

# *A Biblical View* OF THE **END TIMES**

## WHERE DID WE GO WRONG?

Week #3; Dec. 7, 2025, 6PM

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### Review:

- Our session last week was **Part 2** of '**Setting the Proper Foundation.**'
- As we launch into this comprehensive study series called '*A Biblical View of the End Times*,' it is important to get out of the gates on a sure footing.
- And so, in Week 1, we established the fundamental character of God's Word. We also reviewed what our response to the Bible should be.
- Then last week, we built on that. We drilled down into several important truths:
  - **#1, there is no need for OT-styled prophets today.** God's Word is complete and inerrant, and we have the ministry of the Holy Spirit who '*guides us into all truth*' (**Cf. John 16:13**).
  - That means self-appointed 'prophets' who say they are receiving downloads from God which **add to**, or are **outside of** Scripture's revelations, are frauds.
  - This is happening an awful lot these days, and we need to be wise. We need to be cautious and '*test the spirits*' as **1 John 4:1** says.
  - **#2, God's Word shows the study and knowledge of Bible prophecy is very important.** We looked at the content of the Bible, and we saw all the ways that Bible prophecy comprises more than one quarter of it.
  - We also saw from the examples of Paul, Peter, and Jesus that Bible prophecy received a strong emphasis.
  - Peter used the prophetic Scriptures to preach repentance and to affirm the unchanging character and promises of God.
    - He preached Bible prophecy at the very **start of the church**.
  - Paul taught prophecy to correct wrong doctrines and to encourage young believers in their faith.
    - He taught Bible prophecy to **equip a new church**.
  - Jesus spoke about prophecy extensively. He not only showed He fulfilled it, but He taught a great deal about it.
    - He put Bible prophecy in Scripture for **all of the church**.
  - We noted that Jude and John also placed a strong emphasis on Bible prophecy - - again, for **ALL the church!**
  - The bottom line is the themes and doctrines of Bible prophecy were important for the early church, and they are important for the church today.
  - **And then, #3, we concluded with a solid review of the benefits of personally studying Bible prophecy.** We looked at nine specific benefits - although the Bible outlines even more.

**NOTE:** That brings us now to our third week in this series, and it's here that we start to build the walls. In the analogy of building a house, we've laid a strong foundation. Now, it's time to get the first layer of bricks in place.

**NOTE:** We must understand that each layer of bricks moving up from here is supported by what's beneath it. It's why we've approached this series systematically as we've done.

- We now move from the **independent** truths ABOUT Scripture to the **dependent** truths OF Scripture.
- Things like the inerrancy, completeness, absolute authority, and the divinely inspired nature of God's Word are what I'm calling **independent** truths.
- They rest on the character of God, and so no other validation is needed. We've learned if we doubt these truths about Scripture, then we doubt God Himself.
- With our attention now shifting to the **dependent** truths of the Bible, we're going into an *"if this....then that"* situation.
- **IF** God's Word is inerrant – then we cannot argue with what is there.
- **IF** God's Word is divinely inspired – then we should not impose our own preferences on the text when we encounter things that make us uncomfortable.
- **IF** God's Word has absolute authority – then we should conform our lives and choices to what it says. And so on....
- **NOTE:** I don't state any of these '**IFS**' here to imply any doubt about them. Rather, I am affirming each of these **independent** issues as TRUE.
- So again, *'if this....then that.'* It's why I call these next matters 'dependent' truths. They rest on the things we've already learned.
- And I want to start this session with...

#### A. A FEW GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT BIBLE PROPHECY

**NOTE:** I'm going to step back a couple of paces, and I want to take a running start.

1. It's no secret that Bible prophecy is greatly **misunderstood** and **mistreated** in the church today.

- The study of Bible prophecy is called '**eschatology**' (this is the study of the events and doctrines about 'the last days').
- As we've learned, most pastors, teachers, and Christian leaders today ignore the themes of Bible prophecy almost entirely.
  - Research on this issue varies, but anywhere from 75% to 97% of pastors do not teach on Bible prophecy.
  - And, as we've also learned, some of them even mock it, or they ridicule those who give attention to it.

