

# The Importance of Prophetic Studies

By [J.R. Church](#) on January 6, 2010

Eschatology can be one of the most rewarding and worthwhile adventures in the Christian life. The Bible offers an inexhaustible supply of types and symbols. It seems that every chapter in the Old and New Testaments contains prophetic implications. Over and over again the same prophetic patterns seem to emerge. God's plan of the ages is taught throughout on several different levels.

However, some Christians don't believe that such a study is worthwhile. They think that the prophecies of the Bible are too uncertain, and vulnerable to different interpretations. They feel that Christians would be better off to concentrate on the historic value and practical application of Scripture. One can hardly blame them. Clearly, some well meaning, but ill informed people have cast clouds of suspicion over the study of prophecy.

For instance, a few years ago a group of deluded people barricaded themselves in a house and took a policeman hostage. It was reported that they had set a date for the end of the world and that they considered all policemen to be antichrists. After several days of confrontation with the police, the hostage was killed. The police stormed the house, and all seven members of the religious cult were killed. How sad that such deluded people could hurt the cause of Christ.

We should not let such irrational behavior discredit Christianity or the legitimate study of eschatology. What they did was not Christ honoring, nor was it in keeping with the teachings of the Bible. Because of events like that, some Christians relegate the study of prophecy to that kind of mentality. It should not be so. Those who wrote the Bible would not have included so much information regarding last-day events if God did not intend for those subjects to be studied.

God did not inspire His Word to confuse people. He included the prophetic passages to help us understand His great plan of the ages. He did not want to leave us groping in the darkness of human experience without a light at the end of the tunnel.

If Christians and pastors omit the study of prophecy, then they overlook the importance, which the Bible itself places upon the subject. Over and over again the Bible warns us to watch and be prepared for last-day events. How can we be prepared if we do not study those great signs of the times predicted in the Bible.

According to the Scripture, there are certain specific benefits that can be obtained through the study of prophecy.

## I. Spiritual Stimulation

First of all, it can bring spiritual stimulation. That is, it can cause us to want to lead a life pleasing to God. The Apostle John told what the study of prophecy could do for us:

*“And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure”* (I John 3:3).

A study of prophecy will cause a man to purify himself — to live a clean and godly life. Again, Jesus said: *“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me”* (Matt. 16:24). Then the Savior followed that statement with this prophetic incentive: *“For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works”* (Matt. 16:27).

In his letter to the Colossians, the Apostle Paul urged Christians to mortify our *“... members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry,”* giving this prophetic incentive: *“When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory”* (Col. 3:4,5).

The fact that there is a close relationship between a study of prophecy and godliness of life is verified throughout the New Testament. Furthermore, it can be observed in the average church congregation. Pastors regularly testify that the most devoted and faithful workers are those who are knowledgeable concerning last-day events. Those who expect Christ to come again are the ones who seem to be busy about the Master’s business.

Some pastors feel that the subject causes Christians to despair, to slack off in their missionary giving and in their soul-winning efforts. Quite the contrary, the opposite is true. Those churches that are experiencing revival today and are doing a great work across America are the churches that believe in the pre-millennial Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Church after church, whose ministers teach an amillennial view, are dwindling in membership and dying spiritually. The Christian who believes in the Blessed Hope and the soon return of Jesus Christ feels a sense of closeness to Him. This air of expectancy leads to a greater love and a deeper devotion. In Hebrews 10:25 Christians are commanded to do *“so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”* Yes, there is a spiritual stimulation to be gained from the study of biblical prophecy.

## **II. Mental Satisfaction**

Then second, eschatology offers a certain mental satisfaction. God has endowed man with a quest for knowledge about the future, which can only be satisfied through a study of the prophetic Scriptures. It is natural for men to want to know the future. For instance, in the last chapter of his book, the prophet Daniel asked, *“How long shall it be till the end of these wonders”* (Daniel 12:6).

Again, in Matthew 24:3, as Jesus and His disciples encamped one evening along the western slopes of the Mount of Olives, they asked, *“When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?”*

And again, Jesus and the disciples went out to the Mount of Olives on the day of His

ascension, where they enquired, *“Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?”* (Acts 1:6).

