

Understanding Prophecy
Lesson 01-02
**Worldviews Within
Christianity.**

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Christianity**



Textual Considerations



Alexandrian vs Byzantine Texts [126; 127]

It is **significant to our understanding of prophecy**, as we will see later in the course, that the basis for most modern translations of the Bible, owe their Greek text to **Alexandrian** originated texts, specifically two codexes, **Siniaticus and Vaticanus**.

It is also significant that these two Greek texts **differ significantly** with the majority of the Greek texts in existence in reference to clear revelation of the deity of Jesus Christ.



Alexandrian vs Byzantine Texts [126; 127]

From the **Alexandrian** text we get the modern translations **American Standard, Revised Standard, NIV, NASB**, and others.

However, the vast majority of the texts in existence are of the **Antioch** school, called the **Byzantine** text.

The **King James Version** and The **New King James Version** are of the **Byzantine** text type.



Translation Techniques [126; 127]

The **translation techniques** differ significantly from the King James and New King James, when compared to the modern translations.

The King James and New King James translations are **word-for-word** translations, while the modern translations are generally **thought-for-thought** translations.

In the modern translations, the translator can take liberties to express **what he thinks the meaning is.**



Examples [126; 127]


Consider the following examples:

In 1 Timothy 3:16 the word “**God**” is changed to “**He**” in the modern versions.

This removes the clearest teaching that Jesus Christ is “**God**” Himself.

This is how the King James version translates the Byzantine text:

1TIM 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. (KJV)



Examples [126; 127]

The Byzantine Text (Textus Receptus of KJV):

225	3672	3173	2076	2150
16	ἀληθείας.	καὶ ὁμολογουμένως	μέγα ἐστὶ τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας	
	truth.	And confessedly,	great is the	of godliness
3466	μυστήριον·	Θεὸς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί,	ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι,	
	mystery,	God was manifested in flesh,	was justified in spirit,	
3700	ὡφθη ἀγγέλοις,	ἐκηρύχθη ἐν ἔθνεσιν,	ἐπιστεύθη ἐν κόσμῳ,	
	was seen by angels,	was proclaimed among nations,	was believed in (the) world,	
353	ἀνελήφθη ἐν δόξῃ.			
	was taken up in glory.			



Examples [126; 127]

Now compare this to how the New International version translates the Alexandrian text:

1TIM 3:16 Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory. (NIV)

Examples [126; 127]

The Alexandrian Text of modern versions:

καὶ	ἑδραῖωμα	τῆς	ἀληθείας.	16	καὶ
and	bulwark	of the	truth.		And
ὁμολογουμένως	μέγα	ἐστὶν	τὸ	τῆς	εὐσεβείας
confessedly	great	is	the	-	² of piety
μυστήριον·	→ ὅς	ἐφανερώθη	ἐν	σαρκί,	
¹ mystery:	→ Who	was manifested	in	flesh,	
ἐδικαιώθη	ἐν	πνεύματι,	ὤφθη	ἄγγέλοις,	
was justified	in	spirit,	was seen	by angels,	
ἐκηρύχθη	ἐν	ἔθνεσιν,	ἐπιστεύθη	ἐν	κόσμῳ,
was pro- claimed	among	nations,	was believed	in	[the] world,
ἀνελήμφθη	ἐν	δόξῃ.			
was taken up	in	glory.			



Examples [126;127]

The **“Theos” (God)** of the Byzantine is changed to **“os” (who; he)** of the Alexandrian, thus removing the power of the clear expression of the verse that God appeared in human form.

It is clear that Jesus is God in human form when we read the King James **“God** was manifested in the flesh.”

That Jesus appeared in bodily form has no meaning when rendered **“he (who) appeared in a body.”**

That I appear in a body does not make me **God.**



Examples [126; 127]

Notice that the power has been removed from the modern translations when compared with the King James version in the following examples:

Examples [126; 127]

For who was Christ sacrificed?

1CO 5:7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: KJV

1CO 5:7 Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast - as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. NIV

1CO 5:7 Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. NASB



Examples [126; 127]

On whom or what must we believe?

JOH 6:47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. **KJV**

JOH 6:47 I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life. **NIV**

JOH 6:47 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. **NASB**



Examples [126; 127]

The importance of Christs blood in our redemption is removed.

COL 1:14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: **KJV**

COL 1:14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. **NIV**

COL 1:14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. **NASB**




Examples [126; 127]

The reference to eternal life in the KJV leaves no doubt as to life after death.

