

Eschatology

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Intro - Eschatology: Overview

Topics

“**Eschatology**” > *eschatos*, last + *logos*, word or discourse. A discussion about last things.

“*n.* **1.** The branch of theology that is concerned with the end of the world or of humankind. **2.** A belief or a doctrine concerning the ultimate or final things, such as death, the destiny of humanity, the Second Coming, or the Last Judgment.” *American Heritage Dictionary*

Sometimes the subject is broken down into “Individual Eschatology” (what happens to the individual between his own death and the resurrection) and “General” or “World Eschatology” (what happens to all men at the end of time, the conclusion of the world). We will not make these distinctions, but rather study the different facets of eschatology as our texts bring them to view.

We will be studying what the Scriptures teach about the following topics:

- **Death**

E.g.: What happens at death? “Soul” and “spirit.” Is man conscious after death? “Hades,” “Sheol,” “Tartarus.”

- **Second Coming of Christ**

E.g.: When is Christ coming again? Are there signs and if so, what are they? What happens at the second coming? Will there be a “rapture”? What is the “millennium”?

- **Resurrection of the Dead**

E.g.: What happens at the resurrection of the dead? Will both righteous and wicked be raised? What will the resurrection body be like?

- **Judgment**

E.g.: What happens on “judgment day”? If man’s destiny is sealed at death, why a “judgment day”?

- **Eternity**

E.g.: What is the state of both the righteous and the wicked in eternity? “Hell,” “Gehenna.”

Our aim will be to learn what the truth is and then all that is false will stand in obvious contrast, whether these ideas or new ones that arise.

Suggestion: Bring a pen or pencil and extra paper or a notepad to take notes on. We will discuss more in class than the basic questions on the lessons.

Note: The last time we studied Eschatology was 2009. The class material for this study has been edited. If you have the class material from 2009, you may find it helpful to review it as we study this time.

L1 - So what? Why study eschatology?

Read the following scriptures. What impact can an understanding and belief in Biblical eschatology have on one's life and interaction with others. Make appropriate notes. We will study these scriptures in class.

Psa. 73. Note especially vv. 2-3,17, 21-28.

Mt. 5:11-12, 29-30

1Co. 15:19,32-34,58

2Co. 4:7-5:11

2Pt. 3:3-13

Rev. 2:10-11; 21:7-8

L2 - State of man after death

Cultures throughout time and throughout the world have believed in some sort of existence of man after death. The Egyptians had their *Book of the Dead* with “charms, spells, and formulas for use by the deceased in the afterworld” (*The Concise Columbia Encyclopedia*, Columbia University Press. Copyright © 1995 by Columbia University Press). The Persians followed Zoroastrianism, which included views of rewards or punishment depending on one’s choice in the struggle between the dual powers of good and evil. The Grecian philosophers spoke of a shadowy Hadean realm. The American Indians looked toward the “happy hunting ground.” Orientals adopted pantheism, wherein the soul is absorbed into a universal personality. Materialists deny any surviving personality after death. They contend life is like a candle that is snuffed out—all that is left is dust and ashes. What is the *truth* about the state of man after death? Is one conscious? Does personal individuality continue? Is there suffering? Rest? Is there a second chance?

Lk. 16:19-31

Is this a parable? What in the text indicates it *is*, or is *not*?

Regardless of how you answered the question above, let’s suppose it is a parable. If it is, is it a misuse of this scripture to use it to teach about the state of man after death? Explain your answer based on the nature of “parables” (see examples of parables in **Mt. 13**).

Some contend Jesus used a pagan myth or fable and that this story says nothing about the state of man after death. Is there anything in the the text that points to it being a fable, and if so, what? (It might be helpful to look up the word “fable” in a good dictionary. Compare two examples of *fables* in the Bible: **Judges 9:7-15**; **2Kings 14:8-9**.)

Jesus was a preacher. What did his apostle, Paul, write to Timothy and Titus about using fables or myths in their preaching? **1Tim. 1:4; 4:7; 2Tim. 4:2-4; Tit. 1:14**

Note: because *some* of the story is not literal (e.g., finger, tongue, flame) does not mean *all* of the story is not literal (e.g., Abraham, Lazarus, Moses and the prophets). We must beware of making everything figurative when figurative language is used. Figurative language is found on every page of the Bible. To make everything in a context figurative because figurative language is used would mean nothing in the Bible is literal! Figurative and literal language are intertwined, and careful and honest exegesis must be employed to correctly interpret.

What in the text indicates the time frame of this scene is the intermediate state between death and the resurrection *before* Christ’s second coming?

What does this text teach about rationality and personality after death?

