

SECRETS *of the* FUTURE

Secrets of Prophecy | Part 1



SECRETS OF PROPHECY

“Prediction is very difficult, especially if it’s about the future.”

- Niels Bohr, Danish physicist

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Predicting the future can be quite risky. Notice these statements:

- *“The horse is here to stay; the automobile is only a fad.”* Advice to Henry Ford from Horace Rackham, President of Michigan Savings Bank, 1903
- *“Who the hell wants actors to talk?”* H.M.Warner, Warner Brothers, 1927
- *“I think there is a world market for maybe five computers.”* Thomas Watson, Chairman of IBM, 1943
- *“Television won’t last because people will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night.”* Darryl Zanuck, 20th Century Fox, 1946
- *“We don’t like their sound, and guitar music is on the way out anyway.”* President of Decca Records, commenting on The Beatles, 1962



Despite the risk, a look into history uncovers a variety of cultures fascinated with knowing the future. The prophets who wrote the ancient Scriptures used mysterious symbols and time codes to describe over 1,000 startling and specific predictions. These “prophecies” predicted major events and the rise and fall of nations throughout history.

The most intriguing and controversial Bible prophecies are those that speak of our time. Among other things the prophets saw:

- A rapid increase in technology and pace of life
- A union of religious and political powers causing war and destruction
- Greedy capitalists who use the cheap labour of the poor
- A global economic collapse
- Destruction of the environment
- The formation of global politics and the globalisation of the world

What is the purpose and relevance of prophecy? Why were the prophecies written in mysterious codes and symbols? How accurate is Bible prophecy and what do the prophecies really mean? Throughout this series you will discover the keys that unlock the secrets of prophecy. As the future becomes clear, important teachings will help you discover life’s purpose and answer life’s mysteries.



Q1.

WHO CLAIMS THE ABILITY TO TRULY KNOW THE FUTURE?

Isaiah 46:9,10 - *Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, _____ the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are _____ yet _____*

.....

The ancient pagan religions of the world relied on specially trained mystics and astrologers to communicate with their nature gods and understand the future. Prophetic “omens” were determined by observing the strange movements of natural events. The fate of kings and nations was predicted based on the formation of stars and planets, the behaviour of birds, the movement of oil through water or even the liver condition of dead sheep.



The God of the ancient Scriptures declares that He is the only one who can truly predict the future. This unique quality of knowing and telling

the things that are “not yet done”, can easily be tested through a study of Bible prophecy. With over 1,000 clear prophecies, and one-third of the Bible devoted to prophecy, you can take God’s challenge and test if He is real, and can truly predict the future.

Quite a few leaders throughout history have taken a keen interest in Bible prophecy. Some made decisions because they believed in God’s prophecies; others openly tried to defy the prophecies.

King Cyrus, the first great Persian monarch, commanded the rebuilding of the Jewish temple, as a result of the prophecies contained in the books of Daniel, Isaiah and Jeremiah.

Alexander the Great spared the city of Jerusalem from destruction and worshipped in its temple, after he was shown the prophetic book of Daniel.

Jesus Christ told His followers they needed to study and understand the book of Daniel. His life and death were also perfectly matched to the prophecies contained in the Old Testament.

Former US President Ronald Reagan worked with Pope John Paul II to overthrow communism, partly because he feared the prophetic battle of Armageddon.

Adolf Hitler openly opposed the prophetic God of the Bible.

Saddam Hussein believed he was the modern fulfilment of a key character in the prophetic book of Daniel; King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.



Q2.

WHO DOES GOD REVEAL HIS SECRETS THROUGH?

Amos 3:7 - Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His _____ to His servants the _____

.....

Prophets were men and women who God especially chose to share with us His secret mysteries. Many of these mysteries were predictions for the future, or “prophecies”.



It is important to note that Jesus warned against “false prophets” (Matthew 24:24). The easiest way to determine a false prophet is by using the Scriptures as a benchmark. If their predictions do not come true, or they conflict with the teachings of Scripture, you can be assured they are not a true prophet of God.

Q3.

WHEN WILL THE SECRETS OF PROPHECY BE REVEALED?

