



## Study Guide

*“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup> In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.”*  
~John 14:1-3

Bible prophecy is not meant to **SCARE**, but to **PREPARE!**

In Christian circles, we talk about signs of the time. But, in so many ways, we live in the time of the signs! As we see those signs, we are reminded that Jesus is PREPARING a place for us, and prophecy teaches us to PREPARE to dwell with Him in that heavenly place!

### Part 1: Children of Light

Headlines can be concerning, particularly when our world seems to spin out of control. What are some of the headlines of concern today? (Hint: Health scares, severe weather events, lawlessness, persecution of innocent civilians, Middle East chaos)

In light of John 14:1-3 (quoted above), what hope do we have in a world that is, at times, out-of-control?

Do you believe Jesus is returning soon? If so, how do you know?

Read Matthew 24:36 and Mark 13:32 and write one of them out here:

According to those passages, list everyone who knows when the rapture will occur?

God's Word is very clear that none of us knows the day or the hour of Jesus' return. Does that mean God wants us to be clueless about the immanency of His return? Does He want us to be "in the dark" about end times? Let's find out!

Read [1 Thessalonians 5:1-6](#).

Paul is writing to believers in Thessalonica and he speaks of light and darkness in verses 4-5. Specifically, what does he call those believers?

Let's put that in context by working backward through those verses. What are we (believers) told to do in verse 6?

What do you believe it means to "be alert and sober?" Do you think God is asking something impossible of us?

Verse 4 states what is re-iterated in verses 5-6. "Brethren" refers to fellow believers in Jesus Christ, and Paul paints a contrast between darkness and light. We live, not in darkness, but in light. We have an advantage those living in darkness do not have!

Now to verses 1-3. Notice the pronouns used in those verses. In verses 1-2 he is talking to "you," while in verse 3, he addresses "they/them." Obviously two different groups of people! "You" refers to believers, so Paul is writing to those of us who follow Jesus.

To whom does destruction come (verse 3), and what is their ultimate fate?

But to us (believers), he says something totally different in verses 1-2. Keep in mind 1 Thessalonians was written to believers. Chapter breaks were added later, but the text was originally written as a single letter. Thus, believers would have already read what appears in chapters 1-4, where Paul repeated an important principle. Read these passages:

- [1 Thessalonians 1:10](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 2:19](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 3:13](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 4:16-17](#)

What is the common theme of those verses?

So, in verse 1-2, when Paul says, *“Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you,”* could he be emphasizing that they have already been educated regarding the “times and the epochs,” so there is no need to know more? Yet, to unbelievers, verse 3 says destruction will come when they are feeling safe and at peace.

My believing friends, we KNOW Jesus will come unexpectedly, yet there is no need for anything else to be written to us. The time and season will be clear to those who walk in the light of Jesus, rather than the darkness of this world!

Now is a good time to take a break and meditate on the benefit of living in the light. We are not in darkness! It gets even better in Part 2, so stick with it!

## Part 2: Discerning Signs of the Time

Welcome back, Bible students! In Part 1 we emphasized the Biblical truth that only the Father knows the day and hour of Jesus’ return. However, Paul taught the Thessalonians that there was no need to reveal more about times and epochs, as they are not mysterious to children of light (believers)! The day and hour may not be known, but the time and season can be.

In fact, on two different occasions Jesus issued rebukes to those who did not discern the signs of the time in which they lived! Read [Matthew 16:1-3](#). Who did Jesus rebuke?

Do you find it interesting that they asked for a sign? Think about this: Jesus had performed one miracle after another in their midst for quite some time. Though chapter and paragraph headings are not “inspired Scripture,” they often tell us what the next few verses are about. Skim through the previous two chapters ([Matthew 14-15](#)), noticing paragraph headings. List the miracles Jesus performed in that brief time prior to His encounter with the religious leaders.

If that’s not enough, Jesus had already rebuked the Pharisees for asking for signs! Hold your place in Matthew 16, but turn to [Matthew 12](#).

After chastising Jesus for “working” on the Sabbath and conspiring against Him for healing a man’s hand, the Pharisees were rebuked by Jesus (verses 25-29), were warned of the unpardonable sin (verses 30-32) and were taught about character (verses 33-37).

It was then (verse 38) they asked Jesus for a sign. How did Jesus respond (His first words in verse 39)?

Craving signs is dangerous business, particularly when all Jesus has done is ignored! In fact, [2 Thessalonians 2:8-10](#) issues a stern warning. Who do you believe the “lawless one” is?

According to verse 9, what will the lawless one be able to do “in accord with the activity of Satan?”

Yes, Satan and the Antichrist will perform signs and wonders! Be very careful what you ask for, and who is fulfilling your request!

With that as foundation to the Pharisee’s request, turn back to [Matthew 16:1-3](#). The Pharisees asked for a sign and Jesus issued a rebuke. Summarize verses 2-3 here:

This was a group of brilliant men. Not only intelligent religious scholars (though steeped in law!), but also experts at understanding weather signs. Yet, Jesus stood right in front of them, performed miracle-after-miracle, fulfilled Old Testament prophecies of which they were well acquainted, and told them of things to come, but they could not discern the signs of the times! This was Jesus’ first coming, yet they totally missed it!

Unfortunately, Pharisees and Sadducees did not corner the market on lack of discernment! Take a look at [Luke 12:54-56](#). Who did Jesus rebuke in those verses?

Crowds followed Jesus everywhere, so these were likely people acquainted with Jesus’ miracles and fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. Yet, they too missed it! They understood the weather but did not analyze (discern) the present time, with Jesus in their midst! Brilliant in knowledge, lacking in discernment.

Is the message the same for us today?

We live in a technological world where knowledge expands exponentially every few years. In general, we are “brilliant in knowledge,” but are we also lacking in discernment? We have God’s Word, including the New Testament, which the Pharisees, Sadducees and crowds during Jesus’ time did not have. We even see the Lord do supernatural things in our lives. But, do we discern the time and season in which we live? They missed the time of Jesus’ first visitation ([Luke 19:44](#)), how many will miss His second?