Yes, there is a natural curiosity for men to want to know the future. There is a certain mental and emotional satisfaction in knowing that in the midst of trouble and persecution, our Savior has everything under control and that He will emerge triumphant. In Matthew 24:6 our Savior encouraged us to: *“see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass.”*

We can rejoice that we have read the last chapter in the great drama, and we know that we are on the winning side.

For the non-Christian the future is highly threatening. Will he keep his job? Will he maintain his health? Will an accident take the life of a member of his family? Still more uncertain for him is death. Though he may try to hide these uncertainties under a facade of false confidence, he knows that the questions are very real.

The answer to those questions (and the peace of mind he needs so much) lies only in a saving relationship with Christ. No matter what life may hold today, the Christian can understand the basic plan in God’s program and know that his personal welfare is secure.

### **III. Comfort in Sorrow**

Then third, a study of biblical prophecy can give the Christian comfort in times of sorrow. When a family member dies, that feeling of bereavement can be cushioned by knowledge that one day we shall see our loved-ones again. The Apostle Paul wrote:

*“I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.*

*“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.*

*“For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.*

*“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:*

*“Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

*“Wherefore comfort one another with these words”* (I Thes. 4:13-18).

In times of bereavement we can be comforted with that *“blessed hope”* obtained through a study of prophecy.

Sometimes our suffering comes in the form of persecution. At such times knowledge of prophecy can help us through that difficult experience. The Apostle Peter wrote: *“But*

*rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (I Peter 4:13).*

## **IV. Conviction for Service**

Then fourth, knowledge of Bible prophecy can give us conviction for service. Knowing that one day we must stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, we should not only live properly, but we should serve diligently. The Apostle Paul wrote:

*"Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.*

*"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:9,10).*

The study of prophecy will cause us to be diligent about our service to the Savior. Furthermore, we are promised a "*crown of righteousness*" which is laid up for all those who "*love His appearing*" (II Timothy 4:8). We are promised a "*crown of glory that fadeth not away.*"

Even though we cannot know the day nor the hour of our Savior's return, we are commanded to be aware of those signs which will attend the end. In fact, Jesus rebuked the Pharisees in His day for not recognizing the signs of our Savior's First Advent. He said in Matthew 16:3: "*... O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?*"

Let us not be guilty of being like the Pharisees, who evidently adopted an attitude against the study of prophecy and, therefore, did not recognize the Messiah when He came and fulfilled those very prophecies.

There are two extremes when it comes to the study of prophecy. There are those who attempt to prognosticate by setting dates for the fulfillment of certain events, and there are those who shy away from the study of prophecy altogether for fear that they would be in some way associated with those prognosticators. Let us not be guilty of either extreme. Let us study the prophecies of the Bible and not be afraid to probe those difficult portions of Scripture. But at the same time, let us recognize that there are many unknown factors, which God has chosen to remain a mystery.

Prophecy is a progressive study, which cannot be fully understood before the fulfillment of each predicted event. Eschatology constitutes a study of those mysteries which are revealed in their appointed times. For example, during the days of Christ the rabbis were well aware of the prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah, but were confused as to the development of those events.

There were some prophecies, which spoke of the suffering of the Messiah, such as Isaiah 53, and others that spoke of the conquering and reigning Messiah, such as Isaiah 63. The rabbis, however, could not understand that those prophecies referred to one Messiah appearing at two different points in history. They were expecting the Messiah to come the

first time in power and great glory. Contrary to that, however, He was born of a virgin in a lowly stable. This kind of appearance was not comprehended, though the rabbis knew of Isaiah 7:14, which spoke of His virgin birth, and of Micah 5:2, which spoke of Bethlehem, His place of birth. Peter addressed the problem when he wrote:

*“Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you:*

*“Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow” (I Peter 1:10,11).*

The concept that our Savior would come the first time to suffer, and then would come again one day to conquer remained a mystery. In Daniel 12:4 the Lord told Daniel to: *“... shut up the words, and seal the book even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.”*

According to this verse, the study of prophecy is not an exacting science. Though we are admonished in the Bible to study the prophecies, we are not promised a breakthrough on the complete understanding of them. Many of the prophecies being fulfilled in our generation had remained a mystery down through the pages of history.

Jesus gave some insight on the subject when He predicted His own death. During a conversation with His disciples, He assured them that they would not understand the prediction until after it had come to pass. He told them to remember that it had been previously predicted. The account is found in John 16:4: *“But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them.”*

To a large degree, prophecy cannot be completely understood until after it has come to pass. This should not, however, keep us from applying ourselves to its study, for if we did not address the subject, we would not know when the time was near for its fulfillment.

