

Bible - Chapter 4

Prophecy

Overview Review

1. The Law
2. Books of History
3. Books of Poetry
4. **Books of Prophecy**
 - a. Books categorized as Prophecy are Isaiah through Malachi (OT) and Revelation (NT).
 - b. Book of Prophecy contain a few stories and references that tied them to historical events, but are mostly (1) messages from God and (2) predictions about what is to come.
 - c. Predictive prophecies can be divided into (1) Messianic, (2) end times and (3) general.
 - d. Timeframe of the books of Prophecy run during the Kingdom, Exile and Return, except for Revelation which the Apostle John wrote well after Jesus' life.
5. Gospels
6. Acts and Letters

Where are we? We've watched the story unfold from Adam and Eve to the Exile and Return. God has partially fulfilled His promise to Abraham for *land*, lots of *offspring* and *blessing* for all nations. Even as He fulfilled that covenant, He began another cycle of promise and limited fulfillment with David: a *house* (dynasty), a *kingdom* (people ruled by a king) and a *throne* (the authority to rule)...*forever*. Though God was faithful, however, the people repeatedly broke the covenant God made through Moses, thus earning their exile from the land. But even during their disobedience, God promised that a remnant would return, and they did.

Over this rough sketch we began to see the color and depth filled in by the books of Poetry in the last chapter. In this chapter as we listen to more of God's messages to His beloved people, we will see more of *who He is* with all His unexpected twists and turns.

As we continue, God will promise yet another covenant, a "New Covenant" (Jeremiah 31:31-34):
Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah... I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people... For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

If last week was a bit of a break, this week we dive in deep again and jump around the timeline a bit. Most prophecy is also in the form of poetry (see the question on Hebrew poetry in the introduction to the last chapter). As you did in the books of Poetry, beware of *figurative language*. Where we can understand the prophets literally, we must do that. Otherwise, we need to seek and pray for the wisdom to discern what authors mean by their figures of speech.

As a reminder, **pray** then consider the following questions each day. Record your response to #4:

1. What happens? (major characters, events, places)
2. What does it say about God? About Jesus?
3. What questions does it raise? (Write down at least 1.)
4. How should I respond? (Write down at least one practical, tangible adjustment to your life/thinking.)

What kind of prophets are there? We're already encountered **writing prophets** and **non-writing prophets**. Now we come across **major prophets** and **minor prophets**. Unlike how a major event is more important than a minor one, or a major problem more formidable than a minor one, the *major* prophets simply wrote more than the *minor* ones and the scope of their messages is more broad. But no prophets are more or less important than any other - all spoke the words from God Himself.

What kind of prophecy are there? As mentioned during Chapter 2 when we encountered some non-writing prophets, the Bible uses the term "prophecy" to refer to predictions of the future. Thus biblical **prophecy** can be divided into three types: messianic, end times and general. As for *messianic prophecy*, Jesus clearly fulfills what at least 300 OT verses say. Some scholars argue there are over 500. There are all sorts of analogies about how impossible it would be for Jesus to fulfill even 8 of these and yet He fulfilled *all* of them. Between this and the overwhelming certainty of the Bible simply as preserved literature, no one can deny that Jesus is the Messiah without being "intellectually dishonest." The problem, of course, is that when we accept that, we accept that *He* is the rightful Lord of our lives - and we are not - and we don't like that... But I digress.

End times prophecy is about just that: the end of times. What exactly falls into that category is too big a question for this discussion, but the Bible seems to indicate that all the time since Jesus is part of the "end times" or "last days." And yet there will come a time when Jesus returns and finishes off His victory over Satan, which began on the cross. More on that in Section 12.

The last type of prophecy, *general prophecy*, fits in with the stories of history that we've been reading. For example, God told Joseph through dreams that he would rule the rest of his family, which he ended up doing, although their intent had been to kill him.¹ Through the prophet Nathan, God told David that calamity would come from David's own household and that he'd lose his son with Bathsheba, both of which happened shortly thereafter.²

Is everything in the books of Prophecy predictions of the future? As we move into these books, it is important to remember that the words of the prophets are not always predictions of the future, but sometimes God's message to people of the day. In these 17 remaining books of the OT, God sometimes speaks of things to come, but more often simply repeats the Mosaic Covenant in countless ways, "I love you and have chosen you. Please repent and obey me so that I may bless you. If you choose not to, bad things will happen."

Why the change in format of this workbook? Since each book of Prophecy has its own place in history, each requires its own introduction. Because these books tend to be more difficult to understand, I've included a "*lesson*" each one teaches about God or the Big Picture as an attempt to explain why this book is included in the canon of Scripture.

Is there a tool that can help me not get lost in the weeds of these scary little books? Yes! The timeline will give you a quick overview of where each prophets stands in the story and what is going on around them. I'd highly recommend bookmarking it and referring to it often.

¹ Genesis 37:5-9

² 2 Samuel 12:11-14, 12:18, and 16:21-22

----- Section 1 -----

Which are the major prophets? As a review, the *major* prophets wrote more than the *minor* prophets and the scope of their message is broader, sometimes even true for all the world and all time. Those called *major* prophets are Isaiah, Jeremiah (who wrote Jeremiah and Lamentations), Ezekiel and Daniel.

Who is Isaiah? Isaiah seems to be a familiar face in Judah's royal court. He is born in Judah and prophesies to Judah and others. God gives his kids names that signify coming events. Isaiah lives through the northern kingdom's fall in 722BC and watches the southern kingdom continue to decay morally. Isaiah works during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz³ and Hezekiah.⁴ To Ahaz, he predicts judgment for his sin. To Hezekiah, he prophesies deliverance from Assyria.⁵ Later Hezekiah gets sick. As assurance that God will heal him, Isaiah calls on God, who moves the shadows *back* 10 steps of a staircase – He moves the sun backwards in the sky,⁶ which has confounded scientists today. The second part of Isaiah, chapters 40-66 are the more poetic and passionate. Isaiah 40 details God's incomparable awesomeness. *Lesson:* In addition to many calls for Judah to repent, Isaiah gives us the clearest OT picture of Jesus' NT suffering which makes it undeniable that Jesus really is the Messiah. His depiction of God's power and "otherness" helps us to trust God both for today and for what is to come.

