



Things To Come: Week 1

Why We Study Prophecy

Welcome!

Wednesday Evenings in Things To Come

- Refreshments 7:00 pm
- Worship 7:10 pm
- Talk 7:20 pm
- Group Discussion 8:00 pm

Introduction: Isaiah 46:9-10

*9 Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else;
I am God, and there is none like me, 10 declaring the end from the beginning, and from
ancient times the things that are not yet done...*

- God is the only one who knows the future!
 - Not only does He hear us when we pray, but He actually talks back.
 - He even talks to us when we **aren't** looking for Him!
 - A very large percentage of the Bible is prophecy: _____%
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Topics we'll cover:

- What is Bible prophecy?
 - Reasons why people *don't* study Bible prophecy
 - Reasons why we *should* study Bible prophecy
 - Why Jesus is coming back
 - How to read and understand the prophetic Scriptures
 - Basic facts about the Second Coming
 - Signposts of the Last Days
 - Learning Prophetic Vocabulary
 - God's Plan for Israel
 - God's Plan for the Nations
 - The Times and the Seasons
 - Great Tribulation: the Time of Jacob's Trouble
 - The Resurrection from the Dead
 - The Millennial Kingdom of Christ; and
 - The New Jerusalem and Eternity Future
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1. What is Bible Prophecy?

1.1. Prophecy is God's own account of what will happen in the future.

...knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:20-21 NKJV)

...when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come (John 16:13 KJV)

1.2 The Bible has an incredible track record in predictive prophecy.

- The Jewish people captives in Babylon for 70 years
- The exact time Messiah would come, to the day.
- Jesus predicted that the Temple would be destroyed in such a manner that not one stone would remain standing upon another.
- The marvel of Messianic Prophecy: Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53.

1.3. Only the Bible has been demonstrated to predict the future.

- Other religions have prophecies which are self-fulfilling.
- False religions and psychics give vague and fuzzy prophecies, but the Bible is very clear, and very specific.

1.4. Most of the prophecies in the Bible are yet to be fulfilled.

- As much as 90% of the Bible's prophecies is still future.

1.5. The focal point in Bible prophecy is the prophesied return of Jesus Christ to bring about the full manifestation of the Kingdom of God.

- This is the goal of all prophecy in the Scripture: to point us to the end of this age and the wrap-up of Man's management of the world.

2. Four Reasons Why People Don't Study Prophecy

2.1. Why should I worry about it if it's all going to pan out?

- *First*, Scripture counsels us always to be students of the Word.
- *Second*, the Bible's teaching about the return of Jesus and the end of the age is a major theme of Scripture.
- *Third*, the Bible does not teach fatalism. Fatalism says that whatever is going to happen is going to happen. That is not a biblical way of looking at the world.
- If we really believe we are living in the last days, shouldn't we know what the Bible says to people living in the last days?

2.2. Shouldn't we focus on evangelizing and doing good works?

- Evangelism, and good works, and the message of prophecy are all tied together!
- Teaching about the Second Coming is one of the most practical teachings!

2.3. I can't study this stuff because it's too hard

- Can't figure out the symbols?
 - Eternal judgment is one of the foundational teachings of the faith.
 - It's Christianity 102!
 - We're not healthy disciples if we don't know about the return of Christ.
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2.4. It doesn't matter to me because I won't be there.

- Some think they'll die first.
 - Some say they'll be raptured so it makes no difference.
 - There's no guarantee of being raptured at a particular time.
 - You can experience unpleasantness without being raptured.
 - You can live in the general era of the Rapture and not make there.
 - You still need to know about the conditions of end times living!
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3. Why *do* we study Bible prophecy? Ten important reasons!

1. Careful students of the Bible can't ***avoid*** studying it because we find it everywhere in the Scriptures.
2. Bible prophecy is an essential part of the Gospel, because it completes the picture of the salvation that was won by Jesus Christ.
3. Bible prophecy gives us the complete and fully rounded portrait of Jesus. If we do not study Bible prophecy, we will be missing important facets of who Jesus is.

4. Bible prophecy is of great value in *apologetics*: it helps us to defend the Christian faith, and provides unbelievers with evidence for belief.
5. Bible prophecy causes our hearts to give glory to God. When we see the amazing workings of God in history, we can't help praising Him for his wisdom and his power. We are in awe of his ability to order all things according to the purpose of His Will.
6. Studying Bible prophecy is important for our sanctification. It encourages us to live a godly life.
7. Bible prophecy is a practical topic of study, because it encourages us to labor for Christ and to do good.
8. Studying Bible prophecy will help us to be wise as we approach the end of the age, and it will give us understanding of the times and seasons in which we live.
9. God commands us to study *every* part of his Word.
10. There is a blessing that attaches to us when we study the prophetic Scriptures - God said so!

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near. (Rev. 1:3, NKJV)

****HOMEWORK: Read Matthew, chapter 24****