In the 24th chapter of Matthew’s Gospel, the disciples asked the Savior, *“When shall these things be?”* Note that they were neither condemned nor admonished. Quite the contrary, Jesus spent a good deal of time answering their questions. He spoke of *“wars and rumors of wars”* and about a time when *“nation shall rise against nation”* and *“kingdom against kingdom.”* He spoke of certain signs that would attend the end, such as *“famine, disease, and earthquakes in divers places.”*

But then he gave one clear sign that would herald the fulfillment of end-time prophecies. It was the return of the Jews to the land of their ancient heritage. Using the fig tree, an Old Testament symbol for the nation of Israel, He indicated that a certain generation would see the unfolding of the mystery:

*“Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:*

*“So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.*

*“Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled” (Matt. 24:32-34).*

There is the one big clue to let us know when we are approaching the end of this dispensation. That one prophecy has marked our generation as the one to see the fulfillment of those predictions, which have been, heretofore, not understood. Israel is alive again. The fig tree has shot forth its leaves. That is why Eschatology is important. The Apostle Paul wrote:

*“Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,*

*“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (I Cor. 15:51,52).*

Following the giving of that prophecy, the Apostle Paul concluded with verse 58:

*“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord” (I Cor. 15:58).*

That’s the essence of our blessed hope. Why should we study prophecy? To prepare ourselves to be diligent in the service of our Savior; to be steadfast and unmovable in our faith; to be abounding in the work of the Lord; and *“so much the more as you see the day approaching.”*

## **In Defense of Prophetic Studies**

The Bible is composed of 66 books, written over a period of 1,500 years, penned by 44 men from many different walks of life. It is divided into two collections, the Old Testament and the New Testament. There are 39 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament.

It is, without doubt, the verbally inspired Word of God, without error in its original autographs. The Old Testament was, for the most part, preserved in Hebrew, while the New Testament was, for the most part, preserved in Greek.

The Bible is written to tell us where we came from, how to live while we’re here, and how we can have a glorious future. It is the story of conflict between good and evil, God and the devil, the Seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. It tells us about our fall through Adam and our redemption through Jesus Christ.

Beginning with Adam, the first human being, the Scriptures follow the selection of a Chosen People, Israel. They were a genetically pure race through which God’s promised Savior was to come.

## **The Abrahamic Covenant**

Out of the chaos of 2,000 years of human corruption, God called Abram, changed his

name to Abraham, and gave him a special covenant — promising a homeland, a Chosen People, and a Messiah who would carry out that promised covenant. Through the Messiah, God evidently promised Abraham that eternal life in a heavenly city would become available to all who believe. Yes, the Abrahamic covenant was based upon belief, not performance — redemption by grace through faith and faith alone.

All of this was fulfilled in Jesus. What was promised and prepared throughout the Old Testament, became the central theme of the New Testament. This Abrahamic covenant was prepared in the Old Testament, manifested in the Gospels; propagated in the book of Acts; explained in the Epistles, and fulfilled in the book of Revelation.

In Genesis 22:8, Isaac was told that God would provide *“himself a lamb”* for a sacrifice. Throughout the centuries, it was understood that the *“lamb”* would die to take away the sins of the people. And in the book of Revelation, Jesus Christ is referred to as that Lamb. In Hebrews 11:10, we are told that Abraham looked for a city *“which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”* In the closing chapters of Revelation, the Holy City, New Jerusalem, descends from God out of heaven *“as a bride adorned for her husband.”* That is Abraham’s city.

God’s covenant with Abraham was the only covenant that promised eternal life. But it could not become a reality until the death of the *“Testator”* — the one who drafted the covenant. It was like a Last Will and Testament. It promised an inheritance of eternal life, but had to await the crucifixion before it could become effective. And that is the story of the New Testament.

The Old Covenant of Law made with Moses, with its Ten Commandments and its 613 laws, never promised eternal life. It could only condemn a man for his failure to keep its laws. Furthermore, it was a covenant made only with Israel — that special Chosen People that would one day produce Abraham’s *“lamb.”*

Early Israel never hoped for eternal life through the Mosaic covenant. They never looked to the Law to bring them the Messianic kingdom. Throughout the centuries, they looked to the Abrahamic covenant and its promise of a Messiah. That is the grand plan of the Bible.