Consider how does this story affects the doctrine of purgatory... reincarnation...second chances to repent? See also **2Co. 5:10; Heb. 9:27; 2Pt. 2:4,9**.

There are many passages that point to conscious existence after death. Hear are a couple ...

- **Gen. 5:24 (Heb. 11:5)** What did God take if Enoch ceased to exist as a conscious being? Who or what went to be with God? Was it not the same *person* who “walked with God”?
- **2Sam. 12:23** What would David go to, if one ceases to exist or be conscious after death? What good would it be to “go to him” if neither knew it? Is David merely saying he would go to the grave like his son? Is this a statement of unchangeable, sad, fate, or of hope?

L3 - Hades; Sheol; Gehenna; Tartarus; Paradise

Sheol

In KJV, often translated “hell” when the text is not referring to “hell” as we think of it, i.e. a place of eternal torment. For example, compare the KJV and other versions in **Psa. 16:10** (see **Acts 2:24-32**). The KJV translates Sheol: “grave” 31 times; “hell” 31 times; “pit” 3 times (OB).

Hades

“Hades” in the New Testament is the equivalent of “Sheol” in the Old Testament. Compare **Psa. 16:10** with **Ac. 2:27**. Letting *the context* define its usage, what does Sheol or Hades mean in the following?

- **Jonah 2:2** (Note: does it imply non-existence, unconsciousness, annihilation?)
- **2Sam. 22:6** (KJV, “hell”)
- **Job 17:13-16** (KJV, “grave,” “pit”)
- **Lk. 16:23** (KJV, “hell”)

Observation based on the texts above: There is no one universal definition of these words that fits all usages. Like words today, they have multiple meanings. *We must let context determine meaning in each case.*

What kind of people go to Sheol or Hades? Good? Wicked? Both? See the following scriptures.

- **Psa. 16:10** (KJV, “hell”)
- **Num. 16:30** (KJV, “pit”)

Observation based on the texts above: Can’t arbitrarily define “Hades” or “Sheol” as the destiny of the wicked. Since it sometimes means simply “death” or the “grave,” it sometimes refers to a place both good and wicked go. *Again, we must let context determine meaning.*

Tartarus

2Pt. 2:4 (“hell” NAS77, NAS95, NAS20, KJV, NKJV, ASV, ESV; *ταρταρος* - only occurrence in Bible)
Make notes on who goes there and what they experience.

Gehenna

“Gehenna” is the name of a valley S. and W. of Jerusalem. King Solomon (971-931BC) built a “high place” for Molech (**1Ki. 11:7**) on the mountain east of Jerusalem (**2Ki 23:13**), the mount of Olives. Later, Ahaz (731-715 B.C.) and Manasseh (695-642 B.C.) burnt their children in the fire in idolatrous rites in the valley of Hinnom to Molech. **2Ch. 28:3; 33:6**. Josiah (640-609 B.C.), the best king Judah ever had, destroyed the idols and defiled the valley, **2Ki. 23:10**. It became associated in prophetic writings with destruction by fire and brimstone, **Isa. 30:33**, and by death and decay, **Jer. 7:31-33; 19:1-7**. Note **Isa. 66:24**.

What can be learned from *the context* about Gehenna in the following scriptures?
(In these scriptures “hell” translates *γεεννα*, Gehenna.)

- **Mt. 5:22**
- **Mt. 5:29,30**
- **Mt. 10:28**
- **Mk. 9:46,48**

Paradise

What can be learned about “Paradise” from *the context* of the following scriptures?

- **Lk 23:43**
- **2Co. 12:4**
- **Rev. 2:7**

L4 - Intermediate State—With Jesus?

Two basic positions:

- 1) When one dies he goes to an intermediate place know as Hades where there is Paradise for the righteous and Tartarus for the wicked where they remain until Jesus comes again to receive them to himself in heaven
- 2) When a righteous person dies he immediately goes to be with Jesus in heaven. Hades is not a *separate* place from Heaven or Hell for the disembodied souls of men to wait for judgment.

We will discuss these in class. Study these and make appropriate notes for discussion.

Arguments for position #1:

- **Jn. 3:13** - No one has ascended to heaven but Christ. This was written many years after Christ ascended. Therefore, no one but Jesus had went to heaven but Jesus when this was written.
- **Jn. 14:1-3** - Jesus going to prepare a place. When he came (second coming) he would receive them unto himself; they would *then* be where he was—not before.
- **Ac. 2:34** - David has not ascended to heavens, yet David dead for 100's of years, therefore, David still not with the Lord in heaven. Woods, p. 7.
- **Lk. 23:43 with Jn. 20:17**. Jesus went to Paradise, but had not ascended to the Father, therefore Paradise not in heaven, the dwelling place of God (**2Ch 6:33**).
- **Ac 2:27,31 with Jn. 20:17** - Christ went to Hades. But he did not ascend to the Father, **Jn 20:17**. Therefore, Hades not in heaven.
- **1Jn. 4:12** - No man hath seen God. This would not be true of men go directly to heaven.