Where are we?

1. The Law
2. Books of History
3. Books of Poetry
4. Prophecy
 - a. Major prophets
 - i. **Isaiah**
 - ii. Jeremiah
 - iii. Lamentations
 - iv. Ezekiel
 - v. Daniel
 - b. Minor prophets
5. Gospels
6. Acts and Letters

What is the "chart of prophecies about Jesus"? This is a chart beginning on page 24 that contains just a few of the hundreds of messianic prophecies. As you read through the prophets, flip to this chart and write down what is prophesied about Jesus. The first one in Isaiah is done for you as an example.

If you have extra time at this point and want to read the NT fulfillment of the prophecies, feel free! If not, you will have a chance to do that in Section 10 of this chapter.

What questions do you have?

³ Isaiah 7

⁴ Isaiah 36-39

⁵ 2 Kings 19, Isaiah 36-37

⁶ 2 Kings 20:1-11, Isaiah 38

1. Isaiah	
	When did he live and write? Approximately 740-690 BC when Israel was exiled
<i>Is 1:1-3</i>	Whose son is Isaiah? To whom did he write? "The vision concerning ..." (1:1)? Under which kings did he serve (1:1)?
<i>Is 6:1-7</i>	Isaiah's call to ministry. Describe Isaiah's vision of God and what was told to him? What was his fear and of what was he assured?
<i>Is 6:8-13</i>	What is God's question and Isaiah's response (v.8)? In the context of a people group that will be conquered and scattered around the world, what Messianic prophecy appears in v.13? They will not be totally wiped out - Jesus the Messiah will come, as the stump remains after the tree is cut down.
<i>Is 7:14</i>	Turn to the <i>Chart of Prophecies about Jesus</i> (p.24) and write what is prophesied.
<i>Is 8:3-4</i>	What did Isaiah predict? (Samaria and Damascus poetically represent the nation of Israel)
	What significant event happened during Isaiah's life? Israel was overthrown by Assyria and sent into exile in 722BC.
<i>Is 9:1-2</i>	Turn to the <i>Chart of Prophecies about Jesus</i> and write what is prophesied.
<i>Is 35:5-6</i>	Turn to the <i>Chart of Prophecies about Jesus</i> and write what is prophesied.
<i>Is 40</i>	How does Isaiah describe God? What phrases/concepts are most applicable to your life?
<i>Is 52:13-15 & Is 53</i>	Turn to the <i>Chart of Prophecies about Jesus</i> and write what is prophesied. Whom is Isaiah describing?
<i>Is 55:3</i>	Turn to the <i>Chart of Prophecies about Jesus</i> and write what is prophesied.
<i>Is 55</i>	What stands out to you? How certain is God's Word (55:10-11)?
Date:	Key Verse:
Take away:	

Section 2

Who is Jeremiah? A prophet who starts young, Jeremiah prophesies in 627-586BC, ending about the time of Jerusalem's fall. Jeremiah is the son of a priest of Anathoth (2 miles NNE of Jerusalem⁷) and thus a priest himself. He is singled out by God to be a prophet who stands strong in conviction and courage despite repeated captivities, beatings and opposition. Jeremiah warns Judah of judgment for sin and encourages her once she is in captivity, even promising hope and restoration in the future.⁸ In Jeremiah's lifetime Babylon becomes the major Ancient Near East power in 626BC. In Judah, there is false security, empty rituals and false prophets promoting false hope. *Lesson:* God takes sin seriously and deals with it, but also creates a way of restoration.

What is a Lamentation? It is a lament about the darkest hour of Israel's history, when Judah fell and all of Israel went into exile. Tradition ascribes Lamentations to Jeremiah, writing shortly after the fall of Judah in 586BC. Each chapter in Lamentations is an acrostic, a poem with each line starting with the consecutive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. *Lesson:* Like Jeremiah, God mourns the destruction and loss people experience because of sin and seeks to comfort them.

Where do Isaiah and Jeremiah fit in history? We heard of the exile of Israel then the exile of Judah because of their disobedience to God. But, as is always the case, there is more to the story. 605BC finds Judah's King Jehoiakim (J1) paying tribute to King Nebuchadnezzar (N) of Babylon. That doesn't stop N from taking over most of J1's land and deporting some of his people, including Daniel and his friends of fiery furnace fame. Eight years later J1's son Jehoiachin (J2) takes over as king and surrenders to N who deports even more people, including Ezekiel in 597BC. N sets up Zedekiah (Z) as king in Jerusalem but Z rebels so N again conquers Judah once and for all, looting then destroying the temple and burning every important building in Jerusalem in 586BC. This destruction moves Jeremiah to *lament* over Jerusalem. "*It was because of the Lord's anger that all this happened to Jerusalem and Judah, and in the end, he thrust them from his presence.*"⁹ Thus are fulfilled the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Nahum, Micah, Zephaniah and Habakkuk.

Where are we?

1. The Law
2. Books of History
3. Books of Poetry
4. Prophecy
 - a. Major prophets
 - i. Isaiah
 - ii. **Jeremiah**
 - iii. **Lamentations**
 - iv. Ezekiel
 - v. Daniel
 - b. Minor prophets
5. Gospels
6. Acts and Letters

What questions do you have?

