

# Audience Relevance

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Audience Relevance is the key factor in knowing what the Scriptures say and what they mean when they say it and to whom it is said. It is about the time then, when it was spoken by the Lord and not about some far distant future time.

Futurism is a distortion of prophetic fulfillment which is so prevalent in churches today. Audience relevance, when applied to the people, places, and events in their proper hermeneutical context, is very understandable and very believable.

Hermeneutics is the common-sense interpretation of Scriptures; the “**who, what, when, where, and why**” as applied to an audience. In this case, the audience of Jesus and the Apostles is a living first century Bible audience.

The phrase “**in these last days**” in **Hebrews 1:2**, would obviously be the precursors to the phrase “**last day**” as used in **John 6:39, 40, 44, 54** and in **John 11:24**. It is referring to none other than the day of the Lord. That’s why the writer of the Book of Hebrews was making his hearers aware of the necessity of encouraging one another. In **Hebrews 10:25**, the Bible says, “***Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.....as ye see the day approaching***”. Why would he warn them of the approaching Day of the Lord if the Day of Lord was not to come for two thousand years and counting?

This “**Day of the Lord**” was none other than that fearful and tremendous Day of the Lord, the season for the destruction of Jerusalem, the Temple and the nation of the Jews. “**The Last Days**” of Hebrews chapter one and the “**that day**” of **Hebrews 10:25** are irrefutably the same. The two chapters defend the imminence of the Coming of the Lord.

In **1 Corinthians 15:51-57**, the Apostle Paul’s language is such that it could not be interpreted any other way by those who received this Epistle.

He says, “**WE shall not all sleep, but WE shall all be changed...**” These were comforting words to believers about the events getting ready to take place in their lifetime.

In **1 Peter 4:17**, Peter said, “**For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God...**” Peter proclaimed that the time had come. Peter makes it very clear who his audience is. For example, in **2 Peter 3:9**, Peter included himself in God’s promise of salvation when he said “**...the Lord is long suffering to us-ward.**” His use of the term “**us-ward**” puts this verse in its proper setting and identified his proper audience: those who were alive and standing alongside Peter in the first-century church.

The Day of the Lord and the Return of Jesus were some of the things which pertained to a then living audience. It was the knowledge, instruction, and information about events ready to shortly occur in **that generation**. These events were described by the Apostles as being “**at hand**”.

Let’s look back at some other Biblical examples of obvious audience relevance. In **Genesis 6:13-17**, God gave to Noah information about a coming event that was going to happen in his lifetime. He also gave him the knowledge and instructions about building an ark which would be his way of escaping this coming judgment on the wickedness of man.

It is very clear that Noah and his family were the only audience that God was speaking to. Because of Noah’s obedience to the Word of God, He and his family were saved from the judgment of God upon that generation. Obviously, when we read about this account of Noah and the flood in our Bibles today, we don’t start building an ark in our backyard because we know who God’s audience was. We are properly applying the concept of audience relevance.

Another example of audience relevance was when the Israelites were in Egyptian bondage. God gave Moses instruction to apply the blood of a lamb to the two side doorposts and to the upper doorpost of all the houses of the Israelites in order to escape the last plague, the death of the first born.

This was the judgment of God against Egypt. (**Exodus 12:3-7, 12-13**) When we read about this account in our Bibles today, we understand that these instructions were for the Israelites of the eve of their deliverance from Egypt. We do not wipe the blood of a lamb on our doorposts today because we know that these instructions were obviously not for us today. Again, we have applied the concept of audience relevance.

Another example of audience relevance is found in **Isaiah chapter 13** where God revealed to the prophet Isaiah what His judgment was for Babylon by the Medes. (**Isaiah 13:1, 3, 5, 10-11, 13, 15, 17-19**)

Apocalyptic language was used to reveal God's judgment on the kingdom of Babylon. When we apply the concept of audience relevance to this passage describing the destruction of Babylon, it is very clear that God's judgment was being described against the Kingdom of Babylon. The Babylonian Kingdom was destroyed shortly after the Prophet Isaiah prophesied about it.

**Notice that the planet was not destroyed.** The physical sun and moon did not stop giving their light; but God's judgment did come swiftly and completely against the Babylonian world.