Arguments for position #2:

- **Luke 23:43** - go to Paradise at death
- **Php. 1:23** - with Christ at death
- **2Co 5:8** - home with the Lord when leave body
- **1Th. 3:13; 4:14** - come with His saints
- **Rev. 6:9** - souls of martyrs under the alter
- **Rev 14:1-4** - 144,000 on Mt. Zion with the Lamb, before the throne

L5 - “Soul Sleep” / Recognize after Death?

We will discuss the following scriptures in class.

Death as “sleep”

Death is often spoken of as “sleep” in the Bible. See, for example, **Dt. 31:16, 2Sam. 7:12**. Some conclude that what is meant is that there is no conscious activity after death.

Read the following scriptures. What are they referring to as being in a state of “sleep.” Be sure and note the reason for your decision based on the text.

- **John 11:11f**
- **Acts 13:36**

Read **Ecc. 3:19,20? 9:2,3,5,10** - Do these support the materialists claim that man is not conscious after death? What is the key phrase in Ecclesiastes governing the interpretation of all these passages?

Personal identity after death

Do people retain their person identity after death? Will we recognize people after death? Consider:

- **Mt. 22:32** - Abraham, Isaac, Jacob
- **Mt. 17:3** - Elijah, Moses
- **Lk. 16:19f** - Lazarus, rich man, Abraham
- **1Th. 4:13-18** - Comfort for living saints about departed saints

Mt. 10:28

Argument: “Soul and body” are “destroyed” in hell, not tormented. (Related argument on the nature of man: “soul” can be destroyed therefore not immortal.)

Answer: “Destroy” does *not* mean “cease to exist,” or “annihilate.”

“Destroy” —The bolded words in following verses is the same word translated “destroy” in **Mt. 10:28**. Does it mean “cease to exist”?

- **Mt 9:17** - “the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out and the wineskins are **ruined**,” the wineskins are “ruined,” did they still exist? Note: there was a *qualitative* change.
- **Mt 10:6; Lk 15:4,6,9,32** - “**Lost**” (*apollumi*) sheep, coin, son. Non-existent? Annihilated?
- **Heb. 1:11** - “They will **perish**, but You remain ...” Read the rest of the verse to see what is meant by “perish.” What is the parallel?

These, along with many other examples that could be given, make it clear the word can mean loss of *well-being*, **not** loss of *being*. Of its over 90 occurrences in the New Testament, *there is not one clear instance where context shows it is used to mean “annihilate” in the sense of “cease to exist.”*

Observe ...

- Man is comprised of *two* things: body and soul. If not, then when men kill the body, they also kill the soul.
- “Soul” here cannot mean simply human life, for if so, men *do* “kill the soul” when they put men to death and take away their human life.
- The contrast in the text is that men can only affect the body, but God can affect *both body and soul*. However, if at death men cease to exist (no conscious “soul”), when men kill the body they *do* affect both body and soul.
 - **Lk. 23:46** - What was happening to Jesus’ *body*? What did he say about his *spirit*?
 - **Ac. 7:59** - What was happening to Stephen’s *body*? What did he say about his *spirit*?

The truth presented in this text is that man is a dual being with “*both soul and body*,” and while man can kill the body, he cannot kill the “soul,” *implying the “soul” is more than just present life as a man*. The punishment warned is *beyond death*—God will “destroy both soul and body in hell.” This is a solemn warning to the disciples to let nothing deter them from their responsibility of preaching the gospel to an unbelieving world.

L6 - Mt. 24:1-44; Mk. 13:1-32; Lk. 21:20-33 - His “Coming” in AD70

Matthew chapter 24, Mark chapter 13, and Luke 21:5-36 are **parallel accounts** of a discourse by Jesus about His “coming.” In addition to the texts above, read **Mt. 23:34-39**.

Highlight in different colors on the texts provided the following families of words:

- “**Coming**” family (e.g., “Your coming,” “coming of the Son of Man”; include Mt 23:39)
- **Chronological** family (e.g., “immediately after,” “near,” “this generation will not pass away until all these things take place”)
- **Geographical** family (e.g., Judea, Jerusalem, mountains, housetop)
- “**these things**”

Marking these will aid in our interpretation of the texts.

Two or three questions?

