

A little extra...
INTERPRETATION OF BIBLE PROPHECY
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How do we accurately interpret Bible prophecy? This is an important topic as most of Joel's book is looking into the future.

In Bible prophecy you can have four points in time. You have the **present time** – the time of the prophecy and current circumstances (The people are at the end of a great locust invasion and facing a dire and depressing future). Then there may be what is called a “**near fulfillment.**” That is the fulfillment of a prophecy within a short time frame; right away, days or months. But there may also be a “**far fulfillment**” where the prophecy represents God working over a longer period of time, even centuries. Chapter three describes the scattering of Jewish people and the punishment of their enemies; which has happened many times over the last 2,000 years. Lastly, there will be an “**ultimate fulfillment**” where once and for all God fulfills the prophecy (in this passage, a time when God will at the end of time punish the wicked and reward the faithful). In other words, because there is still evil and injustice in the world – we look forward to a final “Day of the Lord” when God will wrap up human history.

Joel three is a passage that can be interpreted at each level: a present setting, near fulfillment, far fulfillment, and a future ultimate fulfillment.