2. But we're talking about God's Word here (so, with our 'running start' in view)...

- The Bible – **when it is properly interpreted** – presents no conflicts in essential doctrine or primary message.
  - That's because it is ALL divinely inspired and inerrant...
  - (and being so), it does not disagree with itself.

- The Bible is also intended to be read normally - - as one would do with any sound work of literature.
  - We've learned it's God's communication to us, and so it's meant to be understood.
  - We therefore need to employ a **consistent** and **literal** hermeneutic when it comes to reading the Bible.

**NOTE:** The term "hermeneutic" means a method or system of interpretation. It is a standard by which one APPROACHES God's Word. **And we need a consistent and literal hermeneutic.**

- The opposite of a consistent and literal hermeneutic is one that chooses to symbolize or allegorize Scripture. That's a non-literal method.
  - That results in the opinion that "the Bible does not really mean what it says."
  - It also results in a lot of **different** ideas and views. Various heresies in the church today stem from adopting an allegorical position.
  - Because underneath these heresies exists a false belief that Biblical truth can be dismissed and explained away.
- **IMPORTANT:** A consistent and literal hermeneutic recognizes the use of figures of speech.
  - An example of a figure of speech is saying, "It's raining cats and dogs."
  - It's meant to provide illustration. It doesn't mean we need to alert the Humane Society. It means it's raining very hard.
  - A literal hermeneutic in God's Word ALLOWS for these figures of speech. Let me give you two examples:
    - **From the OT: (Cf. Song of Solomon 4:5)** – "*your two breasts are like two fawns*" (a poetic illustration meant to convey youth, perfection, loveliness). NOTE: The **Song of Solomon** contains many figures of speech.
    - **From the NT: (Cf. Revelation 20:1)** – John sees an angel coming down out of heaven "*holding a great chain*" to bind Satan (not a standard metal chain since nothing physical can bind Satan who is supernatural – but it's something which John likens to a chain)

**NOTE:** It's important that we stay balanced here.

- a. Again, a consistent and literal hermeneutic acknowledges the proper use of figures of speech and symbolism. They have their place.
- b. For the most part, it's self-evident when these figures of speech are used. Consider the two examples I gave you. This issue largely comes down to using common sense.

**NOTE:** This **logical, literal, consistent** hermeneutical approach is summarized by Dr. David L. Cooper, who - in his work called, "*The Golden Rule of Interpretation*" - said the following:

*‘When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense. Therefore, take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in the light of related passages and axiomatic and fundamental truths indicate clearly otherwise.’*

**NOTE: Let me paraphrase that MUCH more simply:**

*“When the plain sense of Scripture makes good sense, seek no other sense, for it will result in nonsense.”*

## **B. THE THREE BASIC RULES OF PROPER BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION**

**NOTE:** I’ve encouraged you to picture a few things up to this point: flying high in an airplane, building a house from the ground up, and so on....

**NOTE:** Now, I want you to imagine something else: picture a three-legged stool in your mind, something you’d pull up to a counter and sit on.

### **1. Let’s talk about the three legs of that stool:**

- EACH one of those legs represents ONE rule for engaging in proper Biblical interpretation.
- They are common sense guidelines for letting the Bible interpret itself.
- These guidelines are manifest within the Scriptures themselves.

### **2. Here are the three basic rules of proper Biblical interpretation:**

- **First, a passage must be understood in its original Biblical meaning.**
  - We need to understand them as they were divinely inspired to be understood.
  - That means we may need to explore the nuances of the original language in which those passages were written: Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek.
  - We sometimes lose certain details in our English translations. Our translations may round corners that need to be square.
- **Second, a passage must be in harmony with all other passages on the same subject.**
  - This gets back to the fact that the Bible never disagrees with itself.
  - This means that all passages on the same subject will essentially say the same thing, OR they will support the correct interpretation from another angle.
  - It’s important to consider ALL passages on a particular topic to gain the right view.
  - We may not gain the right view if we limit ourselves to one or two passages of our choice.
- **And third, a passage’s interpretation must comply with and support the context.**
  - Very rarely, in the Bible, is any passage ‘an island unto itself.’ Instead, every passage is part of a larger intent.

- That larger intent helps us properly interpret any passage that is contained within it.
- Sometimes the context is two or three verses, and sometimes it is a few chapters.

