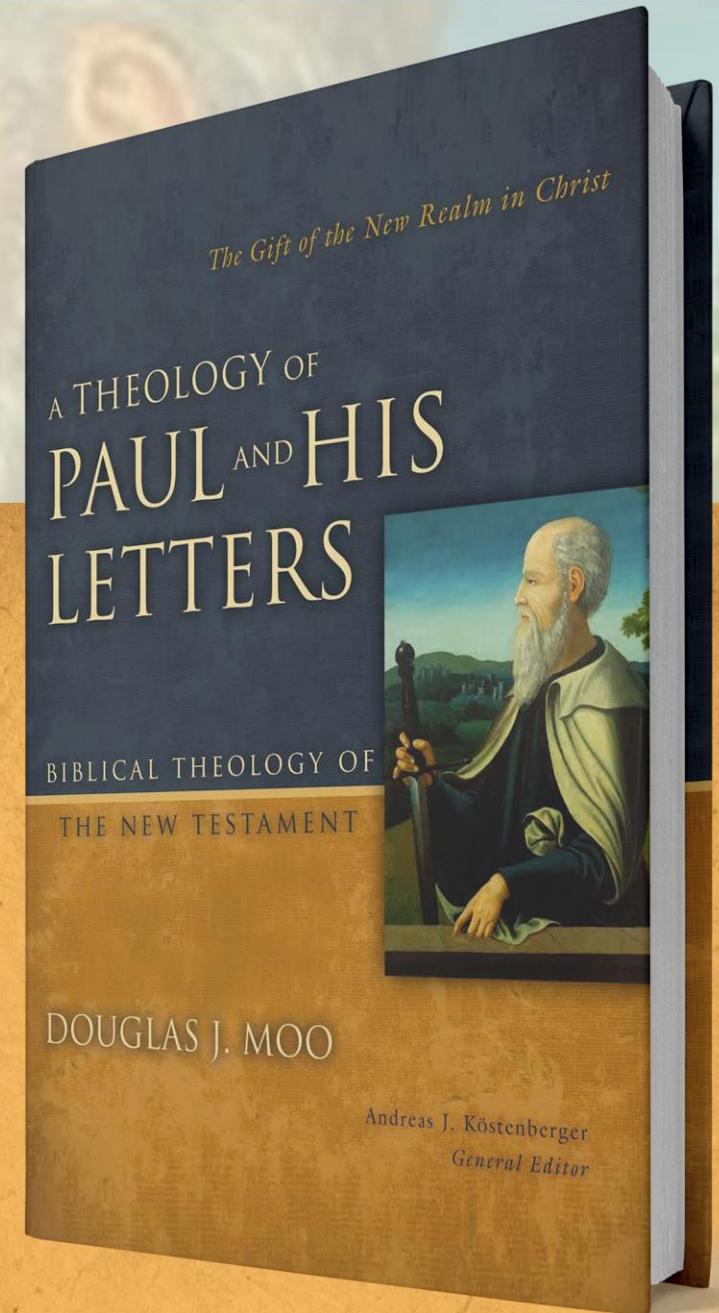
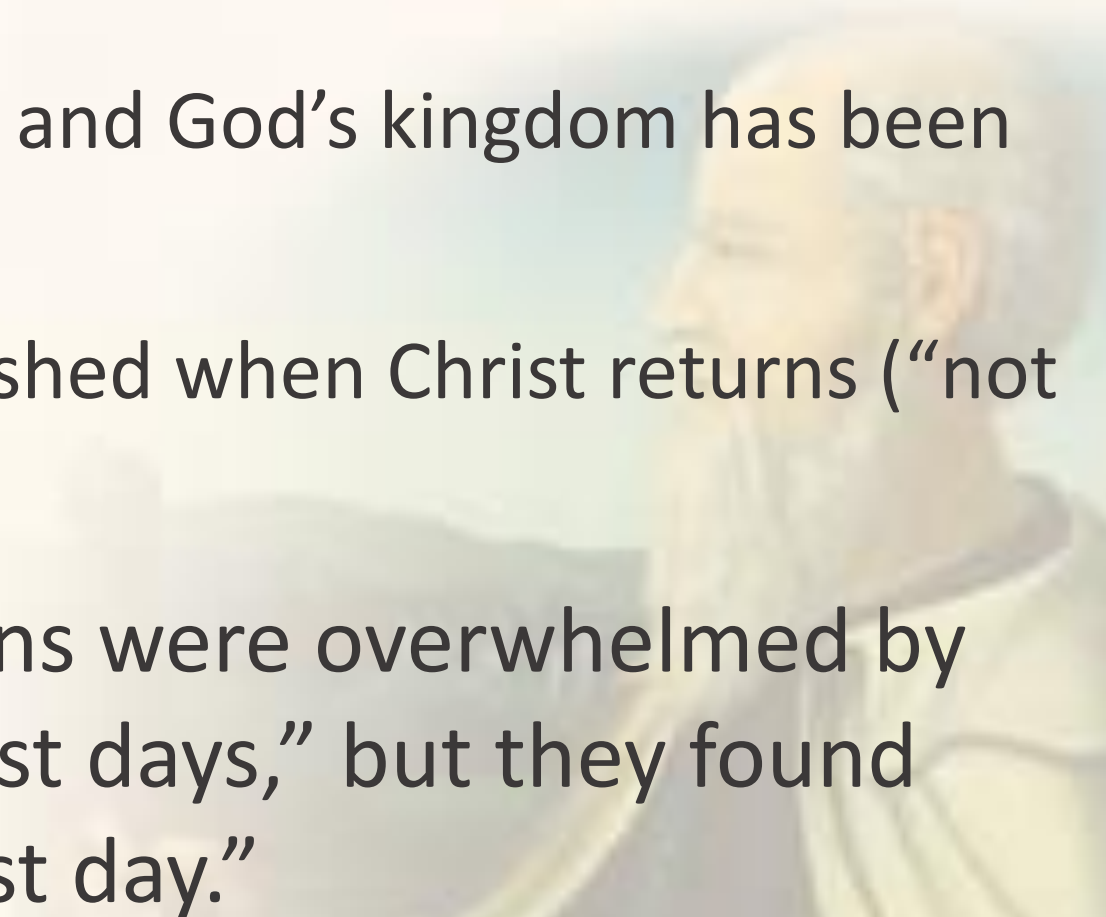
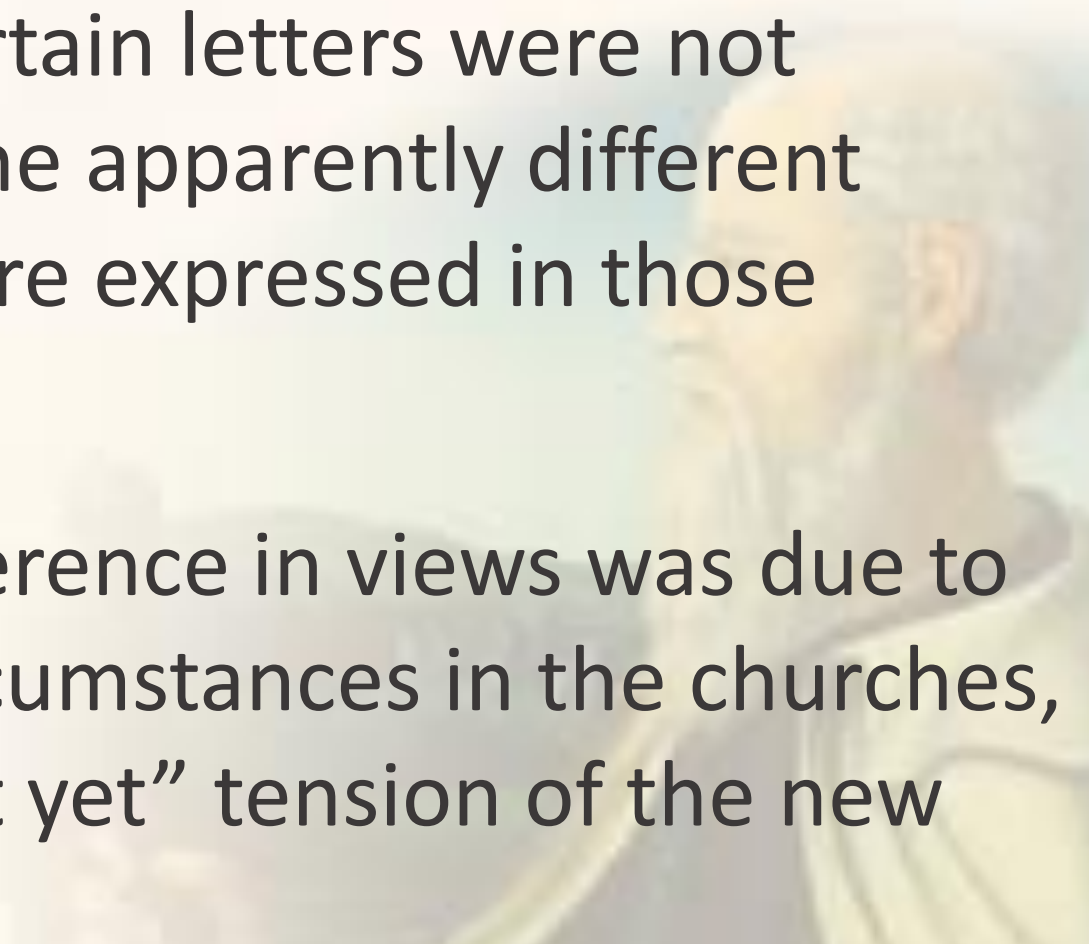