Believers, we have Jesus Himself living inside us, directing us, guiding us, and showing us the way. We are living in the last days and must discern the time and season in which we live!

Our Lord is gracious, though, and spoke to His followers (and to us) in another passage. [Matthew 24](#) is a wonderful chapter for those of us desiring to discern the times and seasons. Why? Because Jesus Himself tells us what we need to know!

The chapter begins with three of Jesus’ disciples accompanying Him to the Mount of Olives, gazing across the Kidron Valley at the Temple. They ask Jesus about the last days and what will be the sign of His coming. Jesus spends the rest of the chapter explaining those signs!

Let’s skip all the way to verses 32-34, though, because, as opposed to the rebuke He gave the crowds and the religious leaders, He tells His disciples (and us) a parable. Read [Matthew 24:32-34](#).

What is a parable? ([Here is a hint](#), if you need one!)

Jesus told an earthly story with a heavenly meaning when He spoke of the fig tree. Now, put on your Hebrew glasses! Jesus was speaking to His Jewish disciples about a Jewish thing. The fig tree symbolizes Israel and every Jew would have caught the reference! (In America, imagine if I said, “land of the free and home of the brave.” You would know immediately I am speaking of America. So it was when Jesus mentioned the fig tree to His disciples.)

In the context of Matthew 24, we know Jesus is talking about the end times, and now He’s speaking of a fig tree, indicating that when the branch “puts forth its leaves,” summer is near. (Discern the season!) Jews of Jesus’ day had no idea they would be exiled not once, but twice, and that the second return would be prophetically important in the last days.

Describe what you believe is represented by the branch putting forth leaves.

If you referenced Israel’s re-birth (May 14, 1948), you are correct! The fulfillment of the fig tree blooming is Israel’s return to the land. Read these prophecies which foretold that:

- [Jeremiah 16:14-15](#)
- [Deuteronomy 30:3-5](#)
- [Ezekiel 11:17](#)
- [Ezekiel 36:24](#)
- [Jeremiah 3:18](#)
- [Jeremiah 31:8-10](#)
- [Zephaniah 3:20](#)

The fig tree has definitely become fruitful!

[Matthew 24:33](#) says, “...when you see these things...” What things? The signs Jesus just spent the first 31 verses talking about, including the fig tree blooming! According to that passage, Jesus is “right at the door!” While we don’t know the day or hour of His coming, the time and season is upon us! The sign of the fig tree blooming tell us that!

Amazing, isn’t it! Though the disciples understood the fig tree to be Israel, they had no idea they would be exiled and would rise from near death as a people group following the many times enemies tried to wipe them out. (Haman, during Babylonian exile; Crusades; Spanish Inquisition; Holocaust; etc)

In Part 3 we’ll find out the importance of Jesus fulfilling all things written about Him, and the Gospel writers’ emphasis on the fulfillment of those prophecies. But before you shut it down for the day, I encourage you to take 5 minutes to enjoy Aaron Shust’s tribute to Israel’s return. It is called [Zion](#) and can be found by clicking that link. Enjoy!

Part3: Believing All the Prophets Have Spoken

Jesus is right at the door! Do you believe it?

Do you ever have “one of those days?” Things just don’t seem to go right, and you wish Jesus would just bust right through the door!?!

I think some close followers of Jesus experienced that at times. In fact, there were two men walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus following Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection, and I think they might have been in the midst of “one of those days” when they got an unexpected visit! The account is found in [Luke 24](#). We’ll focus on verses 13-27, but let’s take a running start into that passage.

Jesus had just been wrongly accused, crucified and buried. But on the first day of the week (Sunday), two women found an empty tomb and an angel declaring “He’s not dead. He is risen!” Jesus was not in the tomb! The two women (Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James), along with other women, went about telling the apostles, though to some “*these words appeared to them as nonsense, and they would not believe them.*”

Now, let’s pick up our passage. Describe what is happening in verses 13-16.

I find verses 17-21 to be somewhat comical as I imagine Jesus saying, “Hey guys, what’s up?” They mention something about this man, Jesus, who was supposed to redeem Israel, but died instead. Can you imagine Jesus having a little fun with this? “So, tell me, guys, what exactly happened, and who was this guy anyway!?!” They respond, “Are you the only person around here who doesn’t have a clue about what just happened?”

They were hung up because they couldn’t see Him! (Verses 16, 24) What was Jesus’ response in verse 25?

According to verse 27, what did Jesus spend considerable time doing?

He had lots to tell them! Read [John 21:25](#). (And you think this Bible study is long...!?!?)

I believe [Luke 24:25](#) was spoken with purpose. It seems to be very important to Jesus that they *believe all that the prophets have spoken*, because He was very intentional and committed to explaining all the things concerning Himself, beginning with Moses and the prophets.

Picture it! There was Jesus, the fulfillment of so many Old Testament prophecies (including His death, burial and resurrection they had just witnessed), right in front of them, recounting the prophecies and proving Himself to be the fulfillment!

Jesus spent a good deal of time stressing the importance of believing all the prophets have spoken. For example, just in Matthew alone, notice the repetitive phrase in each of these passages:

- [Matthew 1:22-23](#)
- [Matthew 2:14-15](#)
- [Matthew 4:12-17](#)
- [Matthew 8:14-17](#)
- [Matthew 13:12-15](#)

- [Matthew 21:1-5](#)
- [Matthew 27:3-10](#)

What is that repeated phrase?

Did you know prophecy comprises about 25-30% of the Bible? Apparently, God deems prophecy to have value! Keep in mind, we're not talking about someone's weird idea of prophecy. We're talking about pure Bible prophecy, rightly interpreted (in context and as intended by the writer). Be careful! There are more "off the wall," untrue to Scripture "prophecy experts" than there are sound prophecy experts. Don't fall into a trap!

Bible scholars tell us there are about 1,000 prophecies in the Bible, and somewhere around half of them have been fulfilled. We're not going to dig into 1,000, or even into the roughly 500 that are yet to be fulfilled. (That would, indeed, be a long Bible study!) But we'll focus on a few that are clear and relevant for today.