## **Reading the Bible Is Essential**

Before understanding any part of the Bible, one must read it all. There is no story, chapter or verse that can be properly comprehended until the last chapter in the book of Revelation is read. No chapter can be left out of our reading.

There is no excuse for the Christian who has not mastered the entire Bible. In our generation, education is available to all. No one has the excuse that he cannot read. Furthermore, in an age of technology, with cassette tapes and CD players, a reading of the Bible can be heard over and over again, until a full knowledge of it is gained.

There are 929 chapters in the Old Testament and 260 chapters in the New Testament, for a total of 1,189 chapters. A continuous reading of it would only take a matter of days to

completely read it through. Therefore, no one should claim ignorance of the world's most famous book. I challenge you to read the Bible. Read it all! Leave nothing out.

## **The Fearful Few**

During the course of my ministry, I have traveled to hundreds of churches across America holding prophetic conferences at the invitation of pastors. Sometimes a pastor will tell me (with a heavy heart) that some of his members have stayed away from the meeting because of the gloom and doom nature of prophecy.

Prophetic studies seem to scare them. They don't understand that the prophets of the Bible were not pessimists. The prophets looked beyond the judgment of God upon a wicked and unbelieving human race, and saw the glories of His kingdom.

Sometimes young people will say, "I want the Lord to come someday but not now, for I have a life to live, things to do, places to go."

I can understand their concern, but, may I say, the coming of Christ will not put an end to activities. In fact, the opportunities of life will only be enhanced when Christ returns. The sorrows of this life will fade in the light and joy of His glory. The suffering of this world will be turned into rejoicing.

I have had some to tell me that they watch our television program. "But," they confess, "Prophecy scares me." To those, may I say, your only fear is that of the unknown. A study of prophecy, on the other hand, will enlighten you and let you know what to expect in the future. There is no need for fear if you have put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ. He will take care of you. In fact, one day Jesus allayed the fears of His disciples on this very subject when He said, "*And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul ...*" (Matthew 10:28) Furthermore, He said, "*But there shall not a hair of your head perish*" (Luke 21:18).

Because of the nature of a prophetic research ministry, I understand a few people — even some pastors — have expressed reservations on the validity of prophetic studies. Frankly, I think their fears are unfounded. Christians should eagerly approach the subject — knowing that in the last days (just before the coming of Christ) there should be an explosion of knowledge on prophetic subjects along with an increased interest by Christians around the world. Just because there are heretical views surfacing today, does not mean that all prophetic probes are unworthy of our attention.

Is not history strewn with all manner of doctrinal viewpoints hatched by heretics? Yet they do not dissuade us from a study of the other great doctrines of the Bible. Then let us not shun Eschatology during these most crucial days in the history of the world.

Christians do not need to fear the future for our faith in Christ releases us from the judgment to come and gives us an incentive to live a victorious Christian life. Only those who do not live by the standards taught in the Bible need to fear. The Word of God was not written to depress the believer with scathing condemnation, but rather to release the heart and mind from such mental anguish by teaching us about the grace of God and His

forgiveness.

In I Thessalonians 5:1-11, the apostle Paul addressed the study of prophecy. He declared that we are children of the day, not of the night. And that we should comfort ourselves with a study of prophecy:

*“But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.*

*“For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.*

*“For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.*

*“But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.*

*“Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.*

*“Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober” (I Thes. 5:1-6).*

There is no need for us to fear the future. We should be excited about the prospects of salvation — for we have been saved from that judgment to come.

In the previous chapter, Paul had described the *“blessed hope”* when he wrote about the Rapture and Resurrection, adding that we should *“comfort one another with these words.”*

Paul wrote:

*“God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*“Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.*

*“Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do” (I Thes. 5:9-11).*

He said that we should rejoice in the study of prophecy, knowing that our future is secure in Jesus Christ. Fear of the unknown vanishes when the unknown becomes known. There are some who believe that a study of prophecy curtails soul winning activity and missionary endeavor. Quite the contrary — the very opposite is true. When people study prophecy, they do not despair. They are motivated to increase their efforts. Moses wrote about this when he penned Psalm 90:12-13:

*“So teach us to number our days that we might apply our hearts unto wisdom.*

*“Return, O Lord, how long?” (Psalm 90:12-13).*

He wrote, that if we knew how long it would be until the return of Christ, we could apply our hearts unto wisdom so as not to waste a single precious moment. It is becoming more and more evident, with the passing of each day that we live in that special generation

destined to see the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, I believe we live in a day of greater soul winning activity than ever before in history.

