

The Essential Elements of the Apostolic Witness

Session 1: Restored Creation and the Day of the Lord

I. Restored Creation

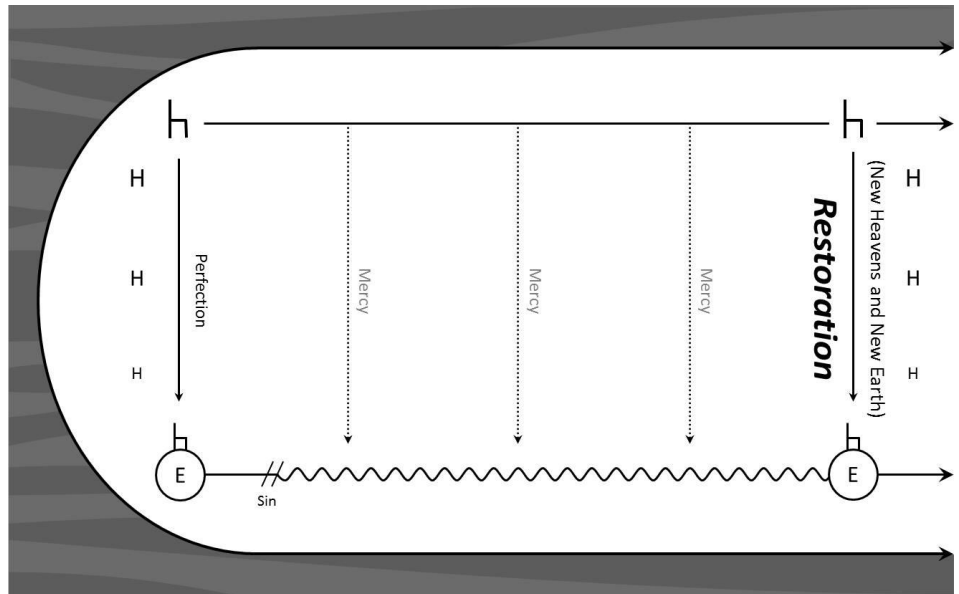
A. The Ultimate Hope of the Scriptures

But according to his promise we are waiting for *new heavens and a new earth* in which righteousness dwells. ¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. (^{ESV} 2 Pet. 3:13-14)

Behold, I will create *new heavens and a new earth*. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. ¹⁸ But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. ¹⁹ I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more. (^{NIV} Is. 65:17-19)

B. The Restoration of All Things

Repent therefore... ²⁰ that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, ²¹ whom heaven must receive until *the times of restoration of all things*, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. (^{NKJV} Acts 3:19-21)



I tell you the truth, at *the renewal of all things*, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹ And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit *eternal life*. (^{NIV} Mt. 19:28-29)

C. The Resurrection of the Dead

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for *the revealing of the sons of God*. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who

subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be *set free from its bondage to corruption* and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in *the pains of childbirth* until now. ²³ And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, *the redemption of our bodies*. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. (^{ESV} Rom. 8:18-24)

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has *eternal life*. He does not come into judgment, but has passed *from death to life*. ²⁵ Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and *those who hear will live*. ²⁶ For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. ²⁷ And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. ²⁸ Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out, those who have done good to *the resurrection of life*, and those who have done evil to *the resurrection of judgment*. (^{ESV} Jn. 5:22-29)

II. The Day of the Lord

A. The Primary Unifying theme of the Scriptures

Wail, for *the day of the LORD is near*; it will come like destruction from the Almighty. ⁷ Because of this, all hands will go limp, every man's heart will melt... ⁹ See, *the day of the LORD is coming*—a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger—to make the land desolate and *destroy the sinners within it*. ¹⁰ The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light. The rising sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light. ¹¹ I will *punish the world for its evil*, the wicked for their sins. I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty and will humble the pride of the ruthless... ¹³ Therefore I will make the heavens tremble; and the earth will shake from its place at the wrath of the LORD Almighty, *in the day of his burning anger*. (^{NIV} Isa. 13:6-13)

The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.” ² The LORD will extend your mighty scepter from Zion; you will rule in the midst of your enemies... ⁵ The Lord is at your right hand; he will crush kings *on the day of his wrath*. ⁶ He will judge the nations, heaping up the dead and crushing the rulers of the whole earth. (^{NIV} Ps. 110:1-6)