**3. HERE'S WHAT'S VERY IMPORTANT: The proper interpretation of Scripture ALWAYS accommodates these three rules *at the same time*.**

- Let me say that another way: NO accurate interpretation of any Biblical passage has ever violated any of these three rules.
- This gets back to the stool with three legs.
  - A stool without three legs won't stand up. It falls over. All three are needed.
  - Furthermore, if one leg is compromised on that stool, you are at risk if you sit on it.
  - Just as one is foolish to depend on a three-legged stool with a bad leg, so one is foolish to trust interpretations that violate any of these three rules.
- These three rules of proper Biblical interpretation will never let you down if you faithfully apply them.

**C. NOW, AS FAR AS BIBLE PROPHECY IS CONCERNED, APPLYING THESE THREE RULES OF PROPER INTERPRETATION LEADS TO SOME LOGICAL CONCLUSIONS**

**NOTE:** We'll be looking into these things more extensively in weeks and months ahead, but here are a few quick examples.

**NOTE:** If we responsibly apply ALL THREE rules of interpretation, that means:

1. Jesus Christ will supernaturally and imminently rapture His church, at a future pre-Tribulation point. **It ALSO means:**
  - The date or time of this event cannot be determined, and therefore...
  - Expectant and faithful living should be the character of God's saints through all the ages.
2. A well-defined, seven-year period of history known as The Tribulation, will begin **at some point after** the Rapture. **It ALSO means:**
  - The Tribulation begins with the confirmation of an agreement or a covenant between the antichrist, the nation of Israel, and 'many others.'
  - This seven-year period will contain multiple physical and supernatural judgments on the earth.
  - This will result in unprecedented worldwide calamities, AND the greatest spread of the Gospel in all human history.
  - The events of the Tribulation are primarily focused on the nation of Israel, and only a remnant of faithful Jews will be saved.
  - The Tribulation will conclude with Christ's glorious physical arrival on earth to set up His 1,000-year physical rule from Jerusalem – in Israel.

3. God's plan for history demands a consistent distinction between national Israel and the church. **It ALSO means:**

- God has had an active and ongoing plan for national, ethnic Israel through all times past, present, and future.
- These plans will culminate in Jesus Christ's 1000-year Millennial Kingdom during which all promises formerly made to Israel **will be fulfilled**.
- The church has not replaced Israel. God has not forgotten or moved beyond the Jews.
- God has not broken His **unconditional, irrevocable, and unilateral** promises to the Jewish people. Believing that violates the character of God.
- And it also means the word "Israel" in the NT does NOT mean "the church."

**NOTE: So, a big question here: 'Where did we go wrong?'** That's the title of this lesson today - because the conclusions I've stated in the last few minutes upset multiple pastors and teachers whenever they are stated. Even within my own sphere, I've been told I am *"too Scriptural."*

There is a great quote from Sir Isaac Newton, and it helps to explain this dilemma. He stated:

*"About the time of the end, a body of men will be raised up who will turn their attention to the prophecies, and insist upon their literal interpretation, **in the midst of much clamor and opposition.**"*

**D. SO, LET'S CONTINUE LAYING THAT FIRST LAYER OF BRICKS**

**NOTE:** I want to look at two important definitions that concern interpreting the Scriptures:

**1. DISPENSATIONALISM** – This is considered a bad word in many churches today, and that's most unfortunate. But what is a **'dispensationalist?'**

- Dispensationalists are people who seek to interpret the Bible literally. We just talked about this.
- If you agree with the things I've said so far, you are likely a 'dispensationalist.'
- If you seek to understand Scripture in its plain, normal, natural, obvious sense - much like we would read and understand most types of literature – then you are likely a dispensationalist.
- Dispensationalists are relatively easy to spot. Just have a conversation with them about Bible prophecy. You can recognize them for the things they say and believe.
- **Dispensationalism** is a term that arose in church history to catalogue those Christians who believe the Bible teaches certain things.
- If you do your own research, you will find that Dispensationalists **firmly** believe:
  - The Bible is God's inspired, inerrant, and complete revelation to man.
    - ✓ As such, Scripture provides the framework by which God's plan for history is made clear.
    - ✓ Scripture is also the means through which we can best understand that history (past and future).
  - Since the Bible reveals God's plan for history, then it follows that there is an ebb and flow to His plan – and history has shown this to be the case.