We've already talked about one: the re-birth of Israel. Consider this. The Bible is clear about what happens in and to Israel in the end. If the land of Israel was not re-established and the Jewish people back in their land, many end time prophecies could not be fulfilled! Here are examples of prophecies that demand that:

- The Antichrist will confirm a covenant with the Jewish people and will establish himself on the throne in the Jewish Temple (in Jerusalem). ([Daniel 9:27](#), [Matthew 24:15](#))
- That will cause Jews to flee from Israel to the mountains. ([Matthew 24:16](#))
- God promises that all Israel (as a nation) will be saved, and the Deliverer will come from Zion. ([Romans 11:26-27](#))
- God will redeem Israel spiritually after redeeming them physically and bringing them home. ([Ezekiel 36-37](#))
- God will destroy Gog of Magog and his coalition on the mountains of Israel when they come to attack. ([Ezekiel 38-39](#))

None of those things could happen if Israel had not been re-born and now back in her land. Israel's re-birth was a "super sign" of the end times.



Another sign has to do with Damascus. What do you know about Damascus today? (Hint: see picture.)

At least as of this writing, Damascus Syria still stands...but only on a very shaky leg! Currently, civil war rages in Syria, and various groups vie for power, for various reasons. (More about that in a moment.) It may not be long, though, until this part of the study is out-of-date!

Bible prophecy actually speaks of Damascus. Read [Jeremiah 49:23-27](#) and [Isaiah 17:1](#). According to those verses, what will ultimately happen to Damascus?

Based on what you know of Syria today, do those prophecies seem probable? If so, why do you think that?

Keep your eye on Syria...the next “super sign” may occur in the Syrian capital.

We’ll take a break right here before moving to a more involved third prophecy relevant to today. As you contemplate what you have studied so far, please remember prophecy is not meant to SCARE, but to PREPARE. Recall to mind that Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us and He is returning soon to spare us from the wrath that is to come! Meanwhile, we study to accurately discern the time and season in which we live! Let’s learn the lesson of the fig tree...Jesus is near, right at the door!

#### Part 4: Another Prophecy: Identifying Northern Invaders

The fall of Damascus may be the next “super sign” of the end times. If so, what then? For that, let’s consider the third prophecy relevant to today. In the end, it will tie together very nicely with what is going on in Syria. (Again, it may not be long until this part of the study is outdated. If so, be a Berean and study all the more to see what God’s Word has to say about the situation!)

Open your Bible to [Ezekiel 38-39](#), where there is very significant stage-setting for events the prophet Ezekiel describes. It is probably the prophecy getting the most air time today, as prophecy teachers are “all over it” because of what we see happening with nations listed there.

To understand the prophecy, you must understand the players in the game. When God revealed the prophecy to Ezekiel over 2,500 years ago, the prophet recorded the ancient names which identified nations and people groups. Research reveals the modern-day names, however, and it is important to know the regions and people groups Ezekiel refers to.

To help cement that, please go to [Who’s Who Among Northern Invaders](#). That is a short study of its own, so we’ll focus only there in this part of our study. You may not be 100% certain, as there is some debate among scholars as to exact identities of a few of the these entities, but based on your understanding, please identify the modern-day locations of these ancient lands and people groups:

Magog

Rosh

Meshech



Tubal

Persia

Ethiopian

Put

Gomer

Beth-Togarmah

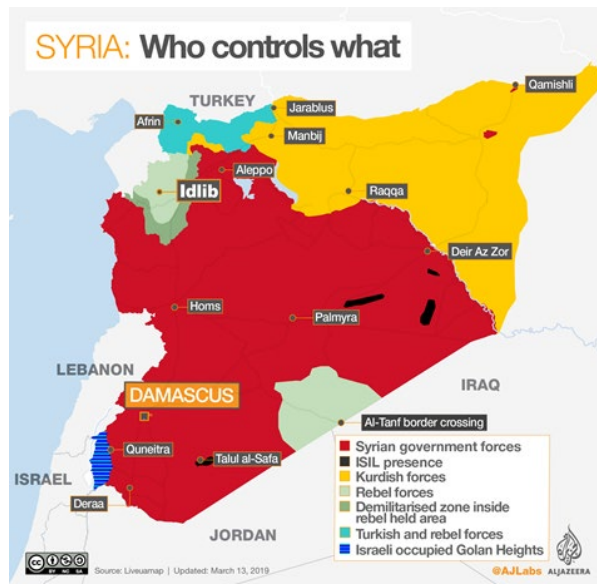
That's foundation for Part 5, so take a break or keep on trucking!

Part 5: What's Happening with Northern Invaders Today?

In Part 4 you identified a coalition, led by Gog of Magog, who will ultimately invade Israel. Refresh your memory by re-reading [Ezekiel 38](#).

We know from that passage a power-hungry Russian czar will lead his nation, along with Iran, Turkey and areas of Libya/Algeria and Ethiopia/Sudan in an invasion of Israel from the north. Ultimately, though, as described in Ezekiel 38-39, the Lord will come upon the scene to take care of business! According to [Ezekiel 38:18-22](#), describe how the Lord God responds to that invasion.

Now to tie that with current events in Syria! As of this writing, here is the layout in Syria:



## Idlib

The **Syrian government** continues fighting in Idlib, battling **Hay'et Tahrir al-Sham**, an alliance of anti-government groups formed in January and linked to al-Qaeda. It is led by **Jabhat Fateh al-Sham**, formerly known as **al-Nusra Front**.



The US-backed Kurds occupy the yellow area where oil and gas are found. The Kurds and Turkey are historical enemies. Syrian President Assad's forces, propped up by Russia, occupy the red area, and also want to seize the oil-rich Kurdish territory. Turkey has now invaded the blue-green area of Syria, in President Erdogan's attempt to grab territory to fulfill his ambition of re-establishing the Ottoman Empire. The light green area is designated as the designated "safe place" for US-backed moderate Sunni rebels, though it is anything but a "safe place!" Turkish President Erdogan, in an effort to gain favor, negotiated a deal in Russia designating that Sunni "safe place," including the darker green DMZ (demilitarized zone) which was supposed to be a buffer. Today, Assad's forces (backed by Russia) regularly invade the "green zone," running into conflict with Erdogan's Turkish forces, resulting in mass casualties of innocent civilians. The smaller map provides a closer look at the current "hotspot" in Syria.

