



# Introduction to Bible Prophecy

*A Bible study prepared for a Leisure Learning Unlimited class*

Note: Scripture used in this Bible Study is from the New King James Version.

## 1. Introduction

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**Objective:** Participants will better understand and appreciate what the Bible has to say about the future.

### Agenda:

1. Introduction
2. Assumptions
3. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream
4. The Abomination of Desolation
5. The Tribulation
6. The Rapture
7. Millennium Kingdom
8. Signs of the Times

## 2. Assumptions

In order to better appreciate this introduction to Bible prophecy, there are four assumptions that need to be accepted at least for the purpose of this class...

1. God is
2. God is Almighty
3. God created us for a purpose
4. God's Word is true

A Bible study specifically addressing these assumptions may be found under Topical Bible Studies on BibleTract.org.

### Basic Principles for interpreting the Bible:

1. Context
2. Literal Meaning First

**What is the most important truth that the Bible presents to us?**

## 3. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

### Reference: Daniel 2:31-44

31 "You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome.

32 "This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,

33 "its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

34 "You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.

35 "Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

36 "This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king.

37 "You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory;

38 "and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all-- you are this head of gold.

39 "But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.

40 "And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.

41 "Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.

42 "And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile.

43 "As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

44 "And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

**3.1 - Verses 31-33 - How would you describe the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream?**

**3.2 - Verses 31-33 - What is the significance of the materials of the image?**

**3.3 - Verses 34-35 - What happened to the image in the dream?**

**3.4 - Verses 34-35 - How is the stone contrasted to the materials that make up the image?**

**3.5 - Verse 34 - What is the significance of where the stone struck the image?**

**3.6 - Verses 34-35 - What is to become of the stone and what is its significance?**

**3.7 - Verses 36-38 - What does the gold head in the image represent?**

**3.8 - What was king Nebuchadnezzar given reign over?**

**3.9 - Verse 39 - What is the commonality between all the statue's materials?**

**3.10 - What governments have we had in history that have ruled over the civilized world? If Gold corresponds to the Babylonians, what do the other materials represent?**

**3.11 - Has there been any world governments since the Romans?**

**3.12 - Verses 41-43 - What does the iron mixed with clay tell us about this future last human world government?**

**3.13 - Ceramic is a lot closer to stone in its properties than metal, do you think there is any significance in that?**

**3.14 - Is there any significance in the two arms, two legs, and ten toes?**

**3.15 - Verse 44 – What will the government be like that will replace the world governments of men?**

## **4. The Abomination of Desolation**

**4.1 - How do we know Jesus is going to come back?**

**References:**

**John 14:1-3** - Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

**Matthew 24:42** - "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.

### **Matthew 24:15-21**

15 "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand),  
16 "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.  
17 "Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house.

18 "And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.

19 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

20 "And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.

21 "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Note that this passage makes a special point to pray that your flight would not be on the Sabbath because it is being directed to religious Jews who will have a dilemma about doing any kind of work on the Sabbath and may hesitate when they should be taking action to flee. But it has application to all of us because the tribulation is not limited to the Jews.

**4.2 - What can we learn about the abomination of desolation from this passage?**

**4.3 - Where can we learn more about the abomination of desolation?**

### **Reference: Daniel 9:25-27**

25 "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.

26 "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined.

27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall

be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate."

**4.4 - What value are the time frames given in this passage?**

**4.5 - What does it mean "Messiah shall be cut off"?**

**4.6 - Who will destroy the city and the sanctuary?**

**4.7 - What is the sanctuary?**

**4.8 - Was the sanctuary destroyed?**

**4.9 - Verse 26 - What does the "it" in "the end of it" refer to?**

**4.10 - Why isn't the 69 and 70<sup>th</sup> weeks of Daniel continuous as between the 7 and 62?**

**4.11 - Verse 26 - How did Daniel describe the time leading up to the 70th week?**

**4.12 - What are desolations?**

**4.13 - What kind of wake-up calls have we had?**

**4.14 - Verse 27 - What happens during the 70th week?**

**4.15 - When does the abomination of desolation occur?**

**4.16 - What is the sacrifice that is ended?**

**4.17 - What must there be for the sacrifice to be ended?**

**4.18 - What is needed for Israel to have sacrifices?**

**4.19 - When was the last time Israel had sacrifices?**

**4.20 - So when did this 70th week occur?**

**4.21 - Why will Israel rebuild the temple and resume the sacrifices?**

**4.22 - Does it seem likely that Israel will have a temple in Jerusalem any time soon?**

**4.23 - So what does this tell us about whether this passage talks about a past or future event?**

**4.24 - Verse 27 - What does it mean the prince will "confirm a covenant with many"?**

**4.25 - Where in the world do we see this scenario being set up today?**

## 5. The Tribulation

**5.1 - There are more prophecies in Scripture about the tribulation than any other time period. Why do you think that is?**

**5.2 - Which book of the Bible tells us the most about the tribulation?**

**5.3 - Revelation 1:1 – First of all, what is revealed in the book of Revelation?**

Revelation 1:1 - The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants-- things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,

**5.4 - What is the revelation of Jesus Christ?**

**5.5 - Revelation 1:19 - What may we conclude about the order of events in Revelation?**

Revelation 1:19 - Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.

**Reference: Revelation 6:12-16**

12 I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood.

13 And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind.

14 Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

15 And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains,

16 and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!

**5.6 - Revelation 6:12-16 - What events are associated with the sixth seal?**

**5.7 - Why would God allow the use of nuclear weapons rather than bring about these events supernaturally?**

**Reference: Revelation 13**

1 Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.

2 Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.