⁷ 2 Chronicles 36, Ezra 1:1, Daniel 9:2

⁸ Jeremiah 29:11-13, Jeremiah 31:31-40

⁹ 2 Kings 24:19

2a. Jeremiah	
	When did he live and write? About 627-586 BC while Judah was being exiled
<i>Jer 1:1-3</i>	Who was Jeremiah? Under which kings did he serve (1:1)?
<i>Jer 1:4-10</i>	Jeremiah's call to ministry. To what office did God appoint Jeremiah and when(1:5)? What was his fear and of what was he assured?
<i>Jer 2:1-4</i>	To whom did he write? (2:2, 2:4)?
<i>Jer 20:7-18</i>	How would Jeremiah characterize the life of a prophet?
<i>Jer 23:5</i>	Turn to the <i>Chart of Prophecies about Jesus</i> (p.24) and write what is prophesied.
<i>Jer 29:11-13</i>	What does God say will happen when we seek Him with all our heart? How much of you is " <i>all your heart</i> "?
<i>Jer 31:15</i>	Turn to the <i>Chart of Prophecies about Jesus</i> and write what is prophesied.
<i>Jer 33:14-17</i>	Turn to the <i>Chart of Prophecies about Jesus</i> and write what is prophesied.
2b. Lamentations	
	When were the laments written? About 586 BC when Jerusalem was destroyed Who wrote them? Tradition ascribes them to Jeremiah
<i>Lam 1:1-2</i>	How does Jeremiah describe Jerusalem, his home city?
<i>Lam 3:19-33</i>	Written to a people who just saw their homeland conquered and destroyed. What stands out to you?
Date:	Key Verse:
Take away:	

----- **Section 3** -----

Who is Ezekiel? A priest during the second deportation of Judah (597BC), Ezekiel ministers to Jews in Babylon & Jerusalem. He writes between 597 and 574BC. His first vision is on canal running between Babylon and the Persian Gulf, far from their Judean home. He's married, but his wife dies and to make a point, God doesn't let him mourn her. Ezekiel could almost be called crazy for the odd but symbolic things God puts him up to. For example, symbolizing the years of Israel's and Judah's sin by lying on his right side (Israel) then left side (Judah) one day for each year of their sin, while eating bread baked over fire from excrement.¹⁰ *Lesson:* The phrase "son of man" appears about 92 times in the book and becomes tied to the concept of Israel's restoration. God makes it clear He will not tolerate His name and reputation being tarnished by the sin and defeat of the Israelites forever, but that He will restore them for the sake of His own name.¹¹ We see this assurance clearly in Chapter 37's dry bone that come to life. But ultimate fulfillment would wait until *Jesus*, who's favorite name for Himself is "Son of man." It all comes together in Jesus...but I digress.

Where are we?

1. The Law
2. Books of History
3. Books of Poetry
4. Prophecy
 - a. Major prophets
 - i. Isaiah
 - ii. Jeremiah
 - iii. Lamentations
 - iv. **Ezekiel**
 - v. **Daniel**
 - b. Minor prophets
5. Gospels
6. Acts and Letters

Who is Daniel and what's up with the lions? Probably as a teenager, Daniel is deported with his three friends Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego during the first deportation in 605BC. He serves for 60 years in the royal courts of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius and Cyrus writing about his last vision in 536BC. Known as a man of integrity and wisdom, Daniel rises to power in Babylon, interprets dreams and visions, handwriting on a wall and survives a den of hungry lions. When God miraculously shuts their mouths, even the king believes in God. Daniel has his own dreams of the end times that require an angel to interpret. His three friends survive a furnace so hot it kills the men that throw them into it. *Lesson:* God is active, involved and communicating even when the people are scattered. Daniel points to the coming King and shows us how to serve those around us well during times of great change. Daniel will come up again when we read about end times prophecy.

What questions do you have?

¹⁰ Ezekiel 4

¹¹ Ezekiel 36:21-23

3a. Ezekiel	
	When did he live and write? Approximately 597-574BC To whom did he write? To the "house of Israel" in exile, though he live among the part of Israel that split off to become "Judah."
<i>Ezek 1:1-3</i>	Who's son was Ezekiel (1:3)? Where and with whom was Ezekiel (1:3)? Under which king did he serve (1:2)?
<i>Ezek 1:4-3:17</i>	Ezekiel's call to ministry. Describe Isaiah's vision of God. What did God give Ezekiel to eat (3:1)? What did the scroll symbolize? God putting His words into Ezekiel so that Ezekiel could speak them to the people.
<i>Ezek 34:23-24</i>	Turn to the <i>Chart of Prophecies about Jesus</i> (p.24) and write what is prophesied.
<i>Ezek 36:21-27</i>	What does God say He will do? What is this new promise called? The New Covenant
<i>Ezek 37:1-14</i>	What happens and what does God want the people to know (37:14)?
3b. Daniel	
<i>Dan 1</i>	What countries and kings are mentioned? What happens?
<i>Dan 3</i>	What happens? What do we learn about God?
<i>Dan 5</i>	What happens? What do we learn about God?
<i>Dan 6</i>	What happens? What do we learn about God?
Date:	Key Verse:
Take away:	

----- Section 4 -----

What is a minor prophet again? No less important than major prophets, minor prophets also spoke God's words and even had their writings included in the Bible! However, they wrote less than the major prophets and the scope of their message was often local to a specific place and time. *Minor prophets* wrote all the remaining books in the OT, each named after its prophet-author.

Why do we care who this person's father was anyway!? In a culture that had no surname or family name, this indicated to which family he belonged and most likely, what his profession was. Professions usually stayed within family lines, especially the profession of priest since God directed that the family of Aaron would be his priests.¹²

Who is Hosea? Writing roughly in 721BC, Hosea is from Israel and prophesied to Israel about her spiritual adultery. God directs Hosea's life to be an example of God's love for an unfaithful bride (Israel): Hosea marries an adulterous woman, Gomer, and has children with her.¹³ When she leaves and commits adultery, God has Hosea go call her back,¹⁴ just as He does to Israel over and over. At this time in history, Israel is at its worst morally and falls to Assyria the next year in 722BC. *Lesson:* As God loved the Israelites despite their unfaithfulness, so He loves us despite ours.

