

INTRODUCTION:

- 1) TODAY WE WILL CONTINUE OUR STUDY OF UNDERSTANDING GENRES BY LOOKING AT *PROPHECY AND APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE*

THINGS WE WILL LOOK AT IN THIS LESSON:

- 1) THE PRIORITY OF PROPHECY
- 2) THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS
- 3) THE APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE
- 4) KEYS TO INTERPRETING APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE

PART 1 – THE PRIORITY OF PROPHECY:

EXAMPLE 1) PERCENTAGES OF PREDICTIVE WRITING...

Book	Predictive Material at Time of Writing
Ezekiel	65 percent
Jeremiah	60 percent
Isaiah	59 percent
Revelation	63 percent

PART 2 – THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS:

EXAMPLE 2) OVERVIEW OF FOUR CRISES...

The Crisis	The Prophets	The Parallels	The Times
The Assyrian Invasion	Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Micah	2 Kings 14:23–20:20; 2 Chronicles 26–32	Assyria deported the ten northern tribes (722 BC). Judah and Benjamin repented and were spared (701 BC).
The Babylonian Invasion	Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Jeremiah	2 Kings 21–24; 2 Chronicles 33–36:20	Nobles' sons (Daniel) were taken to Babylon (606 BC). Thousands of tradesmen and professionals (Ezekiel) were taken to Babylon (597 BC). Most of the nation was taken as slaves to Babylon (586 BC).
The Captivity	Daniel, Ezekiel	2 Kings 25; 2 Chronicles 36:21–23	Jews were held as slaves in Babylon for seventy years. The prophets gave hope to the captives, proclaiming that God still had a plan for them and that His kingdom would come.
The Deportees Return	Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi	Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther	The return under Zerubbabel (the nation and the temple are restored) The return under Ezra (worship is restored) The return under Nehemiah (the walls are restored)

Q 2) WHEN IT COMES TO THE PROPHET'S INTENTION AND THE NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLMENT, WHAT ARE THE THREE TYPES OF PROPHECIES?

Q 3) WHEN IT COMES TO THE PROPHET'S PERSPECTIVE AND THE FINAL FULFILLMENT, WHAT ARE THE THREE TYPES OF FULFILLMENTS?

PART 3 – THE APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE:

Q 4) WHAT ARE THE THREE CHARACTERISTICS OF APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE?

EXAMPLE 4) PRINCIPLE #1. LOOK FOR MEANING IN THE CONTEXT...

TAKEN LITERALLY THIS WOMAN WOULD APPEAR TO BE MARY BECAUSE SHE LITERALLY GAVE BIRTH TO CHRIST:

4 ...The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that it might devour her child the moment he was born. 5 She gave birth to a son, a male child, who "will rule all the nations with an iron scepter." And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne. –Revelation 12:4b-5

OTHER ASPECTS CANNOT RELATE TO MARY:

6 The woman fled into the wilderness to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days. –Revelation 12:6

14 The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the wilderness, where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time, out of the serpent's reach. –Revelation 12:14

15 Then from his mouth the serpent spewed water like a river, to overtake the woman and sweep her away with the torrent. –Revelation 12:15

17 Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring—those who keep God's commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus. –Revelation 12:17

A MORE REASONABLE EXPLANATION OF THE WOMAN IS A SYMBOL OF ISRAEL:

A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. –Revelation 12:1

EXAMPLE 5) PRINCIPLE #2. LOOK FOR MEANING IN THE HISTORY/CULTURE OF THE WRITER...

THE LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES CONTAIN EXAMPLES OF SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE CLARIFIED BY A STUDY OF HISTORY AND CUSTOMS:

Revelation 2:17 — Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.

Revelation 2:20 — Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols.

Revelation 3:3 — Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.

Revelation 3:12 — The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name.

Revelation 3:15-16 — I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! 16 So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

EXAMPLE 6) PRINCIPLE #3. LOOK FOR A MEANING IN PREVIOUS APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE...

AS A GENERAL RULE, IF A SYMBOL IS IDENTIFIED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE IN A CERTAIN WAY, WE CAN EXPECT THAT MEANING WILL BE PARALLEL TO A MEANING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT APOCALYPTIC PASSAGES:

• Rainbow	Ezekiel 1:28	parallels Revelation 4:3
• Living creatures	Ezekiel 1:5–14	parallels Revelation 4:7–9
• Son of Man	Daniel 3:25; 7:13	parallels Revelation 1:13
• Beasts	Daniel 7:1–7	parallels Revelation 13:1–18
• Morning star	Daniel 12:3	parallels Revelation 2:28
• Four horsemen	Zechariah 1:8–11	parallels Revelation 6:1–8
• The great angel	Zechariah 1:11	parallels Revelation 10

EXAMPLE 7) PRINCIPLE #4. LOOK FOR A PARALLEL IN THE GREAT EVENTS OF THE SALVATION STORY...

THESE ARE SOME OF THE MAJOR EVENTS FROM SALVATION HISTORY THAT ARE PICTURED SYMBOLICALLY IN THE REVELATION OF JOHN:

- **Creation**—The final chapter of salvation history reveals the creation of a new heaven and a new earth (Revelation 21:1).
- **Paradise lost and the serpent**—The final chapter shows paradise restored and the dragon defeated. The tree of life in the Garden of Eden is replaced with the tree of life in the new paradise (Revelation 2:7; 12:9; 22:1, 2).
- **The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah**—The wicked are again judged and the fire and brimstone imagery is found in the lake of fire and the smoke of their torment (Revelation 11:18; 19:20).
- **The plagues of Egypt and the Exodus**—God again comes to judge those who persecute His people. The plagues of Egypt become symbols of this final judgment. Note the parallels between the plagues and the events associated with the seven trumpet blasts (Revelation 8–9) and the seven bowls of wrath (Revelation 16).
- **The Babylonian captivity**—The bondage and deliverance from ancient Babylon is a symbolic picture that predicts the judgment on a modern oppressor (Revelation 18).

