

# Understanding the Language of the Bible

Our subject today involves a very important subject- Understanding the Language of the Bible. Remember, if allowed, the Bible will interpret itself.

We must continue to examine the Scriptures searching for the answers to questions that involve the things that we have been taught and the things that are being taught today in churches all over the world.

**Remember, the Word of God is the final authority.**

We have all heard of the word “**Apocalypse**”. According to Webster’s Dictionary, “Apocalypse” means the end of the planet Earth and the end of time.

This is what has been and is being taught in churches today: the expectation of an imminent cosmic cataclysm in which God destroys evil and raises the righteous dead to life in a Messianic Kingdom.

This kind of language describing foreboding and imminent disaster is called “**Apocalyptic language**”. God uses this type of language all through the Bible in describing His judgments against His adversaries.

The Book of Revelation was written in Apocalyptic language. Apocalyptic Language are physical words used to symbolize spiritual realities. The actual word “Revelation” found in **Revelation 1:1** is translated from the Greek word “**Apokalupsis**” and means “**to disclose, the appearing, the coming, the manifestation, to be revealed.**”

The first-century church was looking for His soon appearing. (**1 Timothy. 6:14, 2 Timothy. 1:10, 4:8, Titus 2:13, 1 Peter 1:7,13**)

From the first verse until the last chapter, the Book of Revelation is all about the soon Return of the Lord Jesus Christ in judgment against a Covenant people Israel, against their city, against their temple, and against their religious system. **(Revelation 1:1, 22:20)** This was because they broke the Everlasting Covenant which God had made with them at Sinai. **(Isaiah 24:5)**

Many people are afraid of what is written in the Book of Revelation because their preachers tell them that these things are getting ready to happen soon.

Great numbers of people have been told by church leaders not to depend on a future. This is a total falsehood being preached by money-hungry, self-serving ministries throughout the world.

Today, growing numbers of people are beginning to realize something is wrong with this message. Make no mistake, your idea of the future will determine your philosophy on life.

History is full of good, sincere Godly people who claimed certain knowledge of the end of the world and tried to fit the events of their day into the fulfillment of end-time prophecy.

They have completely missed the meaning of the word **“end”**. What you believe has consequences; it affects your personal life, your community life, even your international life.

What do modern-day wars in the Middle East, the present-day Nation of Israel, famines and earthquakes have to do with the fulfillment of End-Time Bible Prophecy?

**Nothing, absolutely nothing!**

A closer look at the language that is used throughout the Bible will clarify this point.

The first mention of natural things such as the sun, the moon, and stars denoting spiritual realities can be found in **Genesis 37:9-11**, one of Joseph's dreams.

Here the word **“sun”** referred to Jacob as the head of the family.

The word “**moon**” referred to Rachel as the mother of the family, and the word “**stars**” referred to Joseph’s eleven brothers. Obviously, these words did not mean the physical sun, moon, and stars up in the sky.

We can also see this same Biblical language used by David describing when God delivered him from the hand of King Saul. (**2 Samuel 22:8-13,16**)

In this historical narrative of David’s conflicts with Saul, we never read of astronomical or tectonic activity playing a role or of God being seen physically at any time even though this text states that God was seen upon the wings of the wind.

Yet, this is how David described his deliverance. This Biblical language was used to describe God’s direction of human affairs in the judgment or blessing of individuals and nations.

Another example of the language of the Bible can be found in **Isaiah 13:1-13**. Here we see another clear example of the use of Apocalyptic language being used to depict a coming judgment against Babylon.

This is a figurative prediction of the literal destruction of Babylon by the Medes in the year 539 BC. It is very clear that this language involved God’s judgment on the Babylonian people.

Notice that the sun was not literally darkened or else the earth would have frozen; nor did the earth literally “remove out of her place”. This is Apocalyptic language used over and over again in the Bible depicting the Judgment of God.

In **Isaiah 24:1,3, 19-23**, the prophet Isaiah uses this same Apocalyptic language to describe the destruction of Jerusalem. Obviously, the planet Earth did not literally dissolve back then because we are still here today.

Again, Biblical language depicting the coming Judgment of God on a Covenant-breaking nation. In **Isaiah 34:4-5**, the prophet Isaiah speaks about the coming judgment on Idumea which was Edom.

We can see in history that Edom was destroyed in the late 6<sup>th</sup> Century BC. Again, notice the Biblical language used here.

The host of heaven did not literally dissolve, nor did the host literally fall down, but the nation of Edom was cast down and destroyed. This Apocalyptic language of the Bible is symbolic as it describes the judgment of God.

In **Ezekiel 32:2,7-9**, notice the Biblical language in this passage describing the coming judgment against Pharaoh, the King of Egypt. The fall of Egypt occurred in the mid-6<sup>th</sup> century BC.