- Where are we?**
1. The Law
 2. Books of History
 3. Books of Poetry
 4. Prophecy
 - a. Major prophets
 - b. Minor prophets
 - i. Hosea**
 - ii. Joel**
 - iii. Amos**
 - iv. Obadiah...
 5. Gospels
 6. Acts and Letters

4a. Hosea	
	When did he write? Approximately 721BC, the year before Israel is exiled To whom did he write? To the "house of Israel"
<i>Hosea 1:1</i>	Who's son was Hosea? Under which king did he serve?
<i>Hosea 1:2-11</i>	What did God tell Hosea to do and why? What were the children's names and why did God name them that? Despite all that, what promises did God repeat yet again (1:10)?
<i>Hos 4:6</i>	Why are the people destroyed? How does this apply today?
<i>Hos 6:6</i>	What does God desire?
<i>Hos 11:1</i>	Turn to the <i>Chart of Prophecies about Jesus</i> (p.24) and write what is prophesied.
<i>(Please continue...)</i>	

¹² Exodus 28
¹³ Hosea 1:2-3
¹⁴ Hosea 2:14-3:5

Who is Joel? The son of Pethuel who is possibly part of a Judean family, Joel's name means "the Lord is God." Because he doesn't mention specific kings and his message is so widely applicable, it is hard to pin down Joel's audience or time. His reference to being scattered among the nations could refer to the nations of Canaan that the people didn't drive out or to being scattered during the exile(s) so Joel could have written any time between 800 and 400BC. *Lesson:* the Day of the Lord is coming. Peter quotes Joel in explanation of Pentecost when God poured out His spirit on "*all flesh*."¹⁵

4b. Joel	
	When did he write? Between 800 and 400BC. It is hard to say because he mentions no kings or specific, unique events. To whom did he write? "Zion" is addressed most frequently. Zion is a name for Jerusalem, thus Joel seems to speaking to the people of Judah or all of Israel or even us who are destined for Zion, the New Jerusalem...
<i>Joel 1:1-3</i>	Whose son is Joel? What does Joel want people to do?
<i>Joel 2:28-32</i>	What will happen "afterward" or "after this"? (We'll discuss this more when we read about "end times" in a few days!) Who " <i>shall be saved</i> " (2:32)?
<i>(Please continue...)</i>	

What questions do you have?

¹⁵ Joel 2:28-32, Acts 2:17-21

----- **Section 5** -----

Who is Obadiah? Little is known about Obadiah who wrote the shortest book in the OT. He wrote most likely just after 586 BC when Edom helped Babylon by attacking fleeing Israelites. As descendants of Edom, Jacob's twin brother, Edomites were relatives and should have helped Israel. Politically, Edom was like a little mouse joining the big cat, Babylon. Through Obadiah, God makes it clear that He will repay Edom for their actions toward His chosen people. *Lesson:* God cares about the wrongs done to His people (both the Israelites and to believers) and in the end, He will bring justice.

Where are we?

1. The Law
2. Books of History
3. Books of Poetry
4. Prophecy
 - a. Major prophets
 - b. Minor prophets
 - ...
 - iii. Amos
 - iv. Obadiah**
 - v. Jonah**
 - vi. Micah...
5. Gospels
6. Acts and Letters

5a. Obadiah	
	When did Obadiah write? Most likely just after Judah's fall in 586BC
<i>Obad 1-4</i>	To whom did he write? (Edom is descended from Esau, the twin brother of Jacob after whom Israel receives its name so the people are related.) What does he say will happen to them (4)?
	<i>Please continue...</i>

What questions do you have?

Who is Jonah? Though sometimes discounted as nothing more than a whale of a tale, 2 Kings 14:25 speaks of Jonah, son of Amittai, as living during the reign of Israel's King Jeroboam II between 793-753BC. When told to call Nineveh, Assyria's capital, to repentance, Jonah boards a ship in the opposite direction. One huge storm and three days in the belly of a fish later, Jonah submits. But after the entire of city Nineveh repents, instead of rejoicing, Jonah whines. *Lesson:* God is incredibly merciful. Unlike Jonah, we should rejoice with Him when He extends His great mercy even to our enemies. In addition, Jonah is a "type" of Christ...¹⁶

What is a "type"? A *type* is person, thing or event that prefigures another which is called its *antitype*. As used in biblical study, the *type* appears in the OT and its *antitype* in the NT. In the same way that a rubber stamp is not clear but the print it makes on paper is, a type comes first and is shown to be what it is when its antitype appears. In this case, Jonah was a type of Christ: a man who spent three days hidden in a fish which pointed to the antitype to come who would spend three days in death. The Passover lamb¹⁷ is another type of Christ: Jesus is the Lamb of God who was both without blemish and was sacrificed for the sin of people. The snake Moses raised in the desert is another *type* of Christ. When the people were dying from snake bites, they had to look at the snake Moses held up on a pole and they would live instead of dying. In the same way, we need to look to Jesus who was lifted up on the cross in order for us to live eternally and not die for our sin.¹⁸

5b. Jonah	
	When did Jonah write? During the reign of Jeroboam of Israel, 793-753BC about a generation before Assyria would defeat Israel
<i>Jonah 1</i>	Whose son is Jonah? To whom did God send Jonah? ... which is on the east bank of the Tigris River, in present-day Mosul, Iraq What happens in the story?
<i>Jonah 2</i>	What happens in the story?
<i>Jonah 3</i>	What happens in the story?
<i>Jonah 4</i>	What stands out about the interaction between Jonah and God?
Date:	Key Verse:
Take away:	

¹⁶ Matthew 12:39-40

¹⁷ Exodus 12:1-13, John 1:29

¹⁸ Numbers 21:7-9, John 3:14-15

----- **Section 6** -----

Who is Micah? With a relatively long career from about 740-700BC, Micah writes during the reigns of Jotham, a typical Judean king who did mostly good but some evil; Ahaz, an evil king; and Hezekiah, one of the most godly kings in Judah. Living shortly after Amos and during Isaiah's time, Micah witnesses the fall of Israel in 722BC. Micah is from Moresheth-Gath (25 mi SW of Jerusalem) and prophesies to Samaria (the Northern Kingdom of Israel) and Jerusalem (the Southern Kingdom of Judah) alternating between God's judgment and His coming salvation. *Lesson:* Like Micah, we should be passionate about living as God asks. Though it takes a God's strength to do it, it is not complicated.¹⁹

Where are we?