- ✓ Therefore, God's plan includes different 'dispensations.' Here's the root word.
- ✓ These 'dispensations' are ages, chapters, or eras of history within which mankind is tested by some design.
- ✓ They are periods of history in which God uses different means to deal with humanity - - or portions of humanity.
- Dispensationalists believe, since all humanity fell into sin, each person must individually receive God's provision of salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ by believing the Gospel.
  - Thus, Jesus Christ is the **ONLY** way to a right relationship with God.
- Because of mankind's fall into sin – which began with Adam - Scripture teaches that all humanity is **naturally rebellious to God and to the things of God**.
  - Dispensationalists believe in God's sovereign election - TO salvation, BY grace, THROUGH faith - enabling one to become a genuine believer in Christ and to be open to the teachings of the Bible.
  - THEREFORE (and this is important), salvation is a **prerequisite** to properly understanding God's Word.
  - **1 Cor. 2:14** makes this very point **very** clear. It says:

*"The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are **spiritually** discerned."*

- Dispensationalists also believe that because God's plan for history is perfect, and because it is not subject to the will of anyone else, it therefore includes a purpose **for the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—that is Israel!**
  - This plan for Israel includes promises that they will have the physical land of Israel, and they will be a worldwide blessing to the nations.
  - Many of the promises to national Israel **are yet future**, therefore, **God is not finished with Israel**.
- Dispensationalists **ALSO** agree that God's plan from all eternity includes a specific purpose for the church.
  - However, our church age ('Age of Grace') is a parenthetical phase of history.
  - It is sandwiched inside of God's fuller plan for Israel. We will understand that more fully when we deal with a certain passage in the book of **Daniel**.
  - The church began on the Day of Pentecost in **Acts Ch. 2** and will end with the Rapture.
  - After the Rapture, God will return His attention to completing His plan for the redemption of Israel.
- Dispensationalists agree the main purpose in God's master plan for history is to glorify Himself through Jesus Christ. And so, Jesus is the goal and hero of history.

**NOTE:** Prominent dispensationalist scholars, teachers, and institutions in recent times include Billy Graham, Charles Ryrie, Hal Lindsey, Charles Swindoll, Dwight Pentecost, John MacArthur,

Tim LaHaye, Warren Wiersbe, J. Vernon McGee and John Walvoord. It is the position of The Masters College, Dallas Theological Seminary, and Moody Bible Institute.

**2. COVENANT THEOLOGY** – This is another important term to understand, **especially** in our era with the modern church. I’m going to spend a bit more time on this one.

**NOTE: Covenant theology** agrees with Dispensationalism on some key points, but it is effectively the opposite view on other matters. It’s not so much a ‘theology’ as its name suggests. Rather, it’s a framework to interpret Scripture, just as Dispensationalism is.

**NOTE:** Covenant theology is sometimes called **Reformed theology** - - and I’ll circle back and make some additional comments on that.

**1. The overarching principle of covenant theology is - - the issue of ‘covenants.’**

- Covenant theology sees TWO basic theological covenants in Scripture—the **covenant of works** and the **covenant of grace**, the latter ultimately ‘giving way’ to the **new covenant**.
- Followers of Covenant theology generally believe the covenant of works was introduced in the Garden between God and Adam, and so it is sometimes referred to as the ‘Edenic Covenant’ (Garden of Eden).
- With the covenant of works, God promised mankind life for obedience and consequence for disobedience (**Cf. Gen. 2:16-17; Hosea 6:7**).
  - In this view, the covenant of works was further re-emphasized at various points of OT history from there.
  - For example, the Mosaic Covenant outlined strict compliance and consequences within an elaborate system of laws and rituals.
- The future New Covenant was alluded to in several OT passages, and it was introduced in the NT while the covenant of works was still in effect.
- One verse that is often quoted by Covenant theology adherents is **Luke 22:20**.
  - It concerns The Last Supper, and particularly that moment when Jesus said, *“This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.”*
  - This new covenant is the promise Jesus made with humanity: that He will forgive sin and restore fellowship with those who place their faith in Him.
  - No big issues there...
- Another verse that Covenant supporters lean on a great deal is **Gal. 3:28**.
  - Paul wrote **Gal. 3:28** to combat some of the divisions that arose in the early church between Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews).
  - There were pressures for everyone to conform to elements of the Mosaic Law, and so Paul said, *“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for **you are all one in Christ Jesus.**”*
  - Many Covenant adherents manipulate this verse to claim that God has done away with His specific promises to the Jews and to Israel.
  - That is **NOT** what this passage is saying, and when the three rules of Biblical interpretation are properly applied, they make that clear.