Don't be willingly ignorant of the prophecies to be found in the Bible. It is an inexhaustible paradise of prophetic truth. Dig in today and begin your quest for the great treasures to be found in a consistent study of biblical prophecy.

## **Eschatology Was Not An Afterthought**

From the earliest pages of the Bible, God proclaimed His prophetic plan of the ages. Eschatology was not an afterthought. God did not wait until after Calvary to reveal His plan for the end of the world. There is nothing so meticulous as the grand design found in a study of the Old Testament prophets. In Isaiah 46:9-10 the Lord declared:

*"I am God, and there is none like me ...*

*"Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isaiah 46:9-10).*

From the very beginning of the human race God revealed the future to His people. Furthermore, God was motivated by His pleasure. It was for His own pleasure that God guided the men who penned the prophecies.

## **The Bible in the Stars**

For the first 2,500 years of human history, long before Moses penned the first five books of the Bible, God had a prophetic message presented in the constellations. The story given from Virgo, the Virgin, to Leo, the Lion, represented events that would take place in the future. They were prophecies that would begin in Bethlehem and end with the Second Coming. They told the story of the dispensation of Grace. There is nothing in the constellations that speak of Adam and the Garden of Eden; nothing there about the Flood of Noah; and nothing there about Moses and the Exodus. It all begins with Virgo and her virgin-born Son.

One night God spoke to Abraham and told him to look up into the stars. He said, *"If thou be able to **tell** the stars, so shall thy seed be."* It is easy to see from the structure of the sentence that the seed of Abraham refers to an event which was to occur in the future — *"so **SHALL** thy seed be"* — for at that time Abraham had no children.

## **Declaring the End From the Beginning**

God has declared the end from the beginning. When Moses began to write the story of Genesis under Divine inspiration, at that same time, in the halls of heaven, the Great Creator had already prepared for the writing of the book of Revelation.

Though the Bible was penned over a period of 1,500 years, it is one book with a single basic theme. It contains, from cover to cover, a plan for the redemption of man.

If the Bible was written by mere men, we would long ago have exhausted a study of its contents. But that is not the case. The Bible was written with an intricate and inexhaustible design. Theologians have studied it for centuries and are still uncovering new insights. I would have to say that I have found no accomplished scholars of this book — only students. After a lifetime of study, one can only admit that he remains a student in search of the infinite variety of truth to be revealed in the wisdom of the Great Creator.

## **None of the Wicked Shall Understand**

Concerning a study of prophecy, it was to Daniel that God said, *“None of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand”* (Daniel 12:10).

Prophecies were written in such a way that those who have only a casual interest in the book will overlook them and will not understand.

In fact, even the parables of Jesus are prophecies. Understand this. A parable is a riddle — nothing more, nothing less. It is not for children. It is not simply an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. It is a riddle, couched in a symbolic shroud to hide its underlying meaning from those who could not comprehend it.

When our Savior would tell a parable, He would preface it by saying, *“The kingdom of heaven is likened unto...”* That prepares us to accept the parable as a prophetic riddle. They were prophetic scenarios deliberately veiled in metaphoric language so that the average person could not understand it. Only the *“wise”* can understand.

When making that statement, the Bible does not mean that all who do not understand are fools. I think the Lord simply meant that only those, whose time has come, will understand. Our Savior said, *“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled”* (Matt. 5:6). So, even among Christians there is only a select group who will be able to grasp the eternal verity of a prophetic passage.

## **Only the Wise Shall Understand**

For example, those who are involved in soul winning have an interest in the events of the future. Daniel wrote:

*“And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever”* (Daniel 12:3).

The soul winner is a person who lives for the future. That kind of person is more likely to be interested in a study of prophecy.

The average Christian who lives only for today and not tomorrow is sometimes plagued by the thought that one day his world might be upset. His lifestyle might be affected. These people may be Christians, but they just don't understand the prophetic significance of God's message. God knows the future from the beginning and has declared it in His eternal Word.