If Mark and Luke interpret Matthew, how many questions did the disciples ask, and what were they?

Would the disciples be asking about his second coming from heaven at the end of time?

This discourse took place in the last week of Jesus’ life. Study the following scriptures and note (1) the chronology of the events, and (2) the understanding (or, ignorance) of the disciples at each point.

- **Mt 16:21-22** - c. 6 months before the cross
- **Mt. 20:20-22** - during Perean ministry, last four months before the cross
- **Lk 19:11** - On way to Jerusalem for last time
- **Jn. 14:1-5; 16:17-18** - night of betrayal
- **Jn. 20:9** - After resurrection

We will discuss these scriptures in class and their bearing on whether the disciples would ask about His second coming at the end of time.

“Generation,” Mt. 24:34

Does it mean: (1) A nation or race in its *successive* generations? (2) A *contemporary* race, a people *living at the same time*, the generation then living?

The second definition cannot be allowed by those who assign the preceding signs to Christ’ second coming at the end of time. Thus their need for the first definition.

- Matthew uses this word (*γενεα, genea*) 13 times in his account. In class, we will compare how he uses it the other 12 times. **Mt. 1:17; Mt. 11:16; Mt. 12:39,41,42,45; Mt. 16:4; Mt. 17:17; Mt. 23:36**
- Does the **context leading up to chapter 24** focus on a prophecy of a judgment coming on the generation then living or on the nation in its successive generations?
 - Cleansing temple **Mt. 21:12-15** - note esp. v. 15
 - Baptism of John **Mt. 21:23-25** - note v23
 - Two sons **Mt. 21:28-32**
 - Parable of the vineyard **Mt. 21:33-46** - note esp. vv. 42-45
 - Parable of wedding feast **Mt. 22:1-14**
 - Poll-tax (Pharisees) - **Mt. 22:15-22**
 - Woman with seven husbands (Sadducees) - **Mt. 22:23-40**
 - Whose son the “Christ”? (Pharisees) - **Mt. 22:41-46**
 - “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees” - **Mt. 23:1-36**
- Harmonizing Matthew and Mark with Luke, what must Jesus have in view in **Mt. 24:1-33**?

Cosmic and terrestrial catastrophes, Mt. 24:29-30

It is often assumed that the descriptions of cosmic and terrestrial catastrophes are referring to literal happenings. But, idiomatic usage and context must be considered in interpreting these phrases. What were the prophets referring to when using similar imagery in the following passages?

- **Isa. 13:10,13** - see vv. 1,17,19
- **Amos 5:4,5,18-20; 8:9**
- Note by contrast, **Isa. 30:26**.

Dual nature of Hebrew prophecy?

For study: Hebrew prophecy sometimes had dual fulfillment, first to the near, secondly to something in the distant future. Example: **2Sam. 7:12-16**. Is there any support for the possibility that **Mt. 24:36f** might have a second fulfillment in the second coming? We can discuss in class.

Mat 24:1-44 (NAS95)

1 Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him.
2 And He said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down."
3 As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"
4 And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you.
5 "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many.
6 "You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for *those things* must take place, but *that* is not yet the end.
7 "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.
8 "But all these things are *merely* the beginning of birth pangs.
9 "Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name.
10 "At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another.
11 "Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many.
12 "Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold.
13 "But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.
14 "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.
15 "Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),
16 then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.
17 "Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house.
18 "Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak.
19 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!
20 "But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath.
21 "For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.
22 "Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.
23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There *He is*,' do not believe *him*.

24 "For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.
25 "Behold, I have told you in advance.
26 "So if they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go out, *or*, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe *them*.
27 "For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be.
28 "Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.
29 "But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.
30 "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.
31 "And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.
32 "Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near;
33 so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, *right* at the door.
34 "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.
35 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.
36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.
37 "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah.
38 "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,
39 and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.
40 "Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left.
41 "Two women *will be* grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left.
42 "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.
43 "But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into.
44 "For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think *He will*.

L7 - Mt. 24:45-Mt 25:46—2nd coming, not AD70

The AD70 doctrine contends that the second coming of Christ, including the establishment of the eternal kingdom, the day of judgment, the end of the world, and the resurrection of the dead, occurred in AD70 with fall of Jerusalem.

Universal judgment on all, not on Jewish nation alone

- Are the two parables and the judgment scene applicable only to Jews, and only to Jews who lived previous to 70 A.D.? If so, did the Lord say nothing (for 70 A.D. doctrine argues ALL prophecies were fulfilled in 70 A.D.) relative to Jews who failed to use their abilities and to serve others after 70 A.D.?
- “**All the nations**” v32 - does this not include Gentiles as well as Jews? If so, chapter 25 is *not* simply a judgment on Israel. *ethnos* (G1484), “nations” (**Mt 25:32**) occurs in 164 times in 151 verses. It is translated “Gentiles” 87 of those times. In the plural form, it clearly is used of nations other than the Jews. Some say the land of Israel comprised many “nations.”