**NOTE:** Already - you can see hints of the dilemma for the folks in the 'Covenant camp' – they will contort Scripture when it suits their preferences.

**NOTE:** That is why Covenant theology does not see any distinction between Israel and the church. The boundary lines are blurred. It sees both groups as one continuous people of God with one uniform destiny.

**2. The problem with this position is it presents only partial truth** - - and as we learned last week, **partial truth** can have the same effect as **full deception**.

- The result is, many Covenant adherents CHOOSE to see no significance to the current nation of Israel. Some get quite bellicose even talking about it.
- This position invites many problems for these folks, and it means they must ASSERTIVELY discount any prophecies which concern Israel and the Jews.
  - This is **why** many Covenant adherents have adopted the conclusion that the church has replaced Israel.
  - It's why multiple churches, in their study series on **Romans**, avoid **chapters 9-11**, because it's in those chapters that Paul makes a watertight case for God's continued commitment to the Jews.

**NOTE:** This all boils down to a heresy known as '**Replacement Theology**,' or '**supersessionism**.'

In a lesson ahead, I will take a deep dive into Replacement Theology. That will be when I deal with a portion of Scripture in **Genesis**, but for now – here are a few basic points to know:

- ✓ Again, Replacement theology teaches, like it says, that the church has 'replaced Israel.'
- ✓ Adherents of this heresy believe the Jews are no longer God's chosen people, and God does not have any specific future plans for the nation of Israel. This view is VERY problematic.
- ✓ Some folks in this camp are concerned about the obvious problems of this position, and so they try to take a softer stance by claiming the church is an 'expansion' of Israel. You will find this view in the writings of many in Covenant theology circles.
- ✓ But that is wrong TOO. The Bible is very clear that Israel is unique and separate from the church in God's divinely ordained program.
- ✓ Replacement theology also believes that God's **unconditional, unilateral, and irrevocable** promises made to Israel in the Bible are now fulfilled in the Christian church, not in Israel. (**Think about it:** what does that say about their view of God?)
- ✓ To defend their errant views, Covenant adherents 'spiritualize' (or allegorize) the promises concerning the blessing and physical restoration of Israel to the Promised Land. They claim these things are now spiritual promises of God's blessing for the church.
- ✓ There are SO many problems with these views and these methods of interpretation. It's ALSO why many scholars, denominations, and churches which embrace a covenant-based view have shown some rather strong prejudices against Israel and the Jews.
- ✓ **NOTE:** As I said, I'm going to do a deeper dive on Replacement theology in a forthcoming lesson when we get to a certain passage in **Genesis**.
- ✓ **BUT THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT:** What adherents of Covenant theology **cannot** tolerate is a literal interpretation of Bible prophecy.

- This is especially the case concerning the promise of a literal physical Millennial Kingdom, and Israel's future expansion of her borders.
- Covenant adherents must therefore hold to an allegorical or symbolic view of Bible prophecy (or avoid it altogether) – it's the only way they can arrive at their desired outcome.
- It also explains why there are SO MANY different views and ideas within the covenant camp - because the boundaries of interpretation are not clear for them.
- Now, sadly, most Reformed denominations (that is the bulk of churches today), subscribe to one grade or another of Covenant theology.
- It's why many of them refuse to teach Bible prophecy because they cannot teach it properly and still hold to the views they want to have.

**NOTE: By now, you can see there is an obvious problem in the Covenant camp, and that is they have to change the rules of interpretation –** This is exactly what people do when they don't want to believe that the Scriptures mean what they are literally saying. Unfortunately, this happens - a lot!

