

Bible Prophecy Fulfilled



SABBATH—APRIL 14

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Isaiah 52:13–53:12; Daniel 2; Matthew 24:24; John 13:19.

MEMORY VERSE: “Remember what happened in the past. Think about what took place long ago. I am God. There is no other God. I am God. There is no one like me. Before something even happens, I announce [tell] how it will end. In fact, from times long ago I announced what was still to come. I say, ‘My plan will succeed. I will do anything I want to do’ ” (Isaiah 46:9, 10, NIV).

KEY THOUGHT: Bible prophecy remains a powerful tool in establishing our faith.

EVERY YEAR PEOPLE TRY TO GET EXPERT ADVICE ON HOW DIFFERENT STOCKS WILL DO. But, in the end, the experts can tell them everything about a stock except one thing. The experts can not tell what that stock will do in the future.

But God knows the future. He has proved that to us, again and again, by some of the prophecies in the Bible. Many of these prophecies were written well ahead of the time of the foretold events.¹ And time and again the events happened just as God said in the prophecy. We know this, because we see the prophecy in the Bible, and then we can see that the prophecy came true. “The Lord and King never does anything without telling his servants the prophets about it” (Amos 3:7, NIV).

We have seen that these past prophecies became fulfilled, so we can trust God on the prophecies that are yet to be fulfilled. For example, the greatest future prophecy of all is the second coming of Jesus.

This week, we will take a look at some of the great prophecies in the Bible. What can we learn from these prophecies? What is the principle² behind prophecy? How does prophecy help us learn to trust in the Bible as God's Word?

¹events—things that happen.

²principle—a basic rule.

SUNDAY—APRIL 15**PROPHETIC LICENSE
(Matthew 24:24)**

In Hebrew, the verb *naba* means “to prophesy and to foretell.” *Naba* carries the idea of someone pouring forth words eagerly or with inspiration. The noun *nabi* means a spokesperson, a prophet, a person authorized to speak for someone else (Exodus 6:28-30; Exodus 7:1). Another word used in the Bible for someone with the prophetic gift is *seer*. *Seer* is translated from two different Hebrew words, each meaning “to see.” God has given prophets the ability to prophesy (foretell) about things that common people might not see. Prophets see what others might not see. God calls them to speak those things with power.

What warning about prophets does Jesus give in Matthew 24:24?

Jesus’ warning about false prophets comes with the idea that there are true prophets. After all, if we were to refuse all prophets and their gift, we would not need warnings about false prophets.

What principle (rule) about how prophecy (future events before they happen) should work is made known in the following verses? Matthew 24:32, 33; John 13:19.

In these verses, Jesus shows us that prophecy is not just about being able to tell the future. Prophecy also

strengthens our faith in God and the Bible after the prophecy has been fulfilled. The more we see fulfilled, the more we believe that the Bible really comes from God.

There are different kinds of prophecies. One kind deals with the prophecies about a coming Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. Other prophecies deal with the future of the Israelites and other nations. Other prophecies deal with the end of the world and what will happen after the world ends.

Think about the part that prophecy has played in your walk with God. What lessons about prophecy have you learned? What words of advice or warning would you give to a new Christian or to someone studying prophecy for the first time?

MONDAY—APRIL 16**EARLY PROPHECIES
(2 Chronicles 20:20)**

“Have faith in the Lord your God. He’ll [He will] take good care of you. Have faith in his prophets. Then you will have success” (2 Chronicles 20:20, NIV).

Even in the first book of the Bible (Genesis), we see that prophecy plays an important part in the history of God’s work with sinful people.

What do the following verses in Genesis prophesy, or tell about the future?

Genesis 3:15 _____

Genesis 6:13 _____

Genesis 12:1-3 _____

Genesis 15:13, 14 _____

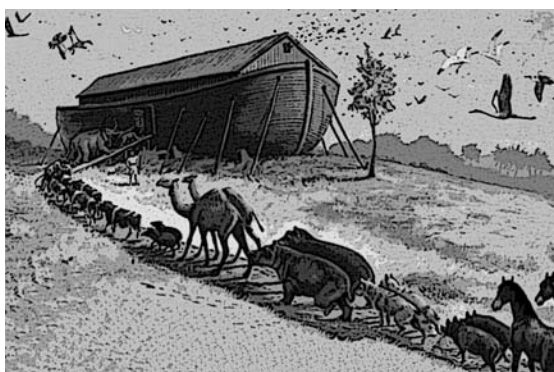
Genesis 18:10 _____

In looking back, it is easy for us to see just how correctly these prophecies were fulfilled. But put yourself in Noah's place. God told Noah He was going to wipe out the earth by a flood of water. Ellen White said that before that time there had never been any rain! (Read *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 96, 97.) Think about Abraham and Sarah. Sarah would one day be the mother of their child when she was too old to have children. This was surely a great test of faith for Abraham and Sarah (Hebrews 11:7-11).