Judgment based on attitude toward Christ’ disciples

25:40, “to the extent that you did it to one of these **brothers of mine**” - Six times Jesus refers to his “brothers/brethren.” Unless this is the exception, it refers to them as his disciples, not simply race. Here are the other five times: **Mt 12:49; 28:10; Mk 3:34; Lk 8:21; Jn 20:17**.

Some argue the destiny of the righteous and wicked does not depend on being baptized, observing the Lord’s Supper, “benevolence toward Christians,” nor “any of the other things Christians concern themselves about at a final judgment,” but rather was a judgment of the Jews because the “weren’t merciful or benevolent” and referred to **Mt 23:23,24** and the good Samaritan.

- The fact that nothing is mentioned about baptism, etc. does not prove these are not factors at this judgment any more than the fact that idolatry is not mentioned proves it would not be a factor in judging Jews.
- If one says “brothers of mine” meant *Jewish* disciples, were the Jews only held accountable for being merciful to Jews who were disciples? **Mt 23:23,24** nor the story of the good Samaritan indicate whether the recipients of benevolence were even believers in God. “Love your neighbor” demands benevolence to all men, disciples or not.
- Jewish *Christians* had the similar problem as their Jewish counterparts who were not Christians, in that they failed to minister to Christians - see the book of James.

Finality

Mt. 25:1, “Then...” = *tote*, “adv. of time...*then, at that time*” TH.

What will happen at that time?

- **24:51**
- **25:10-12**
- **25:30**
- **25:34, 41, 46 t**

Added to this is the sense of finality in this judgment day scene. This is not a parable, but a picture Jesus draws of what will happen on that day. People are separated into either “sheep or “goats” (**vv. 32,33**) and their final destiny is announced (**vv. 34,41,46**). This does NOT picture A.D. 70.

L8 - 1Co. 15 - The Resurrection of the Body

The following questions serve to help the reader see the scope of each section of **1Corinthians 15**. By reading the chapter and completing the questions, hopefully, one will gain at least a general feel for what the apostle wrote here relative to this area of eschatology.

15:1-11 - On what is the gospel Paul preached founded?

Were the Corinthians saved? (v2) See also **Acts 18:8; 1Co 1:9; 6:11**.

Why ask this? Because if they were saved, it undermines the eschatological view of the A.D. 70 doctrine that Christ' redemptive work was not completed until A.D. 70 and therefore the Corinthians were not already in a saved state, but in a process of being saved.

15:12-19 - If there is no such thing as the resurrection of the human body, what then? List or number in your Bible the seven specific consequences Paul sets forth.

- What were some in Corinth saying? (v12b)
Is it inconsistent to believe Christ' body was raised but deny the human body can be raised—but, *are people always consistent?!*
- What was “raised” when Christ was “raised from the dead” (v12a)?
 - ▶ Does “resurrection of the dead” (v12b) refer to something *different* being raised or the *same* thing being raised? This comparison is made throughout this section—see e.g. **vv13-16**.
 - ▶ In **1Co 15** Paul is discussing the resurrection of *what*? See also **vv35ff**.

Proponents of the A.D. 70 doctrine must deny this, because if this is true, the foundation of their theology is destroyed, i.e., that all prophecies were fulfilled no later than A.D. 70.

Do you see anything *in the text* that indicates resurrection of the “dead” refers to a spiritual resurrection of faithful old covenant Jews who died before Christ? (This is what “resurrection of the body” is made to mean by some A.D. 70 advocates.)

What analogy did Paul use to give assurance that those “asleep” would be raised? (v20)

When will the resurrection take place?

- **v23b**
- **v24** - what “then” comes?
- **vv24b-26** - This is “when” he has “abolished” his “last enemy” which is *what*?

Compare

- ▶ **Jn. 5:28,29** - all “in the tombs” are raised to either life or judgment
- ▶ **Jn. 6:39,40; 12:48** - believers raised on the “last day”
- ▶ **1Co. 15:52** - resurrection Paul discussing is at the “last trumpet”

Note: If there is still death, and the resurrection of the righteous and wicked from the tombs has not taken place, has “the end” come? The “last day” past? the “last trumpet” sounded?

15:35-54 - What two questions concerning a resurrection of the body does Paul answer?

In **vv35-44** Paul introduces the “seed” analogy. What is “sown”? What is “raised”?