The earth reels like a drunkard, it sways like a hut in the wind; so heavy upon it is the guilt of its rebellion that it falls-- never to rise again. ²¹ *In that day* the LORD will punish the powers in the heavens above and the kings on the earth below. ²² They will be herded together like prisoners bound in a dungeon; they will be shut up in prison and be punished after many days. ²³ The moon will be abashed, the sun ashamed; for the LORD Almighty will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before its elders, gloriously. (^{NIV} Isa. 24:20-23)

The great day of the LORD is near—near and coming quickly... ¹⁵ *That day will be a day of wrath*, a day of distress and anguish, a day of trouble and ruin... ¹⁸ Neither their silver nor their gold

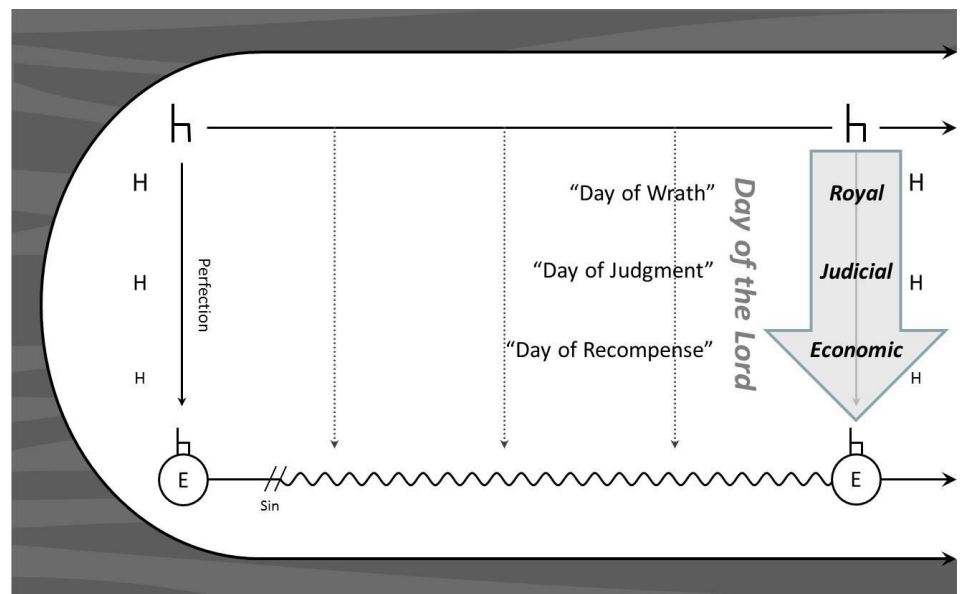
The Essential Elements of the Apostolic Witness

will be able to save them on *the day of the LORD's wrath*. In the fire of his jealousy *the whole world will be consumed*, for he will make a sudden end of all who live in the earth. (^{NIV} Zeph. 1:14-18)

The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of *the great and dreadful day of the LORD*... ^{3:2} I will gather all nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. There *I will enter into judgment against them*... ¹² Let the nations be roused; let them advance into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, for there *I will sit to judge all the nations* on every side. (^{NIV} Joel 2:31-3:12)

See, *the day is coming*, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; *the day that comes* shall burn them up, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch... ⁵ Lo, I will send you the prophet Elijah before *the great and terrible day of the LORD comes*. (^{NRSV} Mal. 4:1-5)

And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. ¹⁵ Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable *on the day of judgment* for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town. (^{ESV} Mt. 10:14-15)



But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for *the day of God's wrath*, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. (^{NIV} Rom. 2:5)

Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. ⁸ He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless *on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ*. (^{NIV} 1 Cor. 1:7-8)

If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ his work will be shown for what it is, because *the Day will bring it to light*. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. (^{NIV} 1 Cor. 3:12-13)

The Essential Elements of the Apostolic Witness

In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy... ⁶ being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion *until the day of Christ Jesus*. (^{NIV} Phil. 1:4-6)

God is just: *He will pay back trouble* to those who trouble you ⁷ and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is *revealed from heaven* in blazing fire with his powerful angels. ⁸ He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our

Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will be *punished with everlasting destruction* and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power ¹⁰ *on the day* he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. (^{NIV} 2 Thess. 1:6-10)

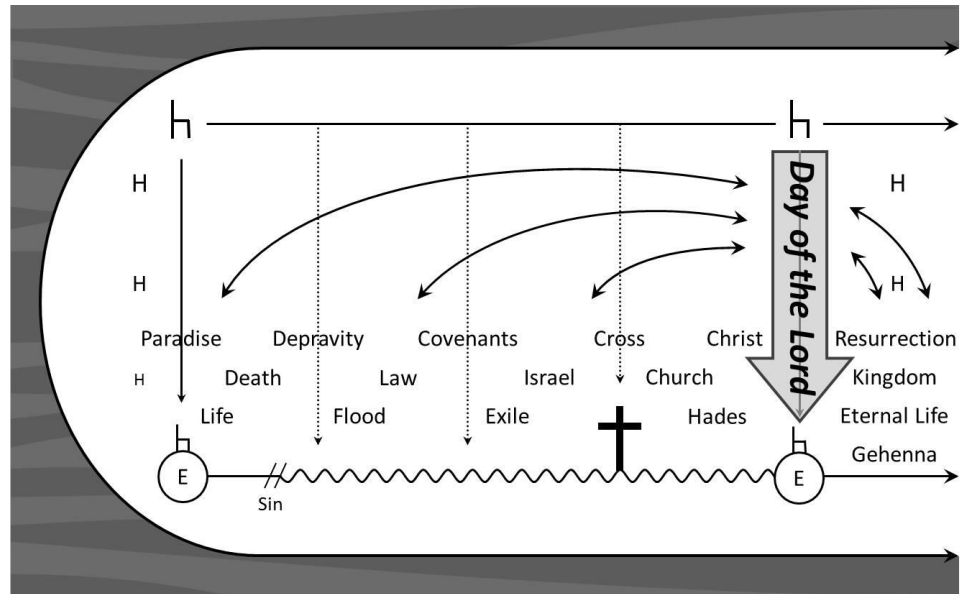
In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and *in view of his appearing* and his kingdom, I give you this charge: ² Preach the Word... ⁸ Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me *on that day*—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed *for his appearing*. (^{NIV} 2 Tim. 4:1-8)

But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for *the day of judgment* and destruction of ungodly men... ¹⁰ *the day of the Lord will come like a thief*, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. (^{NASB} 2 Pet. 3:7-10)

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more *as you see the Day approaching*. (^{NIV} Heb. 10:25)

And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home-- these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment *on the great Day*. (^{NIV} Jude 1:6)

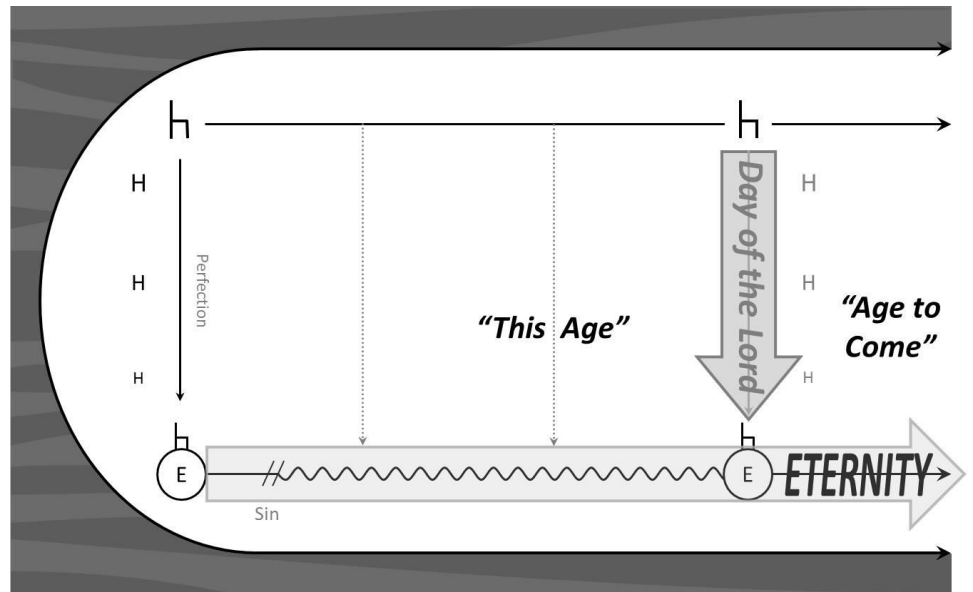
Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, ¹⁷ *for the great day of their wrath has come*, and who can stand? (^{ESV} Rev. 6:16-17)