In II Peter 3:3-5, the apostle warned about skeptics who would try to divert attention away from the study of prophecy. He wrote:

*“... there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,*

*“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.*

*“For this they are willingly ignorant ...”* (II Peter 3:3-5).

Scoffers simply cannot comprehend the prophetic nature of the Bible. They can't seem to understand that God has planned for a glorious conclusion to the history of the human race. His Son shall come to establish a golden age and rule over the world for 1,000 wonderful years.

When the rabbis compiled the books of the Old Testament, they separated them into two major divisions — the Law and the Prophets. There is no hope in the Law, but there is a “blessed hope” in the Prophets. The Law declares our hopeless condition. It describes our sinfulness, our suffering, and the inevitable judgment of God. Paul explained this in Romans 3:20:

*“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”*

On the other hand, the prophets wrote about the glory to come. Paul continues in verse 21:

*“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.”*

There it is! Paul looks beyond the Law to the message of the prophets and declares that we have received the righteousness of God. Any thinking Christian should be vitally interested in a study of the prophets — for they declare the “blessed hope.”

## **Daniel Enjoyed the Study of Prophecy**

Daniel is a good example of why we should study prophecy. In Daniel 9:2, he studied the prophecies of Jeremiah and came to an incredible understanding. He wrote:

*“In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.”*

Daniel was a man who studied the prophecies of the Bible! He enjoyed searching out treasures of truth — and was delighted when he discovered how long the captivity would last. Not only was Daniel impressed with his find, but God was impressed with his diligent digging into the prophetic Word. Once Daniel had found his golden nugget of prophetic truth, God opened the door for Daniel to receive another — even greater —

prophetic announcement.

The angel, Gabriel, was sent to reward Daniel with the prophecy of the seventy weeks. It is one of the most important prophecies on the subject of “times” to be found in the Bible. This chapter seems to set a pattern for the way the Lord rewards those who study the prophecies of the Bible. It has been true in my own ministry. When I come to an understanding of one thing, God allows me to understand something further. It seems to be a never-ending spiritual treasure hunt.

Whenever I find some special prophetic nugget hidden in God’s great treasure trove of truth, He rewards my effort by opening a related Scripture that leads me deeper into the maze of His infinite design — to probe further into the complexities of the pattern of His inexhaustible plan of the ages. There is nothing quite so exciting as a consistent study of the prophecies of the Bible.

It is quite possible that the world may someday face the devastation of a nuclear war. But what should our attitude be toward such a grim prospect? Well, the apostle Peter answered the question for us in his second epistle:

*“Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,*

*“Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?”*

*“Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*

*“Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless” (II Peter 3:11-14).*

Let us live godly lives, witnessing and winning as many people to Christ as we can. Let us take this golden opportunity to reach out to those people who are fearful. Let us give them God’s wonderful plan of escape. Now is the time to win people to Christ!

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Bottom of Form 1

### **Eschatology 101**

**[The Gospel in the Stars: Part 3](http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/the-gospel-in-the-stars-part-3/)**<http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/the-gospel-in-the-stars-part-3/>

The twelve major constellations along with their sidereal sidepieces present the original drama of the ages in the form of what I call a Three-Act play. Act One is presented through the first four constellations — Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, and Sagittarius. It begins in Bethlehem with the birth of the “Seed” of the woman, and [...]

[The Gospel in the Stars: Part 2](http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-14-the-gospel-in-the-stars-part-2/)http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-14-the-gospel-in-the-stars-part-2/

The twelve major constellations along with their sidereal sidepieces present the original drama of the ages in the form of what I call a Three-Act play. Act One is presented through the first four constellations — Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, and Sagittarius. [Read the whole article.](#)

[The Gospel in the Stars: Part 1](http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-13-the-gospel-in-the-stars-part-1/)http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-13-the-gospel-in-the-stars-part-1/

Long before men perverted the message of the constellations and established ancient idolatry, God named the stars and set them in the heavens for signs. [Learn more in this study.](#)

[The Human Brain: Home of the Soul, Part 2](http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-12-the-human-brain-home-of-the-soul-part-2/)http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-12-the-human-brain-home-of-the-soul-part-2/

What, precisely, is the mind? Where is it located? How does it work? Is it something beyond the merely physical — something ethereal that might be close to the spiritual concept of the soul? [Read part 2 to answer these questions.](#)