Notice the tiny blue area to the south. That is Israel's Golan Heights. It rests on the borders with Lebanon (where the terrorist organization, Hezbollah, hangs out), and Syria (where Iran continues their quest to establish a presence).

All the major players are there! Russia...backing the Assad regime and angling for the oil in Kurdish-held territory. Turkey...attempting to barge into the area as Erdogan longs to gain control of the Muslim world. Iran...desperately wanting to get close enough to "wipe Israel off the map." Libya/Algeria and Ethiopia/Sudan currently play less active roles, but important ones. Terrorists camps and weapon depots connected to the "Big Three" dot the landscape of those nations.

Today, Israel continues to attack and destroy Iranian shipments of Russian-made weapons and equipment coming into Damascus. Common is the scenario in which Iran flies in huge transport planes loaded with weapons, they off-load, then Israeli airstrikes destroy the payload and take out Iranian military personnel. (As time progresses, this may change! So if you are completing the study at a later date, the news may be different!)

Meanwhile, the leader of Hezbollah (a terrorist organization positioned primarily in Lebanon), Hassan Nasrallah, is becoming an Iranian military leader. Since the targeted assassination of Qassam Soliemani, Iran's top General, the Iranian military has become discombobulated because Soliemani went to his

grave having kept many of his negotiated deals and strategies to himself. Nasrallah has become the bold lion, willing to take whatever reigns he can to advance the position of an evil regime.

Make no mistake: Russia, Iran and Turkey are not allies. Though they will one day unite against Israel, the three all have very different goals and motives. Russia and its power-crazed President Putin want more and more power! Restore former Soviet glory and becoming the all-powerful world leader is the goal. Getting their hands on oil and gas is critical to meeting their objective.

Turkish President Erdogan, meanwhile, pictures himself as the all-powerful leader of a revived Ottoman Empire, in which he rules the entire Muslim world. Furthermore, we all know about the Iranian regime and their desire to wipe Israel off the map. What is less known, though, is theirs is very much a spiritual motive than a political one. It is their belief that Allah has called them specifically to kill the infidels and create chaos, which will bring about the coming of the Muslim messiah. No amount of political negotiation will ever work with Iran, as theirs is a spiritual mission, not a political one.

Russia and Turkey are currently on opposing sides in Syria and Libya. Both are vying for power and both want oil and gas. Their economies are in the tank, and they are after the resources necessary to play their power game. To grab oil and gas found only in the Kurdish-held areas of Syria or in huge amounts off the Israeli coast serve as a tremendous motivation for the eventual invasion from the north!

United States assistance to the Turks in Syria is not so much that America favors Turkey, but rather are taking a stand with the less of two evils. If Syria falls, it opens wide the doorway for invasion into Israel. Thus, America's presence in Syria is slim, but for the purpose of protecting Israel. Nonetheless, the fact the US is seemingly siding with Turkey makes the Russians nervous.

Meanwhile, Russia does its bidding through Iran. While Russia supplies weaponry and technology with Iran, it is Iran who is taking a beating from Israel when they attempt to ship that equipment and weaponry to Damascus! Russia doesn't like it, yet must allow Israel to take care of business so that big brother (the US) doesn't get involved on Israel's behalf.

So, you see, Syria is a very complicated place! Refresh your memory of what [Isaiah 17:1](#) says about Damascus. Write out that verse here:

This part was a lot of reading, but you hung in there! Remember, current events change rapidly, so what you have read here may be "old news" and much different circumstantially if you are reading this at a later date. However, remember one thing: God's Word is the same yesterday, today and forever. Current events may change, but the Northern Invaders are identified and will not change. They WILL ultimately invade Israel, just as Ezekiel says they will. It is only a matter of time.

But I leave you with this as we close out Part 5: Prophecy is not meant to SCARE, but to PREPARE! You are safe with the Lord. Go back to the passage in which we began and spend some time meditating on [John 14:1-3](#). When you're ready, come back for Part 6.

## Part 6: Putting the Coronavirus in Perspective

We have examined “developing” prophetic events, including the re-birth of Israel (prophesied in Ezekiel 36-37), the destruction of Damascus (prophesied in Isaiah 17 and Jeremiah 49) and the soon-coming Northern Invasion, to include Russia, Iran, Turkey and others (prophesied in Ezekiel 38-39). In Part 6, we’ll focus on another current event causing a worldwide stir and giving us a glimpse of future prophetic events.

At the time of this writing, the Coronavirus has become pandemic, and has shut down the borders of several countries, particularly in the Far and Middle East. Though the Bible does not specifically identify the Coronavirus, we are told pestilence (fatal, epidemic disease) will strike with vengeance during the Tribulation. We’ll examine that passage shortly, but first let’s consider the current situation. (If you are completing this study after the Coronavirus has been contained, perhaps there is another pestilence at hand. If not, there will be eventually!)

The Coronavirus has officially taken the lives of thousands, though experts believe the numbers are far greater than that. China, where the virus originated, has not been forthcoming about how the virus started, what they are doing to contain it, or how many have died as a result of it. (One estimate indicates the numbers in China may be 52 times worse than reported.) What is known, though, is the virus emanated from a chemical/biological lab in Wuhan. That lab is believed to be the only one of its kind in China, and perhaps a lab developing biological and chemical agents to be utilized in chemical warfare. It is also becoming more and more suspect that the virus was manmade.

Evidence is surfacing to indicate 10’s (if not 100’s) of thousands of Chinese citizens have been either shot or cremated if they were infected. Furthermore, many incinerators have been shipped to Wuhan and are believed to be working continually to burn medical waste, animal carcasses and likely human remains.