1. The Law
2. Books of History
3. Books of Poetry
4. Prophecy
 - a. Major prophets
 - b. Minor prophets
 - ...
 - v. Jonah
 - vi. Micah**
 - vii. Nahum**
 - viii. Habakkuk**
 - ix. Zephaniah...
5. Gospels
6. Acts and Letters

6a. Micah	
	When did Micah write? During the reigns of Judah's kings Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, from about 740-700BC during the time of Israel's fall
<i>Micah 1:1-5</i>	Where is Micah from? To whom did Micah write? Why would God come in power?
<i>Micah 4:3</i>	What comfort does Micah speak to the people?
<i>Micah 5:2</i>	Turn to the <i>Chart of Prophecies about Jesus</i> (p.24) and write what is prophesied.
<i>Micah 6:8</i>	What is required of us and how hard is it?
	<i>Please continue...</i>

¹⁹ Micah 6:8

Who is Nahum? About 100 years after Jonah, Nahum follows in Jonah's footsteps, speaking to Nineveh, Assyria's capital. Instead of a call to repentance, however, Nahum speaks words of destruction and judgment against Nineveh that double as encouragement to Israel, which hears that their cruel conquerors would receive their due. Based on an incident Nahum mentions, we know he writes after Thebes fell²⁰ (663BC) but before Nineveh fell to Babylon (612BC). There is much turmoil in the ancient Near East in Nahum's time with Assyria fading, Babylon rising, Israel in exile and Judah declining. *Lesson:* God will judge evil. Similar to the lesson in Obadiah, Nahum assures us that God cares about the wrongs done to His people (both the Israelites and to believers) and in the end, He will bring justice.

6b. Nahum	
	When did Nahum write? Between 663 and 612BC between the fall of Thebes and the fall of Nineveh, after Israel is exiled but before Judah is
<i>Nah 1:1</i>	Where is Nahum from? (Little is known about Nahum's home town, though it may have been near Judah.) Whom does his vision concern?
<i>Nah 1:2-8</i>	What are some things the Lord does or will do?
	<i>Please continue...</i>

What questions do you have?

²⁰ Nahum 3:8-9

Who is Habakkuk? Known simply as a prophet, Habakkuk is a man of questions, asking two questions in his book that we still ask today: first, How long, O Lord, must I call for help while You let evil continue?, and second, Why do you tolerate evil? Why are you silent when wicked people benefit from preying on people more righteous than themselves?²¹ He closes with a prayer and commitment to praise God even in the worst of times.²² Habakkuk's life overlaps with Nahum, Zephaniah, and Jeremiah. He most likely writes between 640-605BC, about a century after Israel fell to Assyria and just before Judah falls. Looking at this situation, Habakkuk wonders how God could use such an evil people to punish Israel but God assures him that Assyria will get their due at the hands of the Babylonians (or the "Chaldeans"²³). In the closing line of His response, God releases Habakkuk (and us) to rest in God's power, justice and sovereignty: "*But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him.*"²⁴ *Lesson:* Trust God no matter what; He will always make things right in the end. And it's okay to ask questions!

6c. Habakkuk	
	When did Habakkuk write? Sometime between 640 and 605BC based his questions and the nations he mentions; just before the fall of Judah Who is Habakkuk? All we know is that he is a prophet (1:1)
<i>Hab 1:1-5</i>	How did Habakkuk receive this message from God (1:1)? Q1. What does Habakkuk's first set of questions address? Have you asked similar things? Or heard people ask them?
<i>Hab 1:13</i>	Q2. What is Habakkuk's second issue?
<i>Hab 2:2-4</i> Note: Hab 2:4 is quoted in Rom 1:17 and Gal 2:16	How does God answer?
<i>Hab 2:20</i>	
<i>Hab 3:17-19</i>	
Date:	Key Verse:
Take away:	

²¹ Habakkuk 1:2-3 and Habakkuk 1:12-2:1

²² Habakkuk 3:18

²³ Habakkuk 1:6

²⁴ Habakkuk 2:20

----- **Section 7** -----

Who is Zephaniah? Based on the detail he gives about Jerusalem, Zephaniah is probably a resident there. His great-great-grandfather's name is Hezekiah. If this is the Hezekiah who was king of Israel in Micah and Isaiah's time, then Zephaniah is a relative of King Josiah. A contemporary of Nahum and Habakkuk, Zephaniah writes around 640-609BC, helping bring about revival during Josiah's reign. While Josiah's reforms take hold for a time, Judah's moral decline continues until God sends Babylon to defeat them a few years later. Zephaniah warns the people of the coming *Day of the Lord*, a day of judgment. It is not always clear when he writes about the defeats and deportations beginning in 606BC, and when he refers to the still-future "Day" of final judgment. *Lesson:* God will judge all nations, but eventually He will redeem and restore.

Where are we?

1. The Law
2. Books of History
3. Books of Poetry
4. Prophecy
 - a. Major prophets
 - b. Minor prophets
- ...
- viii. Habakkuk
- ix. Zephaniah**
- x. Haggai**
- xi. Zechariah
5. Gospels
6. Acts and Letters

7a. Zephaniah	
	When did Zephaniah write? Between 640 and 609BC just after the long reign of an evil king, and shortly before the exile of Judah
<i>Zeph 1:1</i>	What was Zephaniah's lineage? Who was king during Zephaniah's service?
<i>Zeph 3:8-10</i>	Does God plan to only save the Israelites?
<i>Zeph 3:14-20</i>	What encouragement do you find here?
Date:	Key Verse:
Take away:	

What questions do you have?

Who is Haggai? A detail-oriented person, Haggai writes during the time when Judah had begun to return to Jerusalem (about 70 years after Judah's exile). Because he specifies the month and day he receives God's message during the second year of King Darius' reign in Persia, we know exactly when Haggai writes each of his four messages²⁵: August 29, October 17 and two on December 18, 520BC.²⁶

Can we do a quick history review? Of course! In the 700's BC, Assyria was the world power who conquered The Northern Kingdom of Israel and sent them into exile during the time of Isaiah, Hosea and Micah. This fulfilled God promise through Moses that He would curse them (allow bad things to happen to them) if they disobeyed Him and went their own way, which they did. The Southern Kingdom of Judah, however, continued another 120 years until after Babylon had conquered Assyria and become the main power in the Middle East. Babylon conquered Judah and sent her into exile, taking with her Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. Persia then overthrew Babylon and permitted the return of a remnant to Jerusalem. Daniel was still around at this point as Haggai, Zachariah, Ezra and Nehemiah enter the scene. In time, Rome conquered Persia and eventually became the single world power, fulfilling many of Daniel's prophecies and setting the scene for the familiar Christmas story...