CHAPTER 22

The Consummation of the New Realm

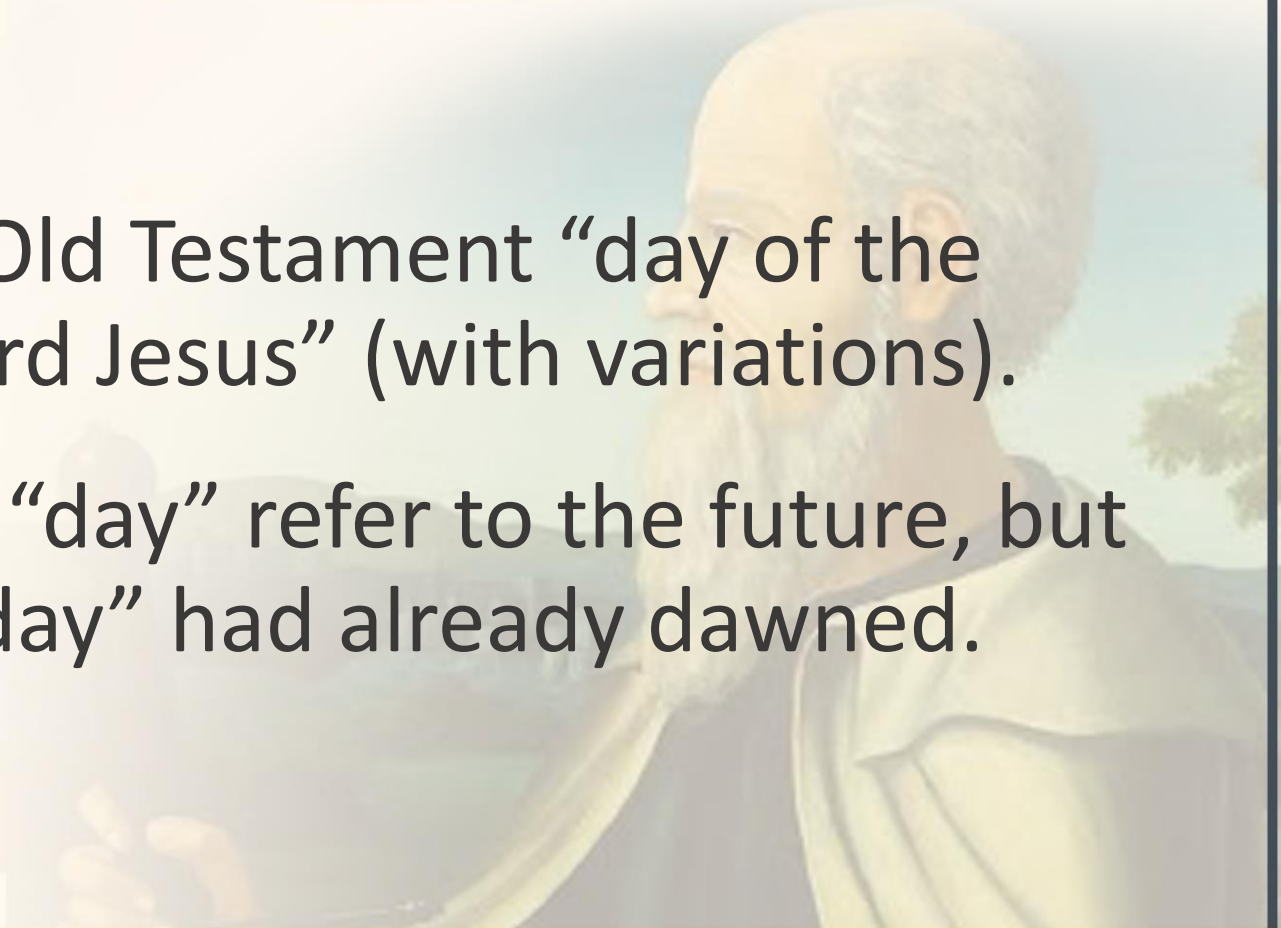


- Christians find hope in the “already”/“not yet” aspect of God’s eschatological plan.
 - The reign of Jesus has begun, and God’s kingdom has been established (“already”).
 - God’s enemies will be vanquished when Christ returns (“not yet”).
 - Paul and other early Christians were overwhelmed by knowing they lived in the “last days,” but they found hope in the reality of “*the* last day.”
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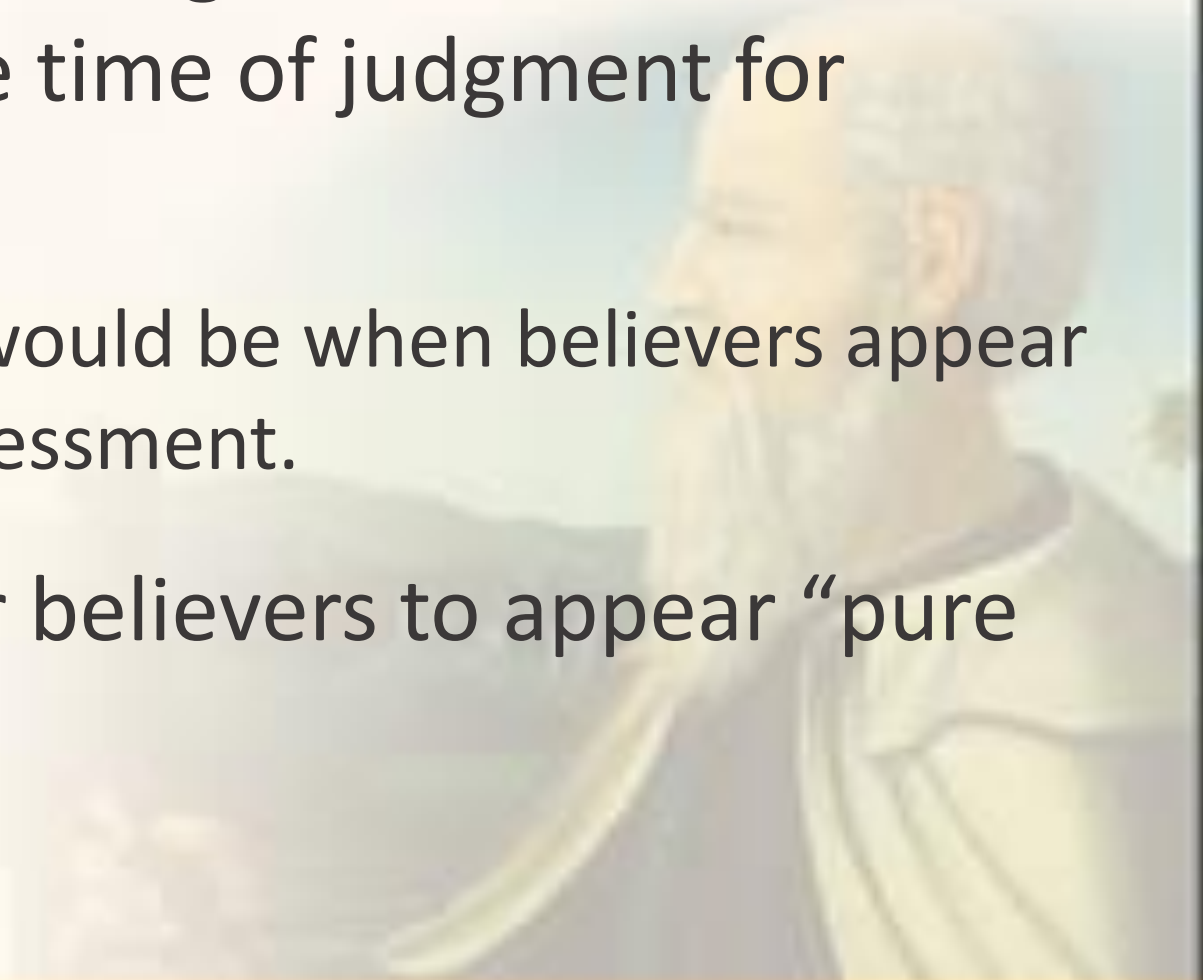
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- Some scholars argue that certain letters were not written by Paul because of the apparently different eschatological views that were expressed in those letters.
 - The author believed the difference in views was due to Paul addressing different circumstances in the churches, as well as the “already”/“not yet” tension of the new realm.

The Day of the Lord Christ

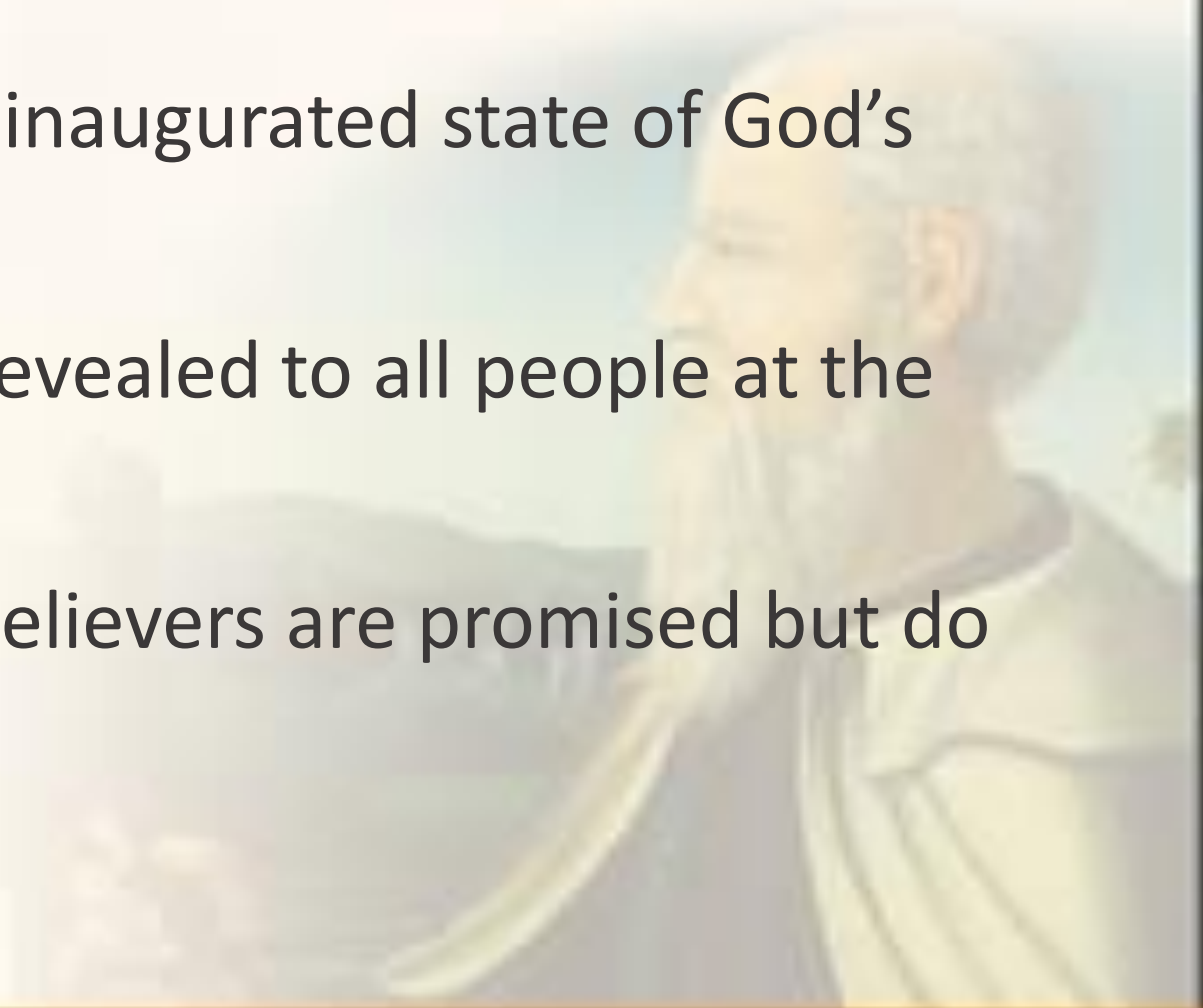
- Paul often referred to the Old Testament “day of the Lord” as the “day of the Lord Jesus” (with variations).
- Explicit occurrences of the “day” refer to the future, but Paul also hinted that the “day” had already dawned.