Behold, I am coming soon, *bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done.* ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." (^{ESV} Rev. 22:12-13)

B. Defining History's Orientation

Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, *either in this age or in the age to come...* ³⁶ I tell you that men will have to give account *on the day of judgment* for every careless word they have spoken. (^{NIV} Mt. 12:32-36)



The sons of *this age* marry and are given in marriage, ³⁵ but those who are considered worthy to attain to *that age* and to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, ³⁶ for they cannot die anymore, because they are equal to angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. (^{ESV} Lk. 20:34-36)

God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in *this age* but also in *the age to come*. (^{NRSV} Eph. 1:20-21)

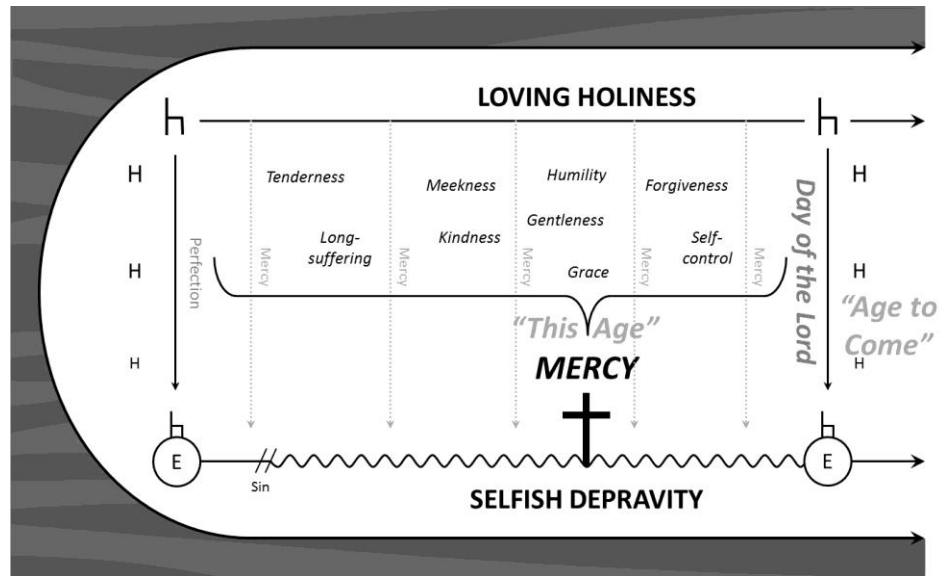
For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. ¹² It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in *this present age*, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope—the *glorious appearing* of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. (^{NIV} Tit. 2:11-13)

Command those who are rich in *this present age* not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. ¹⁸ Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, ¹⁹ storing up for themselves a good foundation for *the time to come*, that they may lay hold on eternal life. (^{NKJV} 1 Tim. 6:17-19)

C. The Context of the Cross

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have *eternal life*.¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not *perish* but have *eternal life*. (^{ESV} Jn. 3:14-16)

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, *Christ died for the ungodly*.⁷ Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die.⁸ *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us*.⁹ Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! (^{NIV} Rom. 5:6-9)



Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*—of whom I am the worst.¹⁶ But for that very reason *I was shown mercy* so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might *display his unlimited patience* as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life. (^{NIV} 1 Tim. 1:15-16)

For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.⁴ But when *the goodness and loving kindness* of God our Savior appeared,⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, *but according to his own mercy*, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,⁶ whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,⁷ so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (^{ESV} Tit. 3:3-7)

Just as man is *destined to die once*, and after that *to face judgment*,²⁸ so Christ was *sacrificed once* to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but *to bring salvation* to those who are waiting for him...^{10:12} But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.¹³ *Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool*,¹⁴ because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. (^{NIV} Heb. 9:27-10:14)