And now back to Haggai... Mentioned also by Ezra as helping rebuild Jerusalem and the temple,²⁷ Haggai is zealous for God's house to be at least as nice as the people's houses. Work had begun on the temple about 18 years earlier, but it is not finished until four years after Haggai and Zachariah spoke out against the growing spiritual apathy.²⁸ Along with motivation to resume the work, Haggai's book is filled with promises that the Lord is with them and will grant peace and blessing. *Summary:* Deal with your spiritual apathy and give God His due.

7b. Haggai	
	When did Haggai write? In August, October and December of 520BC
<i>Hag 1:1</i>	Who was king (of Persia!) during Haggai's service? To whom was Haggai's message addressed?
<i>Hag 1:2-15</i>	What is Haggai's main message (1:4, "this house" = the temple)? What else stands out from God's words through Haggai?
Date:	Key Verse:
Take away:	

²⁵ A quick scan of Haggai shows messages beginning in Haggai 1:1, 2:1, 2:10 and 2:30

²⁶ Richard A. Taylor and E. Ray Clendenen, *Haggai, Malachi*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2007). 54), relying on information from R. A. Parker and W. H. Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology, 626 B.C.–A.D. 75*, *Brown University Studies* 19 (Providence: Brown University Press, 1956).

²⁷ Ezra 5:1

²⁸ Ezra 6:14-15

----- **Section 8** -----

What's in Zechariah? Zechariah begins with a series of eight visions about events in both the near and distant future. The visions alternate between God's coming judgment and His promise of restoration. Specific messianic prophecies dot the book, far more than just the ones we'll read here, rekindling the people's anticipation of the coming messiah. Some of his prophecies, however, refer to both the first coming of Jesus and some to the second. Like Haggai, Zechariah begins to write in the second year of Darius, 520BC in October and November. He ties God's words in the first eight chapters to dates between 520 and 518BC, but the rest may have come much later. Ezra mentions him²⁹ in conjunction with the rebuilding of the temple. Nehemiah lists him as a Levite.³⁰ Thus, Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai and even Confucius in China are all Zechariah's contemporaries. *Lesson:* Zechariah's many visions of promise remind us that God will renew and restore. We can count on Him.

Where are we?

1. The Law
2. Books of History
3. Books of Poetry
4. Prophecy
 - a. Major prophets
 - b. Minor prophets
- ...
- x. Haggai
- xi. Zechariah**
- xii. Malachi**
5. Gospels
6. Acts and Letters

8a. Zechariah	
	<p>When did Zechariah write? He wrote chapters 1-8 in 520-518BC during the reign of Darius in Persia who allowed a remnant to return to Jerusalem. Chapters 9-14 were probably written much later.</p> <p>To whom was Zechariah's message addressed? Most of it is to the people of Jerusalem and Judah. Some is specifically addressed to Joshua the High Priest. Zerubbabel the governor of Jerusalem plays a large part in chapter 4.</p>
<i>Zech 1:1-17</i>	<p>Who was king (of Persia!) during Zechariah's service?</p> <p>Who's son is Zephaniah?</p>
<i>Zech 9:9</i>	Turn to the <i>Chart of Prophecies about Jesus</i> (p.24) and write what is prophesied.
<i>Zech 11:11-13</i>	Turn to the <i>Chart of Prophecies about Jesus</i> and write what is prophesied.
<i>Zech 13:7</i>	Turn to the <i>Chart of Prophecies about Jesus</i> and write what is prophesied.
	<i>Please continue...</i>

²⁹ Ezra 5:1 and 6:14

³⁰ Nehemiah 12:16

Some optional questions to ponder:

How many minor prophets are there and is that significant? There are 12 minor prophets.

Is the number 12 significant? Abraham fathered Ishmael who had 12 sons who each became a prince.³¹ Jacob, Abraham's grandson through Isaac, also fathered 12 sons who each had families and became the 12 tribes of Israel,³² from which spring many OT sets of 12. (Moses sent 12 spies into the Promised land.³³ Joshua set up 12 stones at Gilgal as a witness to God's parting the Jordan River at flood stage.³⁴ Elijah made an altar of 12 stones where God humiliated the prophets of Baal.³⁵) In the NT after a night of prayer, His Father directed Jesus to appoint 12 Apostles.³⁶ Later, Jesus tells them about the 12 future thrones from which they will judge the 12 tribes of Israel.³⁷ Looking elsewhere around the New Heaven and New Earth, we see many other sets of 12 as well.³⁸ So is the number 12 significant? Yes and no. Twelve is certainly used a lot and seems to represent *perfection* and *authority*. As a God of order, God often uses consistent themes throughout His work. But the most important thing about reading the Bible is to figure out how God is speaking through it to help us become who He created us to be. Since He is a God who never changes and who crafts both the tiniest detail and the overarching big picture, we should definitely marvel at patterns and themes running through all He has made, but focus our efforts on the practical application of the plain text.

Are other numbers significant? Yes and no. With one hand firmly grasping the plain meaning of any text, try your own study of three, seven (including sevenfold, seventy and seventy times seven) and forty. If nothing else, it will solidify in your mind that one God wrote the entire Bible and He is a God of order.

What questions do you have?

³¹ Genesis 17:20 and Genesis 25:16

³² Genesis 35:22 and Genesis 49:28

³³ Deuteronomy 1:23-24

³⁴ Joshua 4:20

³⁵ 1 Kings 18:31-32

³⁶ Luke 6:12-13

³⁷ Matthew 19:28

³⁸ Revelation 21-22

Who is Malachi? Little is known about the last OT prophet, Malachi. His name can mean “my messenger” which would make the book anonymous but more likely, it is written by a prophet named Malachi. The issues he addresses are similar to those of Nehemiah's time, so he most likely writes between 450 and 400BC. Although a remnant has returned to Jerusalem and there was a governor in Judah,³⁹ it is a time of spiritual decline. Similar to Habakkuk, he writes a series of questions from the people to God, and God's answers. Some of his questions are, "How have we defiled you?", "How have we wearied Him?", "How have we robbed You?", and "What have we said against You?".⁴⁰ Lesson: Give God your best. He deserves no less.

