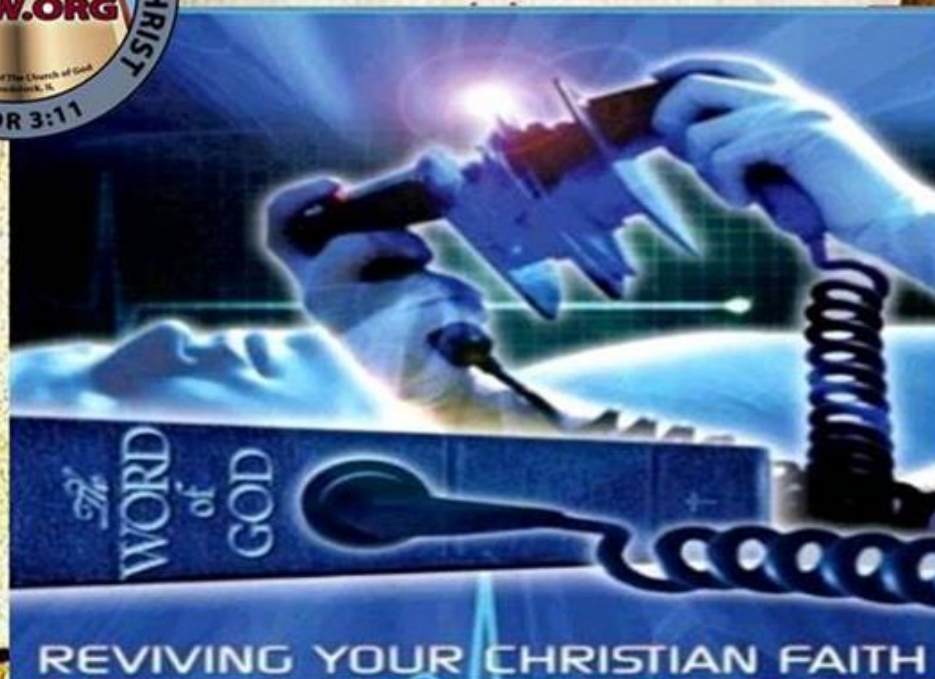
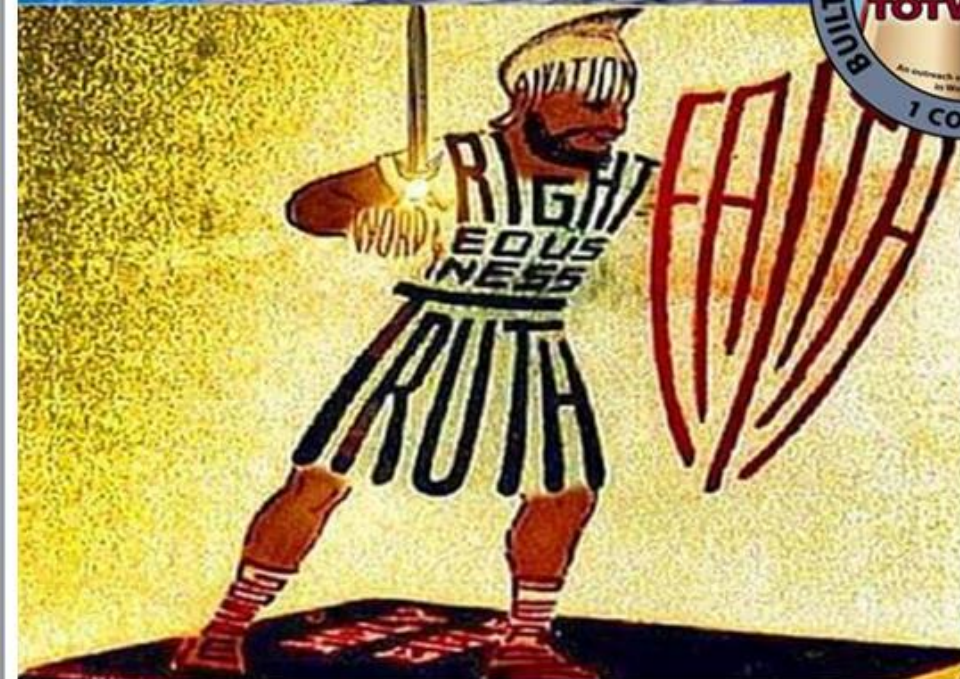
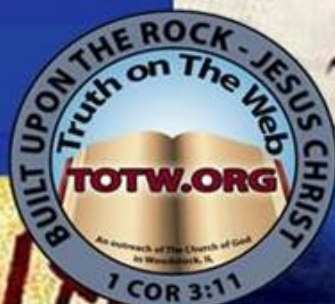