1TI 6:19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. **KJV**

1TI 6:19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life. **NIV**

1TI 6:19 storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, to that they may take hold of that which is life indeed. **NASB**



Examples [126; 127]

The KJV and the Byzantine text in Luke 2:33 makes the clear distinction that Joseph is not Jesus' father.

LUK 2:33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. KJV

602	1484	1391	2992	4675	2474
32	ἀποκάλυψιν	ἔθνων,	καὶ	δοξάν	λαοῦ σου ἰσραήλ.
	revelation (to the) nations, and a glory of people of You Israel. A				
2501	3384	848	2296	1909	
33	Ἰωσήφ	καὶ ἡ μήτηρ	αὐτοῦ	θαυμάζοντες	ἐπὶ τοῖς ἰ
	<u>Joseph</u>	and the mother	of Him	marveling	at the things
4012	846	2127	846	4826	
34	μένοισις	περὶ αὐτοῦ.	καὶ	εὐλόγησεν	αὐτούς Σιμεὼν, καὶ
	said about	Him.	And	blessed	them Simeon, at

Examples [126; 127]

Now notice that the NIV and the Alexandrian text infers that Joseph is Jesus' father (a denial of the virgin birth).

LUK 2:33 The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. NIV

δόξαν λαοῦ σου Ἰσραήλ. 33 καὶ ἦν
a glory of [the] people of thee Israel. And 'was(were)
ὁ πατήρ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ μήτηρ θαυμάζοντες
'the 'father 'of him 'and 'the 'mother 'marvelling
ἐπὶ τοῖς λαλουμένοις περὶ αὐτοῦ. 34 καὶ
at the things being said concerning him. And



Examples [126; 127]

The **NIV** and other modern versions give the impression that **Joseph is Jesus' biological father**, and is so rendered by the **Alexandrian Text**, while the **Byzantine Text** leaves no doubt that **Joseph is not Jesus' real father**.

Remember also that the **vast majority** of the surviving texts are of the **Byzantine** text type.



Examples [126; 127]

The translation that we use does affect prophecy in a significant way as we shall see when we study the Rapture in lesson 7.

This is why I read the King James Version.



Preterism





Preterism

There are a number of worldviews within Christianity.

We have already visited a few

A worldview is thought of as the way you view the world you live in.

Your worldview in Christianity is the way you view Christianity in general, the way you interpret the Bible, and prophecy in particular.

Preterism [39; 43; 96; 108]

Preterism is a belief that Revelation was written as early as 68 AD, or as late as 96 AD, and that all of Revelation was probably fulfilled as early as the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

- The “beast” of Revelation would probably refer to the Emperor Nero, or possibly the Emperor Domitian a little later.
- The “wrath” found in Revelation would symbolically represent the severe persecution of Christians during the reigns of Nero and Domitian.

Preterism

- The preterist is one that believes that the book of Revelation speaks of past events, but not necessarily of exact fulfillment. [39; 43; 96; 108]
- At least one preterist sees the Rapture as a conspiracy, by world planners, to neutralize Christians. [96]
- These people almost seem to believe that it is more urgent to save the Republic than to save souls.
- To the preterist, it seems, the country, the world, and the Kingdom of Christ are ultimately the same things.



Preterism

- **The preterist believes that almost all prophecy was fulfilled at the time of the destruction of the Temple, thus ending the Jewish sacrificial system – replaced by the once-for-all blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ.** [108]



Preterism [108]

- In the view of the preterist, **God has cast Israel aside, and the Church (the new Israel) has replaced the rejected Israel,** inheriting all the promises of God.

This preterist view that the Church has replaced Israel is known as **“replacement theology.”**

- The preterist believes that under God’s new program **the world is getting better and better,** as more people are evangelized and commit to follow Christ.

Eventually Christ will return to claim His **already established Kingdom.**



Preterism [108]

- To the preterist, Revelation therefore deals with the **destruction of Israel and the establishment of the Church as the New Covenant Temple.**

This is why many well known ministries concentrate their efforts toward **Christianizing our secular institutions,** rather than on the message of the **imminent return** of Jesus Christ. [1]



Preterism

- Since Augustine's *City of God*, the Catholic Church sees itself as **possessing the Kingdom authority**.

Therefore, to be **outside the Church** is thought of as being **outside the Kingdom of God**.