8b. Malachi	
	When did Malachi write? About 450-400BC Who was Malachi? Not much is known about his except that he lived and wrote around the time of Nehemiah amidst moral and social decline.
<i>Mal 1:1</i>	To whom is his message directed? ...which at this point of history means <i>to the remnant that has returned to Jerusalem and possibly the Israelites at large</i> , not to the Northern Kingdom of Israel which was overthrown 300 years earlier.
<i>Mal 3:1</i>	Turn to the <i>Chart of Prophecies about Jesus</i> (p.24) and write what is prophesied.
<i>Mal 3:6-10</i>	What are some key points?
<i>Mal 4:1-5</i>	What are some key points?
Date:	Key Verse:
Take away:	

And then,

God is silent

for four hundred years.

³⁹ Malachi 7:8

⁴⁰ Malachi 1:6, Malachi 2:17, Malachi 3:8, Malachi 3:13

----- **Sections 9 and 10** -----

What are the prophecies about Jesus? In this section, we'll step away from going through the Bible cover to cover so that we can research just a few of the hundreds of prophecies about Jesus. Hopefully you've already filled in prophecies from the major and minor prophets. Now we'll go back to Genesis and fill in the remaining blanks. The first one, Genesis 12:3 is done for you as an example.

For each blank in the center column, look up the OT reference (these are in order for easier locating so consider using a book mark to hold the last one you looked up). Then look up the NT reference(s). You are welcome to copy the entire verse or just enough for you to know what the prophecy is about. This is *your* notebook!

Some of the prophecies about Jesus point to concrete events that unfold in the Gospels. For example, Jesus would be born of a virgin. Others are theological truths explained in the letters, like Jesus as the Passover Lamb. Keep an eye out for both as you go.

Do I really have to do this?! This is tedious! Yes! It does seem tedious at first, but as you see prophecy fulfilled, foreshadowing revealed, allusions explained, themes running through the entire Bible like snowball growing with more and more meaning - you'll make your own discoveries of God's faithfulness and the certainty of His words. It will prove well worth your time. You might even want to find more on your own!

Are there tools that can help with jumping all over the Bible? Yes! A simple bookmark in your Bible's table of contents can help. So can memorizing the books of the Bible in order - that you'll have that tool for the rest of your life! Electronic tools can also help. Here are a few:

- E-Sword - a free download. Download ESV for free or a variety of other translations. Download the Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge (TSK), a cross-reference tool for finding related Bible passages. It is listed under "Commentaries." Works on both desktop or mobile devices. This is the tool I used the most for building the prophecies chart!
- Blue Letter Bible website
- Bible Gateway website
- Whatever app or website with which you are familiar

What questions do you have?

Chart of Prophecies about Jesus, in the order of the OT books
Genesis to 2 Samuel

9a. Jesus in the Law and the books of History		
Gen 12:3	<i>"All peoples on earth will be blessed through [Abraham]."</i>	
	<i>God, having raised up his servant [Jesus], sent him... to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.</i>	Acts 3:25-26
	<i>Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. (Our sins are forgiven only in Jesus.)</i>	Ps 32:1
Exod 12:21-23		
	<i>For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.</i>	1 Corinthians 5:7
Num 24:17		
	<i>But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom."</i>	Hebrews 1:8
		Revelation 22:16
Deut 18:15, 18		
		Luke 24:19
	<i>When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!"</i>	John 6:14
Deut 21:23	<i>"...a hanged man is cursed by God"</i>	
		Galatians 3:13
2 Sam 7:11	<i>...the LORD will make [David] a house (lineage, dynasty)</i>	
		Luke 1:31-33
2 Sam 7:12	<i>I will raise up your offspring...and I will establish his kingdom.</i>	
		Luke 1:31-33
2 Sam 7:13	<i>I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever</i>	
		Luke 1:31-33
		Hebrews 1:8
	<i>Please continue...</i>	

Chart of Prophecies about Jesus, in the order of the OT books
Job to Proverbs

<i>9b. Jesus in the books of Poetry</i>		
Job 19:25		
	<i>"Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore..."</i>	Revelation 1:17-18
Ps 2:7	<i>"'You are my Son...'"</i>	
		John 1:34 John 1:49
Ps 8:2		
		Matt 21:15-16
Ps 16:10	The Holy One will not see corruption (his body will not decay)	
		Luke 24:50-51
		Acts 13:35-37
Ps 22:14-18	<i>"...cast lots for my clothing."</i>	
		Mark 15:24
Ps 34:20		
		John 19:33, 36
Ps 41:9	<i>"Even my close friend...has lifted up his heel against me."</i> (that is, "betrayed me")	
		Matt 26:21-25
Ps 118:22-23		
		Acts 4:11-12
Prov 30:4	That God will have a Son and we'll know His name	
		Matt 1:20-21
Date:	Key Verse:	
Take away:		

Chart of Prophecies about Jesus, in the order of the OT books - Isaiah

10. Jesus in the books of Prophecy		
Isa 7:14	The Lord will give a sign. A virgin will have a son who will be called Immanuel.	
	<i>Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way... all this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).</i>	Matt 1:18-25
Isa 9:1-2		
		Matt 4:12-16
Isa 9:2		
		John 8:12
Isa 35:5-6	Miracles of blind getting sight, lame walking, mute speaking	
		Matt 11:4-5
Isa 40:3-5		
		Mark 1:2-4
Isa 53:4	<i>"He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows..."</i>	
		1 Peter 2:24
Isa 53:7		
		Luke 23:8-9
Isa 53:9		
	<i>...There came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. ...And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud and laid it in his own new tomb...</i>	Matt 27:57-60
Isa 55:3		
		Hebrews 13:20
Isa 56:7		
		Matt 21:12-13
	<i>Please continue...</i>	

**Chart of Prophecies about Jesus, in the order of the OT books
Jeremiah to Micah**

<i>10. Jesus in the books of Prophecy, continued</i>		
Jer 23:5		
		Luke 1:30-33
Jer 31:15		
		Matt 2:16-18
Ezek 34:23-24		
		John 10:11
Dan 7:13-14		
		John 5:26-27
Hosea 11:1		
		Matt 2:13-23
Amos 8:9	Darkness at noon	
	<i>Now from the sixth hour (noon) there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour (3pm).</i>	Matt 27:45
Micah 5:2		
		Matt 2:1-6
	<i>Please continue...</i>	

