

Beyond Tomorrow

“Today” and “tomorrow” could easily consume a believer’s focus in life. Days, weeks, or even years could go by without much thought about eternity. But each believer’s “today” and “tomorrow” impacts eternity! We need to live beyond the immediate by putting our focus on eternity. This quarter you will learn about future events and their immediate application to your life today.

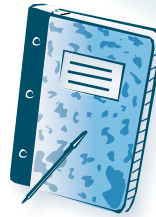


The Real Faith in Life Devotional

Bible Study is designed to help you dig into God’s Word. Each lesson offers devotions for Monday through Saturday, along with an In-Class

worksheet to be completed during your group study.

In order for you to gain the most out of your devotional time, use the following tools along with your student book.



Journal: Purchase a journal or notebook to record your personal thoughts and prayers. Bring your journal and student book to class each week so that you can take notes during the lesson or write any special insights you gain from a particular activity. You may also use the journal for sermon notes or for prayer requests.



Bible study tools: In order for you to dig into God’s Word, consider using a Bible dictionary and a concordance. If you are not familiar with these helpful guides, ask your pastor or youth leader for a recommendation.

Or visit an online Bible tools Web site, such as www.blueletterbible.org.

This site offers commentaries, maps, and many other tools to help you in your Bible study. (This recommendation does not constitute a blanket endorsement by RBP.)

Prophecy 101

If a person at your school wants to take Spanish 3, what classes does he or she need to take first? A lot of junior- and senior-level classes have prerequisites—classes that have to be taken first to learn the material necessary for the more advanced classes.

This quarter's material is a study of end-time events. Because these events are still future, the Scriptures that describe them are identified as prophecy. Before you jump right in to the events of the future, you'll get a "prerequisite course" on studying prophecy so that you are equipped with the knowledge you need to accurately study the key texts of this quarter.

Memory Verse:



"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21).

Monday

Prophets played a significant role in Old Testament history. God often used prophets to represent Him to rulers and to His people, Israel. In fact, almost half of the Old Testament is classified as prophetic literature.

1. Look at the table of contents in your Bible and write the names of the last seventeen books of the Old Testament.

All of the books you listed, except Lamentations, are named after the prophets who wrote them. Lamentations was written by Jeremiah.

Look up the following references and name other Old Testament prophets.

2. Genesis 20:7

3. Deuteronomy 34:10

4. 1 Samuel 3:20

5. Can you think of any other Old Testament prophets?

6. Of course, not everyone who claimed to be a prophet really was a prophet. Read Deuteronomy 18:20–22. What was a sure test of a false prophet?

7. According to Deuteronomy 13:1–4, what had to be true of a prophet's words?

8. All true prophets had at least one thing in common. Read the following verses and write down the source of the prophets' words.

Isaiah 38:4

Jeremiah 1:4

Ezekiel 1:3

9. Read and summarize this week's memory verse, 2 Peter 1:21.



Memory Verse Activity: Choose a place to keep your memory verse card each week, such as in your Bible as a bookmark or taped to your mirror. Choose a time, like after you get home from church on Sunday, to place the new week's card in the designated place. As you memorize this week's memory verse, 2 Peter 1:21, ask yourself: Why is it so important to know that prophecy, along with the rest of Scripture, is inspired by the Holy Spirit?

Tuesday

Throughout Scripture we see accounts of prophecy that were fulfilled down to the last details. In your Sunday School lesson this week, you'll look at many prophecies about Christ that were fulfilled during His lifetime. In the next two days of devotions, though, you'll read about two very specific prophecies that were fulfilled in Elisha's day.

Read 2 Kings 5:1–15.

1. Who was Naaman, and what problem did he have?
2. What did the little maid wish for Naaman?
3. How did word get to Elisha about Naaman's problem?
4. Summarize Elisha's words recorded in verse 8.
5. What did Elisha prophesy about Naaman's healing?
6. Describe Naaman's response and his healing.

Compared to other prophecy in Scripture, this may seem like a very small prophecy that was fulfilled. However, this miracle achieved a chief purpose of all prophecy.

7. What did Naaman learn about God (v. 15)?

Wednesday

Sometime after the Naaman account, Samaria found itself in a very dire situation. Read 2 Kings 6:24–29.

1. Why was Samaria in such a desperate state?
2. What details given in this passage indicate the extent of the famine?
3. Read 2 Kings 7:1 and 2. What incredible word of the Lord did Elisha prophesy?
4. How did the king's officer react to this news?
5. What did Elisha prophesy about the officer?