- When the Church exchanged the **rule of Christ** with the **rule of man (the Pope)** religious atrocities followed. [108]



Preterism

Interestingly, **atheistic evolution** and **secular humanism** support the false view that man is **evolving upwards toward a perfect society.**

Preterist theologians have bought the idea of the Kingdom being established in like manner by **human effort.** [108]



The Futurist





The Futurist

Futurism interprets Revelation in a **literal** sense, indicating a future fulfillment of the wrath of God during a seven-year tribulation period, after which Jesus Christ will return and set up His Millennial Kingdom (**premillennialism**). [43]

According to Steve Gregg, “the best known version of futurism today is that of **dispensational theology**.” [43]



The Futurist

According to a dispensationalist, Pettingill:

The dispensational tests served to show man's utter helplessness, in order to bring him to faith, that he might be saved by grace through faith plus nothing. [105]



The Futurist - Dispensationalism

Dispensationalism supports **progressive revelation**, “the continually unfolding revelation of God given by various means throughout the successive ages.” [105]

- The dispensationalist keeps the distinction between Israel and the Church, and bases this distinction on a system of hermeneutics called **literal, or plain interpretation**. [105]
- Dispensationalists believe the basic purpose of God is in **glorifying Himself** through Salvation rather than just Salvation.

[105]



The Futurist - Dispensationalism

Dispensationalists are futurists. [43]

According to Charles C. Ryrie: “outlines of the dispensationalist approach” and “certain features of the dispensational system are found in the teaching of the early Church.” [105]

The Futurist - Dispensationalism

God's consistent pattern has been one of "progressive revelation" throughout the Old Testament leading up to and through the New Testament.

- This means that God continues to unfold and reveal His truths.
- He does not reveal His truths all at once, but precept on precept, line upon line. [9; 105]
- The various dispensations, or stewardships, are successive and progressive manifestations of God's purpose. [105]



The Futurist - Dispensationalism

- Had they looked back on what God had been saying in this manner, the Jews would have recognized their Messiah in Jesus.
- **Dispensational theology, including the pre-tribulation rapture**, depends on what the Bible **literally** says whether or not the doctrine was fully developed by the early Church.



The Futurist - Dispensationalism

- In contrast, the message of the preterist is one of **force fitting the prophecy of the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24) and the book of Revelation** into the generation of the disciples of Jesus, and no further.

Dispensationalism is the natural result of taking God at His **literal** word.

The Futurist – Dispensational method is the approach we subscribe to in this study.



The Spiritual Approach

The Spiritual Approach

Although the Alexandrian school and Origen first introduced the **allegorical method**, it was **amillennialist Augustine's influence**, in spite of some dispensational leanings, that **caused the Church to abandon the literal method.** [108]

This abandonment gives credence to the **literal futurist approach** being favored by the early Christians prior to Origen and Augustine.



The Spiritual Approach

The spiritual approach does not require literal interpretation, but that the meaning is taken in a **spiritual sense**, edifying believers in any age.

- A common approach is to **mix spiritual with preterist views**. [43]
- Today, however, we see that it was Israel itself that came to life and returned to the land, becoming a nation once again in 1948. [117]



The Spiritual Approach

In spite of the obvious modern day **literal fulfillment** of prophecy regarding **Israel's return** to their land, preterists, as well as Christian world leaders, **refuse to acknowledge** that current events of the Middle East are related to such prophecy, or have any significance as end-time events (see: Ezekiel 36:8-10, 24, 25, 33-36).^[117]

The Spiritual Approach [105]

When Israel was scattered, liberal theologians saw only the **abandonment of Israel** by God.

Therefore, many took a **spiritual preterist** position that the **Church had replaced Israel**, and the Old Testament prophecies of the nation of Israel had spiritual fulfillment in the Christian Gospel and Church.

The Spiritual Approach [105]

The more prophecy that is fulfilled, the more the **literal futuristic truth** of the Bible is revealed.

In spite of this, liberal theologians continue to believe both prophecy and miracles **impossible**.



The Spiritual Approach [105]

Before Israel's literal return to their land, their excuse was that they did not witness the fulfillment of prophecy as we have in this era.

The liberal theologians today have no excuse other than the **hardness and unbelief of their own hearts.**



The Historiologist



The Historicist

An additional view is that the book of **Revelation unfolds** all of **Church history**.

- The entire Church age is thus revealed by **symbolism**.

Therefore, for example, the seven seals become “the barbarian invasions that sacked the Western Roman Empire.”

The “beast” would represent the Papacy of Rome. [43]

- The **historicist** is likely to be an **amillennialist**. [43]



The Importance of Imminency



The Importance of Imminency

For an event to be **imminent** means that it **can happen at anytime**, not necessarily that it will happen soon. [107]

I believe we are intended to continue to **expect Christ's return at any moment.**

Two thousand years is imminent in God's eternity.

The Importance of Imminency

The belief in the **imminent return of Jesus Christ** was mostly abandoned after 300 AD, which caused the fervor of the first 300 years to abate.

