

December 15th



# Advent 2024

*“Naturally, only those who believe that, as the history of the world had a beginning, it will also have an end, can speak of a consummation and have a doctrine of eschatology.”*

—Lewis Berkhof  
Systematic Theology

## —CHRISTMAS & CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY—

### “Eschatology”

#### **Introduction: Theology & the Birth Narratives**

The best theology is biblical, systematic, contemporary, and practical. This Advent, we are considering together how some of the most familiar accounts in our Bibles reinforce some of the most important truths of Christian theology.

***Anthropology***— Though mankind is affected in every way by sin and is in need of salvation, we can still experience the goodness of God’s original design for us as men and women in the world.

***Soteriology***— The incarnation of the Lord Jesus is central to the saving work of God on our behalf, making it possible for us to be delivered from our enemies and forgiven of our sins.

**Key Point: The incarnation of the Lord Jesus is central to the future works of God whereby He will both establish His \_\_\_\_\_ on the earth and \_\_\_\_\_ His people that we might dwell with Him eternally.**

#### **Eschatology Defined**

“The study of eschatology (from *eschaton*, end) is the critical discipline that considers all things that pertain to the life to come...it is not only the capstone of classical Christian teaching, but may rightly be regarded as the foundation stone, the final premise that informs and shapes all other questions of Scriptural reasoning.”—Thomas Oden, *Classical Christianity*

“God, the architect of the ages, has seen fit to take us into His confidence concerning His plan for the future and has revealed His purpose and program in detail in the Word.”—Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come*

### **The Future Hope of Israel & the Nations**

- **The birth narratives affirm the expectation that God would fulfill His promises to Israel through the coming of Messiah.**

#### **1. Gabriel & Mary**

**Luke 1:28-33**— *28 And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” 29 But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. 30 And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”*

⇒ In the Davidic Covenant, God had promised David that one of his descendants would sit on his throne and would rule over his kingdom forever (2 Sam. 7:12-16). The promise was further connected to the New Covenant with the promise that a coming Davidic king would rule over the restored nation as their Shepherd (Ezek. 34:23-32).

**Key Point: The Lord Jesus’ human lineage meant that He would have the right to \_\_\_\_\_ as David’s heir and His divine identity meant that He would have the \_\_\_\_\_ to establish the promised Kingdom.**

#### **2. The Magi**

**Matt. 2:1-3**—*1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, 2 saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” 3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him...*

**Matt. 2:9-11**—*9 After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. 11 And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.*

**Key Point:** God purposed that Messiah would be worshiped as King of Kings and Lord of Lords by both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ alike.

*Psa. 22:27-28— 27 All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you. 28 For kingship belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations.*

## The Future Hope of All Believers

- The birth narratives affirm the hope of eternal life for all who believe.

### 1. Simeon

*Luke 2:29-32— 29 “Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; 30 for my eyes have seen your salvation 31 that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, 32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.”*

**Key Point:** The incarnation of Messiah guarantees the \_\_\_\_\_ hope that all believers share to be delivered from death.

### 2. Anna

*Luke 2:36-38— 36 And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, 37 and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. 38 And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.*

**Key Point:** The hope that believers have in Messiah is to be \_\_\_\_\_ to others.

## Christmas & Christian Theology

1. The baby born in Bethlehem will come again to rule over all nations in \_\_\_\_\_ of all of God’s promises made through the prophets.

*Isa. 9:6-7— 6 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. 7 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.*

*Rev. 20:1-2, 6— 1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. 2 And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, 3 and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer... 6 Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.*

2. Our consummate hope is that we will \_\_\_\_\_ with our God forever in the New Creation.

*Isa. 25:7-9— 7 And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. 8 He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. 9 It will be said on that day, “Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”*

*Rev. 21:5-7— 5 And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” 6 And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. 7 The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.*

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