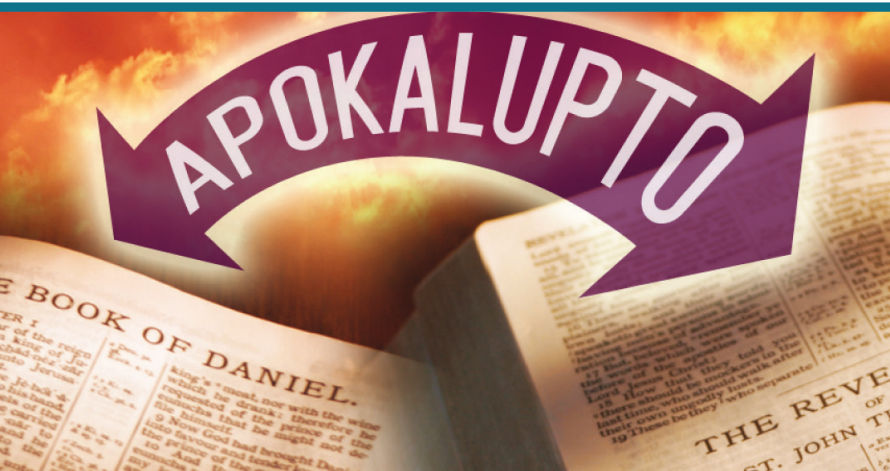
Daniel 12:4 - *But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the _____ of the _____; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase*

.....

The two prophetic books that will be investigated most fully in this series are Daniel and Revelation. The book of Daniel contains prophecies that were concealed, or kept secret, until the “time of the end” (Daniel 12:4).

Revelation or “apocalypse” comes from the Greek word “apokalupto”, which means “to reveal a secret”. It is this book that unlocks the secrets of Daniel and also reveals new prophecies for our time today.

Although prophecy has always been relevant, now is especially the time to read and understand the secrets of prophecy.



Q4.

HOW DID GOD REVEAL HIS SECRETS TO HIS PROPHETS?

Numbers 12:6 - *Then He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a _____; I speak to him in a _____"*

.....

God used dreams and visions to depict and outline His prophecies. On some occasions He would speak directly (1 Samuel 3:10), but usually He spoke through visions. While in vision, the prophets saw a range of symbols and world events that formed the basis of the prophecies.

Sometimes God would reveal the keys to unlocking the prophecy within the vision. At other times the prophets did not understand the meaning and the meaning would remain a mystery until our day, the time of the end (Daniel 8:17,26,27).



Q5.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF BIBLE PROPHECY?

John 14:29 - *And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may _____*

.....

The primary purpose of prophecy is to give us confidence to trust in the God of the Scriptures. God has provided a logical foundation for our belief system, not just a faith based on traditions or culture. There have been many gods throughout history. The Creator God asks us to believe Him on the basis of the accuracy of His predictions. If God created the past, and can see the future, you can trust Him to take care of your life today.

Q6.

WHAT APPROACH DOES GOD USE TO OUTLINE HIS PROPHECIES?

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 _____ it by His angel to His servant John*

.....



The prophecies of the Bible were “signified” – in other words put into signs and symbols. Many of these symbols depict imagery of mystical animals, colours, metals and people.

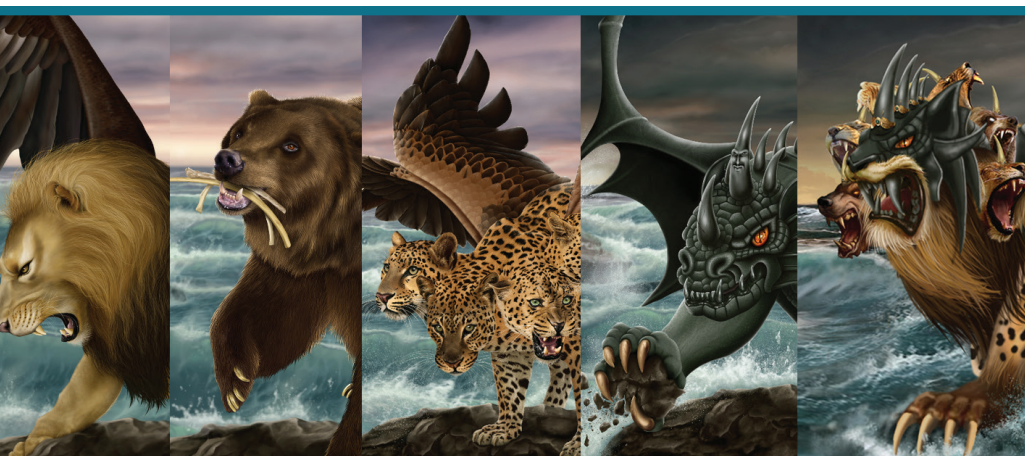
Throughout this series we will uncover intriguing prophetic symbols such as:

- 666 and the Mark of the Beast
- The Great Red Dragon
- The Seal of God
- Armageddon
- The Beast from the bottomless pit
- The Time, Times and Half a time
- The Lord’s Day
- The Antichrist

Two key aspects of Bible prophecy are:

a. Prophetic Symbols

A variety of symbols are used to represent nations, people, religious movements and political events. In total over 60 symbols can be identified with each symbol playing an important role in portraying the full meaning and significance of each prophecy.



b. Numerals

Great men throughout history such as Isaac Newton and Leonardo Da Vinci have been intrigued with the symbolic meaning of Bible numerals. Not only are there many time periods in the Bible that predict when certain events will occur, but certain numbers also represent a spiritual meaning. In total, at least 12 numbers can be identified as holding special significance.

