

Waiting in Hope in the NT

Introduction and Review

- Last week we looked at general eschatology from the perspective of the OT.
- Solomon described the meaningless existence of life without genuine hope in God – history & future (Eccl. 1:1-11; Rom. 8:20).
- OT also describes a meaningful life of hope in God: He is the Lord of history as He is working out His own purposes (Is. 46:9b-11; Ps. 103:19; Rev. 21:1).
- Christ is the center of history (Gen. 3:15; Job 19:25-27; Is. 9:6; Dan. 7:13-14).
- Christ is the fulfillment of redemptive history from the OT (Mt. 5:17; Lk. 4:16-21; 24:27, 44).

I. Waiting Before Christ Was Revealed

A. Believers

Some believers in nonreligious work activities were waiting for the Messiah in hope (Lk. 2:8-20). Other believers in religious work were patiently waiting for the Messiah in hope (Lk. 2:25-26, 36-38).

B. Unbelievers

Many unbelieving religious people were expecting a Messiah or Christ to simply make life easier for them – personal gain (Mk. 14:61). There were basically two Messianic expectations from the OT: Priestly & Royal

Believers waited in hope for Christ in the NT before His birth & Christ was revealed to all who would believe – biblical eschatology with hope.

II. Waiting After Christ Was Revealed

A. Believers

There were some who had doubts, fear & confusion, but God reaffirmed the truth to them: before the resurrection (Lk. 7:18-23) & after the resurrection (Lk. 24:13-27; Jn. 20:24-28). Some showed great love for Christ after His death (Lk. 23:50-56).

B. Unbelievers

They refused to accept the truth; denied, suppressed & attempted to cover it up (Mk. 14:61; Mt. 28:11-15). Some were converted (Saul, Cornelius, etc. – Acts 8:1ff) but most continued to deny (Rom. 1:18-32; 2Pe. 3:1-7).

God confirmed the truth to all who would believe before and after the resurrection of Christ – biblical eschatology with hope!

ILL: You've been waiting for major changes on your job. Your employer informs all employees that a big announcement is coming that will benefit all employees. Employees begin to speculate pay raises, stock options, better savings plan, medical benefits, etc. When announcement is made – expense reduction (voluntary retirement) & equipment upgrades. Many employees disappointed – no immediate benefit. Others saw long-term benefit & job security.

APPL: The same is true in the kingdom of God & eschatology in particular. Wrong interpretations & expectations can lead to disappointments, confusion & even doubts that any benefit can come from certain actions from God in the future. But believers must learn to trust God as faithful, truthful & favorable with our future even when we do not understand.