15:55-58 - How does belief in the resurrection of the body impact the believer?

Paul quotes **Isa. 25:8** in **v. 54** and **Hos. 13:14** in **v. 55**, and makes application to the resurrection of the imperishable, immortal body (**vv. 50-54**). The same Holy Spirit that guided Isaiah and Hosea guided Paul, and this shows the Messianic import of Old Testament prophecy. See **1Pt. 1:10-12**.

L9 - 1Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:1-11

4:13-18

What was Paul's purpose in this section of **1Thessalonians**?

How did what he wrote serve that purpose?

What two groups are discussed?

"Shall rise first" - First in comparison to what?

How many resurrections are discussed or implied in this section?

"rapture" - **"3.** The transporting of a person from one place to another, especially to heaven... [Obsolete French *abduction, carrying off* from rapt *carried away ...*]" *American Heritage Dictionary*. "'Rapture,' in the context of eschatology, is an English word derived from the Latin *rapio*, 'caught up' as found in the Vulgate rendering of 1 Thessalonians 4:17." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rapture>

The text says saints, dead and alive, will be "caught up" to meet the Lord in the air when he comes again, but it does *not* teach the premillennial view of the "rapture." In the pre-tribulation premillennial view, Christ will come and secretly "rapture" the saints from the earth, followed by seven years of "tribulation," after which He will come again and set up his 1,000 year reign on the earth. There is *nothing in this text* to support these views.

5:1-11

This is discussing the *time* of the event in **4:13-18**, with associated admonitions.

What is it called?

Will this event be *expected* or *unexpected*?

What will happen to those who are unprepared for it?

What are saints urged to do?

Will the saints have been "raptured" up to heaven when that day comes, or will they be on earth living soberly and alertly?

L10 - 2Thessalonians 2

Read the chapter.

Here we see another example (see **1Co. 15**) of wrong views concerning eschatology circulating in the first century.

What and when is “the day of the Lord” (**v2**) based on his first letter (**4:13-5:11**)?

Question for thought: If the “apostasy” and “the man of lawlessness” were to come over 2,000 years later, would there be a need to warn the Thessalonians about it and prepare them not to be swallowed up in it?

Whoever, or whatever, “the man of lawlessness” is, what did Paul say the Thessalonians knew about him? **v6**.

For thought: Do you reckon the Thessalonians knew anything about the world and political events of the twentieth century?

What did Paul teach would guard them against this apostasy and the deception connected with it?
See **vv 5,10,12,13-15**.

L11 - Revelation 20

We may *assume* a passage is referring to the **final judgment at the end of time**, when in fact it is referring to a **judgment on nations and people in times past**. Read, for example, **Psa 9:3-7; Dan 7:5-12**.

Compare **Rev. 17:1; 18:10,20; 19:2,11; and 20:4** — in view of the above, does the language demand that this refers to the **final judgment**? Considering this, and the time constraints of the book (**1:3; 2:16; 3:10-11; 6:11; 22:6,10,12,20**), should we not be careful in assuming the language of **Rev. 20:1-10** refers to the final judgment at the end of time?

Only *two* of the following will you read about *in the text* in **Revelation 20**. Circle the numbers for those two. Note are the verse/s where you read about each. (1) The second coming of Christ (2) Christ on the earth reigning in Jerusalem (3) Christians generally (4) Martyrs for the name of Christ (5) Reigning with Christ for 1,000 years

Underline each of the following that is *literal*. (1) **19:11**, A white horse the Faithful and True is riding (2) **19:13**, A robe dipped in blood He is wearing (3) **19:15**, A sharp sword coming from His mouth (4) **19:17-18**, An angel's summons to the birds to eat the flesh of men and horses slain in battle (5) **19:20**, A beast seized (6) **20:1**, A great chain by which Satan is bound (7) **20:4**, Thrones upon which martyrs sat (8) **20:8**, Gog and Magog, as numerous as the sand of the seashore (9) **20:4-7**, *1,000 years....??*

In the following, does “1,000” refer to a literal amount, or to a concept? If a concept, what is it?

- **Dt. 7:9** (Compare also **1Chron. 16:15**)
- **Psa. 50:10**
- **2Pt. 3:8**

Are the resurrections spoken of in the following texts physical resurrections of the body, and if not, what does the language signify?

- **Isa. 26:19**
- **Ezek. 37:12-14**
- **Rom. 11:15**

Compare

	<u>Rev. 6:9-11</u>	with	<u>20:4</u>
• Where were the souls?.....			
• How had they died?.....			
• Why had they died?.....			
• What were they crying for (ch. 6)			
and what were they given (ch. 20)?			

