

Overcoming Millennial Madness: An Introduction to the Study of Prophecy and End Times.

Part I - Why the Study of Prophecy Matters?

Introduction:

- What is eschatology?

Topics Covered:

- Why Study Prophecy?
- End time vocabulary
- Major eschatological views
- Examining the central issues of eschatology
- Recommended resources for personal study
- Applications for Bible reading

What is Prophecy?

- Prophecy as predictive revelation

- Prophecy as moral revelation

Why Study Prophecy?

- Objections:
 - General objections (2 Tim 2:15; Acts 20: 20, 25, 27; 1 Tim 3:16;
 - Multitude of views
 - Divisive nature of prophecy
 - Uselessness of prophecy

 - Prophecy is too hard to understand (2 Peter 3:1-16).
 - Expected responses of believers to eschatological truth:
 - Remember the teachings of the prophets and apostles (v. 1-2).
 - Know *these things* (v 3).
 - Consider what is revealed about God (v. 8-9).
 - Conduct should be transformed (v. 11).
 - Long for the new heavens and the new earth (v. 13)
 - Live holy lives (v. 14).
 - Be on guard against error, and distortion of the Scriptures (v. 17).

- Be steadfast (v. 17).
 - Grow in grace and knowledge of what God has revealed (v. 18)
- Prophecy is only needed for pastors
 - The Thessalonian example (Acts 17:2; 2 Thess. 2:1-5)
- **Abundance Prophetic of Content in Scripture**
 - 62 of 66 books of the bible contain predictive prophecy
 - 27% of the bible contains predictive prophecy
- **Scriptural Commands and Commendations:**
 - The Great Commission (Mt. 28: 19-20)
 - The early church's example (Acts 2:42)
 - The prophets' example (1 Peter 1:10-11)
- **Scriptural Benefits**
 - Fulfilled prophecy proves that the Bible is true and inspires confidence in Scripture (Acts 13:32-35; 42-44).
 - The study of prophecy promotes obedience and provides the gateway to God's blessing (Rev. 1:3; 22:7)
 - Prophetic material equips the saints to refuse those who mock the Christian hope (2 Peter 3.1-13)
 - Prophecy provides answers to theological questions that are found nowhere else, such as the relationship between the resurrection and the rapture bringing comfort and hope (1 Thess. 4:13-18).
 - Prophecy gives motivation for holy living today (1 Thess. 5:6-9; Titus 2:11-14; 2 Peter 3:11-13; 1 Cor 15:58).
 - Prophetic expectation purifies (1 John 3:2-3).
 - Prophecy is a source of hope, comfort and encouragement for the Christian in sorrow (1 Thess. 4:18; 5:11; Titus 2:13).
 - The study of prophecy encourages patient endurance in the midst of suffering and trials (James 5:7-11).
 - Prophecy assures that unjust persecution of the righteous will be avenged by God (2 Thess. 1:5-10).
 - Prophecy produces concern for service (2 Cor. 5:9-10).¹
- **Pitfalls and Warnings**
 - Knowledge puffs up (1 Cor. 8:1)

¹ Adapted from *Christ's Prophetic Plans*, Mayhue and MacArthur, pg. 14-15

- Exercise caution in identifying current events with specific individuals or facts of eschatology.
- Unhealthy speculation (Titus 3:9; 1 Tim. 1:3).
- Allow Scripture to mean what it says—Don't spiritualize.

Recommended Resources:

- *Christ's Prophetic Plans: A Futuristic Premillennial Primer*, Mayhue & MacArthur, Moody, 2012.
- *Has the Church Replaced Israel*, Vlach, B&H Academic, 2010.
- *Revelation 20 and the Millennial Debate*, Waymeyer, Kress, 2001, 2004