Why are we here? Where are we going? Is there any meaning to human history? Is humanity’s struggle through the ages merely an endless repetition of pain, suffering, death repeated in one society after another as the classical thinkers postulated, or does it have a beginning, a goal and an end?

The Bible teaches that this world began with God the Creator and that history has a goal and direction and a destination. This is the *linear view of history* that believes that our Sovereign God is in charge of events and that they lead toward a determined end- Divine judgment and ultimate restoration.

Eschatology is a theological term derived from 2 Greek words. Eschaton = Last things, logos = study of= meaning the study of “last things.” God has a plan for the ages which he has not hidden. He has revealed the broad outlines of that purpose and plan in His sacred Word and He has done this IN ADVANCE within human history through His servants the prophets. In these 13 weeks, we are proposing to survey that plan especially looking at how it will END. This is the study of God’s prophetic Word. Let us begin by defining, “Bible prophecy?”

1. **What is Bible Prophecy?** (About 1/3 of the Bible was prophecy when written)
   Dr John Walvoord (of DTS) taught that half of the 1000 Bible prophecies have already been fulfilled.

1. **Prophecy is history written in advance by God who controls history**  *Isa 46:9-11*

   “Remember the former things long past,
   For I am God, and there is no other;
   *I am* God, and there is no one like Me,
   Declaring the end from the beginning,
   And from ancient times things which have not been done,
   Saying, ‘My purpose will be established,
   And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’;
   Calling a bird of prey from the east,
   The man of My purpose from a far country.
   Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass.
   I have planned *it, surely* I will do it.

2. **Prophecy is God’s infallible, trustworthy revelation**  *2 Peter 1:16-19*

   16 For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.
   17 For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an “utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, “This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased”— 18 and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.
   19 We have the more sure prophetic word, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.
Although the New American Standard translation seems to imply that the Apostles’ experience on the mountain made the Word of God more sure, to do so they have to add words that are missing in the Greek text. Both the Greek construction and good theology stand against this point of view. A better rendering would be: “And We have the altogether sure or certain prophetic Word. Two evidences that Jesus will come again in glory. One, we are eyewitnesses to his transfiguration which is a precursor to his future Coming. AND secondly we all Christians possess a sure and certain word of prophecy that guarantees that Jesus will come again.

3. Prophecy that is yet to be fulfilled will be the focus of this study –see schedule

II. Why should we study Bible Prophecy?

1. Prophecy Reveals God’s Plan for the Ages:

   It reveals God’s blueprint for humanity; past, present and future

2. Fulfilled Prophecy Proves the God of the Bible Exists.

   God reveals the future to His prophets so that men will have irrefutable evidence that the God of the Bible actually exists and controls History.

3. Fulfilled Prophecies Demonstrate that Future Prophecy will be literally fulfilled

   The Messiah would come from Bethlehem of Judah  Micah 5:2
   The Messiah would be born of a Virgin – a supernatural conception  Isa 7:14
   The Messiah would be Emmanuel – God with us.  Isa 7:14
   The Messiah will yet rule on the throne of David and over his kingdom  Isa 9:7

4. The Study of Prophecy warns us against Deceivers and False Teachers

   Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. 1 John 4:1-3

5. The Study of Prophecy should promote evangelism
The possibility of the soon coming of Jesus motivated early believers to spread the gospel. The recovery of that prophetic truth in the 19th century launched the greatest missionary outreach since the days of the Roman Empire.

“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.”

Rev 22: 12

6. The Study of Prophecy tends to purify the Believer

“Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when he appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is.”

I John 3:2

7. Prophecy offers confident Hope in a hopeless age.

Even though the world is threatened with nuclear holocaust as nations arm themselves for war, the Christian does not need to be afraid because we have a sure and certain hope in Jesus Christ.

Rom 15:4 For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.