

The end of the world and other stories ...

Death

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die.” *Ecclesiastes 3.1-2*

“In death there is no remembrance of you; in Sheol who can give you praise?” *Psalms 6.5*

Judgement

“For God will bring every deed into judgement, including every secret thing, whether good or evil” *Ecclesiastes 12.14*

“The LORD judges the peoples; judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness and according to the integrity that is in me” *Psalms 7.8*

“Rise up, O LORD! Do not let mortals prevail; let the nations be judged before you. Put them in fear, O LORD; let the nations know that they are only human” *Psalms 9.19-20*

“Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. For with the judgement you make you will be judged” *Matthew 7.1*

“We will all stand before the judgement seat of God ...each of us will be accountable to God” *Romans 14.10,12*

Heaven

“In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth ...” *Genesis 1.1*

“Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you” *1 Kings 8.27*

“From that time Jesus began to proclaim, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.’” *Matthew 4.17*

“Jesus said, ‘Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise’” *Luke 23.43*

“an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” *1 Peter 1.4-5*

“our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Saviour” *Philippians 3.20*

“I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven” *2 Corinthians 12.2*

“I saw heaven opened” *Revelation 4.1*

“Jacob dreamed that there was a ladder set up on earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it ... Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, ‘Surely the LORD is in this place – and I did not know it!’ And he was afraid and

said, 'How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God and this is the gate of heaven.'" *Genesis 28.12, 16-17*

Hell

"If you say 'You fool!' you will be liable to the *gehenna* of fire" *Matthew 5.22*

"As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." *Matthew 25.30*

"And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur, where the - beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night for ever and ever" *Revelation 20.10*

Purgatory

"Judas made atonement for the dead, so that they might be delivered from their sin" 2 *Maccabees 12.45*

"the work of each builder will become visible, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done. If what has been built on the foundation survives, the builder will receive a reward. If the work is burned, the builder will suffer loss; the builder will be saved, but only as through fire" *1 Corinthians 3.13-15*

Resurrection

"Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" *Daniel 12.2*

"For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his" *Romans 6.5*

"for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death ... So it is with the resurrection of the dead ... It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body" *1 Corinthians 15. 22-26,42,44*

Eternal Life

"Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgement, but has passed from death to life" *John 5.24*

"I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly" *John 10.10*

"this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" *John 17.3*

The Story of God's Triumph

What sort of story?

“In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken”
Mark 13.24-25

“write what you have seen, what is and what is to be” *Revelation 1.19*

How does God win?

“Then one of the elders said to me, ‘Do not weep. See, the Lion of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.’ Then I saw between the throne and among the elders a Lamb standing as if it had been slaughtered” *Revelation 5.5-6*

What does God's victory mean?

The Kingdom of God has come

“The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together ... They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea” *Isaiah 11.6,9*

The resurrection of the dead

“On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-matured wines, of rich food with marrow, of well-matured wines strained clear. And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death for ever. Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth” *Isaiah 26.6-8*

New creation

“On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee” *John 2.1*

“if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has been made new!” *2 Corinthians 5.17*

“I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind” *Isaiah 65.17*

“I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘See the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.’ And the one who was seated on the throne said, ‘See I am making all things new.’” *Revelation 21.1-5*

God's presence with us

"I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine in it, for the glory of the God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb" *Revelation 21.22-23*

The return of Jesus

"Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven" *Acts 1.11*

Is there a timetable?

"Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour" *Matthew 24.42-44*

"You yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, 'There is peace and security', then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labour pains come upon a pregnant woman and there will be no escape" *1 Thessalonians 5.1-3*

Millenarian hopes

"Then I saw thrones, and those seated on them were given authority to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus and for the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. *Revelation 20.4-5*

The Rapture

"Two will be in the field; one will be taken, the other left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left" *Matthew 24.40-41*

"The Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord for ever. Therefore comfort one another with these words." *1 Thessalonians 4.16-18*

Life in the end times

"So then, let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation" *1 Thessalonians 5.6-8*