See also **Rev. 2:10-11**

There has been a war (**chapter 19**). Satan's helpers, the beast and false prophet have been utterly defeated. That having happened, the devil is chained and the martyrs are raised and reign 1,000 years. What is the point of this graphic picture?

On Gog and Magog, go back and read **Eze. 38-39**. If you have notes from our previous study of Ezekiel, review them.

If “resurrection” in **Rev. 20:4-6** does not refer to a physical resurrection of human bodies, does this mean that *any* passage that mentions resurrection cannot refer to a physical resurrection of the body? What determines whether a text refers to a physical resurrection of the human body or is used figuratively?

L12 - A.D. 70 Views

Rev. 19:10 - “the spirit of prophecy”

The title of one of the books by Max King, a proponent of the A.D. 70 doctrine, is “The Spirit of Prophecy.” This is taken from **Rev. 19:10**. It is used to set forth one of the main views of the A.D. 70 doctrine, i.e. that **the nature of prophecy is “spiritual” instead of “literal,”** and from this fundamental concept the doctrine is woven resulting in the **denial of any *literal* resurrection, judgment-day, and a place called heaven.**

Is there anything in the verse or context that indicates the angel is saying that the *nature* of prophecy in general is “*spiritual*” not “*literal*” and should always be interpreted this way?

Note what the text *does* say: **not** “prophecy is spiritual”; but that “the **testimony of Jesus** is the **spirit of prophecy**.”

What does “**testimony of Jesus**” mean— testimony Jesus *gives*, or, testimony *about* Jesus? Compare **1:2, 12:17**. Jesus and his glory forms the theme of this letter, and this is what the immediate context is about, **v7f**.

“**spirit of prophecy**” — “spirit” has numerous meanings in the New Testament. One is, “ purpose, aim” (*Vines Expository Dict.*), e.g. **2Co 12:18; Php 1:27**.

Suggestion: “ Don’t worship me ... I am not the focus ... worship God ... “for” it is the gospel of the glorified Lamb that characterizes prophecy, or is the purpose and aim of prophecy, not angels or other “servants.” Note: *the prophecy of this book*. This particular revelation (**1:1,2**) is the theme of this book.

Gal. 4:21-31

Considered by some A.D. 70 advocates as “the key of the Bible.” It is viewed as an allegory using the **transition from Ishmael as the heir to Isaac** as the heir picturing the **transition from national Israel to spiritual Israel becoming the heir**, which transition was culminated in A.D. 70. As Isaac did not become the heir when he was born, so the church did not become the heir in its beginning, but rather at the end of the “world” (Judaism) in A.D. 70. It is then (A.D. 70) that we “come to Isaac” at the “fall of the world” (i.e. destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70) and enter the new “world.”

Gen. 12:1-3 - did God intend to fulfill this prophecy through Eliezer (**Gen. 15:1-6**), Ishmael (**Gen. 16**), or Isaac (**Gen. 17:1-8, 17:19,21; Rom 9:6-9**)? Was Ishmael *ever* God’s intended heir of this promise?

What did Paul say the purpose of his allegory was? **Gal. 4:21**. See **5:1-4**.

Is there any indication that the purpose of this allegory was based on a transition of inheritance from Ishmael to Isaac or that it pictured such a time of transition of inheritance from physical to spiritual Israel?

Were the Galatian Christians and Paul justified and heirs of salvation *at the time of the letter* or would they have to wait until A.D. 70? **1:2-4; 2:16, 20-21; 3:8-9, 26-29; 4:1-7; 5:1**

If they are *now* (*before* A.D. 70) justified and heirs of salvation, are they *now* sons of the free woman and recipients of the promise? See the allegory, **4:21-31**.

If this text does not support the supposed transition that A.D. 70 advocates maintain, then one of their “key” passages fails of proof for their doctrine.

Rom. 4:13

A.D. 70 advocates say this text shows Abraham was looking to inheriting a “world,” and then equate this “world” with the “city” or “country” of **Heb. 11:8-16**, the “new heavens” and “new earth” of **2Pt. 3:13**, all of which referred to the passing away of Judaism in A.D. 70.

If **4:12**, “heir of the world,” is interpreted in the light of **vv11-12, 16-18**, what does it mean? Compare **Gal 3:7-8, 29**.

L13 - Daniel 2,7,9

Daniel 2 (Read the chapter)

Nebuchadnezzar's dream was about "what will take place in the latter days," **v28**. How is "latter days" translated in **Gen. 49:1** in NASB? (See marginal note in **Gen 49:1** and **Dan 2:28**.) (Compare also Num. 24:14—compare NASB, NKJV, ESV) Note the content of Gen. 49, to which this phrase refers.