- There are MASSIVE problems with this...
  - Once you choose to go down this path, you don't know what the Bible is really saying, and nor does anyone else. Who's the REAL authority?
  - You must convince yourself that large portions of the Bible are meant to be confusing.
  - And if you accept that premise, then you probably believe that God Himself is confusing. Remember: God's Word reflects Himself.
  - Everything begins to break down because God's inspired rules of interpretation no longer apply (again....this is **by choice!**)

#### **E. THE GROWING INFLUENCE OF AMILLENIALISM –**

**NOTE:** The belief in 'amillennialism' today is surging (the belief that there is no future literal 1000-year physical reign of Jesus Christ headquartered in Israel).

**NOTE:** Many amillennialists believe we are living in the 'kingdom age' right now - - THIS IS the Millennial Kingdom! They believe this time is a 'spiritual reign of Christ from heaven.'

**NOTE:** This position is dominated by the Reformed movement, who, honestly, have things right on most issues. But, how did they come to believe such obvious fallacies?

#### **1. During the reformation, when the Reformers' leaders (like Martin Luther) fought back against the dark power of the Catholic church, they had to fight where the battle was hottest. And so, they focused on:**

- the Gospel, and the nature of Jesus Christ,
- (and) salvation by sovereign election, and by grace through faith.

#### **2. "Sometimes you have to lose some battles in order to win the war."**

- Being as the Reformers were occupied with contending with the massive and oppressive Roman church, they lost some battles in order to win the war.

- Consequently, 'eschatology' was not their priority. (And) it still is not.

**NOTE: There are some strange ironies within the Reformed camp, since the Reformers tend to be those who...**

- Love the doctrine of sovereign election most sincerely,
- are the most careful and intentionally Biblical. But they are, nevertheless....
- ... not interested in applying their skills to the end of the story, as if the end does not matter much. (NOTE: Let me remind you - - the end matters VERY much to God!)

**NOTE:** I have taught at prophecy conferences, and I will be teaching at more. For some time now, I've had my finger on the pulse of Bible prophecy. I've not found any 'amillennial prophecy conferences.'

**NOTE:** If you don't know what you believe about the future - if everybody has their own view since there's no consistent standard for interpretation, it's a tough matter to teach on.

- If you are an 'amillennialist,' you really don't know what to do with Bible prophecy.
- That's because you've made personal choices - - and you're going to stick with them.
- Your dilemma is this: if you interpret the prophetic texts of Scripture the same way you interpret the rest of Scripture – **(that means 'literally')** – then you end up being a premillennialist. You end up holding to Dispensational views.
- That's why amillennialists do not assign much value to matters of eschatology. That's why they discount more than 25% of God's Word.
- Here's the bottom line: Bible prophecy holds their personal choices, their personal preferences – and in many cases, their personal prejudices - accountable. And they don't want that accountability.

**NOTE:** Perhaps some of you are thinking: *"Steve, you sound very opinionated here. I think you're being too heavy-handed and brittle with this issue."*

**NOTE:** Let me read you a few quotes from some formidable and respected amillennialist leaders. They describe this situation that I've laid out for you as a REAL dilemma for them:

**Oswald T. Allis** (he was an American Presbyterian theologian, and a professor at Westminster Theological Seminary) – He said, *"The OT prophecies, **if literally interpreted**, cannot be regarded as having yet been fulfilled, **nor are they capable of being fulfilled in the present age.**"*

- He's right! That's true! If you interpret the OT prophecies literally (as you are supposed to), then they cannot be fulfilled in **this present age**. They have a **future fulfillment**.
- Mr. Allis is therefore saying he cannot interpret these OT prophecies literally because he has to make them fit **right here right now**.
- He says that because he wants to subscribe to the belief there is no future earthly kingdom, led by Jesus Christ, and headquartered in Jerusalem, Israel.

**Floyd E. Hamilton** (he was an important figure in the Orthodox Presbyterian church; educated at Princeton Theological Seminary) – He said, *"Now we must **frankly admit** that the **literal***

*interpretation of the OT prophecies gives us just such a picture of **an earthly reign of the Messiah as the premillennialist pictures.***

- At least he's being honest about the problem. He's saying a literal OT interpretation gives us a premillennial view. It gives us a literal earthly Messianic Kingdom in Israel.
- And he's also implying that since we don't want to get **there**, we need to change the rules of interpretation to avoid the obvious conclusion.

