



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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Opening Prayer



Understanding Prophecy in the End Times



Understanding Prophecy
Lesson 01-01
What Is Prophecy?

Introduction



What Is Prophecy? [132]

Rick Warren says this about prophecy in his book *The Purpose Driven Life*:

“When the disciples wanted to talk about prophecy, Jesus quickly switched the conversation to evangelism. He wanted them to concentrate on their mission in the world. He said in essence, ‘The details of my return are none of your business. What is your business is the mission I’ve given you. Focus on that.’”



What Is Prophecy? [132]

Warren then says this:

“If you want Jesus to come back sooner, focus on fulfilling your mission, not figuring out prophecy.”



What Is Prophecy?

Warren misses on two counts.

First, he distorts the context of Acts 1:6 and 7 – The disciples wanted to know if Jesus was now going to establish the promised Kingdom.

Acts 1:6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.



What Is Prophecy?

Second, Jesus did not avoid nor discourage the study of prophecy – He encouraged us to know the signs when He laid out the end-time scenario in Matthew chapter 24 and 25.

Jesus therefore laid the foundation for our study of prophecy and the end-time events.



What Is Prophecy?

What is Prophecy:

The intent of this study is to lay a **foundation** for the study of prophecy.

Each lesson introduces a topic that has vital importance to the overall understanding of prophecy and prophetic events for these end times.



What Is Prophecy?

The lessons contained in this course incorporate basic elements of prophecy and present a **progression toward end-time events.**



What Is Prophecy?

The prophecies of the Messiah, God's Master Plan, the place of Israel in prophecy, Satan, Heaven, and Hell are essential introductory elements to the prophecies of end-time events such as the Rapture, the Tribulation, the Antichrist and 666, the Second Coming, and the Messianic Kingdom.



What is Prophecy?

In the book of Revelation an angel tells John the following:

Rev 19:10 ...the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Keep in mind as we progress through this study that Israel's Messiah, Jesus Christ, is the primary key to understanding prophecy.

What is Prophecy?

So then, what is Prophecy? ^[133]

- Prophecy deals with **predicted future events** (history written in advance).
- Theologians refer to the doctrine of prophecy as ***Eschatology***.
- ***Eschatology*** is from the Greek word *eschatos*, meaning, “last” or “last things.”
- **“Last things”** refers to the events that will climax human history.
- **Biblical prophecy** refers to all predictions that were future at the time they were written.



What Prophecy Deals With

Prophecy Deals With: ^[133]

- The whole scope of world history.
- Divine purposes of Israel.
- The First and Second Comings of Jesus Christ.
- The course and destiny of the church.
- Consummation of human history in a kingdom on earth.



Why Study Prophecy?



Why Study Prophecy? [71]

Why Study Prophecy?

- About **a third of the Bible is prophecy**, yet many pastors are afraid to teach it.

They say it is **difficult** to understand or too **controversial**, and fear loss of congregation.

- Paul, in his letters to the Thessalonians, did not think that the subject of prophecy, or future events was too difficult or controversial for his new Christians to comprehend.

The study of prophecy encourages believers to **live holy lives** and to **be prepared for the return of Christ** at any moment.



Why Study Prophecy?


The reason that many churches do not teach prophecy is that many today do not want to hear the **hard sayings**.

Many are like Israel in Isaiah's time when Isaiah wrote:

ISA 30:9 That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD:

10 Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits:

11 Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.





6 Reasons to Study Prophecy [71]

There are six (6) good reasons why we should study prophecy.

1. If prophecy is a major part of the Bible, God must consider it **important.**

- **Omitting prophecy study ignores **a third of the Bible**.**

2. Prophecy **reveals our Lord as He really is.**

- **Prophecy deals with the life of Christ, His birth, suffering, death, and the details of His Second Coming in majesty and great glory.**

(Continued)

6 Reasons to Study Prophecy [71]

3. Proper understanding of prophecy protects the believer against cults and false prophets.

- Prophecy foretells that the end-times will be a time of great deception, with lying signs and wonders.
- The best way to avoid falling for the deceptions of false teachers is to know the Word of God, especially prophecy.

(Continued)

6 Reasons to Study Prophecy [68; 71]

4. The study of prophecy **promotes evangelism.**
 - The greatest times of church evangelism in history has occurred during times of widespread prophecy interest and study.
 - Nothing promotes evangelism more than the expectation of the soon return of Jesus Christ.
 - Fulfilled prophecy convinces us that God exists.
 - At the time of the “dark ages”, beginning about the 4th century, Bible reading became prohibited to the common man.