Think BIBLICALLY



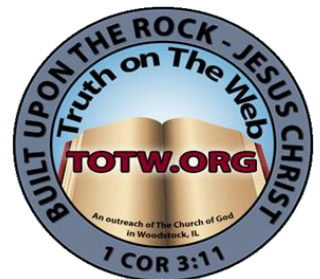
REVIVING YOUR CHRISTIAN FAITH



Now

Not Yet

Inaugurated Eschatology



John 16:32 Behold, **the hour cometh, yea, is now come**, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.

John 4:21-24 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe Me, **the hour cometh**, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But **the hour cometh, and now is**, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

The Last Days

Isaiah 2:2 And **it shall come to pass in the last days**, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

Micah 4:1 But **in the last days it shall come to pass**, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it.

Hebrews 1:1-2 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in **these last days** spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds;

Acts 2:16-20 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass **in the last days**, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

“The coming of the end also meant a new beginning—the beginning of God’s new age, the messianic age. The new age was also referred to as the kingdom of God, which meant “the time of God’s rule.” This new age would be a time of righteousness (e.g., Isa 2:2-4). It would be a time of the fullness of the Spirit (Joel 2:28-30) when the new covenant spoken of by Jeremiah would be realized (Jer 31:31-34; 32:38-40). Sin and sickness would be done away with (e.g., Zech 13:1; Isa 53:5). Even the material creation would feel the joyful effects of this new age (e.g., Isa 11:6-9). Thus when John the Baptist announced the coming of the end to be very near and baptized God’s Messiah, eschatological fervor reached fever pitch. The Messiah was at hand, the one who would usher in the new age of the Spirit (Luke 3:7-17). Jesus came and announced with his ministry that the coming kingdom was at hand (e.g., Mark 1:14-15; Luke 17:20-21). He drove out demons, worked miracles, and freely accepted the outcasts and sinners—all signs that the end had begun (e.g., Luke 11:20; Matt 11:2-6; Luke 14:21; 15:1-2).

Everyone kept watching him to see if he really *was* the Coming One. Would he really bring in the Messianic Age with all of its splendor? Then suddenly he was crucified—and the lights went out.

But no! There was a glorious sequel. On the third day he was raised from the dead, and he appeared to many of his followers. Surely *now* he would “restore the kingdom to Israel” (Acts 1:6). But instead he returned to the Father and poured out the promised Spirit. Here is where problems show up for the early church and for us. Jesus announced the coming kingdom as having arrived with his own coming. The Spirit’s coming in fullness and power with signs and wonders and the coming of the new covenant were signs that the new age had arrived. Yet the end of *this* age apparently had not yet taken place. How were they to understand this?

John 5:25-29 Verily, verily, I say unto you, **The hour is coming, and now is**, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for **the hour is coming**, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

John 6:39-44 And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of **all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.** And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that **every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.** The Jews then murmured at Him, because He said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and **I will raise him up at the last day.**

Ephesians 2:1 And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

Ephesians 2:5-6 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

Colossians 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

Jesus' view of the Kingdom of God

Jesus taught that the Kingdom of God will be fulfilled in the **future**:

Matthew 25:31 when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit upon His glorious throne

But Jesus also taught there a **present** aspect to the Kingdom.

Luke 17:20-21 the Pharisees asked Jesus, “When will the Kingdom of God come?” Jesus replied, “The Kingdom of God isn’t ushered in with visible signs. You won’t be able to say, ‘here it is!’ or ‘It’s over there!’ For the Kingdom of God is among you.”

Jesus' view of the Kingdom of God

- Power of the Kingdom is available today
- But complete fulfillment— the reign of God— will come when Jesus returns
- The Kingdom is both now and not yet.

