

He Gave Us Prophets

Study Guide

LESSON
EIGHT

UNFOLDING
ESCHATOLOGY



THIRD MILLENNIUM
MINISTRIES

Biblical Education. For the World. For Free.

STUDY GUIDE

CONTENTS

Outline.....	3
Notes.....	4
Review Questions	18
Application Questions.....	24

How to use this lesson and study guide

- **Before you watch the lesson**
 - **Preparation** — Complete any recommended readings.
 - **Schedule breaks** — Review the outline and the time codes to determine where to begin and end your viewing session. IIM lessons are densely packed with information, so you may want to schedule breaks. Breaks should be scheduled at major divisions in the outline.
- **While you are watching the lesson**
 - **Notes** — Use the Notes section to follow the lesson and to take additional notes. Many of the main ideas are already summarized in the notes, but make sure to supplement these with your own notes. You should also add supporting details that will help you to remember, describe, and defend the main ideas.
 - **Pause/replay portions of the lesson** — You may find it helpful to pause or replay the video at certain points in order to write additional notes, review difficult concepts, or discuss points of interest.
- **After you watch the lesson**
 - **Review Questions** — Questions on the basic content of the lesson. Answer review questions in the space provided. Review questions should be completed individually rather than in a group.
 - **Application Questions** — Questions relating the content of the lesson to Christian living, theology, and ministry. Application questions are appropriate for written assignments or as topics for group discussions. For written assignments, it is recommended that answers not exceed one page in length.

Outline

- I. Introduction (0:32)
- II. Mosaic Eschatology (2:01)
 - A. Covenant Cycles (2:42)
 - B. Covenant Culmination (3:30)
- III. Early Prophetic Eschatology (7:38)
 - A. Similarities to Moses (8:19)
 - B. Additions to Moses (10:20)
 - 1. Kingship (10:50)
 - 2. Temple (12:38)
 - 3. Gentiles (14:16)
- IV. Later Prophetic Eschatology (18:53)
 - A. Jeremiah's Expectation (19:37)
 - B. Daniel's Insight (21:15)
 - C. Final Outlooks (25:07)
 - 1. Initial Hopes (25:42)
 - 2. Final Hopes (26:45)
- V. New Testament Eschatology (28:46)
 - A. Terminology (29:36)
 - 1. Gospel (29:54)
 - 2. Kingdom (32:25)
 - 3. Latter Days (33:32)
 - B. Structure (34:34)
 - 1. John the Baptist (34:55)
 - 2. Jesus (35:45)
 - C. Themes (37:30)
 - 1. Exile (37:50)
 - 2. Restoration (39:24)
- VI. Conclusion (42:24)

Notes

I. Introduction

II. Mosaic Eschatology

Moses told Israel:

- Hard times were coming: exile from the land of promise.
- Eschatological hope: one day things would be much better.

A. Covenant Cycles

Cycles of judgment and blessing would characterize the relationship between God and his people.

B. Covenant Culmination

Moses saw a definite end or eschaton in the future.

Judgments would increase as Israel went further and further away from God.

God would have mercy on his people and bring them back to the land to enjoy a permanent state of unimaginable covenant blessings.

In its technical use, the term “the last days” means “the culmination of history.”

In the “latter days” or “eschaton,” Israel would be brought back to the land of promise and receive tremendous blessings.

III. Early Prophetic Eschatology

The prophets up to the time of Daniel had a basic eschatological perspective that looked very much like Moses’ own perspective.

A. Similarities to Moses

God would supernaturally renew the remnant of his people in exile and give them forgiveness.

Early prophets expected a change of heart in those who were taken into exile.

Early prophets taught that Mosaic eschatology was true.

B. Additions to Moses

A major covenant event took place between Moses and the early prophets: the Royal Covenant made with David.

1. Kingship

The judgment of God would include a desertion of the throne of David.

The restoration of Israel after the exile would include a restoration of the throne of David to great glory.

2. Temple

Many Israelites wrongly believed that the temple of God in Jerusalem was inviolable.

The temple of God in Jerusalem would be destroyed.

The prophets promised that in the restoration period after the exile, a glorious temple would be rebuilt.

3. **Gentiles**

Victory over the people of God would be given to the Gentiles during Israel's exile.

The people of the covenant had become God's enemies because of their sins.

“Day of the Lord”

- Yahweh was able to destroy all of his enemies in a single day
- judgment against the people of God after they became his enemies
- a great battle that would take place as the people of God were restored to the land

In the restoration after exile:

- The blessings of God would pour out on Israel.
- These blessings would include the ingrafting of countless Gentiles into the true faith.
- God's covenant people would expand to cover the entire earth.

IV. Later Prophetic Eschatology

The reactions of God's people had a tremendous effect of the ways that the "latter days" or "eschaton" would unfold.