(Continued)



6 Reasons to Study Prophecy [71]

- It was not until the 14th century, when the Bible was translated by John Wycliffe into the language of the common man, that Bible study was again possible.
- The 19th century brought the **rediscovery of prophecy**, and the accompanied **evangelic fervor**.
- The **most missionary minded** churches were those that **taught Bible prophecy** and the **soon return of our Lord**.

(Continued)



6 Reasons to Study Prophecy [71]

5. The study of prophecy tends to **purify the believer.**

- The study of prophecy, particularly those passages pointing to the Lord's soon return, **promotes holy living** – “Do I want to be doing this when the Lord returns?”

(Continued)

6 Reasons to Study Prophecy [71]

6. Prophecy offers hope in a hopeless age.

- Prophecy students have an understanding of what the Lord has planned for the future (**God's master plan**), and are **not afraid**.
- The study of prophecy brings **hope (confidence)** because we know **our place in God's plan**, and we know the Planner.
- As we study Scripture, verses of fulfilled prophecy **build confidence** that God is able to complete His plans for the future.



Subjects Involved In Prophecy

Subjects Involved in Prophecy are ^[133]

- **Salvation.**
- **Death and resurrection.**
- **Divine judgments of men, angels, and demons.**
- **Eternal punishment.**
- **Heaven.**
- **The New Jerusalem.**
- **The New heaven and new earth.**



The Golden Rule of Interpretation [71]

The Golden Rule of Interpretation

When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense, but take every word at primary, literal meaning, unless the facts of the immediate context clearly indicate otherwise.



Principles of Interpretation



Principles of Interpretation – God is Sovereign

Essential Principals of Interpretation- **God is Sovereign** [133]

- **God is sovereign** and is **directing** the **course of human history toward an intelligent end.**

Providence is the doctrine that **God directs** all events in keeping with **His sovereign will.**



Principles of Interpretation – God is Sovereign [133]

In fulfilling His purposes (sovereign will),
God allows:

Human choice.

John 7:17 If any man will do his will,
he shall know of the doctrine, whether
it be of God, or whether I speak of
myself.

Principles of Interpretation – God is Sovereign [133]

There is Divine influence within man, especially Christians, for good, but man has a sin nature.

Philippians 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

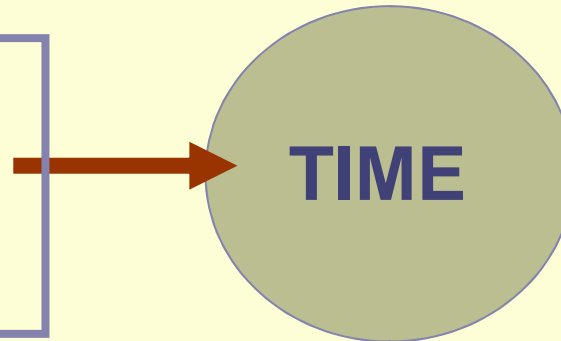
Natural law – as humans, we must obey the natural laws such as gravity.

God's supernatural intervention – seen in our salvation, answer to prayer, God's protection, God's revealing Scripture knowledge.

By its nature Christianity is **supernatural**.

Principles of Interpretation – God is Omniscient

God exists outside of time – he sees all of time at once.



Essential Principals of Interpretation – God is Omniscient ^[133]

- God is **outside of time**.
- He **knows** the beginning from the end.
- He **knows** what will actually happen in the future.

Principles of Interpretation – God is Omniscient [133]

If God knows the beginning from the end, and if He inspired the writing of Scripture, then the Bible is 100% accurate.

All prophecy will be fulfilled.

God guided the writers of Scripture.

If Scripture comes from God, shouldn't it be interpreted **literally**?

Principles of Interpretation – God is Omniscient [133]

Peter affirms that prophecy comes directly from God:

2 Peter 1:20 **Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.**

21 **For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.**

- Prophecy is understandable by the same way as it was given, by the guidance of the **Holy Spirit.**



Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally? ^[133]

There are several methods used by Bible scholars to interpret the Bible.

- Many follow the allegorical method of interpretation.
- Adherents of this method believe that the true meaning of **Scripture is hidden in allegory.**
- They would say that the words of scripture have another **secondary meaning.**

Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally? ^[133]

- In this way, allegorists are able to interpret Scripture in a way that **lines up with their own personal beliefs** – usually beliefs that **deny the supernatural and foretelling** of future events.

They would tend to **spiritualize** the book of Revelation, and would not believe that it refers to a future literal fulfillment.

