

A silhouette of a woman with long hair, wearing sunglasses, is shown in profile on the left side of the image. She is holding an open book and appears to be reading. The background is a warm, orange-toned sunset or sunrise sky with scattered clouds. The sun is visible as a bright orange circle near the horizon on the right side. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

"Hope does not disappoint": The basis for hope according to St Paul

Cork Scripture Group

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Reason for Hope

The future of the world is the glorious future that God creates

- Kingdom of God (Synoptics)
- Age to Come / Coming Age (St Paul)
- Eternal Life (John)

That future has already broken into the present

- Resurrection of Jesus
- Giving of the Spirit

God is faithful and able to do all that God has promised

These sufferings bring patience, as we know, and patience brings perseverance, and perseverance brings hope, and this hope is not deceptive, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given us. (Rom 5:4-5 JB)

Understanding
St Paul's
Worldview

A New Covenant
Jew

An Apocalyptic
Jew

The New Covenant

Jeremiah 31:31-34

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a **new covenant** with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: **I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.** No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will **forgive** their iniquity, and remember their sin no more

Ezekiel 36:24-28

I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A **new heart** I will give you, and a **new spirit** I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. **I will put my spirit within you,** and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances. Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and **you shall be my people, and I will be your God.**

St Paul a New Covenant Jew

- God remains true to God's original purpose with, and promises to, Israel.
 - This included God's plan to bless all peoples.
- When sin means that the covenant isn't kept, God doesn't scrap it, but intervenes to 'make it work'. God does this by doing something surprising:
 - God makes peace with rebellious humanity through Jesus' death on the cross
 - God empowers people to fulfill the covenant ('love God and love neighbour') through the gift of the Spirit

Jewish Apocalyptic Hope

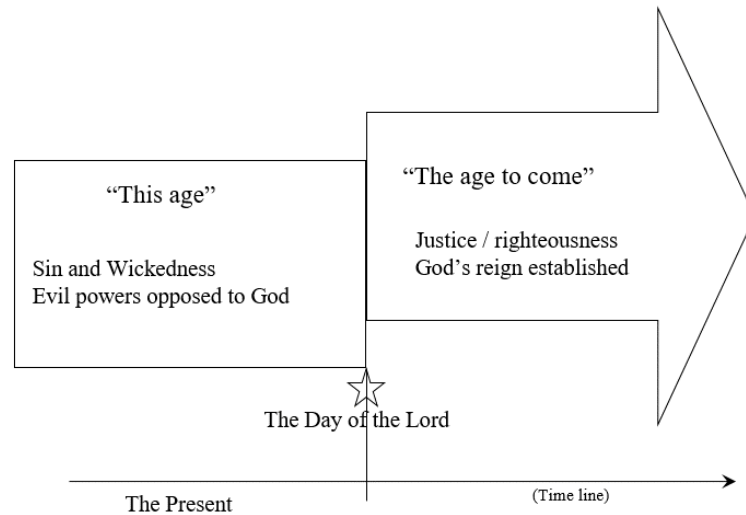
Apocalyptic was a worldview found in a variety of Jewish groups, including the **Pharisees**

Beliefs:

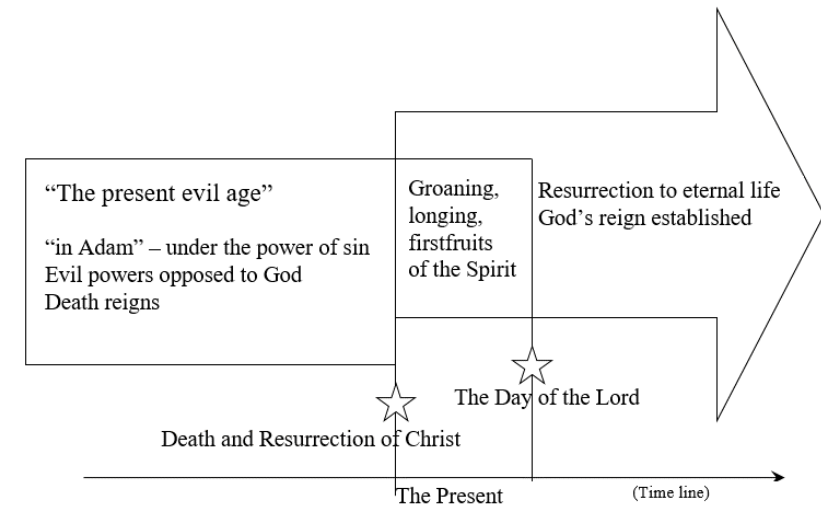
- The cosmos is a battleground between good and evil.
 - Dualistic -light versus darkness
- God will supernaturally intervene to defeat the forces of evil
 - Day of the Lord
 - 'wrath of God'
- History divided into two ages –the present evil age and the glorious age to come.
 - The Glorious New Age (= Messianic Age) is ushered in by the resurrection of the righteous

The Day of the Lord

Eschatology: Old Testament Picture



Eschatology: New Testament Picture (esp. Paul)



Pauline Eschatology

In the death, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus, God has already inaugurated the age to come or new creation, promised by the prophets.

The inaugurated new age currently overlaps with the present evil age.

In the not-too-distant future, God will act to end the present age and bring the age to come into its glorious fullness.

Now-and-not-yet: Believers are to be alert and to live in light of the reality of the present and coming new age

St Paul an apocalyptic Jew

Philippians

- I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil 1:6)
- Do all things without murmuring and arguing, so that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, in which you shine like stars in the world. It is by your holding fast to the word of life that I can boast on the day of Christ that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. (Phil 2:14-16)
- But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself. (Phil 3:20-21)

1 Thessalonians

- ... and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead— Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming. (1 Thes 1:9-10)
- ... for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. (1 Thes 5:5)

Romans 8:18-25

I consider that the sufferings of this **present time** are not worth comparing with the **glory about to be revealed** to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the **revealing of the children of God**; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its **bondage to decay** and will obtain the **freedom of the glory of the children of God**. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the **first fruits of the Spirit**, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, **the redemption of our bodies**. For in **hope** we were saved. Now **hope** that is seen is not **hope**. For who **hopes** for what is seen? But if we **hope** for what we do not see, we wait for it with *patience*.

- **Present age and the glorious age to come**
- **Looking forward to resurrection**
- **Already have the Spirit**

Colossians 1:3-13

In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the **hope** laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this **hope** before in the word of the truth, the gospel that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, and he has made known to us your love **in the Spirit**.

For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you **may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God**. May you be made strong with all **the strength that comes from his glorious power**, and may you be prepared to endure everything with *patience*, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in **the inheritance of the saints in the light**. He has rescued us from the **power of darkness** and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the **forgiveness** of sins.

- **The Spirit is already given**
- **The New Covenant**
- **Present age and glorious age to come**