It was the same apocalyptic language used in the New Testament in **Acts 2:19-20, Matthew 24:29, and Revelation 5:12-17** to describe the judgment of God on the twelve tribes of Israel from AD 66- AD 70.

This was the language of gloom and doom at the arrival of God's judgment on Israel for breaking His Covenant. (**Isaiah 24:5**) Just as the physical planet earth with all of its constellations did not pass away at the time of the destruction of Babylon, likewise the planet did not pass away at the destruction of Israel and its Temple.

So why are so many churches today and believers today waiting for the physical planet, the sun moon and stars, to all be destroyed sometime in our future?

It is because the concept of audience relevance is not being applied to these Scriptures found in the New Testament.

(Please refer to the Bible Study on “**Apocalyptic Language**” on YouTube for many more examples of this same language being used and a more in depth look at this subject)

The last book in the Old Testament is the Book of Malachi. This book was an indictment against the priesthood. (**Malachi 1:6-8, 2:1-2, 8, 3: 8-9, 13-14**) When we apply the concept of audience relevance, it is so easy to see that these were things said to and of the priest of the Old Covenant and not to anyone in the New Testament. It was only relevant to people under the Law.

As we continue to apply the concept of audience relevance throughout the Bible, we can easily see that the first century Christians understood that the following prophecies were to them and for them and would be fulfilled in their lifetime: **Luke 21:22, Matthew 24:34, Mark 1:15, 1 Corinthians 10:11, Philippians 4:5, 1 Thessalonians 4:15,17, 5:4, 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, Hebrews 10:37, James 5:8, 1 Peter 4:17**. Remember, when we read all these Scriptures, we must continue to apply the concept of audience relevance.

The phrase “**Last Days**” is used several times in the New Testament to convey to the readers the nearness of the Coming of the Lord and the end of the Old Covenant Age.

The “**Last Days**” spoken of in the New Testament are the same as the “**Last Days**” spoken of by the Old Testament prophets. In the Book of Acts, the people who were present there on the Day of Pentecost could hardly think that there would be two thousand years of “**Last Days**” before that Great and Notable Day of the Lord’s coming.

This is obviously a futuristic distortion of time in comparison to the Apostle Peter’s presentation of prophetic fulfillment. Again, the futuristic position simply refuses to apply the concept of audience relevance to these New Testament references to the “**Last Days**”.

Peter’s audience was familiar with the Prophet Joel’s prophecy regarding the Coming of the Lord.

His audience understood that if these things were being fulfilled in their lifetime, then the Day of the Lord and all the events mentioned by Joel would soon take place in their lifetime. (**Joel 2:28-31, Acts 2:16-20**)

These two Scriptures in Joel and Acts confirm the events would transpire before the Great and Notable Day of the Lord. Jesus also confirmed that John the Baptist was Elijah. (**Malachi 4:5, Matthew 11:13-14**)

In **Luke 20:45**, the Scripture said that Jesus spoke to His audience. The audience that Jesus spoke to was alive two thousand years ago.

There are many examples in the Scriptures that prove what was said to the believers in the first century involved the events that were to take place in their immediate lifetime.

They were never intended to happen in our time today. It was the **“Last Days”** of God’s Old Covenant relationship with Israel, her land, city, Temple, and religion.

In AD 70, Jesus returned. There was a resurrection of all the dead and a catching away of living Christians just like Jesus and His Disciples taught and propagated.

It was the Day of the Lord, the Day of the Lord’s Judgment. The Book of Revelation had been completely fulfilled. We now live beyond the End Times.

There are no last days or end of the New Covenant. The New Covenant is everlasting. (**Jeremiah 32:40, Ezekiel 37:26, Hebrews 13:20.**)

Jesus is here now reigning in His Spiritual Kingdom. Spiritual death has been defeated. You must be born again according to the Scriptures if you want to be a part of this Everlasting Kingdom. (**John 3:3-5, 8:51, 11:26, Acts 2:38**)

## **Conclusion**

When the concept of audience relevance is applied throughout the Word of God, the Scriptures all fall right into place.

There are no gaps, no delays, no futuristic-end- time scenario, and no fearful feelings of impending doom hanging over our heads anymore.

When we understand and apply the concept of audience relevance, it is so clear that the people who were alive in the first century Church were looking forward to the Return of Jesus and the establishment of His Kingdom **in their lifetime** and they saw it.

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