A. Jeremiah's Expectation

Followed the pattern of early biblical prophecy, Jeremiah predicted that the exile would last 70 years.

This prophecy was fulfilled when the first returnees came back to the land in 539 B.C., under the leadership of Zerubbabel.

B. Daniel's Insight

Famous vision of the 70 weeks of years in Daniel chapter 9.

The Israelites had gone into exile, but they still had not repented of their sins.

Because the people had refused to repent, God decided to multiply the length of the exile seven times over.

C. **Final Outlooks**

The last stages of Old Testament prophecy:

- during the restoration period
- after a number of Israelites were released from captivity and returned to the Promised Land

1. **Initial Hopes (539-515 B.C.)**

Small groups of Israelites returned to the land. They hoped to see the great blessings from God poured out quickly.

Haggai and Zechariah focused on four eschatological hopes:

- the restoration of David's throne
- victory over Gentile nations
- the restoration of the temple
- the renewal of nature

2. Final Hopes

Israel had little more than outward conformity to the will of God.

- widespread intermarriage with Gentile women
- widespread apostasy resulted
- the hope of great blessings for Israel were cast into the distant future

Malachi:

- focused on this distant hope more than any other late prophet
- sharply rebuked those living in Jerusalem
- warned them that a day of judgment and blessing was coming in the future

V. New Testament Eschatology

New Testament writers:

- understood the developments of eschatology within the Old Testament
- added to this the reality of Jesus' ministry

A. Terminology

1. Gospel

More than 100 times New Testament writers speak of the Christian message about Christ as the “gospel” or “good news.”

Term “gospel” comes from:

- the Old Testament prophets
- Hebrew word *basar*, often translated “good news” or “glad tidings”

Jesus brought the restoration from exile.

2. Kingdom

The New Testament age is the age of the “kingdom” — the restoration of God’s people, and their victory over the world

Jesus announced that the restoration had come in him because God's reign over the earth was being established.

3. Latter Days

Old Testament prophets used the term "latter days" to describe the period after exile.

New Testament writers referred to the whole New Testament period as:

- the "eschaton" or "latter days"
- the culmination of prophetic expectations

B. Structure

1. John the Baptist

John believed that the Messiah would bring the kingdom all at once.

2. Jesus

Jesus spent much of his ministry explaining that:

- The eschaton was not coming as John and others expected.
- God had decided to bring the restoration slowly.

The New Testament perspective on eschatology, taught by Jesus and his disciples, is known as “inaugurated eschatology.”

- Inauguration of the kingdom: Christ’s life, death, resurrection, ascension, Pentecost, and the ministries of the apostles.
- Continuation of the kingdom: the time in which we live today, after the first coming of Christ, but before his second coming.
- Consummation of the kingdom: when Christ returns, the full measure of the restoration

C. Themes

1. Exile

- Inauguration: judgment against the covenant people

- Continuation:
 - spiritual exile for non-Christian Jews
 - church discipline and excommunication

- Consummation: everlasting judgment away from the blessings of the new heavens and the new earth

2. Restoration

- Inauguration:
 - Jesus is the son of David, the king.
 - Jesus is the temple.
 - Jesus began victory for his people by defeating Satan and the power of death.
 - Jesus sent the Holy Spirit who is the down payment of our inheritance.
 - Jesus performed countless physical healings in his ministry.

- Continuation:
 - Jesus reigns as king over the world.
 - The church is the temple of God.
 - The church has victories and spiritual battles against evil.
 - The Holy Spirit continues in the church as the down-payment of our full inheritance.
 - Christians often receive physical healings and other special acts of providence.

- Consummation:
 - Jesus' kingship will extend to all the world.
 - God will reshape the whole new creation into one temple.
 - There will be a total victory over evil for God's people.
 - The people of God will receive their full inheritance of the new creation.
 - Nature will break forth into a paradise, fully renewed in the glorious salvation.

VI. Conclusion

3. In what ways was the early prophets' eschatology similar to Moses' eschatology?

4. In what ways did the early prophets add to Moses' eschatology?

11. How does the New Testament handle the theme of restoration in the three stages of the kingdom?

Application Questions

1. How do covenant blessings and curses apply to believers today?
2. How might the behavior of the modern church affect the way the kingdom comes in the future?
3. What might have happened if God's people in the Old Testament had been more faithful in the days before the exile? In the days of the exile? In the restoration after the exile?
4. Explain why John the Baptist's expectation for the kingdom of God was common in his day.
5. How do you feel knowing that Jesus will completely fulfill all the restoration promises from the Old Testament?
6. How should the understanding that we are living during the continuation of the kingdom of God affect the way modern Christians read Scripture and apply it to their lives?
7. If we embrace the picture of biblical eschatology taught in this lesson, how might our views of God, ourselves, unbelievers, and the creation itself be changed?
8. What is the most significant insight you have learned from this study? Why?