After China, Iran is believed to have the second largest number of exposures (in the thousands). Italy is close behind and many other countries have reported cases. Israel, and even the Gaza Strip, have closed off their borders to those arriving from China. Many others have followed suit.

Make no mistake, this pandemic is real and deadly, and we will likely see similar or worse epidemics in our lifetimes. However, it is nothing compared to pestilence and destruction that will occur during the Tribulation.

The book of Revelation reveals vivid imagery of a time early in the Tribulation in which seven seals will be broken and horrible things will happen upon the earth. Read [Revelation 6](#) for a glimpse of the destruction those seven seals will bring.

Now focus on the fourth seal, described in verses 7-8. Who is sitting upon the ashen horse, and who is following him?

What authority is given to those two characters, and how will they accomplish it?

How many will be killed?

The current population of earth is about 7.8 billion. Suppose one half are Christians and are raptured before the Tribulation. (That is a very generous estimate!) That would leave 3.9 billion people during the Tribulation. Given those numbers, almost a billion people will be wiped out when a fourth of the earth is destroyed as a result of the fourth seal!

But is there something more sinister at play?

Maybe...maybe not! But to destroy civilizations certainly plays into the globalist agenda. The globalist agenda espouses the idea that there should be only one government, one religion, one currency, and borders should be erased so we can be one big, happy family. However, there is an effort to limit the size of that "family!"

To give you one example, to the right is a picture of the Georgia Guidestones. In brief, this is a monument upon which are engraved tenants consistent with proponents of One World Order (globalists). Those tenants are written in multiple languages, and the first is this: "Maintain humanity under 500,000,000 in perpetual balance with nature."



Consider the numbers once more. There are approximately 7.8 billion people on the earth. To reduce it to 500 million requires the demise of 7.3 billion people!

Friends, we are living in a culture of death that will only increase. Abortionists have killed over 6 million babies since Roe v Wade in the 1970's, the elderly and physically challenged are more and more becoming the target of death, and conflicts and wars are often kept stirred up on both sides, resulting in increased casualties. Where will it end?

There is definitely a global agenda striving for One World Order with One World Government, One World Religion and One World Currency! I can't describe it any better than Amir Tsarfati in his teaching, [The Illuminati and One World Government](#). To gain understanding of the agenda, I encourage you to carve out time (1 hour) to watch that video teaching.

As we close this part, let's circle back to the Coronavirus (or whatever the latest pestilence might be). Read these verses from [Psalm 91](#), paying careful attention to God's promises regarding pestilence:

*He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High  
Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.*

*<sup>2</sup> I will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress,  
My God, in whom I trust!"*

*<sup>3</sup> For it is He who delivers you from the snare of the trapper  
And from the deadly pestilence.*

*<sup>4</sup> He will cover you with His pinions,*

*And under His wings you may seek refuge;  
His faithfulness is a shield and bulwark.  
<sup>5</sup> You will not be afraid of the terror by night,  
Or of the arrow that flies by day;  
<sup>6</sup> Of the pestilence that stalks in darkness,  
Or of the destruction that lays waste at noon.  
<sup>7</sup> A thousand may fall at your side  
And ten thousand at your right hand,  
But it shall not approach you.  
<sup>8</sup> You will only look on with your eyes  
And see the recompense of the wicked.  
<sup>9</sup> For you have made the Lord, my refuge,  
Even the Most High, your dwelling place.  
<sup>10</sup> No evil will befall you,  
Nor will any plague come near your tent.*

#### Part 7: What Else Will We See in the End?

Beyond the One World Order agenda of the globalists, what other things might we expect in the end? The Bible is filled with many prophecies regarding the end times, but let's set our sights on two very clear evidences of the last days: lawlessness and false prophets/teachers.

Turn in your Bible to [2 Timothy 3:1-5](#). To provide context, the apostle Paul is writing to the young protégé, Timothy, as Timothy launches his ministry. In chapter 1, Paul charges Timothy to guard what has been entrusted to him, and in chapter 2 he instructs him to be a strong soldier of Christ Jesus. Surprisingly, Paul then launches into the last days, telling Timothy what they will be like.

Within the long list in that passage, choose 3-4 of those acts of lawlessness and provide current examples.

Sadly, those things are not always limited to the "outside world," but have infiltrated the church to various degrees as well. Are we impacting our culture, or is our culture impacting us?

2 Timothy provides a New Testament perspective, so let's flip back to the book of Isaiah for an Old Testament perspective. Read [Isaiah 5:20-23](#) and list the contrasts you find there.

Now, list current day examples where good is called evil and evil is called good.

Evil has been part of our world since the day Adam and Eve succumbed to temptation in the Garden of Eden. Do you think it is any different today than any other time in history? Why or why not?

Not only is lawlessness rampant in our world today, so are false prophets and teachers. In His famous Sermon on the Mount ([Matthew 5-7](#)), Jesus taught the multitudes about so many things, including awareness of wolves in sheep's clothing (Matthew 7:15), and he identified them as false prophets. Paul also provided great advice in [Colossians 2:8](#). According to that verse, what takes us captive if we rely upon the traditions of men?

We're also warned of false prophets arising among us in [2 Peter 2:1-3](#). What will they secretly do?

What will they do with the "way of truth?"

What is their motive in exploiting you with false words?

Destructive heresies, maligned truth and exploitation with false words characterize false prophets. They do so by captivating us through philosophy and empty deception ([Colossians 2:8](#)) and by adding to or taking away from God's Word. According to [Revelation 22:18-19](#), what are God's warnings to those who add to or take away from His Word?

Finally, in Paul's training of Timothy, he warned against those who fall away. Write out [1 Timothy 4:1-2](#) here:

Deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons are being spread in so many ways, leading so many astray. My prayer is you have uncovered good food for thought as you have journeyed through each part of this study. Take a break here, if necessary, then come back as we look into modern-day false doctrines that are growing rampant in our churches today.

