

# Introduction to Eschatology

The word “**eschatology**” comes from the Greek word “**eschatos**” which means “**ends of, latter, last, final**”. The suffix “**logy**” simply means “the study of”.

Therefore, eschatology is the study of the last days of the Old Covenant that God had with the Nation of Israel. It is the belief that all Bible prophecies were completely fulfilled by AD 70.

These prophecies include those dealing with the Return of the Lord Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the judgment of God against the nation of Israel and the arrival of the Kingdom of God. Jesus Himself predicted all these things in **Luke 21:6,20-22, 28, 31**.

Under the Old Covenant, being judged a false prophet was a very serious matter. It meant a death sentence, (**Deuteronomy 18:20**). Yet most modern prophecy teachers completely ignore this crucial point and present a Gospel message that make Jesus and the Apostles deceivers.

There are some that claim that the eschatology aspect of the Apostles doctrine is a relatively new teaching; however, as we can see from the passage we just read, there is nothing new about it.

This Apostolic teaching comes from the Bible which was divinely inspired long before any man-made creeds that contained contrary contradictions came into existence.

**Remember**, when you read the Bible, you are reading about things written to people that were alive in the first century. These things were getting ready to take place in their first century lifetime not our lifetime.

We believe that all Bible prophecy was fulfilled on schedule. The 1st century church received everything it was promised. The inspired words of Jesus and the Apostles take precedence over all teachings to the contrary.

God is the author of the Scriptures, not the author of confusion. (**2 Timothy 3:16, 1 Corinthians 14:33**) Confusion only comes when the original meaning of Scripture is altered or changed. (**Ephesians 4:5, Acts 2:42, 1 Timothy 4:16, John 17:8,20, Galatians 1:8, Hebrews 2:3, 1 John 4:6.**)

The question that often arises is, "**What does eschatology have to do with salvation?**" The answer is it has everything to do with salvation. It is about God being faithful to fulfill His promises in His Word.

Does truth matter? If truth does matter, then eschatology matters. Here are several reasons why it matters. Salvation is tied to eschatology because no one can go to heaven before Jesus returns. Jesus refers to this in **John 13:33, 36 & 14:2-3.**

Paul states in **1 Thessalonians 4:15-17** that the dead in Christ shall rise first. If the dead have not yet been resurrected which happens at the second coming, then no one is yet in heaven.

Most Christians believe that when they die, they will go to heaven; but heaven was not opened until the return of Jesus. According to **Hebrews 9:28**, salvation was not yet complete until Jesus appeared the second time without sin unto salvation. Peter also said in **1 Peter 1:5**, that salvation was not yet complete.

Consider this parable in **Matthew 22:1-10**. In **Matthew 22:1-3**, those invited to the marriage feast of the king's son are the nation of Israel, but they refused to come.

As this parable continues, in **Matthew 22:4-7**, we have a very clear prediction of the AD 70 judgment of Jerusalem. The destruction of the nation was because of their rejection of Jesus.

It was also prophesied from the beginning of John the Baptist's ministry in **Matthew 3:9-10**. Jesus did come in judgment against the nation of Israel in AD 70.

**This judgment ended the nation of Israel, its physical temple and sacrifices.**

God made it very clear that He is through with Israel, yet most Christians today still believe that the Jews are God's special people and must be protected. This false belief is affecting our foreign policy.

The truth about eschatology really does matter. It affects your world view. We are not living in the last days; we live in the Kingdom of God.

This Kingdom has no end; it is an eternal Kingdom. When we read and study the Bible, we must keep in mind the hermeneutical principle of audience relevance.

Audience relevance seeks to discover what the original audience understood a passage to mean. The Bible was written for us but not written to us. As you read these Scriptures, ask yourself to whom is this written? When did "**they**" expect Jesus to return?

A few places where Jesus specified when He would return when talking to His disciples are **Matthew 10:23, 16:27-28, 24:34**.