**Loraine Boettner** (he was a Reformed American theologian, teacher, and author who was also an alumni of Princeton Theological Seminary) – He wrote in his work, *'The Meaning of the Millenium'* – *"It is generally agreed, that if the prophecies are taken **literally**, they **do** foretell a restoration of the nation of Israel in the land of Palestine, with the Jews having a prominent place in that kingdom, and ruling over the rest of the nations."*

- Well, what's wrong with that? That's what the Bible teaches, so why should we not believe what it says?
- Mr. Boettner was known to subscribe to Replacement Theology, and you can sense his anti-Jewish leanings in this quote. As I said before, this is a common problem in the Reformed and Covenant camps.
- And again – you see the reluctance to responsibly interpret God's Word. Mr. Boettner admits he cannot hold to the views that he wants if he does that.

**IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND:** It's interesting that the problem many Covenant or Reformed folks have is the same problem atheists have. They've branded themselves as believing in something **that does not exist**.

- They do not believe in a literal future 1000-year reign of Jesus Christ, headquartered in Jerusalem, Israel.
- The Bible is very clear about this: that's exactly what's going to happen. So, if you call yourself an 'amillennialist,' then you must **FIRST** state what you **don't** believe
- **THEN** (and this is the hard work) you must go to **ALL** the many passages of Scripture that teach very clearly about the Millennial Kingdom, and you must come up with some way to argue that these passages are not saying what they **ARE** saying.
- I could say much more, but I'm out of time and I need to wrap up.

**NOTE:** Prominent covenant scholars, teachers, and institutions include: R.C. Sproul Jr., J.I. Packer, Kim Riddlebarger, Tim Keller (founder of The Gospel Coalition), John Calvin, Augustine, Martin Luther (BTW, who Hitler was partly inspired by – we'll learn more about that later), and John Piper. Covenant Theology is the position of Reformed Theological Seminary, Westminster Theological Seminary, and Fuller Theological Seminary.

**LET ME WIND DOWN HERE:** For those of you that might **still** be wondering where I personally stand in all this – I am a strong Dispensationalist. I believe this is the position of **greatest humility** and **personal responsibility** when it comes to God's Word. **Therefore:**

1. When it comes to teaching what I find in the Bible, I will NOT teach what is NOT there – nor will I avoid teaching what IS THERE.
2. I will always take the Scriptures at face value – I will always explain to you, *to the best of my abilities*, what I believe the Scriptures are telling us. MY agenda is **truth!**
3. I will not pretend – as many do – that the Bible doesn't mean what it says, nor will I tell you it's saying something it's not.
4. I won't impose another doctrine (like the Gospel, for example) on any passage that is plainly moving in a different direction.
5. Being as these are my positions, I will therefore not engage in any political correctness. This is NOT a matter of tact. It IS a matter of truth.
6. If the Bible states it plainly, so will I. Political correctness has invaded and corrupted the church. It is not a part of sound Biblical doctrine - - or of any truth in general.
7. Concerning some interpretations of Bible prophecy which do not conform to the three rules of proper interpretation, I'll touch on them so you know about them - but I won't teach them with same time or conviction as I will teach the correct view.

**NEXT WEEK: “The Very First Bible Prophecy”** (we will step into a time machine and go back to the Garden of Eden).

- We will start to get into the details of Bible prophecy. And we'll begin by unpacking one of **the most significant** passages in all of Scripture.
- We will learn about a 'talking snake.' We will need to 'unlearn' some things too.
- We're going to learn about what one Bible prophecy mentor of mine has appropriately called '*the seed war*.'
- We're going to see an outline for all of God's Word, we'll learn about the person and work of Jesus Christ, and we'll discover an overlooked theme that starts in **Genesis** and ends in **Revelation**.



**SOLID  
BREAD**

Solid Bread Community was started with a passion to teach the truth of God's Word – every part of it, as it was divinely inspired to be understood.

The rules are simple. First, teach what IS there. Don't pretend the Bible is not saying what it is saying.

Second, don't teach what is NOT there. Don't force a passage to mean something it really doesn't.

And – number three, if the Bible states it plainly, we should too.

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