## Part 8: Definitions and Examples of False Doctrine in Churches Today

As we dive into Part 8, please take a moment to recall the warning Jesus gave in [Matthew 7:15-20](#). We know there are wolves in sheep's clothing (false prophets) lying in wait to serve up destructive heresies, maligned truth and false words. But how do we know truth from lies when they are so subtle?

I suggest that we know in the same manner a bank teller knows the difference between a real and a counterfeit bill! In training, tellers are taught how to recognize counterfeits, not by handing them a bunch of counterfeit bills to look at, but by putting the real thing in their hands and instructing them to know the real thing frontwards, backwards, upside-down and every which way! In other words, know the real bill so well that anything else is obviously counterfeit.

That's how we are to be when it comes to discernment of false doctrine! Get into God's Word, dear friends! Know it forward, backward, upside-down and every which way! You see, if we know and understand God's Word, we are able to take what we hear and weigh it against the veracity of God's Word. In doing so, we will not be fooled by false prophets and teachers! Knowing God's Word is the key, and there is no short cut!

As we discuss false doctrine here, please weigh all that is discussed according to Scripture. Don't take my word for it, but study to show yourself approved. Again, Paul taught Timothy this principle in [2 Timothy 2:15](#). Write that verse here:

Each of us is commanded to accurately handle the Word of God. Be a Berean!

Having said that, it is important for you to know this: as I share examples of false doctrine and those who espouse it, I am NOT doubting their salvation, their love for Israel or their overall character. I am simply pointing out where it appears they are missing the mark theologically. The intent is simply a warning against false doctrine.

There are at least five false doctrines that have already either taken hold in the church today, or are significantly on the rise:

### 1. Replacement Theology

Replacement Theology stems from the belief that, because the Jewish people rejected Jesus as Messiah, all promises made to the Jewish people have been transferred to the church, making the church the "new Israel."

That could not be further from the truth. Throughout Scripture we find reference of God's everlasting promises to Israel. Here are a few examples:

[Genesis 17:6](#) – God promised an everlasting \_\_\_\_\_.

[Genesis 17:8](#) – God promised the land of Canaan as an everlasting \_\_\_\_\_.

[Genesis 48:4](#) – God promised Jacob (Israel) a land as an everlasting \_\_\_\_\_.



[Psalm 105:9-10](#) – God promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob an everlasting \_\_\_\_\_.

[Jeremiah 32:40](#) – Despite captivity in Babylon, God promised an everlasting \_\_\_\_\_ to Israel.

[Ezekiel 16:60](#) – God promised to remember the everlasting \_\_\_\_\_ with Israel.

[Ezekiel 37:26](#) – God’s covenant of peace will be an everlasting \_\_\_\_\_.

Over and over again, primarily through the prophets, God promised an everlasting covenant and a land of their own to the Jewish people. He was serious when He made His covenant. But did the Jewish people blow it when they rejected the Messiah? Let’s see what Scripture has to say about that.

Begin with the very last verse of [Romans 10](#). Write that verse here:

Based on that verse, it would seem God lost his patience with His people. But not so fast! Move on to [Romans 11](#) and read verses 1-2. It doesn’t get any clearer than that! Has God rejected His people?

Unfortunately, some otherwise well-respected theologians have fallen into the false theology of Replacement Theology. Some are identified in [Replacement Theology: The Black Sheep of Christendom](#).

## 2. Duel Covenant Theology

Another very damaging theology is that of Dual Covenant Theology. It is ideology that claims two different pathways to salvation: one for the Jews and one for the Gentiles. They teach that Jews do not need to believe in Jesus as Messiah because the law will do.

Why is it dangerous? Because Jews who believe that and die without entering into a salvation relationship with the Messiah, founded upon His grace, will spend eternity separated from the Lord. That is an eternal danger.

Again, let’s consider what Scripture has to say about salvation of the Jews. Look up [Romans 1:16](#) and write it here:

The Gospel is the power of salvation to all....but to the Jews first! It is more Jewish than it is Christian!

In [John 3:1-6](#), a religious leader (a Pharisee) named Nicodemus came to Jesus out of curiosity because it was obvious He had come from God. Jesus told Nicodemus he must be born again, which triggered questions about how one is to be born again. Jesus proceeded to tell him.

This was a Jewish man! If Jews could be saved any other way, why did Jesus tell Nicodemus he must be born again? Why did Jesus say, “...unless one is born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God?” Jesus answers that question Himself in [John 14:6](#). What is the only way to the Father?

Since Jesus said, "...no one comes to the Father but through Me," do the Jews have a different pathway to salvation?

There are some individuals and ministries who "love Israel to death." In other words, though they truly do love the nation of Israel, they are "loving the Jewish people to death" by promoting the false theology that the Jews do not need the Messiah.

No one takes more people to Israel each year than John Hagee. Without doubt, he loves Israel, and he runs one of the largest pro-Israel ministries in the world (Christians United for Israel). Yet, he loves the Jewish people "to death," and promotes false doctrine. You will find evidence of that in a well-written article entitled, [John Hagee \(CUFI\), Let My People Go!](#)

Unfortunately, ministries such as The International Fellowship of Christians and Jews work hard to build much-needed bridges between Christians and Jews, but also promote Dual Covenant Theology.

Genesis 12:3 tells us that those who bless Israel will be blessed. What better way to bless Israel than to share with them the Jewish Messiah who came to them first, but also offered us Gentiles saving grace by the loving act of giving His life for the entire world! ([John 3:16](#))

### **3. New Apostolic Reformation**

One of the most popular false doctrines arising within the today is the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR), with its "modern-day Apostles" and their "new revelations." The problem is God has not changed His mind about the position of apostles. Yes, while "apostle" might refer to one "sent out" as a missionary or church-planter, Jesus' apostles were of a different calling. NAR proponents claim to have been given not only new or special revelation from God, but also a position as apostles, of equal status to Jesus' apostles.