What promises of God are you waiting to come true? What lessons can you learn from past examples of Bible characters who

³ancient—very old.

⁴Cyrus—the king of Persia who conquered Babylon.



God told Noah that a flood would wipe out the earth.

trusted in God's promises? How can they help you learn to trust Him, too?

TUESDAY—APRIL 17

THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL 2 (Daniel 2:41)

What does the prophecy in Daniel 2 teach us about God's power to foretell the future?

World history proves that most of this amazing prophecy has been fulfilled. Babylon's golden kingdom ruled the world from 605 B.C. to 539 B.C. Babylon's influence (power) spread far and wide. Babylon became the ruling power in the ancient³ Near East. Today the ruins of Babylon are located in Iraq, 70 miles south of Baghdad. The Bible prophesied about the fall of Babylon (Jeremiah 51:49, 53) and clearly stated who was to direct (lead) the battle against Babylon (Isaiah 45:1-4). Cyrus⁴ and

his army were at the gates of Babylon about 175 years after the prophecy was given.

The Medes and Persians ruled the world from 539 B.C. to 331 B.C. But then God said in Daniel 2:39, “Next, a third kingdom will rule even the whole earth. The bronze part of the statue stands for that kingdom” (NirV). Daniel 8:21 clearly explained that Greece was the third kingdom. Within a short time, the Greek armies, led by Alexander the Great, conquered the world. The Greeks carried bronze shields and swords and wore bronze breast plates and helmets.

The Greek Empire was then conquered by the iron monarchy of Rome in 168 B.C. It was another wonderful fulfillment of the prophecy in Daniel 2. Rome had the longest rule of any other world power. For more than 500 years, Rome ruled from the British Isles to the Arabian Gulf, from the North Sea to the Sahara Desert, and from the Atlantic Ocean to the Euphrates River.

But as Daniel said, “The kingdom shall be divided” (Daniel 2:41, NKJV). So Rome was divided into independent kingdoms that later became the nations of modern Europe. They were the nations that would not “hold together any more than iron mixes with clay” (Daniel 2:43, NirV). Today we are living in the time of the feet and toes of the statue.

The next kingdom to come is the final one, God’s eternal⁵ kingdom. Daniel was right about all the other kingdoms. How foolish it would be for

us not to trust God on the last kingdom.

Think about the prophecy in Daniel 2. Daniel lived more than 500 years before Christ. But he described Europe as it is today! How could Daniel have done this without God’s power? Is your faith weakening? Do you sometimes have trouble trusting in God? Go back over this prophecy or other prophecies that have been fulfilled. Ask God to use these prophecies to build your faith.

WEDNESDAY—APRIL 18

THE MESSIAH IN PROPHECY (Isaiah 52:13–53:12)

Of all the prophecies in the Old Testament, the ones about Jesus’ first coming are among the most powerful. There are about 60 Old Testament prophecies about His first coming. One of the most powerful is in Isaiah.



**“And the Lord [God] has placed on his servant [Jesus] the sins of all of us”
(Isaiah 53:6, NirV).**

⁵eternal—forever; without beginning or end; lasting forever.

How did Jesus fulfill the prophecy in Isaiah 52:13–53:12?

Isaiah 52:13–53:12 is one of the most powerful examples of prophecy in the Bible. It is full of prophetic conditions that could not be arranged ahead of time to cause fulfillment. This prophecy continues to be powerful proof for the Christian faith.

Below are a few Old Testament prophecies about Jesus and their New Testament fulfillment. What can we learn from these about the trustworthiness of the Bible?