[The Human Brain: Home of the Soul, Part 1](http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-11-the-human-brain-home-of-the-soul/)http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-11-the-human-brain-home-of-the-soul/

What makes the human brain such an elusive and mysterious machine? Over the past century, it has been the subject of a barrage of scientific investigation. Yet, no one has been able to discover its secrets. [Read the whole story.](#)

[The Anatomy of a Dream](http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-10-the-anatomy-of-a-dream/)http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-10-the-anatomy-of-a-dream/

Most of us experience dreams while sleeping. Those we best remember usually occur early in the morning during the final stage of REM (Rapid Eye Movement). But dreams can occur at any hour of the night. Our brains go in and out of deep sleep as the night progresses.

[Moses and the Dispensations](http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-9-moses-and-the-dispensations/)http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-9-moses-and-the-dispensations/

Now, we know that Moses was looking forward to the promised Messiah, but for him to say that Christ would demonstrate certain traits or characteristics found in himself is most important. The statement gave me a desire to take a closer look at Moses' life.

[You Are A Prophecy](http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-8-you-are-a-prophecy/)<http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-8-you-are-a-prophecy/>

One of the greatest comparisons of God's plan of the ages can be seen in the life of every human being. There is an uncanny relationship between the 70-year lifespan of a human being and the 7,000 years of world history which, according to the Bible, has been predetermined for the great human adventure — a sacred journey.

[Dispensationalism and the Menorah](http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-7-dispensationalism-and-the-menorah/)<http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-7-dispensationalism-and-the-menorah/>

Dispensationalism is a foundational concept in Eschatology. One cannot properly understand God's Plan of the Ages without knowing this biblical view of history. Scholars have written extensively about these seven dispensations that reveal God's dealings with man throughout the various stages of history.

[The Doctrine of the Great Sabbath](http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-6-the-doctrine-of-the-great-sabbath/)<http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-6-the-doctrine-of-the-great-sabbath/>

Down through the centuries, Christian theologians have searched the Scriptures for clues, which might shed light on the nearness of the Second Advent of Christ. Among the prophets, Hosea stands out as one of the most important. His treatment of the two advents of the Messiah should be examined. [Read lesson 6.](#)

[The Secrets of Psalm 90](http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-5-the-secrets-of-psalm-90/)<http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-5-the-secrets-of-psalm-90/>

The 17 verses in Psalm 90 divide naturally into seven parts, corresponding to the six days of Creation and the seventh day wherein God rested. But more than that, each division also contains an overview of those events, which marked each of six millennia. The seventh millennium is depicted in the final division as the kingdom of our Lord. [Read lesson 5.](#)

[The Millennial Day Concept](http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-4-the-millennial-day-concept/)<http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-4-the-millennial-day-concept/>

Each of the Six Days of Creation Represents a thousand years of Human activity on this Earth – then the Judgment will come. [Read lesson 4 »](#)

[Literal Versus Allegorical Interpretation of Scripture](http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-3-literal-versus-allegorical-interpretation-of-scripture/)[http://](http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-3-literal-versus-allegorical-interpretation-of-scripture/)

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If you are concerned about rightly dividing the Word of God, then you are involved with a subject biblical scholars call hermeneutics. According to Dr. A. Berkely Mickelsen, hermeneutics “designates both the science and art of interpretation.  
[Read lesson 3 »](#)

[Levels of Biblical Interpretation](http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-2-levels-of-biblical-interpretation/)<http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/lesson-2-levels-of-biblical-interpretation/>

There are three basic levels of biblical structure – primary interpretation, practical application and prophetic implication. Most Christians are aware of the primary interpretation and practical application of Scripture, but shy away from studying prophecy. Too many fail to understand its importance in our personal spiritual development. [Read lesson 2 »](#)

[The Importance of Prophetic Studies](http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/the-importance-of-prophetic-studies/)<http://www.prophecyinthenews.com/the-importance-of-prophetic-studies/>

Eschatology can be one of the most rewarding and worthwhile adventures in the Christian life. The Bible offers an inexhaustible supply of types and symbols. It seems that every chapter in the Old and New Testaments contains prophetic implications. Over and over again the same prophetic patterns seem to emerge. God’s plan of the ages is taught throughout on several different levels. [Read lesson 1 »](#)

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