

Scripture Interpreting Scripture: The Prophets and Revelation

A narrative study through Old Testament prophecy and the Book of Revelation

Opening Narrative

The prophetic books of Scripture often speak in visions, symbols, warnings, promises, and patterns. At first, these images may appear scattered: beasts rise from the sea, kingdoms fall, a remnant is preserved, judgment comes, and a restored creation is promised. Yet when the Old Testament prophets are read alongside the Book of Revelation, a shared testimony begins to emerge. Scripture itself supplies the meaning of Scripture. Daniel explains kingdoms and beasts; Ezekiel explains heavenly throne imagery, measuring, restoration, and temple hope; Isaiah explains the holy God who judges evil and makes all things new; Zechariah explains the pierced One, the cleansing fountain, the lampstands, and the victory of the Lord; Joel, Amos, Zephaniah, Haggai, and Malachi add the Day of the Lord, the shaking of nations, and the final refining of God's people.

This study follows that principle: the Bible's prophetic passages are not treated as isolated predictions, but as a unified witness. The Old Testament prophets provide the language, symbols, and covenant setting that Revelation gathers together. Revelation then brings these strands to their climax in Jesus Christ, the Lamb who was slain, the King who reigns, the Judge who overthrows evil, and the Bridegroom who dwells forever with His people.

Body: Prophetic Scriptures That Reveal the Meaning of Other Scriptures

1. God Reveals His Plan Before He Acts

Amos 3:7 declares that the Lord reveals His counsel to His servants the prophets. Daniel 2:28 likewise says that God reveals mysteries concerning what will happen in the latter days. Revelation opens in the same spirit: it is "the Revelation of Jesus Christ," given to show His servants what must come to pass. Together, these passages teach that prophecy is not meant to satisfy curiosity alone; it reveals God's sovereignty over history and prepares His people to endure faithfully.

2. The Son of Man and the Coming Kingdom

Daniel 7 presents “one like the Son of Man” coming with the clouds of heaven to receive dominion, glory, and a kingdom. Revelation 1:7 announces that He comes with clouds and every eye will see Him, while Revelation 11:15 declares that the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ. Daniel provides the interpretive key: the cloud-coming figure is not merely a symbol of judgment, but the rightful King whose reign replaces the violent kingdoms of the earth.

3. Beasts, Horns, and Earthly Empires

Daniel 7 describes beasts rising from the sea, representing kingdoms that oppose God’s rule. Revelation 13 gathers those beastly images into one composite beast, showing that the same pattern of arrogant empire continues until final judgment. The horns, blasphemous mouth, persecution of the saints, and temporary authority in Revelation are best understood in light of Daniel’s vision: worldly power becomes beast-like when it exalts itself against God and wages war against His people.

4. The Throne Room and the Holy God

Isaiah 6 shows the Lord seated on His throne while seraphim cry, “Holy, holy, holy.” Ezekiel 1 describes the living creatures, wheels, glory, and heavenly majesty surrounding the throne. Daniel 7 pictures the Ancient of Days seated in judgment. Revelation 4 gathers these images together. The throne in Revelation is therefore not new imagery; it is the fulfillment and expansion of the prophetic vision that God reigns above every earthly power and will judge history in righteousness.

5. Scrolls, Seals, and Hidden Things Made Known

Daniel is told to seal the book until the time of the end, while Revelation presents a sealed scroll that only the Lamb is worthy to open. Ezekiel also receives a scroll containing lamentation and warning, and John in Revelation 10 eats a little scroll that is sweet in the mouth and bitter in the stomach. These passages interpret one another: God’s prophetic word is both revelation and responsibility. It unveils divine purposes, but it also contains judgment, warning, and the bitter cost of faithful witness.

6. The Measuring of the Temple and the Preservation of God’s People

Ezekiel 40–48 describes a measured temple and a restored people. Zechariah 2 speaks of Jerusalem measured for restoration. Revelation 11 includes the measuring of the temple, while Revelation 21 measures the New Jerusalem. Measuring signifies ownership,

protection, order, and promised completion. Revelation uses the prophetic language of temple measurement to show that God knows, preserves, and completes His dwelling place among His people.

