (4) Israel and the church. I will mention each of them below, but we will examine them in more detail throughout this book.

Key #1 to Understanding Eschatology:
The Biblical Last Days

Understanding Old Covenant Israel and their last days is the first key to understanding eschatology. Many of the “end-time” prophecies given by the Old Testament prophets were given to Israel, not to the church. Many of the words of Jesus about “the end” and judgment were spoken directly to Israel. In fact, much of the prophecy of the scriptures could be described as “Jewish eschatology” because it was dealing with God’s covenant people Israel in their last days as God was fulfilling Old Testament prophecies and promises made to them.

The New Testament writers living in the first century believed they were living in the last days. What they were in the last days of was not the world, but the end of something specific: an age. Many people don’t know about the devastation that happened in AD 70 when the Romans utterly destroyed Jerusalem, killed over a million Jews, and leveled the temple with its priesthood and sacrifices. To the Jews, this event was the end of their world and would happen in the lifetime of those living in Jesus’ day. Jesus predicted this event would happen, it was no secret, and it was something the early believers warned others about. So biblical, covenantal eschatology is not so much about the “end of the world” as it is the end of the Old Covenant age of the Mosaic Law and the beginning of the New Covenant age through the finished work of Jesus Christ. These were the “biblical last days” which have already come and gone.
Key #2 to Understanding Eschatology:  
Biblical Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics is the art of interpreting scripture. It is the systematic rules and ways to properly understand the Bible. We all “do hermeneutics” even when we don’t realize it. Whenever we read a scripture and interpret it, we are using this tool. The problem is that many people have never been taught the proper way to hermeneutically interpret scripture and this leads to misinterpretations. The more I learned about hermeneutics, the more I was exposed to the historical particulars surrounding the scripture. The more I learned of the nature of scripture, the more my former view of eschatology didn’t line up anymore.

The main point of hermeneutics is to *exegete* the scriptures. Exegesis means to “draw out of” what is in the scriptures. It’s finding out what the author meant to convey to the original audience to which he was writing.

This is opposed to *eisegesis* which is “reading into” the scriptures something that is not there. When we *eisegete* scripture, we usually look at it from our point of view and place a modern-day meaning on a text which was not originally present in the text itself. When we exegete scripture we look at it from the original audience’s point of view so we can understand what the original writer meant.

Some other crucial components of biblical hermeneutics are:

- **Audience Relevance** – A foundational principle in hermeneutics is that the Bible was not originally written *to* us, but it was written *for* us. The Apostle Paul wrote a letter to the church at Corinth addressing real issues that were happening in that church. His thinking and intent on those particular issues didn’t go thousands of years into the future.
Rather, that letter was intended for them, for their time, and their issues. Now, where there are similar circumstances or moral exhortations, we can conclude that God’s word to them is God’s word for us as well. However, while the scripture is profitable for all, we shouldn’t expect everything that was said to them to come to pass in our day.

- **Covenant Understanding** – The Bible is a book about covenants and if we don’t understand the timing and nature of covenants, then we will inevitably misunderstand and misapply scripture. There are five major covenants in scripture: Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic (the Law), Davidic, and the New Covenant. One misunderstanding is that since the gospels are in the New Testament that means they are part of the New Covenant. However, when Jesus spoke and ministered to the Jews in the gospels, the Old Covenant Law was still in effect. The New Covenant didn’t begin until after His death and resurrection. We must understand which part of the Bible we are reading and which covenant the people were under in a specific passage or book.

- **Context** – Finding the context of a book or passage is crucially important. There are two contexts to keep in mind when reading scripture: First, we have the historical context: Who was the book written to, who was it written by, when was it written, what type of genre is it, what are the situations surrounding the book, and what did the words mean to the original audience? For instance, when we understand the historical particulars surrounding the churches Paul addressed in his letters, we can better understand why Paul said what he did. Then and only then can we properly apply these ancient texts to our day. Next, we must search out the biblical context of a scripture. Too many times we take one scripture and lift it out of the others
Thank you for previewing *End-Time Myths*. To purchase a full copy of the book, please visit [www.endtimemyths.com](http://www.endtimemyths.com) or search for it on Amazon. God bless you in your search for truth!