It is interesting to note that the ancient pagan religions also used signs and symbols to represent spiritual beliefs, particularly in reference to worship of the "nature gods". During the Early to Middle Ages, as the church blended in with the surrounding pagan cultures, some of these symbols were incorporated into Christian art, rituals and traditions. You may recognise some of these symbols.

- The egg = birth and fertility goddess
- The sun face = sun god
- Pentagram = union and balance between the spiritual realm and the elements of nature
- The solar wheel = sun god/circle of life
- The crescent moon = sacred feminine
- The all seeing eye = spiritual enlightenment
- Chalice = goddess, female sexual organs



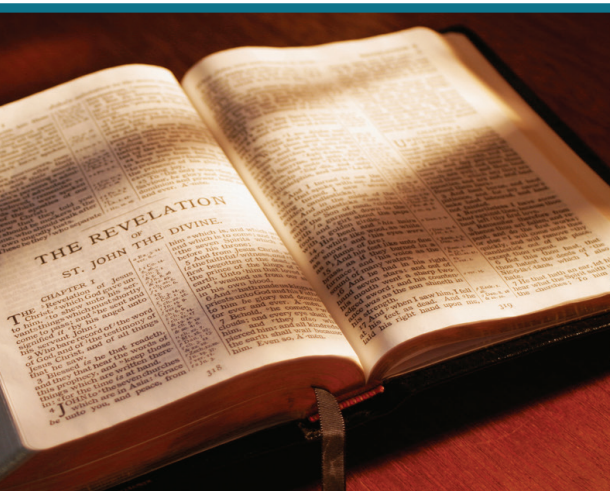
Q7.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO TO GAIN THE MOST BENEFIT FROM BIBLE PROPHECY?

Revelation 1:3 - *Blessed is he who _____ and those who _____ the words of this prophecy, and _____ those things which are written in it; for the time is near*

.....

The books of Daniel and Revelation are important for us to read and understand. What is even more important is that we keep, or put into action, the things we learn from God's Word. God wants us to worship Him out of love, and the highest form of worship is obedience. True happiness is the consequence of loving obedience to God and His Word.



Q8.

WHY WAS THE BIBLE WRITTEN IN MYSTERIOUS SYMBOLS?

Luke 8:10 - *And He said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that ' Seeing they may not _____, and hearing they may not _____' "*

.....

a. For protection

A number of prophecies predicted the downfall of empires and described nations and global political powers in less than flattering terms. The Bible was at risk of being destroyed by those who opposed God's people and denied God's teachings. The major prophecies were placed into a code for protection. Jesus said, "seeing they may not see and hearing they may not understand". The prophecies were cloaked in symbolism.

b. To increase faith

Bible prophecy is not really difficult to understand, but it does take time and commitment. Readers need to dig into each prophecy to determine its meaning, and search the Scriptures to discover the keys to each symbol. Your faith will increase as you learn more about God and see His amazing love and care for people throughout history (Romans 10:17).



c. To effectively communicate

Symbols are a powerful form of communication. Companies spend millions of dollars creating symbols that touch a chord within the community and effectively communicate the meaning and personality of their brand.

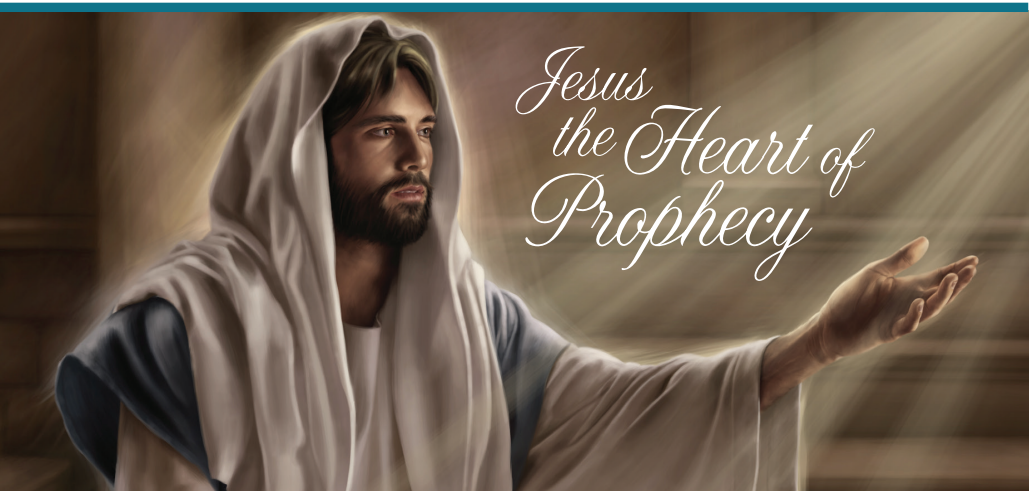
Q9.