Read the conclusion of this account in 2 Kings 7:3–20.

6. Why did the lepers decide to go to the Syrian camp?
7. Why had the Syrians left their camp?
8. How did the Syrian possessions become the possessions of the Samaritans?
9. Which of Elisha's prophecies came true?

These two accounts from Elisha's ministry are only a small sketch of the many, many times God faithfully brought about what He promised through His prophets. The fulfillment of prophecy in Scripture reminds us what a trustworthy, omniscient, powerful, and wonderful God we serve.

Thursday

Prophecy can be difficult to study, and sometimes even great Bible scholars disagree about its interpretation. There are some guidelines to interpretation that will help you be an accurate student of prophecy, whether or not it all makes sense to you. Over the next three days, you will study six of these guidelines.

Guideline 1: Rely on the Holy Spirit's teaching ministry.

Read 1 Corinthians 2:9–13.

1. How has God revealed to us things that are beyond our comprehension?



Remember this week's memory verse. It is the Holy Spirit Who inspired the words of prophecy that are written in the Bible.

2. What things does the Spirit search (v. 10)?

3. What ministry of the Spirit is mentioned in verse 13?



We cannot tackle prophecy—or any part of the Bible—in our human strength and understanding. We desperately need the Holy Spirit to teach us the deep truths of God.

Guideline 2: Understand the words of Scripture literally.

4. If your friend sent you a text that read, "Meet me in the park at 2:00," where would you meet your friend, and what time would you meet him or her?



Our normal practice is to take words we read and hear literally. This practice should carry over into the way we read and understand the Bible.

5. Review yesterday's devotions. How accurately was Elisha's prophecy fulfilled?



Every fulfilled prophecy in Scripture was fulfilled literally. This fact forms the basis for our expectation that unfulfilled prophecy will also be fulfilled literally.

Friday

Guideline 3: Study the context of the passage.

Oftentimes, a quick look at the context of a passage will keep students of God's Word from making errors in interpretation.



"Context" can refer to (1) verses surrounding the passage, (2) the purpose that the book in which the passage is found serves in the entire Bible, and (3) the conditions of the world at the time in which the passage was written.

Skim Daniel 2:31–45.

1. What did Nebuchadnezzar see in his dream?
2. How do you know the meaning of this dream?

This is a very obvious example of the way surrounding verses help us understand a passage. Sometimes we may need to study further and longer to understand confusing passages. This guideline keeps us from isolating verses and making them mean something God never intended.

Guideline 4: Compare Scripture with Scripture.

Review Deuteronomy 13:1–4.

3. Summarize what verses 1–3 say about listening to a prophet.

Because Scripture is completed, we don't need prophets today to tell us the word of the Lord. But the principle remains true that God doesn't say one thing in one place and another thing in a different place. His Word does not contradict itself. As you study prophecy, remember that a prophecy never means something that is contradicted elsewhere in Scripture.

Saturday

Guideline 5: Recognize that prophecies often have both an immediate and future fulfillment in view and that time intervals are not usually specified.

Read Zechariah 9:9 and 10.

1. When in the life of Christ was verse 9 fulfilled?

2. When will verse 10 be fulfilled?

Zechariah likely didn't know that there would be at least two thousand years between the fulfillment of verse 9 and verse 10. Prophecies such as this were the reason the Jews in Jesus' day expected a political Messiah Who would overthrow Rome. They did not take into account the prophecies of Isaiah 53 and Daniel 9:27, which speak of the Messiah's death.

Guideline 6: Use the study of prophecy to exalt the Lord Jesus.

One of the dangers of studying prophecy is getting caught up in intellectual debates and forgetting the heart of the Bible.

3. Review Tuesday's devotions. What result did the fulfillment of Elisha's prophecy have in Naaman's understanding of God?

4. Read Revelation 19:10. What is the purpose (spirit) of prophecy?

As you study many prophetic passages over the course of this quarter, you'll see that while the passages often describe what will happen to mankind, the focus always returns to a worship of Jesus.



To prepare for the future, I can learn about God's character today.



Journal Notes



Prophecies of the Messiah

O.T. Prophecy	Summary	N.T. Fulfillment
Genesis 3:15		
Isaiah 7:14		
Psalms 2:7		
Micah 5:2		
Isaiah 35:5, 6		
Isaiah 40:3		
Psalms 41:9		
Isaiah 53:7		
Isaiah 53:5		
Isaiah 53:9		
Psalms 16:10		