- Paul taught about the “day” being the time of ultimate salvation for believers or the time of judgment for unbelievers.
 - He also taught that the day would be when believers appear before Jesus for ultimate assessment.
- He believed the goal was for believers to appear “pure and blameless” on that day.

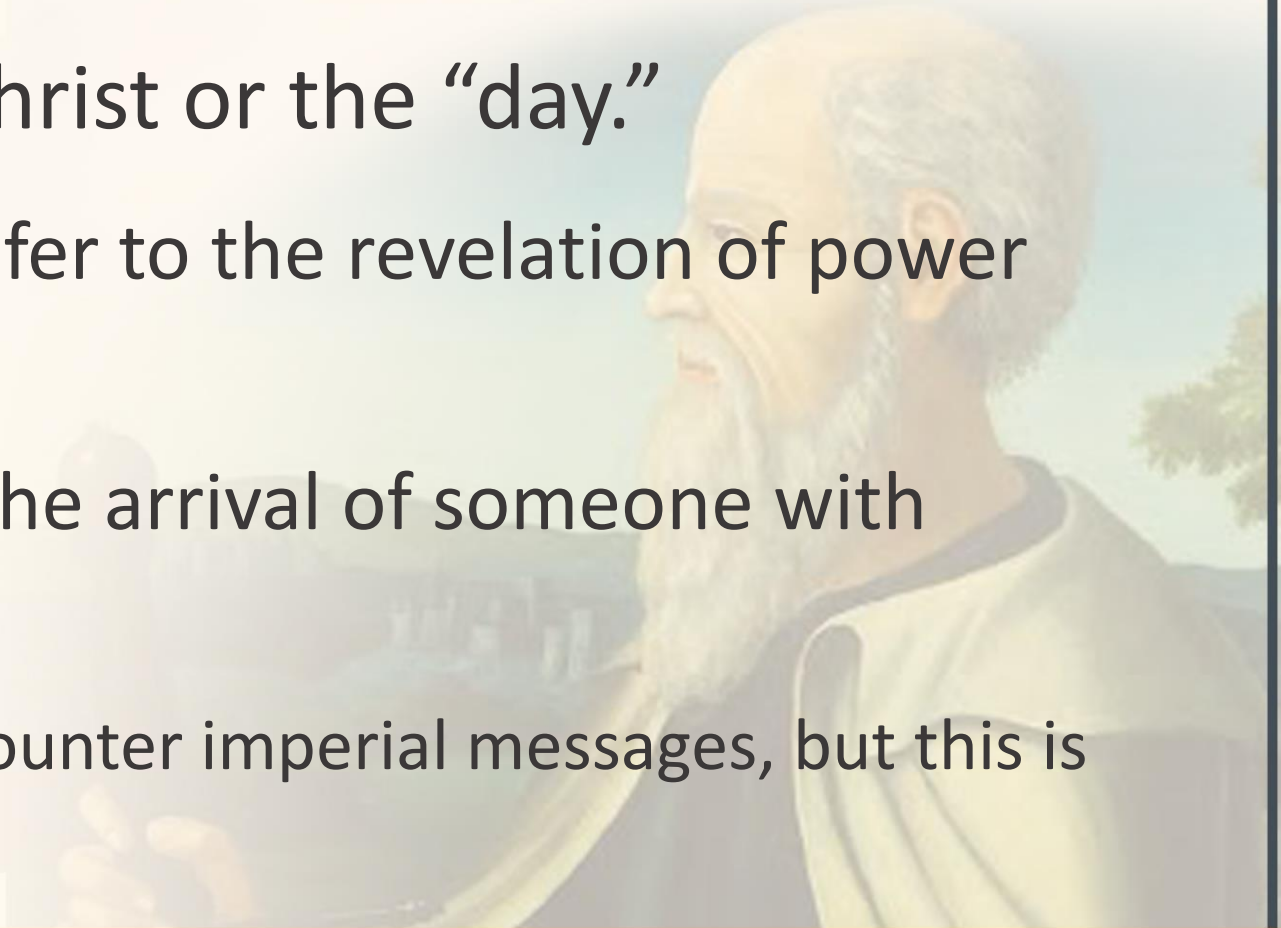


- Paul used three other designations of end events:
 1. “Kingdom” language – the inaugurated state of God’s redemptive work
 2. “Glory” – God’s presence revealed to all people at the climax of history
 3. “Inheritance” language – believers are promised but do not yet possess the world

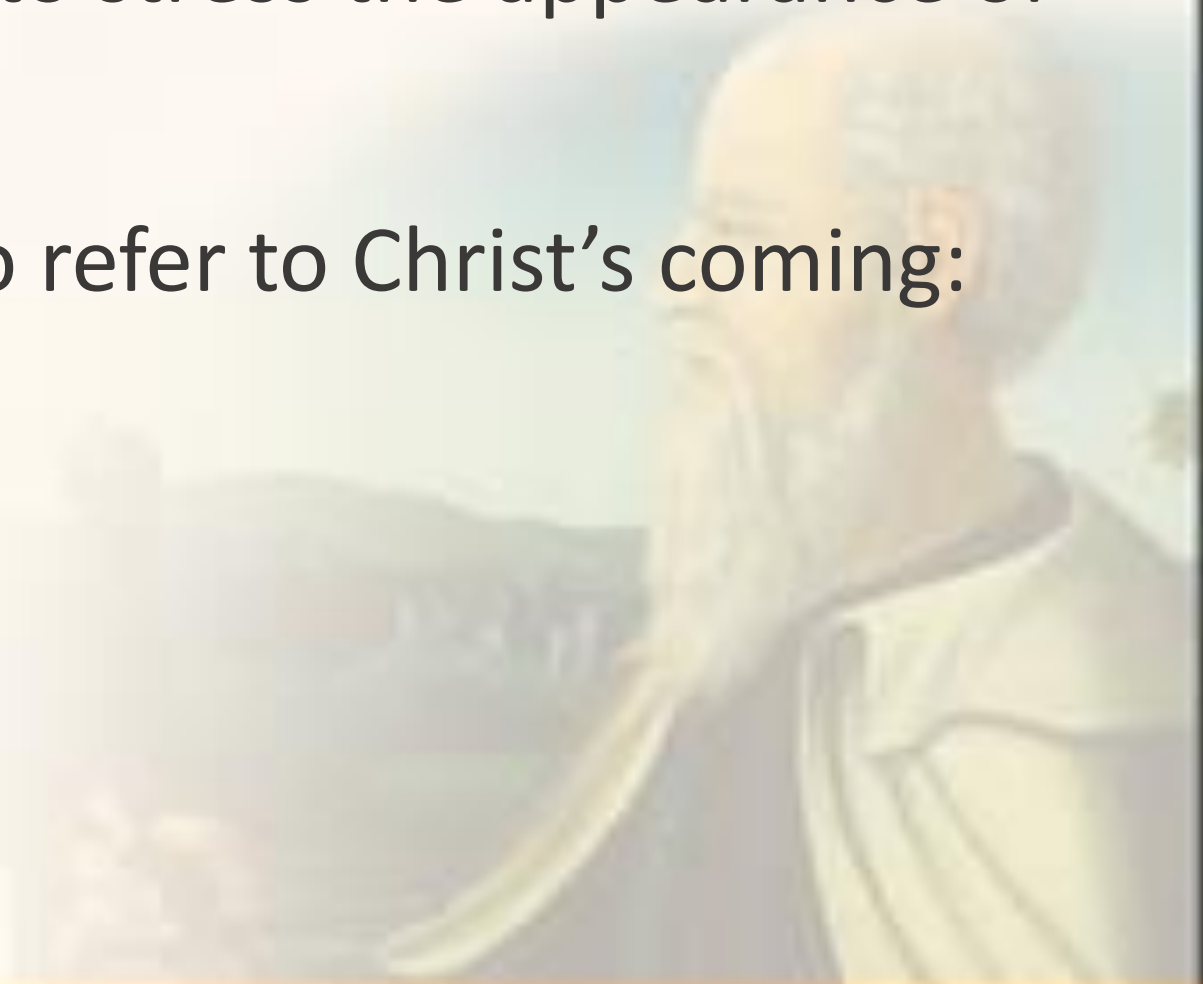


The Parousia

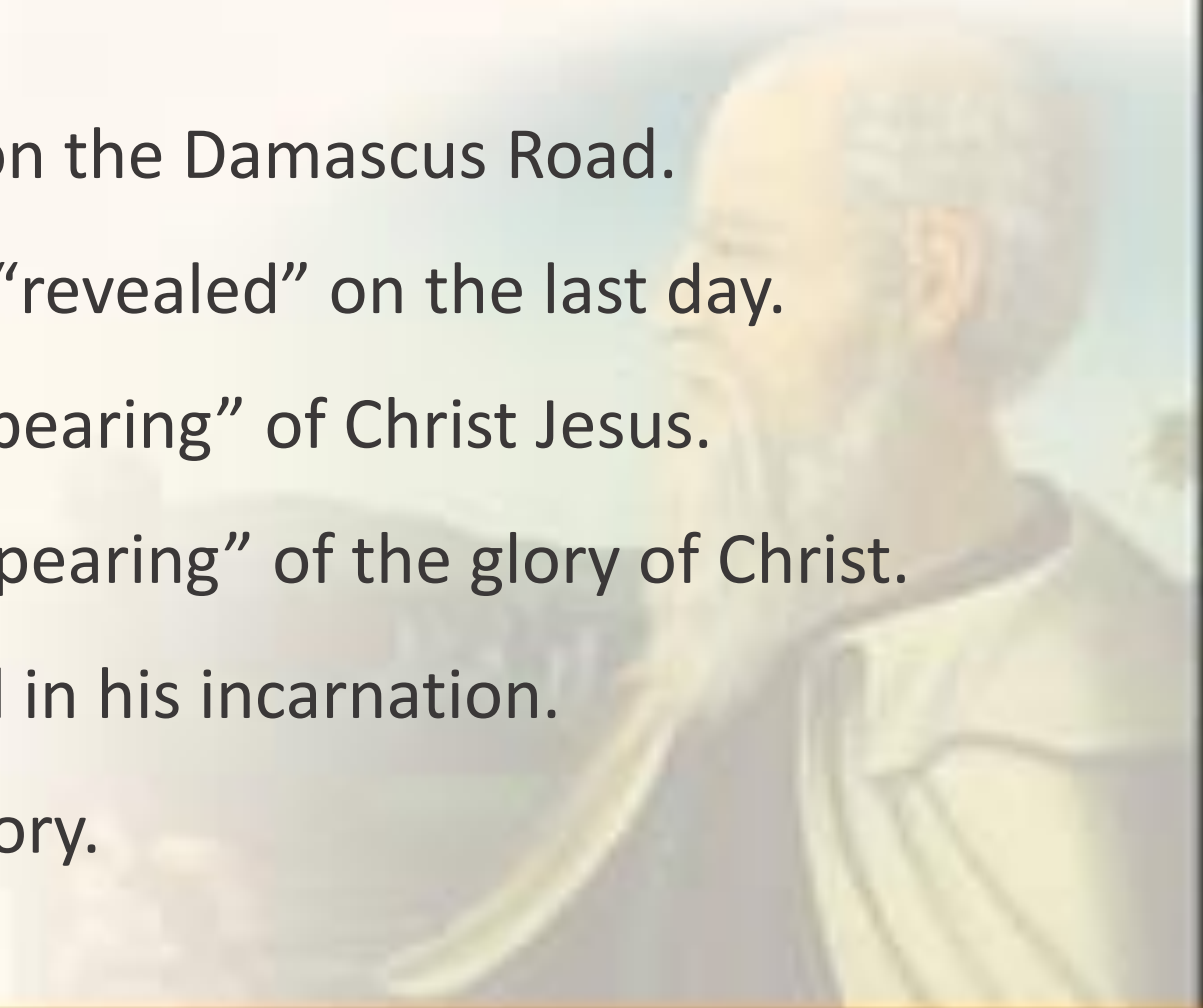
- *Parousia* is the coming of Christ or the “day.”
 - It was sometimes used to refer to the revelation of power from a hidden deity.
 - It was also used to refer to the arrival of someone with power, such as an emperor.
 - Paul may have used this to counter imperial messages, but this is not definite.