**Nahum 1:1-5** uses the same Biblical language to describe the coming judgment of God upon Nineveh. Again, notice the Biblical wording; the whole “**world**” or planet was not burned up, but Nineveh was destroyed.

We can see another example of this Biblical Apocalyptic language in **Habakkuk 3:10-11**. This is a song of triumph that Habakkuk prayed to commemorate God’s deliverance and judgment against the Midianites, the enemies of His people.

The prophet Daniel had a vision about some of the Last-Day events concerning the nation of Israel. Notice the Biblical language used in **Daniel 8:10**.

Some of the stars did not literally fall to the ground. Most stars are much bigger than planet Earth. The prophet Joel also uses this same Biblical Apocalyptic language to describe the “**Day of the Lord**”. (**Joel 2:10, 3:15**)

It is easy to see in all of these Old Testament references that the Apocalyptic Language used in the Bible is symbolic and metaphorical. (Metaphor is a figure of speech that refers to one thing in terms of another)

To have the sun, moon, or stars not to give their light is descriptive of God’s judgment.

This same Biblical Apocalyptic language, as it was used in the Old Testament, was continued in the New Testament. In the New Testament, we can see this same Biblical language describing the judgment and the Fall of Jerusalem in AD 70.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke used this same Biblical Apocalyptic language to describe the Fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 not the end of the planet Earth. (**Matthew 24:29-31, Mark 13:24-27, Luke 21:25-28**)

Of course, the Apostle John has his Apocalyptic language throughout the whole Book of Revelation. (**Revelation 6:12-13, 7:16, 8:12, 9:2**)

The whole Book of Revelation was written in Apocalyptic language and was never intended to be taken literally. Just as we read time and time again in the Old Testament, the physical planet Earth and the sun, moon and stars were not ever literally destroyed; but a kingdom or a nation was.

In **2 Peter 3:10-13**, we read another Biblical description of the coming judgment of God. The physical means employed were always those of invading armies or natural disasters.

In every case, the “**worlds**” (social, political, and religious) of those receiving the judgment of God were ended or dramatically changed. They were appropriately spoken of in “world-ending” terms.

Falling stars, bloody moons, darkened sun, shaking earth, signs in the sky and other “collapsing-universe, cosmic-cataclysmic language is employed throughout the Bible.

### **In our modern-day minds, it sounds like the End of the World.**

Scattered throughout Biblical history are numerous fulfillments of this Apocalyptic Language. These fulfillments are mostly overlooked by popular writers of today. Knowing the nature of these previous fulfillments will enable us to make proper sense of this Biblical language.

Popular end-sayers today assume that the Bible’s Apocalyptic Language must be interpreted literally and physically. Since no one has witnessed a cataclysmic, earth-ending event of this nature, its time must still be in our future.

The shock value of earthquakes, exploding stars, cosmic eclipses, and nuclear holocausts are awesome. This rendering of the Bible’s Apocalyptic texts serves the purpose of end sayers and has become fixed in the minds of millions of people.

This is a very flawed method of interpretation.

Failing to give proper attention to historical fulfillments, we do a grave injustice to understanding the Bible's use of Apocalyptic Language. Without this historical perspective, we are guaranteed to misinterpret their meaning.

As we have allowed the Bible to shed light on itself, we have seen that this type of Apocalyptic language always depicts a coming judgment of God.

We can also see this same type of Biblical language used to describe the blessings promised to Israel if they submitted to God and were obedient. **(Isaiah 30:26, 60:19-20) Isaiah 35:1,6** and John 7:38-39 describe some of the kingdom blessings brought to us by Jesus.

We use symbols today also. For example, if someone said "I love the Bulls, or the Bears, or the Dolphins". Would you think that that person was an animal lover? If I showed you a cartoon of an elephant fighting with a donkey, what would that mean to you?

We conclude from the Bible that God is never going to destroy this world, our planet. **(Psalms 78:69, 89:36-37, 93:1, 104:5, 119:90 148:3-6)** The Earth belongs to God and He has dominion over it. His stated will and purpose are that the earth be filled with His glory and not destroyed. **(Exodus 9:29, 1 Corinthians 10:26, Isaiah 6:3, Habakuk 2:14)**

## Conclusion

The end of the world spoken of today in churches is a false doctrine made up by carnal-minded and traditional-minded church leaders seeking to scare people into their churches and scare people into giving money.

They continue to take the Book of Revelation literally attempting to assign modern-day events and people to the topics discussed in this Book.

They continually try to predict something that is just not going to happen. The world is never going to end. The Bible Truth is that this world that we live in and the present New Covenant Age simply do not have an end. **(Ephesians 3:21)**

This is why it is so **VERY** important that we make sure that we are Covenant connected to the Lord through obedience to the Gospel message according to the Scriptures. **(Acts 2:37-39)**

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