**Matthew 10:23** *But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, **Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.***

**Matthew 16:27-28, 27** *For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. **28** Verily I say unto you, **there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.***

**Matthew 24:34** *Verily I say unto you, **this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.***

Let's have a look at the following statements made by Jesus and his Apostles regarding his return.

- Jesus told Peter when He would return in John 21:21-22.

**John 21:21-22** 21, Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? 22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.

- Paul spoke of the nearness of the return of Jesus to the Roman Christians in Romans 13:11-12, 16:20.

**Romans 13:11-12**, 11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armour of light.

**Romans 16:20** And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

- To the Corinthian Christians, in 1 Corinthians 1:7-8, 7:31, 10:11, 15:51-52.

**1 Corinthians 1:7-8**, 7 so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: 8 who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**1 Corinthians 7:31** and they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.

**1 Corinthians 10:11** Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

**1 Corinthians 15:51-52**, 51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

- To the Philippian Christians in Philippians 1:6, 4:5.

*Philippians 1:6* being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

*Philippians 4:5* Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

- To the Thessalonian Christians in 1 Thessalonians 4:15, 5:23.

*1 Thessalonians 4:15* For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

*1 Thessalonians 5:23* And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- To Timothy in 1 Timothy 6:14.

*1 Timothy 6:14* that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:

- To Titus in Titus 2:12-13.

*Titus 2:12-13, 12* teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; *13* looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

- The writer of Hebrews in Hebrews 10:37.

*Hebrews 10:37* For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

- James talked of His return in James 5:7-9.

**James 5:7-9**, 7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. 8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for **the coming of the Lord draweth nigh**. 9 Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: **behold, the judge standeth before the door**.

- Peter also wrote about this to Christians in 1 Peter 1:13, 4:7.

**1 Peter 1:13**, Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought **unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ**:

**1 Peter 4:7** But **the end of all things is at hand**: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

- John wrote about it to the seven churches in Asia Minor in Revelation 1:1-3, 7.

**Revelation 1:1-3**, 1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things **which must shortly come to pass**; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: 2 who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. 3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: **for the time is at hand**.

**Revelation 1:7** Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, **and they also which pierced him**: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

- Jesus talked about His coming to the 1st century church of Thyatira in Revelation 2:25.

**Revelation 2:25** But that which ye have already **hold fast till I come**.

- Jesus also said to the 1st century church of Philadelphia in Revelation 3:11 that He was coming quickly.

*Revelation 3:11 Behold, **I come quickly**: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*

- Some other references where Jesus talked about His soon return are found in Revelation 22:6-7, 10, 12, 20.

*Revelation 22:6-7, 6 And he said unto me, these sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things **which must shortly be done**. 7 **Behold, I come quickly**: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.*

In **Matthew 24:34**, Jesus tells His disciples very plainly and very clearly that all of the things He had mentioned in **Matthew 24** would come to pass in their generation.

*Matthew 24:34 Verily I say unto you, **This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled**.*

**This included:**

- the Gospel being preached in all the world,
- the abomination of desolation,
- the great tribulation, and t
- the second coming of Christ.

This is so clear. Jesus made it very clear that He was coming in the lifetime of those He was speaking to back in that first century. All of the writers of the Epistles of the New Testament knew and wrote about His soon return **in their lifetime**.

**The Book of Revelation has already taken place.**

All the Scriptures that we have mentioned speak of the nearness of the end of the Old Covenant and the beginning of the New Covenant.

The Resurrection was on the Last Day of the Last Days. (**John 6:39, 11:24**)

**John 6:39** *And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, **but should raise it up again at the last day.***

**John 11:24** *Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again **in the resurrection at the last day.***

The Return of Jesus was **on the Last Day** of the Last Days. The Judgment was set up on **the Last Day** of the Last Days and has been ongoing ever since.

Jesus did keep His promise to come within that first century generation. His coming occurred spiritually the way He intended. He made atonement for sin that would last forever.

Today, we are in the New Eternal Covenant. Now all generations can receive eternal life and live eternally in heaven. Remember, we must always read the Scriptures for what they actually say, not for what we want them to say.

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