WHO IS THE CENTRAL CHARACTER OF BIBLE PROPHECY?

Revelation 1:1 - *The Revelation of* _____

.....

Although the prophecies outline future events, the focus of Bible prophecy is Jesus Christ. There are many prophecies that refer specifically to Jesus – describing unique names, His appearance, His character and the way He interacts with His people.



Q10.

WHAT ARE THE KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING BIBLE PROPHECY?

In order to understand the prophecies, the following principles need to be followed:

a. Understand the symbols

This can be quite easily achieved as the Bible provides the keys to what they mean.

b. Pray for spiritual enlightenment

The Bible says that spiritual things are “spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:14). Ask God to help you understand the prophecies; after all, He developed them.

c. See the prophecies as signposts in time

Some people get confused when they view the prophecies as relevant only to the time of the Bible writers. Misunderstanding can also occur when we apply all the prophecies to the end of time. Throughout this series you will see predictions covering a time period from their inception through to the end of time. God provides “signposts” or events throughout time which highlight where we are in human history.



d. Allow the Bible to interpret itself

It is essential that we allow God to unlock the secrets of prophecy. By comparing Scriptures we can avoid speculation and allow the Bible to interpret itself. Understanding the Old Testament, in particular, is the foundation for understanding Bible prophecy. Of the 404 verses in the book of Revelation, more than 270 refer back to the history, imagery and prophecy of the Old Testament.

Q11.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE KEY SYMBOLS OF PROPHECY?

.....

a. Beast = kingdom/political power (Daniel 7:17,23)

The use of animals as a symbol for a nation is still common today. For instance, the “Kangaroos” are Australians, “Kiwis” are New Zealanders, “Springboks” are South Africans and the “Eagle” is often used for Americans.

b. Woman = Church (Jeremiah 6:2)

In Bible prophecy a pure woman is a symbol of a pure church; a corrupt woman is a symbol of a corrupt church.

c. Water = many people (Revelation 17:15)

Even today a large number of people are referred to as a “sea” of faces.

d. Day = year (Ezekiel 4:6)

One of the most important numerical codes is the “day for a year” principle. In Bible prophecy a prophetic day equals a literal year. As an example, 1,260 days (Revelation 12:6) represents a literal 1,260 years.

Q12.

WHAT WARNING DOES GOD GIVE WHEN INTERPRETING PROPHECY?

2 Peter 1:20 - *Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any _____ interpretation*

.....

Prophecies are to be interpreted through an understanding of the Bible, not personal guesswork. What you or I might “think” it means is not as important as what God says the prophecy means. This series of study guides will cover a broad range of important Bible teachings. In each case we will look into the context of specific Bible statements, and move through the Bible to discover the overall meaning.





Q13.

WHAT PROMISE DOES JESUS GIVE TO THOSE WHO OBEY HIS WORD?

Revelation 22:14 - *Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of _____, and may enter through the gates into the city*

.....

The Bible promises you the gift of eternal life if you choose to accept it. Choosing Jesus means more than just a verbal affirmation. It involves loving Him and a willingness to obey Him. Understanding the prophecies of the Scriptures helps you to know and love God more fully and provides clear direction for these last days of earth's history.

Three points to remember

- Only God knows the future
- The “secrets of prophecy” are understood by allowing the Bible to interpret itself
- Jesus is the centre of prophecy

The Story:

A young girl was watching a man publicly denouncing God as a myth and mocking the thought that anyone could predict the future. She turned to the man and said to him, "My Bible talks about you". "Oh, is that true?", said the man. "What does it say about me?" The young girl quoted to him from the book of Psalms, "The fool has said in his heart there is no God" (Psalms 14:1). As only a young girl could, she then went on to say, "The Bible says the fool has said in his heart there is no God, but Mr you are even sillier because you have actually said it out loud!"

What lessons can we learn from this simple story?

Relational questions

1. How could understanding prophecy impact your spirituality?
2. In what ways do you think an understanding of prophecy will give you hope for the future?
3. What do you think you can do in your approach to Bible study to ensure Jesus remains at the heart of prophecy, instead of just focusing on future facts and events?

Your response:

Knowing the importance and relevance of Bible prophecy, would you like to know God better by further investigating the meaning of Bible prophecy? _____



WHO WILL CONTROL *the* WORLD?

In order to know the future, we must first understand the past. Learn how an ancient prophecy accurately predicted that Hitler would never control the world in Part 2 of the Secrets of the Future series. Email or call Hope Channel to continue your journey.



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