Postmillennialism replaced the doctrine of the **imminent return** of Jesus Christ, which had caused the Christians to continue **expectantly** looking for the return of Jesus. [5; 70]



The Importance of Imminency [70; 107]

It would take another one thousand four hundred years to return to the doctrine of **"imminent return"** which would **excite evangelistic fervor** once more.

Whenever a Church has a strong emphasis on the "Second Coming," a **strong missionary evangelistic fervor** is present.



The Importance of Imminency

The doctrine of imminency, as pertains to the Rapture of the Church, is that there are **no prophecies awaiting fulfillment** prior to that event. [108]

TIT 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;



Natural Interpretation



Natural Interpretation

It is my belief that a **literal, or plain interpretive method** is the **most natural**.

- I believe that **God says exactly what He means** and has communicated His meanings to the writers of Scripture, and to the prophets.
- I also believe that a **consistent literal interpretive method** will lead one naturally to **dispensational theology, premillennial** in regards to the second advent of Christ, and to the **pre-tribulation Rapture**.



**Let's Make it
Simple**



Let's Make it Simple

These worldviews can be summarized into two worldviews contained in the following parable.

Matt 24:44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

(Continued)



Let's Make it Simple

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.



Let's Make it Simple [150]

The parable speaks of two servants tasked with providing food to their master's household while he was away.

One servant was faithful and wise, while another was described as evil.

This parable was given in the heart of a prophetic chapter, so it must have a prophetic theme.

The “meat in due season” refers to teaching the entire Word of God, including prophecy.



Let's Make it Simple [150]

It is the responsibility of Bible teachers and pastors to teach the whole Word of God including prophecy.

Some pastors believe that the Lord can come at anytime, and so teach their flock to live in expectancy of that event.

They are excited about the prospect.



Let's Make it Simple [150]

Other pastors do not see the urgency, “the Lord has delayed His coming.”

They say in effect, “The Lord’s coming is still far in the future so I’ll just teach what the flock can use for their daily lives; no need to be an alarmist; better to make them feel good about themselves.”



Let's Make it Simple [150]

Do you understand the times so that you can inform your brothers?

The children of Issachar had understanding to know the times so that they could tell Israel what they should do:

1 Chron 12:31 And of the half tribe of Manasseh eighteen thousand, which were expressed by name, to come and make David king.

32 And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do....



Let's Make it Simple [150]

Can you say the same of yourselves?

Are you living your life with the hope and expectancy of the **imminent** return of our Lord?

John Wesley wrote:

I know that many have been mistaken about the year of His return, but should we be unwise on account of the presumptuous claims of such people? Just because they say 'today,' should we say 'never,' and 'peace, peace' when we should be full of expectation?



Let's Make it Simple [150]

We need to live in expectancy every day.
Gerard Kramer asked:

Is this hope really alive in us? We should actually wake up every morning with the thought, 'Maybe it will be today!' and before we go to sleep, 'Maybe it will be tonight!' Do we think during today that the Lord could suddenly call us to meet Him in the air?...Or does this all sound a bit exaggerated, even a little strange? The daily expectation of the Lord Jesus should be the normal thing for every Christian.



Let's Make it Simple [150]

Martin Luther cut to the heart of the matter:

If you are not filled with a burning desire for this day, you can never pray the Lord's Prayer [Thy kingdom come].... If you believe it, you would of a necessity long for it with all your heart; if you do not have this longing, you are not a Christian, nor can you glory in your faith.



Let's Make it Simple [150]

The phrase “meat in due season” also points to “the signs of the times, and to the fact that we should correctly interpret them so we can tell the people what they must do.

If you can read the signs, then you know what meat you must provide to your listeners.



Let's Make it Simple

Should you not then study prophecy?

Peter said the following about the prophetic Word:

2 Peter 1:19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

Peter speaks of the “more sure word of prophecy” that we are to “heed.”



Let's Make it Simple

Again Peter said:

2 Peter 3:3 **Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. 5 For this they willingly are ignorant....**

Peter is saying that these men are dumb on purpose – They are false teachers or “evil servants.”



Let's Make it Simple

This then is the condition of the church of Jesus Christ in these end-times.

There are “faithful and wise servants” and there are “evil servants.”

Do you know the signs of His coming?

Are you watching and longing with great expectancy and hope to see your Savior face to face?



End of Understanding Prophecy - Lesson 01



Closing Prayer



GOD IS IN THE DETAILS
CREATION REVELATION

THY WORD IS TRUE FROM THE BEGINNING; AND EVERY ONE OF THY RIGHTEOUS
JUDGMENTS ENDURETH FOR EVER. - PSALM 119:160

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