

Theological Equipping Class
Eschatology in the Old Testament | August 11, 2019

Helpful Hints for Understanding OT Eschatology

1. What the OT actually says and what OT Jews believed are not always the same.
2. We have to read the OT through the lens of the NT.

Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ. (Galatians 3:16)

3. Keep in mind the already/not yet and prophetic foreshortening.
4. Eschatology is woven throughout the OT.
5. Most OT prophecy is not eschatological.
6. Understand the role of prophetic idiom.
7. Be aware of the poetic and figurative aspects of OT eschatology.

No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed. (Isaiah 65:20)

8. OT eschatology is about kingdom through covenant.
9. The OT is more concerned with general eschatology (national, corporate eschatology, dealing with Israel, the world, creation) than with personal eschatology (what happens to us after death).
10. Eschatology is progressively revealed throughout OT.

Old Testament Eschatological Hope

Creation and Fall

- *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.* (Genesis 1:1)
- *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.* (Genesis 3:15)

What are the key eschatological expectations that we see in the OT?

1. Israel would undergo exile (Jer 23:20; cf. Jer 30:24), oppression (Ezek 38:14–17), persecution (Dan 10:14; 11:27–12:10), false teaching, deception and apostasy (Dan 10:14ff.; 11:27–35).
2. After the tribulation Israel would seek the Lord (Hos 3:4–5) and be delivered (Ezek 38:14–16; Dan 10:14; 12:1–13) while their enemies would be judged (Ezek 38:14–16; Dan 10:14; 11:40–45; 12:2).
3. This deliverance and judgment will occur because a leader (Messiah) will finally conquer all of its enemies (Gen 49:1, 8–12; Num 24:14–19; Is 2:2–4; Mic 4:1–3; Dan 2:28–45; 10:14–12:10).
4. Some of Israel's Gentile enemies will experience deliverance during these eschatological days (Jer 47:4; 49:39; cf. Is 19:19–25)
5. The saints of Israel will be raised from the dead (Dan 12:2).
6. God will establish a new covenant with Israel (cf. Jer 31:31–34 with Jer 30:24). In that new covenant, the Spirit will be given in a distinct manner (Joel 2).
7. God will establish a kingdom on the earth and rule over it (Is 2:2–4; Dan 2:28–45; Mic 4:1–3) together with a Davidic king (Hos 3:4–5).

Eschatological Themes of the OT:

1. Messiah

- *Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time. And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. (Daniel 9:25–26)*
- *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel. (Genesis 3:15)*
- *I will surely bless you, & I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, & in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice. (Gen 22:17–18)*
- *And Abraham said to God, “Oh that Ishmael might live before you!” God said, “No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him. (Genesis 17:18–19)*
- *And God said to him, “I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body. (Genesis 35:11)*
- *The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. (Genesis 49:10)*
- *And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever. (2 Samuel 7:16)*
- *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. (Isaiah 9:6–7)*
- *My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes. (Ezekiel 37:24)*
- *And the Lord will be king over all the earth. On that day the Lord will be one and his name one. (Zechariah 14:9)*
- *The Lord says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.” (Psalm 110:1)*

2. Day of the Lord | Judgment

- *Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord! Why would you have the day of the Lord? It is darkness, and not light, as if a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him, or went into the house and leaned his hand against the wall, and a serpent bit him. Is not the day of the Lord darkness, and not light, and gloom with no brightness in it? (Amos 5:18–20)*
- *The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, and the lofty pride of men shall be humbled, and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day. (Isaiah 2:11)*

- *The great day of the Lord is near, near & hastening fast; the sound of the day of the Lord is bitter; the mighty man cries aloud there. A day of wrath is that day, a day of distress & anguish, a day of ruin & devastation, a day of darkness & gloom, a day of clouds & thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast & battle cry against the fortified cities & against the lofty battlements. (Zephaniah 1:14–16)*
- *Blow a trumpet in Zion; sound an alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming; it is near, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness there is spread upon the mountains a great and powerful people; their like has never been before, nor will be again after them through the years of all generations. (Joel 2:1–2)*
- *The oracle of the word of the Lord concerning Israel: Thus declares the Lord, who stretched out the heavens & founded the earth & formed the spirit of man within him: “Behold, I am about to make Jerusalem a cup of staggering to all the surrounding peoples. The siege of Jerusalem will also be against Judah. On that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples. All who lift it will surely hurt themselves. And all the nations of the earth will gather against it. On that day, declares the Lord, I will strike every horse with panic, & its rider with madness. But for the sake of the house of Judah I will keep my eyes open, when I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. Then the clans of Judah shall say to themselves, ‘The inhabitants of Jerusalem have strength through the Lord of hosts, their God.’ “On that day I will make the clans of Judah like a blazing pot in the midst of wood, like a flaming torch among sheaves. And they shall devour to the right and to the left all the surrounding peoples, while Jerusalem shall again be inhabited in its place, in Jerusalem. (Zechariah 12:1–6; see also vss. 8, 9, 11; 13:1, 2, 4 and so forth)*

3. Blessing of the Gentiles

- *Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” (Gen 12:1–3)*
- *Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. (Psalm 2:8)*
- *May he have dominion from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth! May desert tribes bow down before him, and his enemies lick the dust! May the kings of Tarshish and of the coastlands render him tribute; may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts! May all kings fall down before him, all nations serve him! (Psalm 72:8–11)*

4. Peace/ New Creation

- *There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious. (Isaiah 11:1–10)*
- *The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. (Isaiah 35:1–10)*
- *Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law. Thus says God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it: "I am the Lord; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. I am the Lord; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols. Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them." (Isaiah 42:1–9)*