There are two significant problems with this if we dig into Scripture. First, the Bible indicates exclusive characteristics of Jesus' apostles: they witnessed the resurrection of Jesus ([1 Corinthians 9:1](#)), they were explicitly called ([Acts 9:15](#), [1 Corinthians 1:1](#), [2 Corinthians 1:1](#), [Ephesians 1:1](#), [Colossians 1:1](#), [2 Timothy 1:1](#)), and the sign of a true apostle was the performance of signs and wonders ([Acts 2:43](#), [2 Corinthians 12:12](#)). Their purpose was to build the foundation of the church, along with the prophets, with Jesus as the Cornerstone ([Ephesians 2:20](#)). We are beyond that stage in history.

The second significant problem is one of "adding to" Scripture. [Revelation 22:18-19](#) strongly warns against adding to or taking from the prophecy. However, the principle applies throughout Scripture. God doesn't "need our help" in adding to what He has already given through the writers of Scripture. As soon as someone claims to have a "new revelation" or a "new apostolic calling," it is implied there is something God must have forgotten to tell us in His Word! Such is just not the case. We can trust that God's Word is not only accurate, but also complete! He has not left anything out and has not given new or special revelation to anyone.

[GotQuestions.org](#), a sound, highly Scriptural-referenced site that answers Bible-related questions of all kinds, says this:

*There are some today who are seeking to [restore the position of apostle](#). This is a dangerous movement. Frequently, those claiming the office of apostle seek authority equal to, or at least rivaling, the authority of the original twelve apostles. There is absolutely no biblical evidence to support such an understanding of the role of apostle today. This would fit with the New Testament's warning against false apostles ([2 Corinthians 11:13](#)). ([Source](#))*

That is a firm position when it comes to the New Apostolic Reformation.

Big names in the NAR movement generally come from ministries such as Rock Church International, Bethel, Jesus Culture and Hillsong. Most have a charismatic bent, though not all charismatic congregations are adherents to the New Apostolic Reformation. In fact, there are some sound charismatic churches who speak out against NAR.

Another disturbing characteristic of the New Apostolic Reformation is the use of very appealing and high-quality music to draw well-intentioned believers into the fold. Bethel and Hillsong are known to produce very popular worship music, some of which is not sound theologically. Beware of being drawn into false theology by popular worship music.

#### **4. Prosperity Gospel**

This false teaching has been around as long as there have been ears to tickle! As humans, we tend to want “feel good” experiences in life, and we sometimes lose sight of the fact that, though our God is a loving God who paid the ultimate price to save us, we still live in a fallen, sin-sick world in which consequences fall upon the just and unjust. Life is just not always going to be easy.

In essence, Prosperity Gospel says, “God wants everyone to be happy and prosperous.” But, again, Scripture tells us something totally different. Read [Mathew 8:20](#). Was Jesus prosperous?

Often, the teaching focuses on the depth of one's faith. “If you only have enough faith, you will \_\_\_\_\_!” Enough faith will heal people, will make their bills disappear, will make them prosperous. But how much faith is enough? Everyone of us know people we consider “giants in the faith,” yet they face hardship just like us! Did their faith fail?

What about the missionary in a foreign land who is abducted and killed, while perpetual criminals live lives of freedom and fortune? What about the prayer warrior who battles cancer, while a child molester perpetrates evil upon children without consequence.

There is a lesson we can learn from the Apostle Paul in [Philippians 4:10-14](#). Please read that passage slow and deliberately. Why was Paul rejoicing?

Others were concerned about Paul. Obviously, he was not experiencing “happiness and prosperity!” He was in the midst of hardship.

According to verses 11-12, in what conditions had Paul learned to be content?

Is that different than the idea of “having enough faith” so that you might be happy and prosperous? What is the difference between happiness and contentment?

Circumstances drive happiness, while the joy of the Lord propels contentment! Why was Paul content with little or much? Because his eyes were not on what he had or didn't have, they were on the One who provided for him! Prosperity causes us to look at our bank accounts and our material possessions, while contentment requires that we focus on the Giver of life. Prosperity Gospel robs us of full dependence upon Jesus, while drawing us to want whatever we “have the faith” to go after.

Another characteristic of Prosperity Gospel is the idea of “sowing a seed of faith.” In other words, “Send us your money [sow the seed] and God will bless you.” Viable ministries are to be supported, but beware of those to whom you give, that are using funds to build their own kingdom rather than the Kingdom of God! As you give, it should go to further the work of God's Kingdom. If not, stop giving!

Lots (but certainly not all) high-profile TV preachers are among the wolves in sheep's clothing! Why? Because TV is still a very effective way to entice people to “sow a seed of faith!” Many, such as Joel Olsteen, Joyce Meyer, Creflo Dollar and others are pocketing millions while teaching others they need “just a little more faith” to become “their best self.”

Beware!

## **5. Seekers of Spectacular Signs & Wonders**

Another false phenomenon has made the rounds throughout the years, and that is those who continually look for spectacular signs and wonders, then try to tie them to Jesus' Second Coming.

Let's return briefly to [Matthew 16](#), which we studied in Part 2 of this study guide. If you recall, Jesus issued a rebuke to the religious leaders after they asked for a sign (verse 1). They knew how to discern the appearance of the sky but did not understand the time and season in which they lived. Namely, Jesus was right in front of them, performing miracles and fulfilling Old Testament prophecies about His coming. Yet, they did not recognize Him and, moreover, asked for signs from heaven even after seeing Jesus do miraculous things!

Now, read verse 4. Who seeks after a sign?

Furthermore, Jesus had already rebuked them previously for the same thing! Read [Matthew 12:38-39](#). According to verse 38, who asks for signs?

So, twice Jesus Himself describes those who seek after spectacular signs and wonders. Yet, when His disciples sat with Jesus on the Mount of Olives in [Matthew 24](#), asking what would be the sign of the end, Jesus told them straight out what they should look for. According to verses 1-28, what are some of the signs Jesus promised?

Friends, there is no need to ask for signs or to look for them in seeking to know of Jesus' Second Coming. Jesus Himself has spoken! Rebuke was issued to those who longed for spectacular, supernatural signs.