What does the similar phrase in **Heb. 1:1-2** refer to? (Compare 2:1-4.) Compare also **Ac. 2:17**.

Based on these scriptures, underline the possible meanings of "latter days." (1) A short period immediately prior to Christ's second coming. (2) A phrase simply meaning "later" or "days to come" (3) The Christian dispensation (4) The latter years of the Jewish nation before its ultimate fall in A.D. 70

If the four kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar's dream are Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, in what time frame (century) does that place the events of **Dan 2:44**? Compare **Mt 3:2**; **Mk 9:1**; **Jn 18:36-37**; **Col 1:13**

Daniel 7 (Read the chapter)

The four beasts represent four kingdoms, **vv17,23**. If the four kingdoms are Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, in what time frame (century) does that place the events of **Dan 7:13-14**? Compare **Mk 1:15**; **Lk 24:25-27**; **Ac 2:32-36**.

"Son of man" (**Dan 7:13**) was one of Jesus most common ways to refer to himself. In Daniel's dream, was the Son of Man COMING FROM heaven or GOING TO heaven? Compare **Jn 14:28**; **16:28**; **20:17**; **Lk 24:26**; **Ac 2:34**; **Ac 5:31**; **Eph 1:20**

Daniel 9:24-27

The message Gabriel gave to Daniel is about what people and city? **v24**

What event is clearly spoke about in the first part of **v26** (up through the word "nothing")?

What will then happen "the city and the sanctuary"? **v26** How is this described in **v27** (after the word "offering")?

Compare **Mt. 24:15-16** with **Lk. 21:20-21**. What does Luke's gospel interpret "the **abomination of desolation** [Jesus quotes from LXX of Daniel] which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet" to be? What year did this happen?

What time limit on these events is found in **Mt 24:34**?

Premillennialists view a "gap" between the Messiah being "cut off" and the rest of the chapter (between the word "nothing" and "and"). According to this doctrine, we are now living in this "gap" and it will continue until the 70th week begins sometime in the near future. Already this "gap" is over 1900 years. Do you see any "gap" of time in the text, and if so, where?

Review

1. What benefits are there is studying eschatology?
2. In warning the Pharisaic lovers of money about their fate, what story did Jesus tell that clearly shows that the state of man after death is one of consciousness, either in torment or comfort? Where is this found?
3. Is this story an account of a historical event, or is it a parable, or is it a pagan myth? Why is the answer to this question important in the study of eschatology?
4. How does this story bear on the question of purgatory? second chances to repent after death? reincarnation?
5. “Sheol” or “Hades” does not mean the same thing in every text. What is the determining factor as to its meaning?
6. What is the historical background for Jesus’ use of “Gehenna” to warn of fearful punishment after death?
7. What are some of the things he said about Gehenna that were designed to impress upon the mind it was the worst possible punishment?
8. With whom did Paul expect to be when he died?
9. **Mt. 10:28** — Jesus said men were unable to do what?
10. What does “destroy” mean in **Mt. 10:28**?
11. What two questions were the disciples asking in **Mt. 24**?
12. What is a key verse in that chapter limiting the events discussed previous to that verse to a particular period of time?
13. What indicates the judgment scene in Mt. 25:31ff refers to the second coming of Christ and *not* A.D. 70?
14. What is the topic of **1Cor. 15**? How would you prove this? How does this impact the A.D. 70 doctrine?
15. **1Th. 4:18** — Paul wrote, “Therefore, comfort one another with these words.” What were they distraught about and what did he say that was designed to comfort them?
16. **1Th. 4:17** is a key verse used to support current premillennial views about the “rapture.” What are some of the the things assumed in current rapture theology that are not found in this text?
17. **Rev. 20:4-6** discusses a thousand year reign. What is assumed in current premillennial theology that is not found in this text?
18. How is **Rev. 19:10** interpreted by A.D. 70 advocates to deny prophecy of a coming *literal* resurrection and judgment-day?
19. **Gal. 4:21-31** is a key verse in A.D. 70 doctrine to support their concept of covenantal transition. What is assumed about Ishmael that was *never true*? What did Paul say his purpose was in using the allegory?
20. In **Rom. 4:13** Abraham is called “heir of the world.” What does this mean based on the *context*? What does it mean according to A.D. 70 theology?
21. “Heaven and earth passing away” in **Mt. 5:17,18** and **24:35** are made to refer to what in A.D. 70 doctrine? What do these phrases mean based on context and harmony?
22. **Heb. 11:8-16** speaks of Abraham seeking a “better” country. What is this contrasted with in the context?