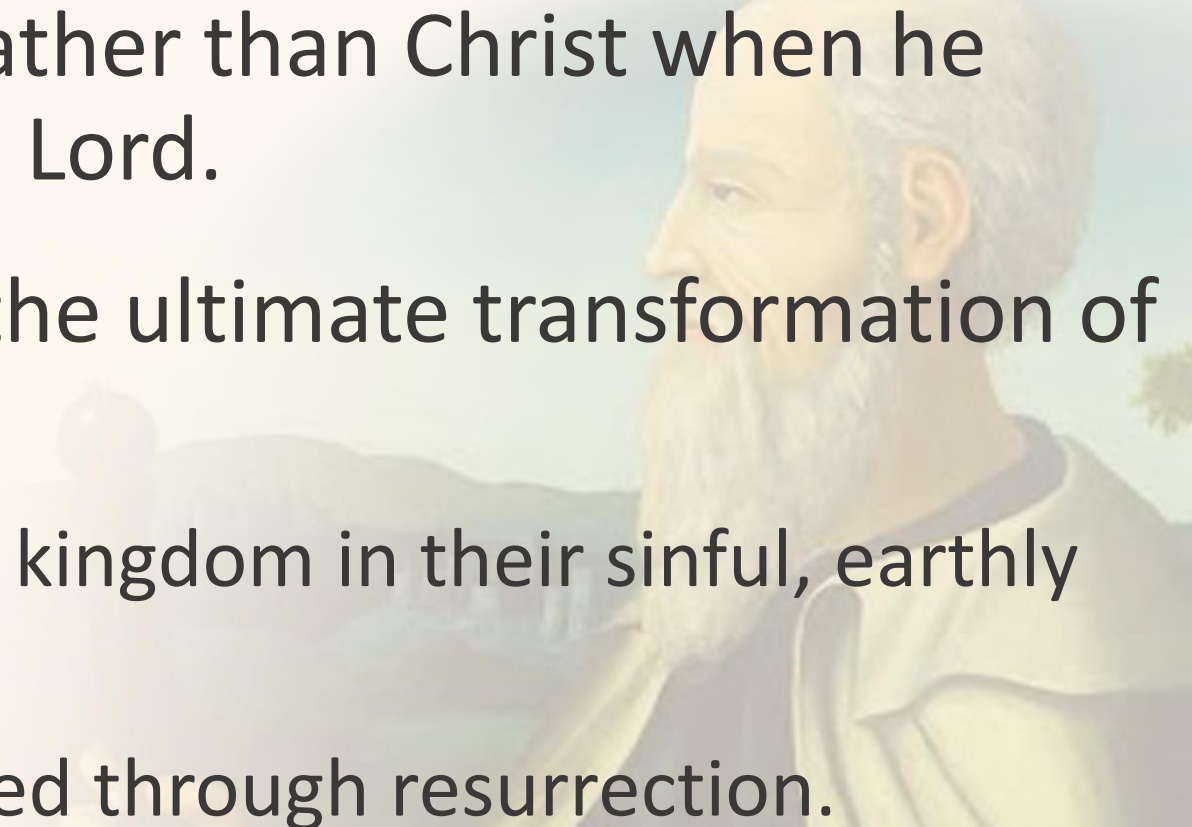
- Paul also used motion verbs to stress the appearance of Christ.
- He used a variety of words to refer to Christ's coming:
 - "Revelation"
 - "Appearance"
 - "Appear" or "reveal"

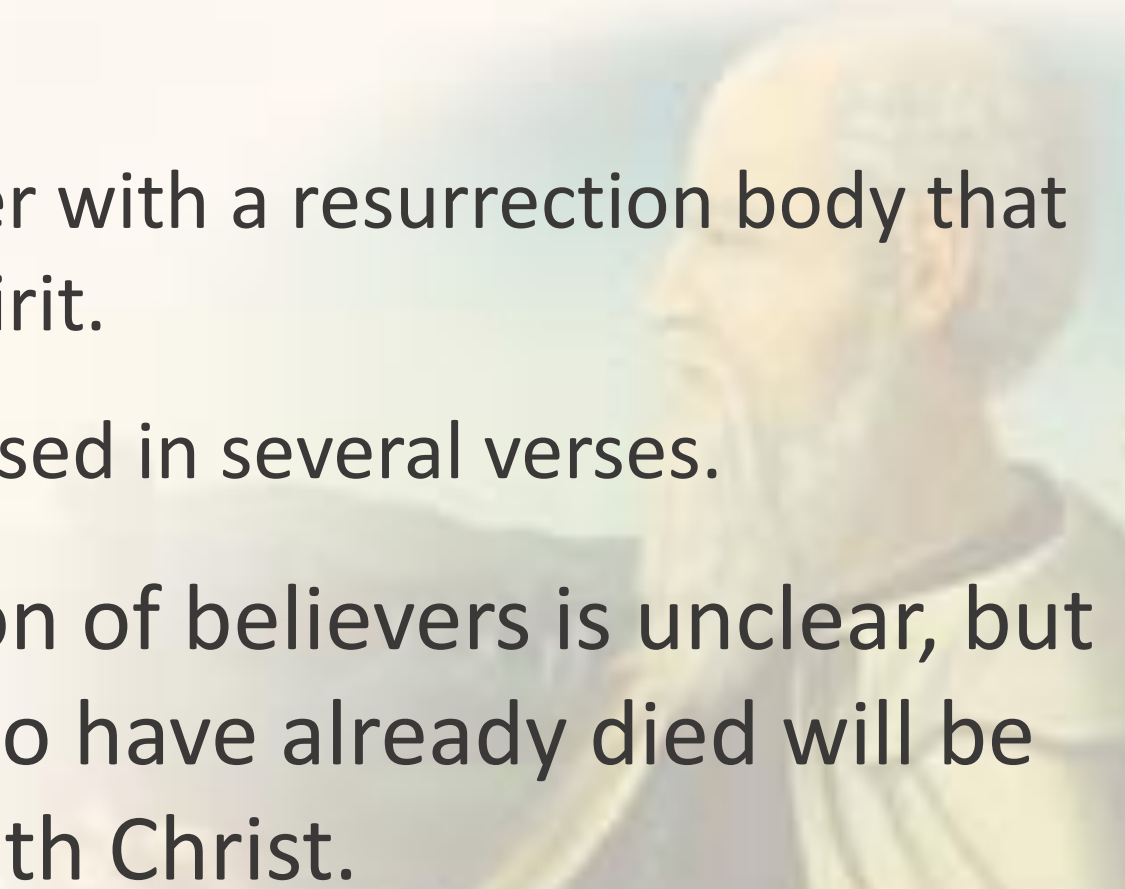


- These also highlight the “already”/“not yet” aspect of Paul’s eschatology.
 - Christ was “revealed” to Paul on the Damascus Road.
 - Christians wait for Jesus to be “revealed” on the last day.
 - Christians celebrate in the “appearing” of Christ Jesus.
 - Christians find hope in the “appearing” of the glory of Christ.
 - Christ “appeared” to the world in his incarnation.
 - Christ “will appear” again in glory.