- **Most orthodox interpreters of Scripture reject the allegorical method**, but some believe that prophecy (eschatology) is a special case – that we should not try to understand prophecy literally.

Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally? ^[133]

The allegorical method has led to amillennialism.

a = no

millennial = thousand

Amillennial = no thousand

- **Amillennialism** is the system of interpretation that denies that there will be a thousand-year reign of Christ following the Second Coming.

Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally? ^[133]

Amillennialists base their interpretations on four (4) distinct but separate assumptions.

- 1. They interpret the kingdom promises as Christ's reigning in the hearts of the believers.**
- 2. The prophecies are literal, but conditional.**
 - They believe the conditions have not been met; therefore, the prophecies will not be fulfilled.**
- 3. The prophecies will be fulfilled non-literally, either in the intermediate state before resurrection or in heaven.**
- 4. The millennium will be fulfilled in the eternal state in the New Jerusalem.**

Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally? ^[133]

Amillennialists say that since the Old Testament promises of an earthly kingdom are not repeated in the New Testament it means that the prophecies are not literal.

Premillennialists argue that this is not true, and point to certain Old Testament prophecies that have fulfillment in New Testament events – for example, the virgin birth and that Christ would sit on David's throne.

Pre = before – **Premillennialist** believe that **Christ's Second Coming is before a literal thousand-year earthly reign.**

Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally? ^[133]

An example would be the **virgin birth** and **prophecy of the kingdom** depicted in Luke:

LUK 1:30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.



Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally? [40]

The prophecy of Luke 1:30-33 speaks of **two separate events** – Christ's **birth** and His **earthy kingdom**.

In Matthew 20, Jesus implied that the time for His kingdom on earth was **not yet** when He spoke of the **“cup” (crucifixion)** that He **must drink first**.

Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally?

MAT 20:20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him.

21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, **in thy kingdom.**

22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. **Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?**

Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally? [133]

Later in Acts 1:6 & 7, the disciples were still asking about **the kingdom** even after Christ's death and resurrection, indicating that **the disciples expected it.**

ACT 1:6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.



Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally? ^[133]

In the preceding verses, Christ confirmed that **the kingdom had not yet happened**, and by not correcting them, indicated that it was **yet to take place** in the future.



Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally? ^[133]

The **disciples expected**, and **Christ implied**, a **literal future kingdom**.

If the book of Revelation is taken **literally**, then Christ is to reign in an earthly kingdom for one thousand years.

REV 20:1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years....

(Continued)



Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally?

4 ... I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years....

6 ... on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,



Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally? ^[133]

The teaching of a coming earthly kingdom (**premillennialism**) was the common belief of the first century church.

Premillennialism is the belief that Christ will come again and set up a thousand year reign on earth.

Even amillennialists (no millennium) agree that a **literal interpretation** of the Bible **leads to a premillennial understanding** of the coming kingdom as the only possible interpretation.



Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally? ^[133]

Those that **interpret literally** agree on the certainty of the resurrection and judgment of all men, heaven and a literal eternal hell, and the literal fulfillment of prophecies relating to these doctrines.

Modern liberal theologians disagree, favoring:

Only the righteous will be resurrected (conditional immortality).

Or, eventually all will be saved (universalism).





Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally? ^[133]

The **allegorical method** has also led to support of **postmillennialism**.

Post = after.

Thus, Christ's Second Coming is after the thousand years.

Postmillennialism is the position that states that Christ's Second Coming will be **preceded** by a golden age on earth of one thousand years.

This view says that the Gospel will be triumphant and the earthly kingdom will conclude with the Second Coming.



Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally? ^[133]

The **literal-historical method** is the one we follow.

This method **accepts allegory and figurative language** in Scripture where it is clearly indicated, but believes that all Scripture should be interpreted **literally** where not clearly allegorical or figurative language is employed.

This method **accepts the literal interpretation of prophecy.**



Should the Bible Be Interpreted Literally? ^[133]