3 And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast.

4 So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"

5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months.

6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.

7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear.

10 He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

11 Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.

12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

13 He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.

14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived.

15 He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

16 He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads,

17 and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

18 Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.

**5.8 - Revelation 13:2 - What three things will the dragon give the beast?**

**5.9 - Who is "the dragon"?**

**5.10 - Revelation 13:3 - What kind of following will the beast have?**

**5.11 - Who will give authority to the beast, a.k.a. Antichrist?**

**5.12 - Who gives authority to the devil?**

**5.13 - Revelation 13:5 – What is the significance of the time period here?**

**5.14 - Revelation 13:5-6 - What will the beast talk about?**

**5.15 - What three things will the beast blaspheme?**

**5.16 - Revelation 13:7-10 - Who will the beast persecute?**

**5.17 - Revelation 13:16-18 - What is the mark of the Beast?**

**5.18 - What is the significance of the number 666?**

**5.19 - What technology today makes it more understandable how no one may buy or sell without a certain mark?**

## 6. The Rapture

**Reference: 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18**

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**6.1 - Verse 14 - Who gets to be with Christ when they die?**

**6.2 - Verse 15 - When does the resurrection happen & in what order?**

**6.3 - Verse 16 - What will happen just prior to the resurrection of the church?**

**6.4 - Verse 17 - Where is Christ during the resurrection of the church?**

**6.5 - Verse 18 - How are these verses comforting?**

**6.6 - How does verse 18 reinforce the idea that the Rapture occurs before the tribulation?**

**6.7 - How does verse 17 show that Paul expected the rapture to be an imminent event even back in his day?**

**6.8 - What explanations do you think will be given for the rapture?**

Another important reference to the rapture is 1 Corinthians 15:50-57. For a Bible study on this passage and others dealing with the rapture, the BibleTract.org Topical study titled "Our Blessed Hope."

## 7. The Millennium

**Reference: Revelation 20:1-6**

1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.  
2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;  
3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.  
4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.  
5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.  
6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

**7.1 - Revelation 20:1-3 - What will become of Satan?**

**7.2 - Revelation 20:4-6 - Who is involved in the first resurrection?**

**7.3 - What will the saints be doing during the 1000 year reign of Christ on earth?**

**Reference: Isaiah 65:17-25**

17 "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.  
18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, and her people a joy.  
19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people; the voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, nor the voice of crying.  
20 "No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; for the child shall die one hundred years old, but the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed.  
21 They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.  
22 They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, and My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.  
23 They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth children for trouble; for they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them.  
24 "It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear.  
25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain," says the LORD.

**7.4 - What five things will not exist in this glorious Kingdom to come**

**7.5 - Isaiah 65:17-25 speaks of a new heavens and a new earth but why can't this refer to the eternal state?**

**7.6 - What does it mean in verse 17 that "the former shall not be remembered or come to mind"?**

**7.7 - What are the implications of this for the eternal state?**

**7.8 - What does verse 19 tell us about the millennial reign?**

**7.9 - Why will things be so much better during the millennial reign of Christ?**

**7.10 - Verse 20 - How long will people live during the millennial reign of Christ?**

**7.11 - Verse 22 - It says that the time of God's people will be as that of a tree, what does this mean?**

**7.12 - Will there be any sin in this Kingdom?**

### **7.13 - What does verses 21-22 tell us about the millennial reign?**

Genesis 3:17-18 - Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': 'Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field.

### **7.14 - What part of the consequences of the fall of man does verse 23 address?**

Genesis 3:16 - To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

### **7.15 - What implications do you think the removal of laboring in vain and the pain of child birth will have on the population?**

#### **Reference: Revelation 20:11-21:5**

11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

1 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.

2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.

4 "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."

### **7.16 - Revelation 20:11-13 - What happens at the great white throne?**

### **7.17 - How do you think those who are judged according to their works will fare?**

Isaiah 64:6 - But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; we all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

### **7.18 - Revelation 21:1 - What happens to the world?**

2 Peter 3:10 - But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

### **7.19 - Revelation 21:4 - What will the new heaven and earth be like?**

For more on the Millennial Kingdom and our eternal state, see the BibleTract.org Topical Bible study titled "Heaven."

## **8. Signs of the Times**

### **A sampling of several categories of end-time signs:**

#### **Nature:**

Luke 21:25-26 - And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken.

#### **Society:**

2 Timothy 3:1-5 - But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

#### **Technology:**

Daniel 12:4 - But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.

#### **Politics:**

Revelation 13:7 - It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

**Finances:**

James 5:3 - Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days.

**Israel: The number one sign of the end-times...**

**8.1 - Has the Church replaced Israel in God's promises?**

Romans 11:25-26 - For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

Matt 24:32-34 - Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near-- at the doors! Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

**8.2 - There are many Bible references to Israel being restored to the land. Indeed they had been taken off into captivity by Babylon, how do we know that these prophecies have not been fulfilled in History?**

**Reference: Ezekiel 37:21-25**

21 "Then say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land;  
22 "and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again.  
23 "They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God.  
24 "David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them.  
25 "Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children's children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever.

**8.3 - How do we know that Ezekiel 37:21-25 is a reference to a restoration of Israel to their land that has not been fulfilled in history?**

**8.4 - What is verse 22 talking about that they will no longer be two nations?**

**8.5 - What does verse 23 have to say about whether this passage has been fulfilled or not?**

**8.6 - What does it mean that David will be king over them all?**

**8.7 - Could God remove Israel from the land and re-gather them again?**

For more on the signs of the times, see the BibleTract.org Topical Bible studies titled "Signs of the Times" and "Signs of the Financial End-Times."