A few years ago, some big-name online prophecy teachers (beware!) began touting blood moons and tetrads as signs of Jesus' return. The theory was based on verses plucked out of context, such as:

- Joel 2:30-31: *I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, blood, fire and columns of smoke.*  
<sup>31</sup> *The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.*
- Acts 2:20: *The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.* (Quoted by the writer of Acts from Joel 2:32.)
- Revelation 6:12-14: *I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; <sup>13</sup> and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind.*

Now, Bible students, look carefully at those verses. Do they mention things in addition to blood moons? Yes! They mention fire and columns of smoke, the sun turned into darkness, a great earthquake, the sun becoming black, stars falling to earth and a fig tree casting unripe figs shaken by a great wind. In the prophecy of blood moons, were any of the other phenomena mentioned? Of course not! The plucked a single "sign" out of many others and turned it into false theology. The blood moons they warned about came and went, yet we're still awaiting the rapture!

Dear friends, one cannot pick and choose which signs predict the end of time and which do not!

Furthermore, the false blood moon prophecy was such a big deal because those blood moon fell on Jewish feast days. Well, two problems there: Jewish feast days always fall on full moons, so the fact blood moons were to appear on Jewish feast days is really not as unusual as you might think. Blood moons have occurred on Jewish feast days many times in the past. Secondly, the calculations, measurements, etc of the resulting eclipse were calibrated to full moon in America, not Israel! America is not mentioned in the Bible, so why would Jesus put focus on end time signs in America? (Perhaps we think more highly of ourselves than we ought!)

Now for the kicker! Revelation 6 clearly occurs during the Tribulation, which has not occurred yet! However, Biltz and Hagee's books on the blood moons were both written in the mid-2010's! False teaching!

Finally, turn to [2 Thessalonians 2:8-12](#).

There is focus on the "lawless one" in these verses. Who is the lawless one? He is coming in accordance with who?

According to the end of verse 9 and the beginning of verse 10, how will he come?

Why did the wicked perish (verse 10)?

Verses 11-12 issue very strong warning to such as these. Summarize those verses here:

The point here is that even Satan and the Antichrist are capable of performing signs and wonders. For those looking for spectacular signs and wonders, the risk of being deceived is high and the consequences are dire! When Jesus spoke, He could be trusted, and He Himself has told us what to expect in the last days. There is no reason to look for spectacular signs and wonders, which often are taken out of context anyway!

Mark Biltz and John Hagee are perhaps the two most prominent sign seekers in recent history. For more information, read [Blood Moons: Do They Fulfill Bible Prophecy](#) (and notice Hagee's "new revelation" found just to the left of "The Seven Seals of Revelation" graphic). A third sign seeker is Jonathan Cahn who espoused not only the blood moon prophesy, but also wrote *The Harbinger*, theorizing that God has given specific signs to America, significant to end times. Yet America is never mentioned in the Bible!

Beware of those who seek spectacular signs and wonders as evidence of the coming of Jesus! Jesus Himself told us what to look for and all legitimate signs point to His coming!

Jesus is indeed coming soon and there are Scriptural signs in our world to indicate that. In Part 9, we will head for home, asking the question, "How close are we?" Take a break to meditate on Scripture passages you have read and come back refreshed for the end of our study together!

Part 9: How Close are We?

We have covered lots of ground, and we are going to land this plane in Part 9! Hopefully you are able to distinguish between an actual sign of the times (as provided clearly in Scripture) and the spectacular signs some want to see as signs of His coming. Be a Bible student and you will not be fooled!

Many of the signs we see today, including false prophets and teachers, will find ultimate fulfillment in the Tribulation. Yet, the rapture occurs before that! We will be out of here! To illustrate, it has been said:

In the late fall, when you see Christmas trees, Christmas lights, Christmas decorations, and you sing Christmas songs, you know Thanksgiving is just around the corner!

Such it is with Bible prophecy! We see the signs of the Tribulation, but we look forward to a time before that in which we will be caught up to meet Jesus in the air! What a glorious celebration that will be! Indeed, our redemption draws near!

[Luke 21](#) is a "sister passage" to Matthew 24 in which Jesus spends much of the chapter informing His followers what to expect in the end. Read verses 10-27, then write verse 28 here:

My friends, “these things” have begun to take place, thus we know our redemption draws near! How sweet!

Interestingly, remember Jesus telling His disciples the parable of the fig tree in Matthew 24? Well, on to read the next few verses in Luke 21! What do you find?

God’s Word also has great encouragement for us as we await His return! Turn to [1 Thessalonians 5:1-11](#). Why do you think Paul says (verse 1) that we have no need for anything to be written to us regarding times and epochs?

Verse 2 says that Jesus will come like a thief in the night. No one knows the day or the hour, yet we have no need for anything to be written to us. Could it be that, if we are prepared as a bride awaiting her groom, we don’t need to know the exact time? We are always ready!

Verse 3 implies that some will not be ready. While nice and comfy (“peace and safety”) in our own little worlds, could we experience sudden destruction? Yes...if we are not ready! What do verses 4-8 say about being ready?

Verses 9-10 are some of the most encouraging verses in all the Bible! Write them out here:

Finally, the passage ends with specific instruction. What are we to do as we await His return?

[Titus 2:11-14](#) are flagship verses for this ministry, *Looking for the Blessed Hope*. Read those verses slowly and deliberately. Describe the great gift God has given us, according to verse 11.

How are we to then live?

We have a Blessed Hope and His name is Jesus! He is coming again, and we are blessed as we look for the Blessed Hope and His appearing! Jesus, our Blessed Hope, will come for us one day soon. But one more thing we must do until He comes!

Read [Luke 19:13](#) in the King James Version and one other version. In a parable, Jesus once again instructs us as to what we should do. The KJV uses an interesting word. What is it?

What does it mean to “Occupy till I come?”

Indeed, we must do business...the Father’s business! Are you a businessman or woman? If not, what will you do to become one?

We are living in the time of the signs, therefore, we must prepare for His coming! Let’s do it together!

Thanks for studying with us. It is my prayer you have been blessed, and that you will in turn encourage one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near. ([Hebrews 10:25](#))