

Bible Prophecy: The Overarching Theme

written by Tim Jennings, M.D. | July 7, 2020



The Bible is filled with prophecies, and thousands of books have been written about Bible prophecy – many of them contradicting each other.

As we examine the question of Bible prophecy, we must ask: What is the primary purpose of prophecy? Some believe prophecy is given so that we can glimpse the future, predict events of tomorrow, perhaps drawing a timeline. But Jesus said:

I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe (John 14:29 NIV84).

Here, Jesus suggests that the primary purpose of Bible prophecy is not to prognosticate, but to increase our faith, confidence, belief, and trust in God once the prophecy has been fulfilled. It is not primarily so that we can predict future events in detail, but when events happen, we can see that God foreknew, that His plan is being carried out, and, therefore, we can trust God with our lives today and our unknown future.

While we may not know the details of events that will transpire in our lives tomorrow, next week, or

next year, we do know that the Bible promises us a new heaven and earth in the end. I would like to suggest that Bible prophecy – essentially all Bible prophecy – is focused upon the war between Christ and Satan informing us that God is acting and will act in the future to eradicate sin, heal sinners and restore His universe to perfection.

While different prophecies give different details and focus in different places in human history, the overarching theme of Bible prophecy is the same: Messiah is coming to save!

Consider each of the prophecies below and ask: What is the theme or end-goal of each of these prophecies:

The Scenario	The theme
God speaking to the serpent in Eden: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (Genesis 3:15 NIV84).	Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people
Prophecy to Abraham: “I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed” (Genesis 22:17, 18 NKJV).	Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people
To David: “The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: ‘When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. ... Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever’” (2 Samuel 7:11-16 NIV84).	Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people
To Isaiah: “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever” (Isaiah 9:6, 7 NIV84).	Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people
Zechariah’s prophecy in chapter three about Joshua the high priest being accused by Satan and God taking away his sin and giving him new clothes; what is it about?	Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people

<p>To Zechariah: “Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the LORD. It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two’” (Zechariah 6:12, 13 NIV84).</p>	<p>Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people</p>
<p>To Haggai: “This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,’ says the Lord Almighty. ... The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,’ says the LORD Almighty. ‘And in this place I will grant peace,’ declares the LORD Almighty” (Haggai 2:6-9 NIV84).</p>	<p>Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people</p>
<p>To Joel: “Afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved” (Joel 2:28-32 NIV84).</p>	<p>Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people</p>
<p>To Jeremiah: “This is what the LORD says: ‘When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place. For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future’” (Jeremiah 29:10, 11 NIV84).</p>	<p>Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people</p>
<p>To Daniel: The prophecy of the multi-metal man in chapter two, which ends with God’s kingdom destroying the kingdoms of the world.</p>	<p>Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people</p>
<p>Daniel’s vision of beasts in chapter seven ends with: “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed” (Daniel 7:13, 14 NIV84).</p>	<p>Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people</p>

To Malachi: “‘See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,’ says the LORD Almighty. But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner’s fire or a launderer’s soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver” (Malachi 3:1-3 NIV84).	Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people
To Malachi: “‘Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and that day that is coming will set them on fire,’ says the LORD Almighty. ‘Not a root or a branch will be left to them. But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall. Then you will trample down the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I do these things,’ says the LORD Almighty” (Malachi 4:1-3 NIV84).	Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people
Jesus’ prophecy in Matthew 24	Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people
The apostle Paul’s prophecy in 2 Thessalonians 2 concerning the second coming and the man of sin	Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people
The prophecies to the seven churches in the book of Revelation - what does each one end with? A promise to the overcomers!	Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people
The prophecies of the seven seals - ends with what?	Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people
The prophecies of the seven trumpets - ends with what?	Jesus destroying sin and Satan and saving people

What is the focus of essentially all Bible prophecy? The coming Messiah to defeat Satan, cleanse us from sin, and restore this world and His universe to perfection.

While we may not know the specifics of tomorrow, next week, or next year, God wants you to know that if you trust Him, your eternal future is secure. Jesus is coming again, all sin will be destroyed, and His people will be saved. So when you see chaos in the world - don’t fear but “look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near” (Luke 21:28 NKJV).