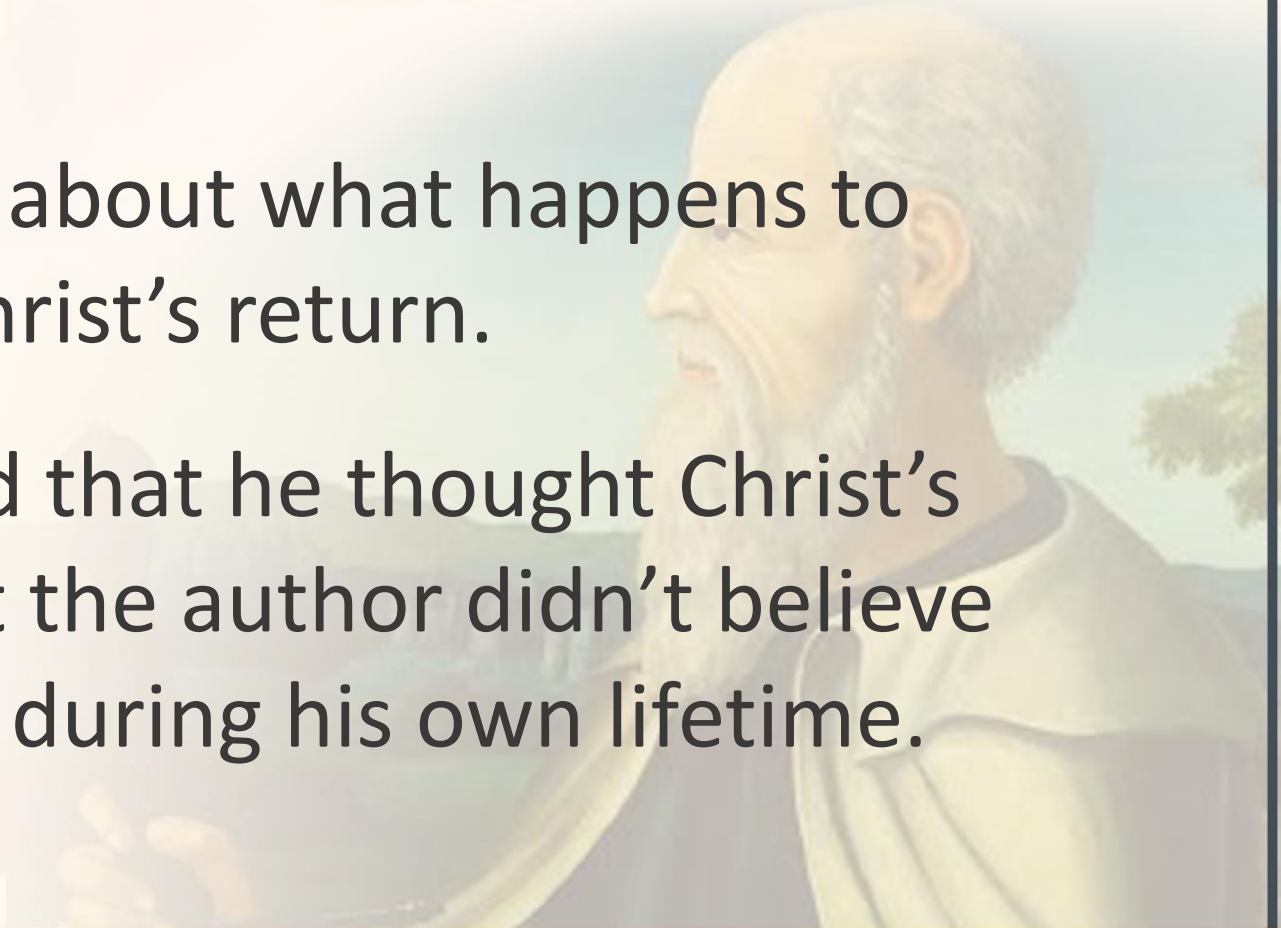
Resurrection and Rapture

- Paul focused on believers rather than Christ when he taught about the day of the Lord.
 - Christ's coming completes the ultimate transformation of believers.
 - Humans cannot enter God's kingdom in their sinful, earthly bodies.
 - Their bodies must be changed through resurrection.
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- Christ's resurrection guarantees the resurrection of believers.
 - God will provide each believer with a resurrection body that will be suited to life in the Spirit.
 - This transformation is addressed in several verses.
 - The timing of the resurrection of believers is unclear, but Paul indicated that those who have already died will be the first to be resurrected with Christ.

The Question of Timing: “Imminence”

- There have been questions about what happens to believers who die before Christ’s return.
- Paul’s early letters indicated that he thought Christ’s return was “imminent,” but the author didn’t believe Paul expected the parousia during his own lifetime.



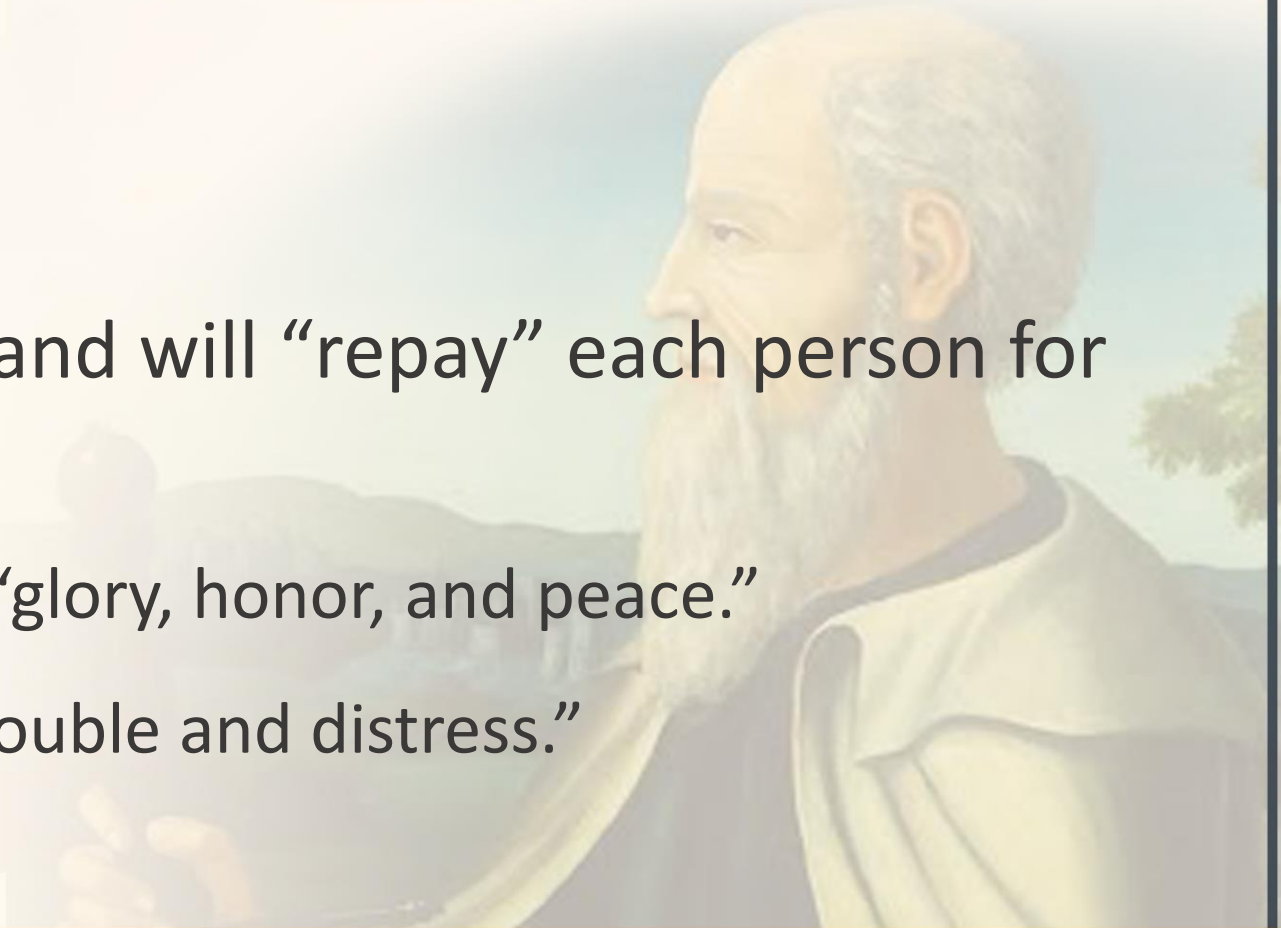
- Philippians 1:13 suggests that believers are with Christ when they die.
 - However, they do not have spiritual bodies and are therefore waiting for their resurrection bodies.
 - Some scholars believe this should be interpreted using two viewpoints:
 1. The participant dies and immediately transitions from one body to the other.
 2. The onlookers see a space of indefinite time between the transition.
 - This is often referred to as the “soul-sleep” view.

- “Rapture” is not a New Testament term.
 - It is often referred to as the physical movement of bodies as they are taken off the earth to meet the Lord.
 - It is also the transformation of bodies.
 - The author believed it is best seen as a “parallel to resurrection.”
- The author did not believe that a pretribulation rapture is clearly indicated in Paul’s letters.
 - Believers will suffer in a type of “tribulation” because of living in a fallen world and due to their faith.

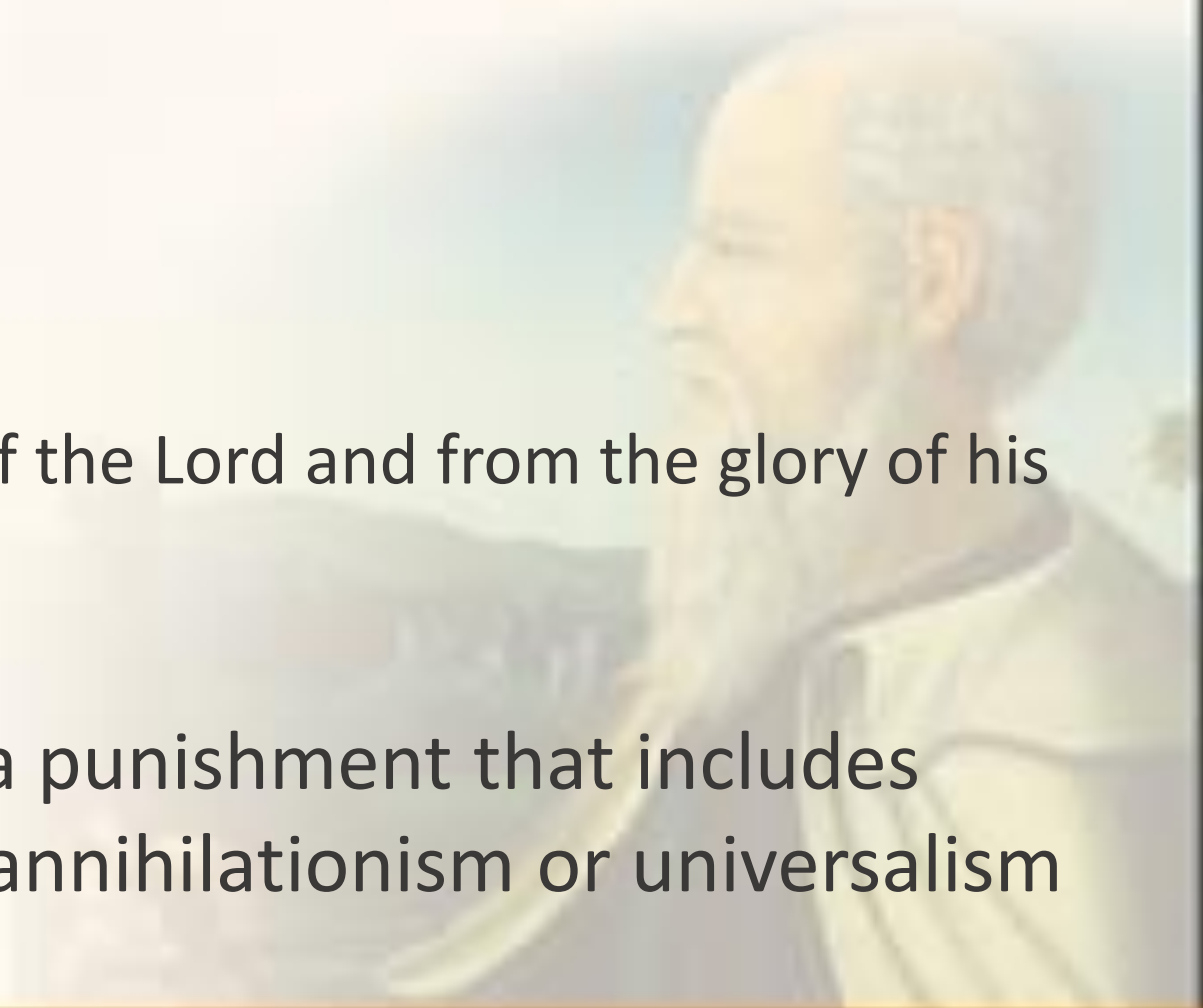
Judgment

- Unbelievers

- Paul taught that God is just and will “repay” each person for what they have done.
 - Good will be rewarded with “glory, honor, and peace.”
 - Evil will be punished with “trouble and distress.”