This Age & The Age To Come

Hebrews 6:4-6 For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the **powers of the world to come**, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put *him* to an open shame.

1 Corinthians 10:11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and **they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.**

Hebrews 9:26 For then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but **now once in the end of the world** hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

Matthew 13:36-43 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and His disciples came unto Him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; **the harvest is the end of the world**; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; **so shall it be in the end of this world**. The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Luke 20:27-36 Then came to *Him* certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked Him, Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children. And the second took her to wife, and he died childless. And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore **in the resurrection** whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife. And Jesus answering said unto them, **The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead**, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

The storyline of Scripture divides all history into these two ages. “This present age” began when God created all things and continued through humanity’s corruption of all things, such that this age is characterized by sin, death, and opposition to God. “The age to come,” though it sounds entirely future-oriented, has already broken into the present (inauguration) with the coming, redemption, and reign of God’s new man. Yet this final, eternal age will come into its final fulfillment at the *telos* of all history (consummation).

This two-sided reality of redemptive history leads to an already–not yet dynamic in the structure of the Bible’s self-presentation. To be clear, the already is not “this present age” in itself but the presence of “the age to come” in “this present age.” Theologians use the concept of inaugurated eschatology to describe the significance of the fact that the final fulfillment of God’s plan for humanity and all creation has begun: the way things will be forever has crashed into the way things are now temporarily.

First coming of Jesus

The age to come
realized in principle

Age to come

The period in
which we
now live

Second coming of Jesus

This age

The original schema of the Old Testament and the rabbis was strictly linear:

This present age

The age to come

Messiah comes

Messianic woes, wars with Israel's enemies

Spirit poured out

All Israel become prophets

Great peace, prosperity

Time

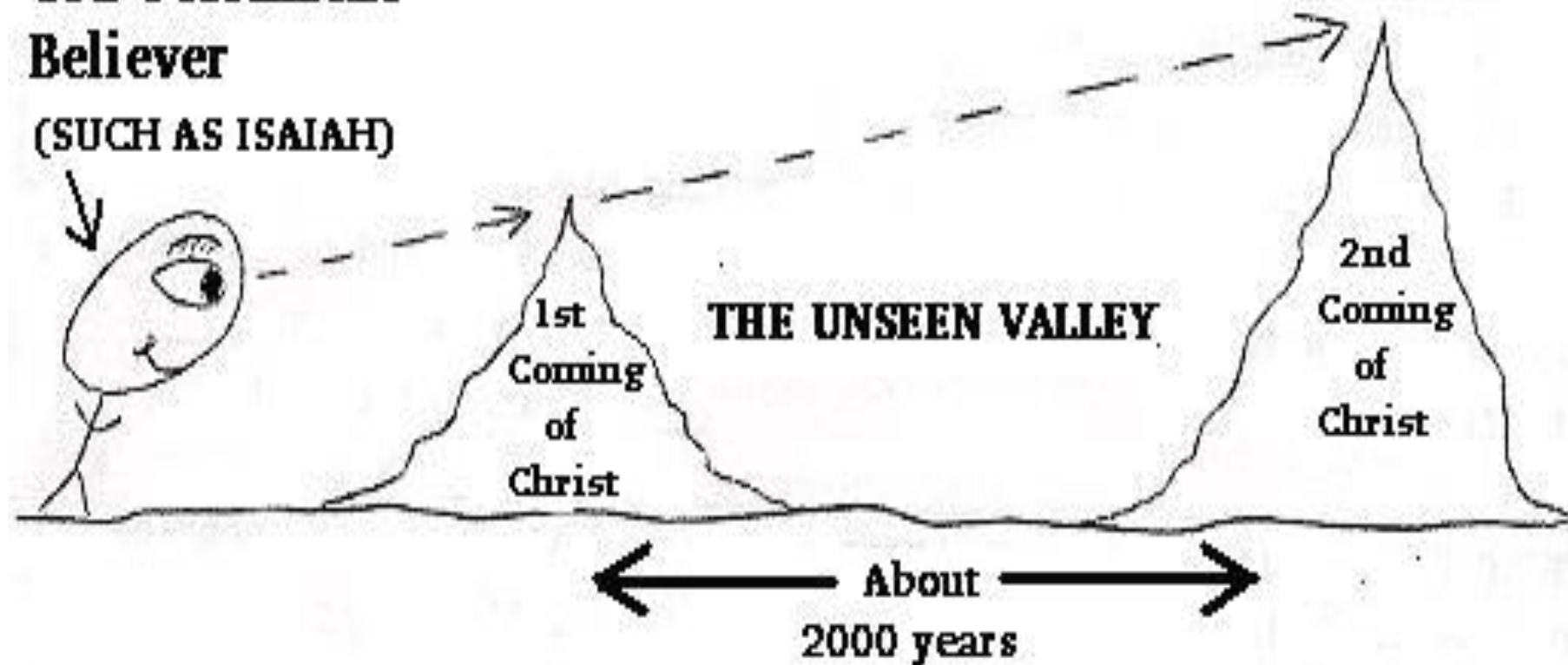


Isaiah 11:1-9 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

1 Peter 1:10-11 Concerning this salvation, the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, **searching for who or what kind of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, pointed to, when it predicted the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that would follow them.**

**Old Testament
Believer**

(SUCH AS ISAIAH)



Two Comings Not Foreseen

I saw in the night visions, and, **behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven**, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before Him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

Daniel 7:13-14

Two Comings Not Foreseen

“R. Alexandri said: **R. Joshua b. Levi pointed out a contradiction.** it is written, in its time [will the Messiah come], whilst it is also written, I [the Lord] will hasten it! — if they are worthy, I will hasten it: if not, [he will come] at the due time. R. Alexandri said: **R. Joshua opposed two verses: it is written, And behold, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven whilst [elsewhere] it is written, [behold, thy king cometh unto thee...] lowly, and riding upon an ass!** — if they are meritorious, [he will come] with the clouds of heaven; if not, lowly and riding upon an ass”

Sanhedrin 98a, Babylonian Talmud, Soncino edition, CD-Rom

The Talmud

The *Tanna debe Eliyyahu* teaches: The world is to exist six thousand years. In the first two thousand there was desolation; two thousand years the Torah flourished; and the next two thousand years is the Messianic era, but through our many iniquities all these years have been lost.¹

¹He should have come at the beginning of the last two thousand years; the delay is due to our sins.

Sanhedrin 97a & b, Babylonian Talmud, Soncino edition, CD-Rom

“Very early, beginning with Peter’s sermon in Acts 3, the early Christians came to realize that Jesus had not come to usher in the “final” end but the “beginning” of the end, as it were. Thus they came to see that with Jesus’ death and resurrection, and with the coming of the Spirit, the blessings and benefits of the future had already come. In a sense, therefore, the end had already come. But in another sense the end had not yet fully come. Thus it was *already* but *not yet*.

The early believers, therefore, learned to be a truly eschatological people. They lived between the times—that is, between the *beginning* of the end and the *consummation* of the end. ... *Already* they knew God’s free and full forgiveness, but they had *not yet* been perfected (Phil 3:10-14). *Already* victory over death was theirs (1 Cor 3:22), *yet* they would still die (Phil 3:20-21). *Already* they lived in the Spirit, *yet* they still lived in the world where Satan could attack (e.g., Eph 6:10-17).

Already they had been justified and faced no condemnation (Rom 8:1), yet there was still to be a future judgment (2 Cor 5:10). They were God's future people. They had been conditioned by the future. They knew its benefits and lived in the light of its values, but they, as we, still had to live out these benefits and values in the present world.

The hermeneutical key to much in the New Testament, and especially to the ministry and teaching of Jesus, is to be found in this kind of "tension." Precisely because the kingdom, the time of God's rule, has been inaugurated with Jesus' own coming, we are called to *live* in the kingdom, which means life under His Lordship, freely accepted and forgiven but committed to the ethics of the new age and to seeing them worked out in our own lives and world in this present age.

Thus when we pray, "Your kingdom come," we pray first of all for the consummation. But because the kingdom--the time of God's rule--that we long to see consummated has already begun, the same prayer is full of implications for the present."



www.totw.org