Old Testament Prophecy	New Testament Fulfillment
Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:23
Micah 5:2	Luke 2:4-7
Daniel 9:25	Luke 3:1-23
Hosea 11:1	Matthew 2:14

It is exciting to study how Jesus points out prophecies about Himself and their fulfillment after His return to life. Jesus told two disciples on the road to Emmaus, “‘Didn’t [did not] the Christ have to suffer these things and then receive his glory?’ Jesus explained to them what was said about himself in all the Scriptures. He began with Moses and all the Prophets” (Luke 24:26, 27, NIV). Jesus may have talked to these disciples about His birth (Isaiah 7:14) and ministry (work) (Isaiah 9:1, 2). He may have shown that people refused to accept Him (Isaiah 53:3), nailed His hands and feet (Psalm 22:16), and mocked

and insulted Him (Psalm 22:6-8). He also may have shown them His crucifixion with sinners (Isaiah 5:12) and His resurrection (Psalm 16:10).



After His death and return to life, Jesus told two of His followers what the Scriptures said about Him.

Jesus fulfilled these prophecies. For this reason, you can receive forgiveness from God right now, by accepting His work for you. How should salvation by faith change your life? How has salvation by faith changed your life already? What other changes do you need to make?

THURSDAY—APRIL 19

**THE SECOND COMING
(John 14:3)**

Many of the prophecies about past events have been fulfilled. They have happened just as the Bible said they would happen. But these were all prophecies fulfilled in the past. The Bible also talks about prophecies that

will happen soon. Among the most important of these are the prophecies about Christ's second coming.

All the prophecies about Jesus' first coming were fulfilled according to the Bible. So what does that tell us about the prophecies of the Second Coming?

Before leaving His disciples (followers), Jesus had promised them that His second coming would be sure. "If I go and do that [prepare a place in heaven] I will come back. And I will take you to be with me. Then you will also be where I am' " (John 14:3, NIV). Peter, one of Jesus' closest disciples, wrote, "But we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth. Godliness will make its home there. All of this is in keeping with God's promise" (2 Peter 3:13, NIV).



Jesus promised He would come again and take us to heaven.

The Bible shows what the second coming of Christ will be like. The Bible also describes the signs of His second coming. Read the following prophecies about these signs. Then mark an x by the ones that are being fulfilled.

- ___ 1. Increase of knowledge
(Daniel 12:4)
- ___ 2. False messiahs
(Matthew 24:4, 5)
- ___ 3. Wars and rumors of wars
(Matthew 24:6, 7)
- ___ 4. Famine
(Matthew 24:7)
- ___ 5. Earthquakes
(Matthew 24:7)
- ___ 6. Preaching of the gospel
(Matthew 24:14)
- ___ 7. Spread of disease
(Luke 21:11)
- ___ 8. Signs and wonders
(Luke 21:11)
- ___ 9. People living in fear
(Luke 21:26)
- ___ 10. Social problems
(2 Timothy 3:1-5)
- ___ 11. Increase of skepticism⁶
(2 Peter 3:3, 4)

These 11 prophecies are correct descriptions of our world today. But they were written hundreds of years ago. That is even more proof that we can trust the Bible.

⁶skepticism—doubting something; questioning things; not believing.

If you thought that Jesus were coming back tomorrow, would you be happy or fearful? What does your answer tell you about yourself and your relationship to God?

FRIDAY—APRIL 20

ADDITIONAL STUDY: Ellen G. White, “Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream,” pp. 491–502, in *Prophets and Kings*; “The Bible Prophets Wrote for Our Time,” pp. 338, 339; “Can All Have the Gift of Prophecy?” pp. 340, 341, in *Selected Messages*, book 3.

“It is Jesus’ voice that speaks through early Bible leaders and prophets, from the days of Adam to the closing time of world history. Christ is shown in the Old Testament as clearly as He is shown in the New Testament. It is the light from the Old Testament prophecies that brings out the life of Christ and the teachings of the New Testament with clearness and beauty. Christ’s miracles are a proof that He is God. But a stronger proof that Jesus is God is found in comparing⁷ the prophecies of the Old Testament with the history of the New Testament.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 799.

“Every nation that God has allowed to have a place on the earth has had

an opportunity [chance] to show whether it would fulfill His purposes for it. Prophecy has followed the rise and growth of the world’s great empires—Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome. The same thing happened to each of them. Each of these, along with less powerful nations, had its period [time] of test. Each failed. Its glory faded. Its power died.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 535.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ❶ As a class, talk about the lesson in general this week. What things stood out that perhaps have helped you better understand how prophecy works?
- ❷ Prophecy provides a lot of reasons to believe in the Bible. But why do you think many people still refuse to believe the Bible? What could you do to help break down some of these “blocks”?
- ❸ There are many strange teachings about prophecy. What can you, as a class, do to help new church members better understand Bible prophecy and the principles behind these prophecies?

⁷comparing—showing how things are the same.