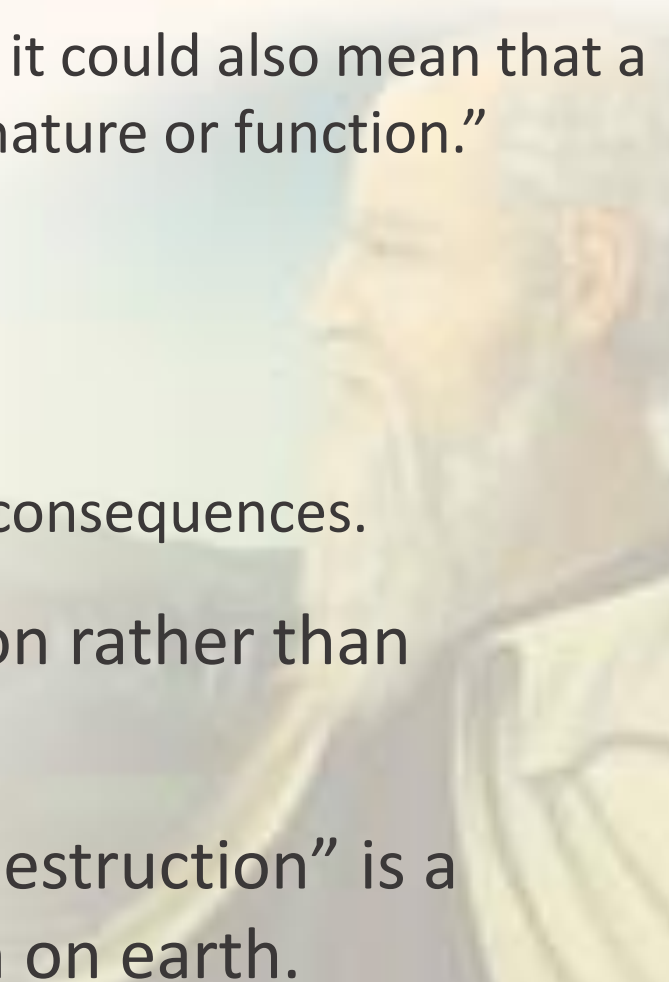


- Paul never used the word “hell”; he used various words and phrases to describe God’s justice for the wicked:
 - “Perish”
 - “Condemn”
 - “Punish”
 - “Destroy”
 - “Shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might”
 - “Judge”
- Many scholars argue against a punishment that includes eternal torment and suggest annihilationism or universalism instead.

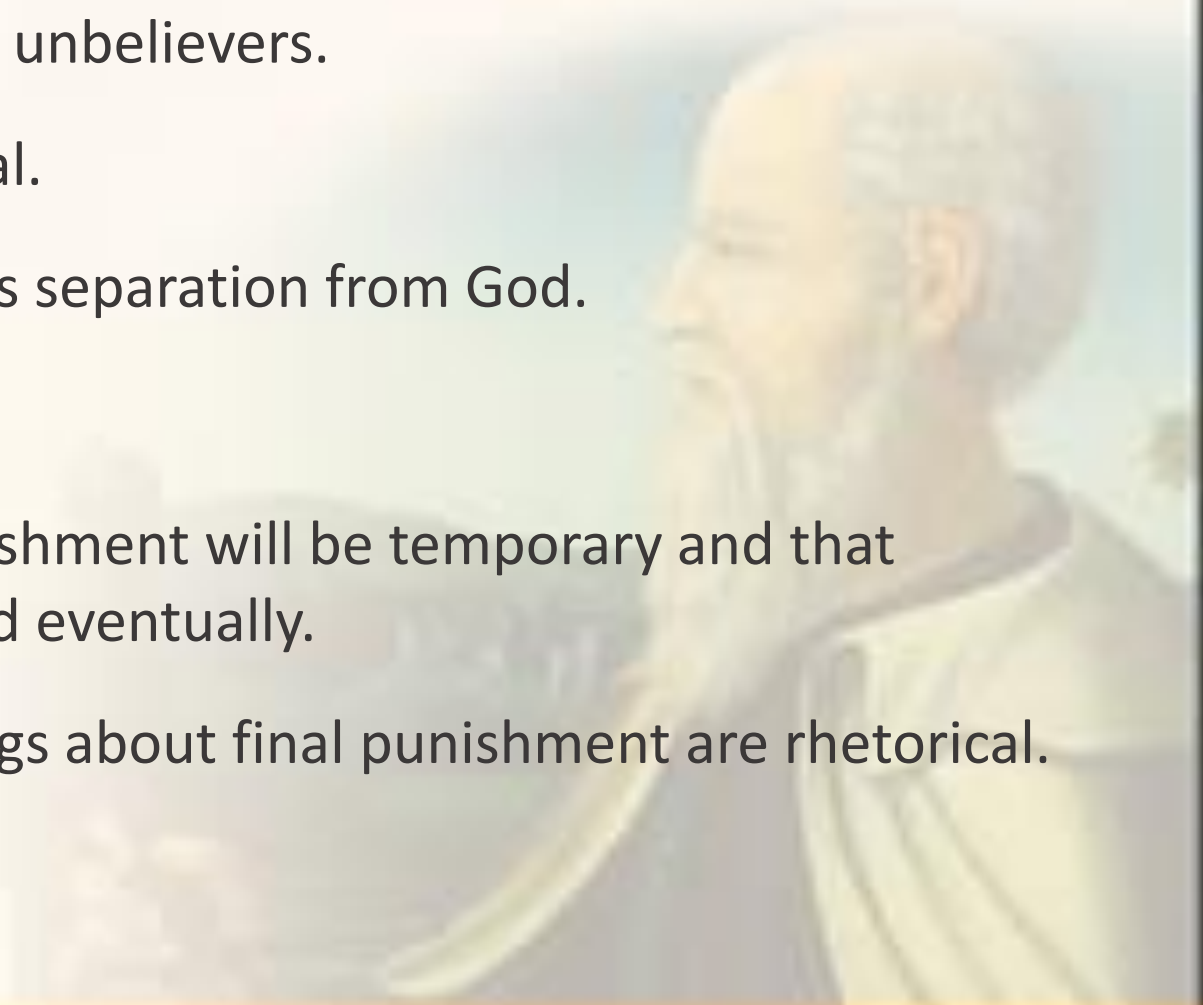


- Eternal Destruction?

- Annihilationists believe that unbelievers will be punished for a time and will then cease to exist.
- This assumes that humans were not created immortal and that believers will be given the gift of immortality upon their resurrection.
- Resurrection in general is taught by other biblical authors, but it is not explicit in Paul's letters.
 - It is possible that some of his references indicate a resurrection of the unrighteous.
 - Paul was a Pharisee, and they believed in the resurrection of the righteous and unrighteous. He appeared to confirm this belief in Acts.

- Paul's teachings on the destruction of the unrighteous are debated.
 - "Destruction" could refer to annihilation, but it could also mean that a person or object has "lost the essence of its nature or function."
 - The word "eternal" is also debated.
 - It could last "for an age."
 - It could refer to destruction that has eternal consequences.
 - "Destruction" may be a state of deprivation rather than annihilation.
 - Paul used vocabulary that indicates the "destruction" is a continuation of the unbelievers' condition on earth.
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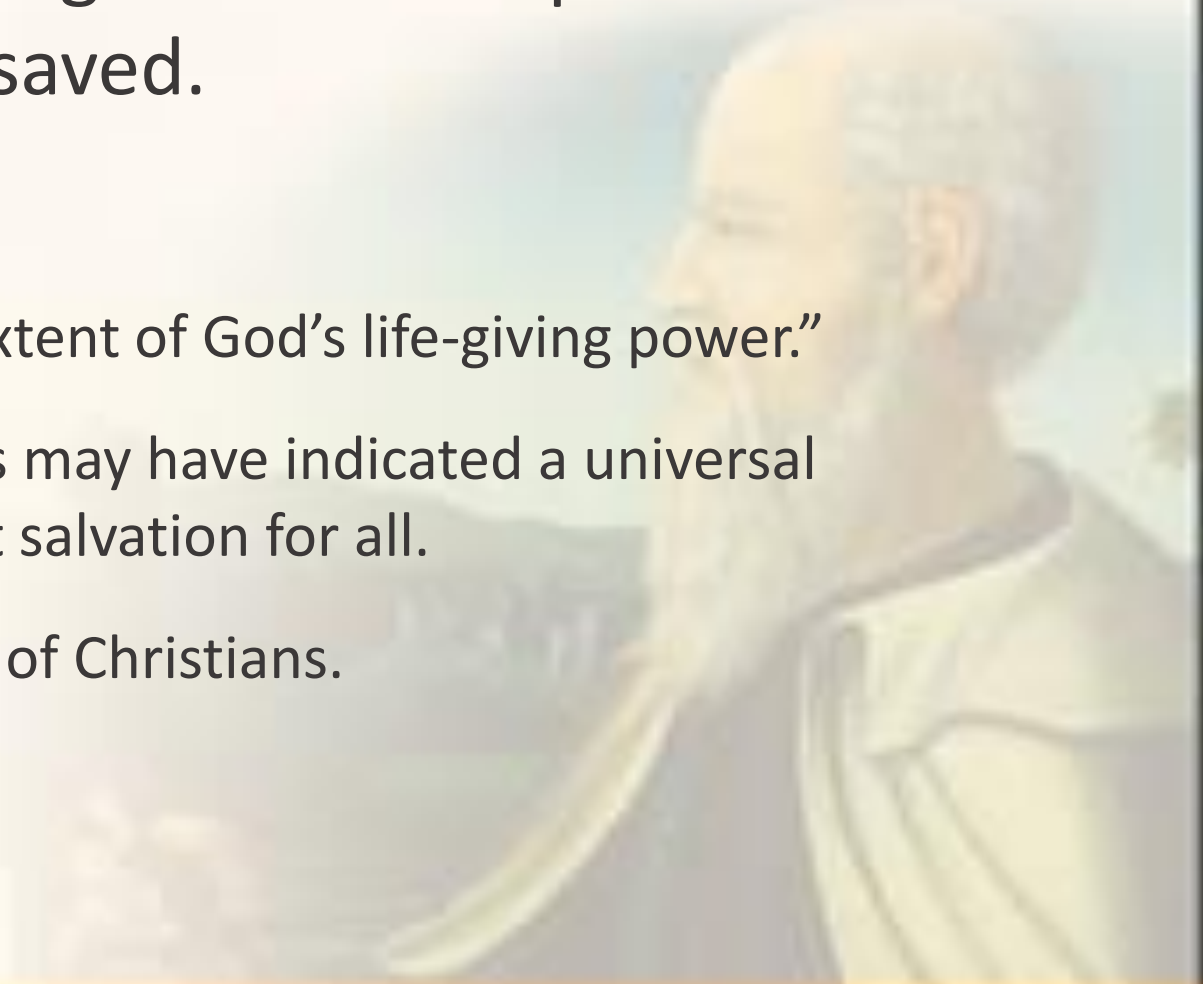
- Three points of annihilationism are secure:
 1. God will inflict punishment on unbelievers.
 2. The punishment will be eternal.
 3. The heart of the punishment is separation from God.
- God “All in All”?
 - Some scholars believe that punishment will be temporary and that everyone will be restored to God eventually.
 - Some believe that Paul’s warnings about final punishment are rhetorical.