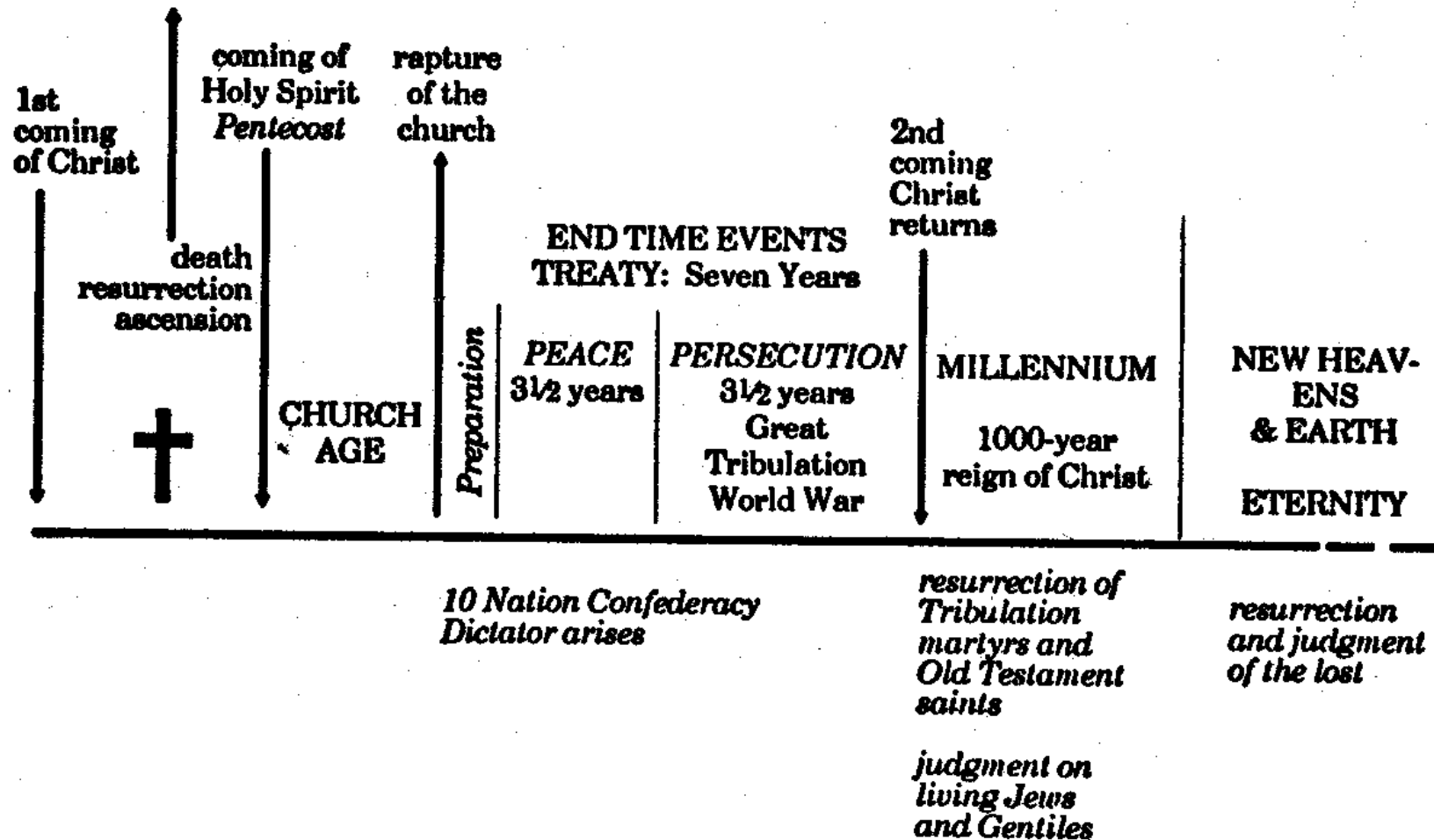
The **literal method** of prophetic interpretation **led to premillennialism**.

Pre = before.

Premillennialism is the view that Christ's Second Coming will be followed by His reign over an earthly kingdom for one thousand years.

Premillennial Chart of the Future [133]

PREMILLENNIAL CHART OF THE FUTURE PRETRIBULATIONAL VIEW





Amillennialism vs Premillennialism [126; 127]

For the first two centuries of the Christian Church, premillennialism was the common belief.

It was in the school of theology at Alexandria, Egypt, that amillennialism began to be proposed.

The Alexandrian school believed that Scriptures should be interpreted non-literally (allegorically).



Amillennialism ^[133]

The **Alexandrian school** gained considerable influence in the North Africa region, and influenced **Augustine**, Bishop of Hippo (354-430), to its side.

Augustine discarded non-literal interpretation of most of Scripture, but maintain non-literal interpretation when applied to prophecy.

Because of this, he developed the **amillennial** (Augustinian) view of the future.



Amillennialism ^[133]

The Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Reformers of the 16th century widely adopted the Augustinian view.

According to John Walvoord:

“Augustine believed the age in which he lived spiritually fulfilled the concept of a kingdom on earth, which would climax in the second coming of Christ, judgment of the wicked, and rewarding of the blessed.”



5 Minute Break