7. The Day of the Lord: Judgment and Deliverance

Joel, Amos, Zephaniah, Isaiah, and Malachi all speak of the Day of the Lord as a day of darkness, shaking, fire, refining, and deliverance. Revelation's seals, trumpets, and bowls continue this prophetic pattern. Cosmic signs, falling stars, darkened skies, earthquakes, and the cry of the nations echo the prophets' language. The Day of the Lord is not simply catastrophe; it is the moment when God exposes evil, vindicates the righteous, and brings history under His holy rule.

8. Babylon as the Symbol of Proud Rebellion

Isaiah and Jeremiah prophesy against Babylon as a proud empire destined to fall. Daniel lives under Babylon and sees the rise and fall of kingdoms. Revelation 17–18 names “Babylon” as the great city of spiritual corruption, wealth, idolatry, persecution, and rebellion against God. The Old Testament defines Babylon as more than one ancient city; it becomes a recurring symbol of human arrogance organized against the Lord. Revelation announces its final collapse.

9. The Pierced One, the Lamb, and Cleansing

Zechariah 12:10 speaks of the people looking on the One whom they pierced and mourning. Zechariah 13:1 speaks of a fountain opened for cleansing. Isaiah 53 presents the suffering servant who bears sin. Revelation brings these streams together in the slain Lamb who redeems people by His blood and yet reigns from the throne. The prophets reveal that victory comes not merely through force, but through the suffering, sacrifice, and triumph of the Messiah.

10. The Remnant, the Witnesses, and the Faithful Saints

Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah, and Zechariah all preserve the theme of a faithful remnant. Daniel speaks of saints who endure under oppressive powers. Revelation calls for the endurance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus. The prophetic message is consistent: God preserves a people who remain faithful in the midst of pressure, deception, exile, and persecution.

11. Gog, Magog, and the Final Opposition

Ezekiel 38–39 describes Gog and Magog as a final coalition that rises against God's restored people but is overthrown by divine intervention. Revelation 20 uses Gog and

Magog to describe the last rebellion after Satan's release. Ezekiel gives Revelation its interpretive background: the final battle is not uncertain. The nations may gather, but God Himself brings the conflict to an end.

12. New Heavens, New Earth, and the Dwelling of God

Isaiah 65–66 promises new heavens and a new earth. Ezekiel ends with a restored city and the declaration that the Lord is there. Zechariah foresees holiness spreading through all life. Revelation 21–22 completes these hopes: the New Jerusalem descends, God dwells with His people, death is removed, the curse is gone, and the river and tree of life appear. The prophets reveal the meaning of Revelation's ending: redemption is not escape from creation, but the renewal of creation under the presence of God.

Conclusion: A Chronological Narrative of the Prophetic Message

The prophets begin with the certainty that God rules history and reveals His purposes before He acts. Human kingdoms rise in pride, violence, wealth, and spiritual rebellion, but none of them are ultimate. Daniel sees their beast-like nature; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Minor Prophets expose their injustice and idolatry; Revelation gathers them under the final image of Babylon and the beast.

Into this troubled history God promises a King. The Son of Man receives the kingdom; the Servant suffers for sin; the pierced One is mourned; the Lamb is slain and yet found worthy to open the scroll. Through Him, God's hidden plan unfolds. The Messiah redeems a people, calls them to endure, and makes them witnesses in the midst of a world that resists His reign.

As history moves forward, the conflict intensifies. The Day of the Lord arrives in judgments that shake creation and expose the futility of evil. The proud city falls, false worship is judged, oppressive powers are overthrown, and the saints are vindicated. The final rebellion gathers like Gog and Magog, but it ends under God's direct judgment. Evil does not have the last word.

The prophetic story concludes not in ruin, but in restoration. The measured city is completed, the dwelling of God comes down, the curse is removed, the tree of life returns, and the nations are healed. Read together, the Old Testament prophets and Revelation appear to say this: God reveals His plan, judges rebellion, preserves His faithful people, exalts the Lamb, defeats every enemy, and renews creation so that He may dwell forever with His redeemed people.

Scripture Reference Framework: Daniel 2, 7, 12; Isaiah 6, 11, 24–27, 53, 65–66; Ezekiel 1, 9–10, 37–48; Joel 2–3; Amos 3, 5; Zephaniah 1–3; Haggai 2; Zechariah 2–4, 12–14; Malachi 3–4; Revelation 1–22.