- Some believe that Paul's warnings about final punishment are rhetorical and that all are saved.

- 1 Corinthians 15:20–28

- Paul taught “a future universal extent of God's life-giving power.”
- The author believed Paul's words may have indicated a universal resurrection of the dead, but not salvation for all.
- Paul referred to the resurrection of Christians.

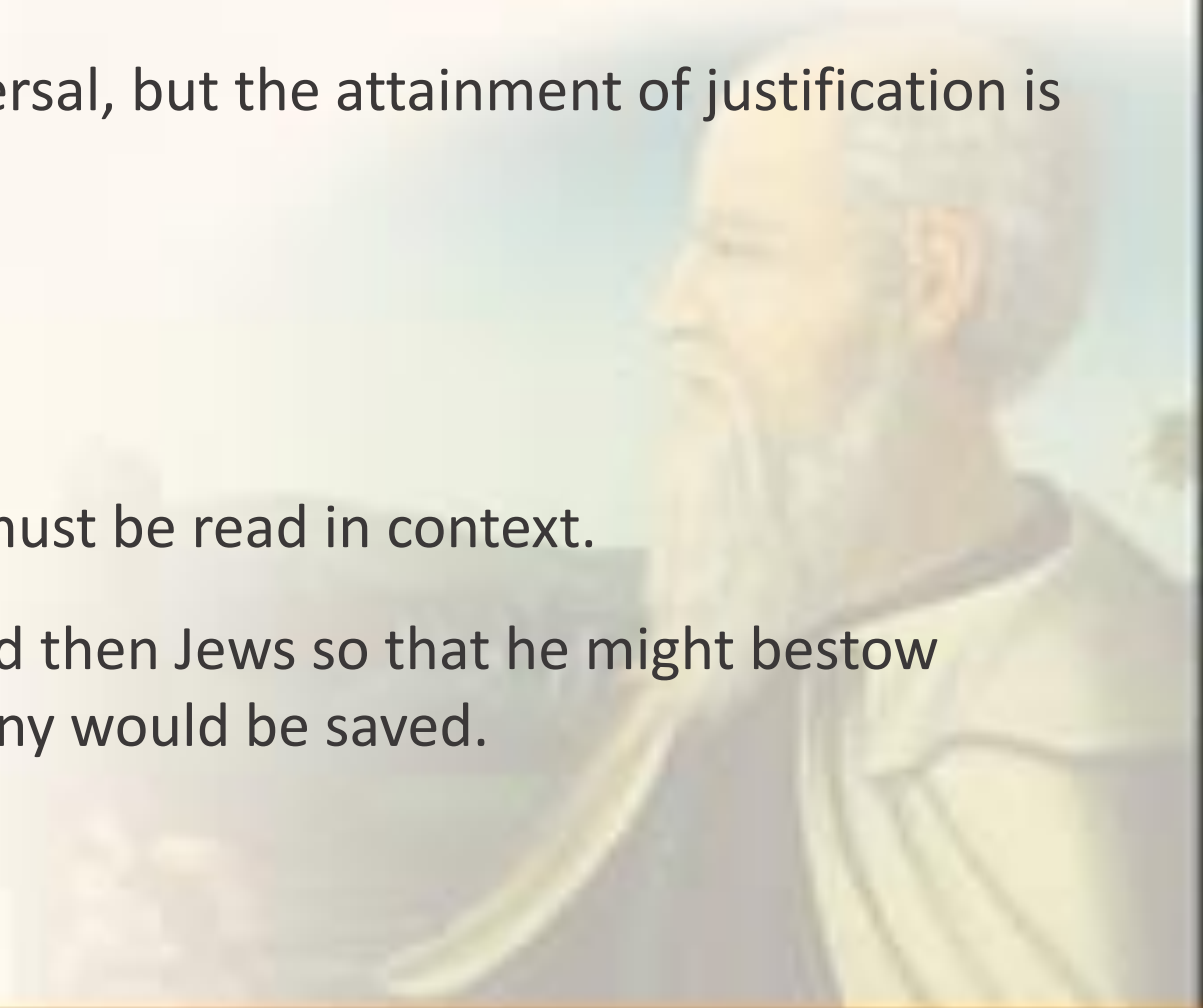


- Romans 5:18

- The “universalism” in this text is restricted to those who are justified in Christ.
- The offer of justification is universal, but the attainment of justification is not.

- Romans 11:32

- The author believed the verse must be read in context.
- God has imprisoned gentiles and then Jews so that he might bestow mercy. Paul did not say how many would be saved.