**Chart of Prophecies about Jesus, in the order of the OT books
Zechariah to...Luke!**

10. Jesus in the books of Prophecy, continued		
Zech 9:9		
		Matt 21:1-7
Zech 11:12-13		
		Matt 26:14-16
Zech 13:7		
		Matt 26:31
Mal 3:1		
		Luke 7:24-27
Jesus even prophesied about in the NT!		
Luke 1:32		
		Rom 1:1-4
Date:	Key Verse:	
Take away:		

Is Jesus already on David's throne or is that still future? As for the one who would sit on the throne of David forever, we know now that this is Jesus. But is that now or still future? Since His resurrection, Jesus has been on His throne at the right hand of God. Stephen saw Him there when he was stoned in Acts 7.⁴¹ Hebrews also portrays Him seated beside God's throne in Heaven.⁴² Like many of the OT promises of which there was partial fulfillment shortly after the promise was made, this prophecy has been fulfilled to an extent, but will have an even greater fulfillment when Jesus comes again and reigns on the New Earth.⁴³ And speaking of that, let's move on to End Time Prophecy...

What questions do you have?

⁴¹ Acts 7:56
⁴² Hebrews 12:2
⁴³ Revelation 21:1-8

----- Section 11 -----

What is End Times Prophecy about? We've looked at the Books of Prophecy which contained lots of prophecy, much of which is *general prophecy*. We just survived jumping all over the Bible to look at *messianic prophecy* and its fulfillment in Jesus. Now we come to end *time prophecy*...

What are the "end times" and "last days" and are we in them yet? This is an excellent - and well contested - question. Let's look at what the Bible has to say.

<i>11a. What will we see during the End Times (or Last Days) and do we see that today?</i>	
	Read enough of the context of these verses (the verses before and after them) to make sure you understand what the author is saying.
<i>Acts 2:17</i>	What event is taking place (2:1)? Who is speaking (2:14) and what issue is he addressing (2:12-13)? What is he saying about "the last days"?
<i>2Tim 3:1-7</i>	What types of things will we see in the last days and do we see these today?
<i>2Pet 3:3</i>	What types of things will we see in the last days and do we see these today?
<i>1John 2:18</i>	What/who will come in the "last hour"? Who is the "antichrist"? See also 1 John 2:22, 1 John 4:3; 2 John 1:7 to understand how John uses this term. Do we see the "antichrist" today?
What is your conclusion? Are we in the end times / last days? YES or NO Why do you say that?	
<i>Please continue...</i>	

Do prophecies always apply to only one timeframe? No. Before we continue, let's take a slightly deeper look at prophecy in general and establish (or shatter!) some expectations. If we think about it, the covenants we've already seen has a limited fulfillment in their time, but we now know they will find their ultimate fulfillment in Jesus. The same can happen with prophecy: limited fulfillment followed by ultimate or complete fulfillment. We call this *dual prophecy* or *dual fulfillment*.

Additionally, one line of a prophecy can speak of near events and the next of distant events in the same sentence or couplet of poetry. Joel contains an excellent example of this sort of *split prophecy*, with some of it being fulfilled at Pentecost and some yet to be fulfilled. As always, however, as history unfolds, God will definitely show us where and when His words apply, if we earnestly seek Him.⁴⁴

11b. Split Prophecy	
<i>Joel 2:28-32</i>	What has occurred already (both your own observations of life and Acts 2 can help)? What has yet to happen?
<i>Please continue...</i>	

What can we expect to see as the end comes closer? Joel mentioned some of it, but others also speak of drastic times before Jesus returns. We'll read some of these here and some in the next section.

11c. OT signs of the end	
<i>Zech 14:1-9</i>	What sense do you get and what specifics are mentioned?
<i>Dan 11:40-12:13</i>	In response to what is to come, what should we do now (12:12-13)?
Date:	Key Verse:
Take away:	

⁴⁴ Jeremiah 29:13

----- Section 12 -----

Is it always so hard to understand what is said about the end times? No, there are some passages that are more accessible!

<i>12a. NT signs of the end</i>	
<i>Matt 24:1-44</i>	What does Jesus say about it?
<i>1 Corinthians 15:50-58</i>	In response to what is to come, what should we do now?
<i>1 Thessalonians 4:13-18</i>	In response to what is to come, what should we do now?
<i>12b. The final judgment</i>	
<i>Revelation 19:11-20:15</i>	What happens?
<i>12c. What we look forward to after all that</i>	
<i>Isaiah 65:17-25</i>	What do we have to look forward to?
<i>Rev 21-22</i>	What do we have to look forward to?
Date:	Key Verse:
Take away:	

Is that all, or are there other places that talk about end times? These references only scratch the surface. The following are a few more places the end times and the Day of the Lord are mentioned - but there are even more than this.

Like Zechariah, Ezekiel 38-39 describes battles which may correspond to battles that take place during the Tribulation, possibly the battle of Armageddon. Daniel 8-12 all talk about events future to Daniel's life. Many can be traced to history that unfolded before Jesus' arrival. Others have yet to find a place in history and are accepted to point to times still future to us.

In the NT, the message of 2 Thessalonians is that the Day of the Lord has not yet come; do not be deceived if anyone says otherwise. 2 Peter 3 states with certainty that the Day of the Lord will come. Be ready, therefore, at all times.

And finally, Revelation is the most well-known collection of prophecies about the future and the end times. It is considered a book of prophecy even though it is addressed to *the seven churches*.⁴⁵ Chapters 2-3 contain letters to seven churches, which may have been real churches of John's day or may be symbolic, or both. At any rate, the issues addressed in these letters address still hit home today. The remainder of Revelation contains massive amounts of figurative language and is commonly accepted to refer to the "end times."

Is there a way to quickly summarize what will happen in the future? Thankfully, yes, there is.

In the end, God wins.

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.
Habakkuk 2:14

⁴⁵ Revelation 1:4