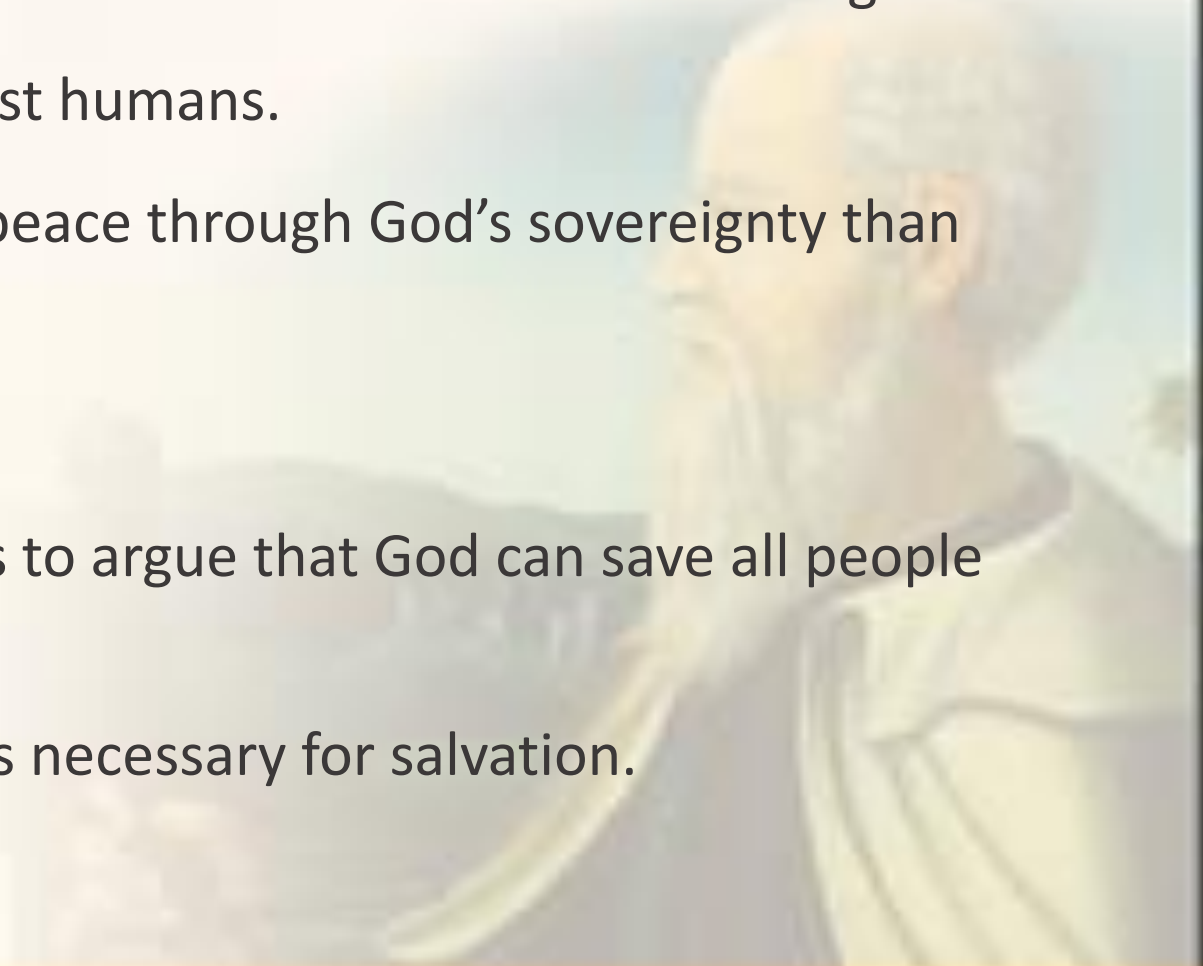


- Colossians 1:20

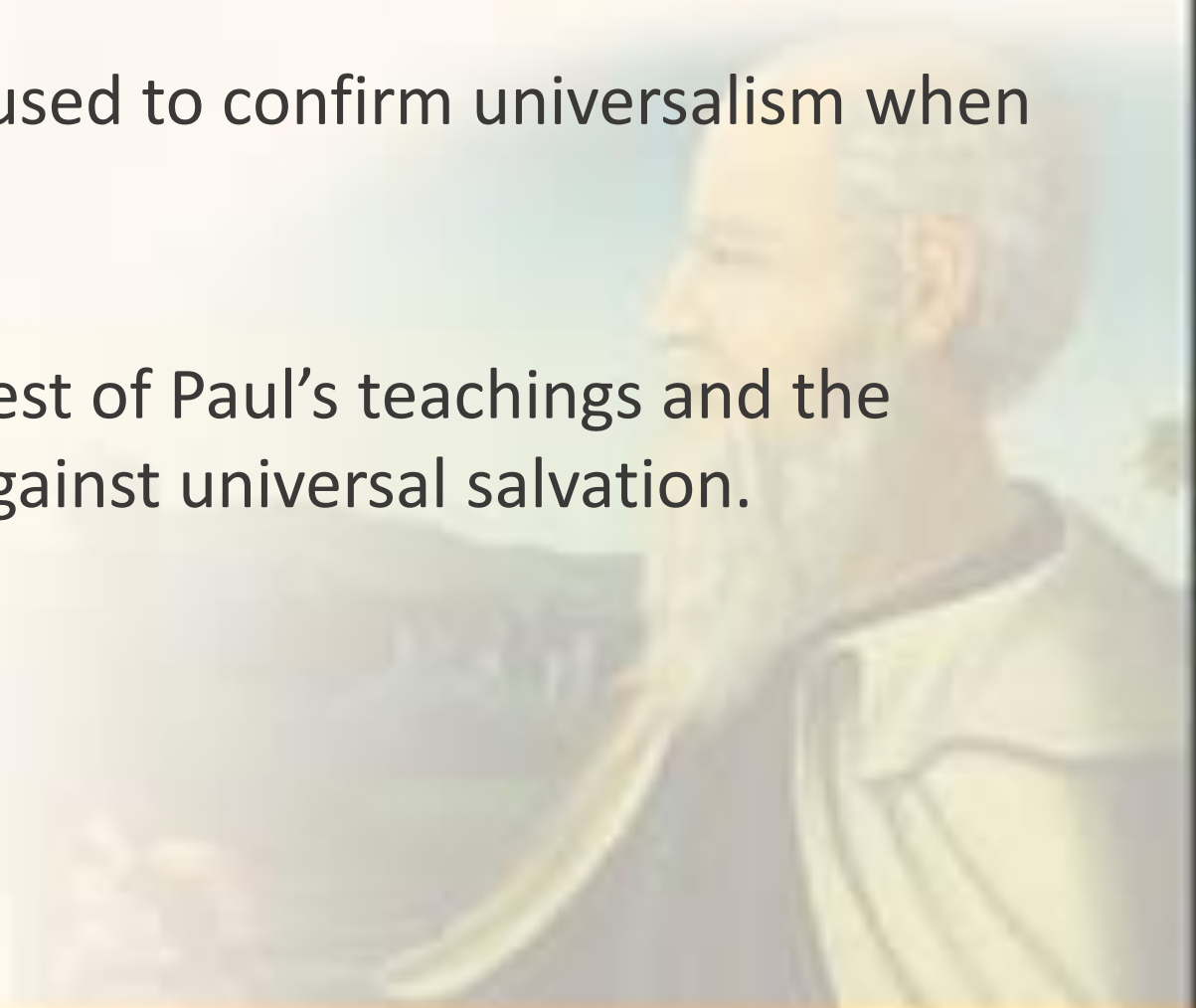
- Paul taught that God's purpose was to reconcile himself to all things.
- This includes the universe, not just humans.
- It more likely refers to universal peace through God's sovereignty than universal salvation.

- 1 Timothy 2:4

- This is often used by universalists to argue that God can save all people regardless of their faith.
- Paul, however, taught that faith is necessary for salvation.

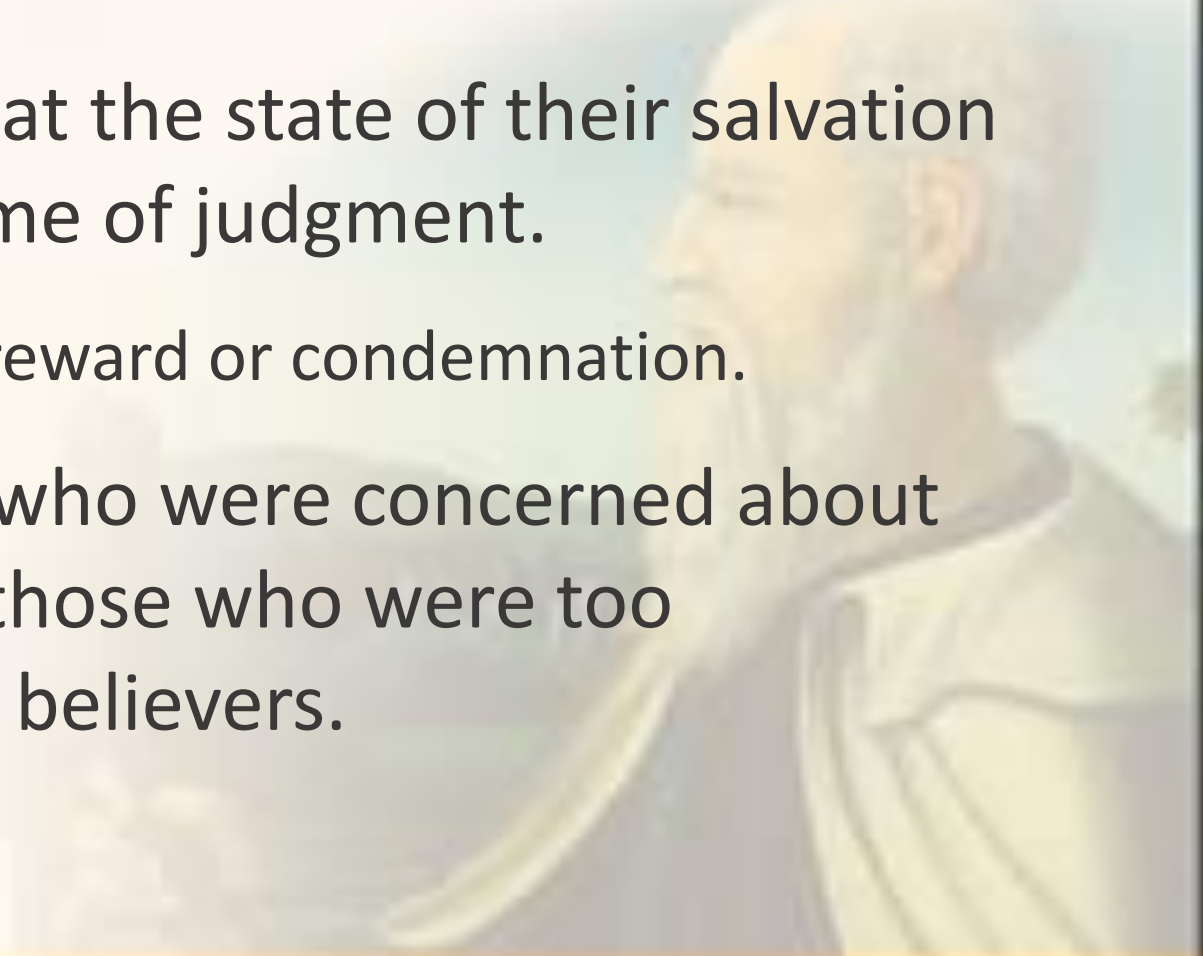


- Each of these verses could be used to confirm universalism when they are read alone.
- The author believed that the rest of Paul's teachings and the entire New Testament argue against universal salvation.

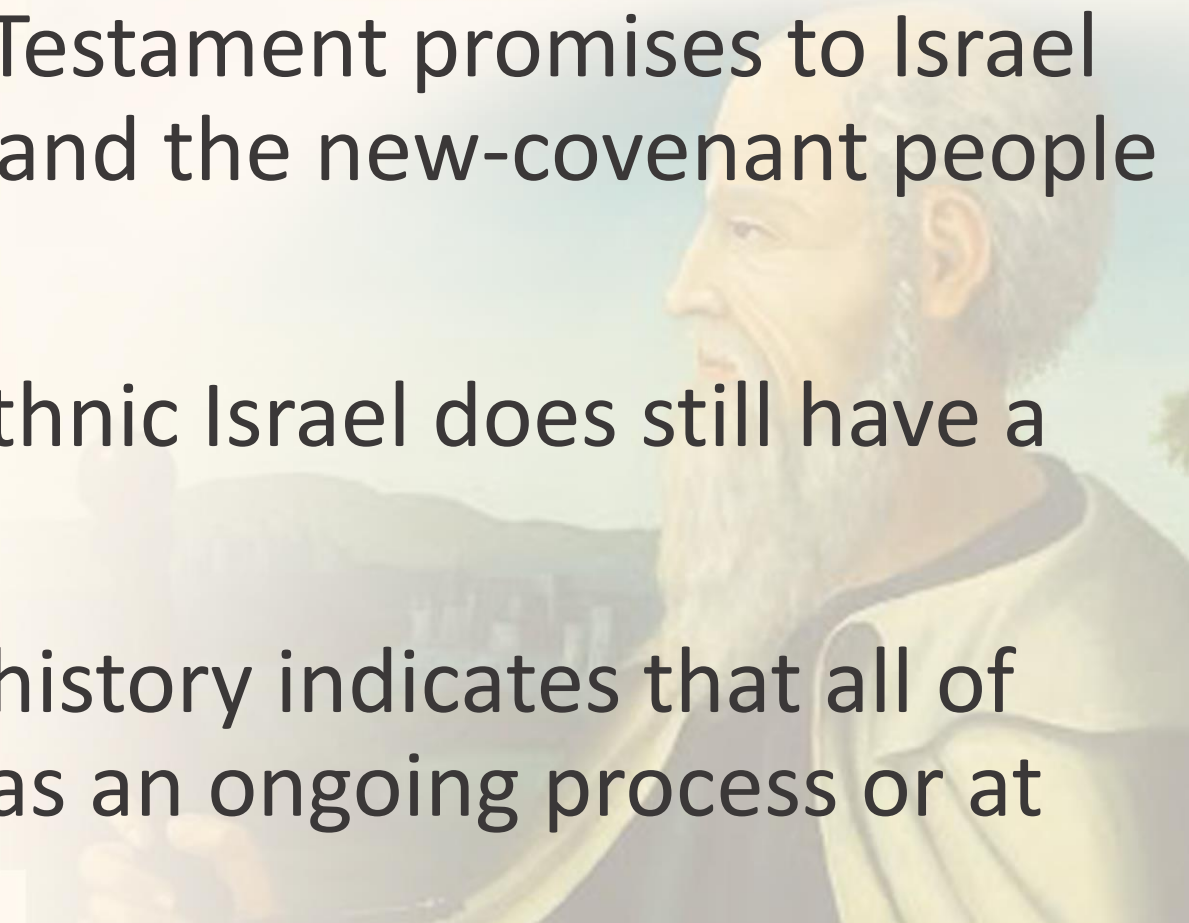


• Believers and the Judgment

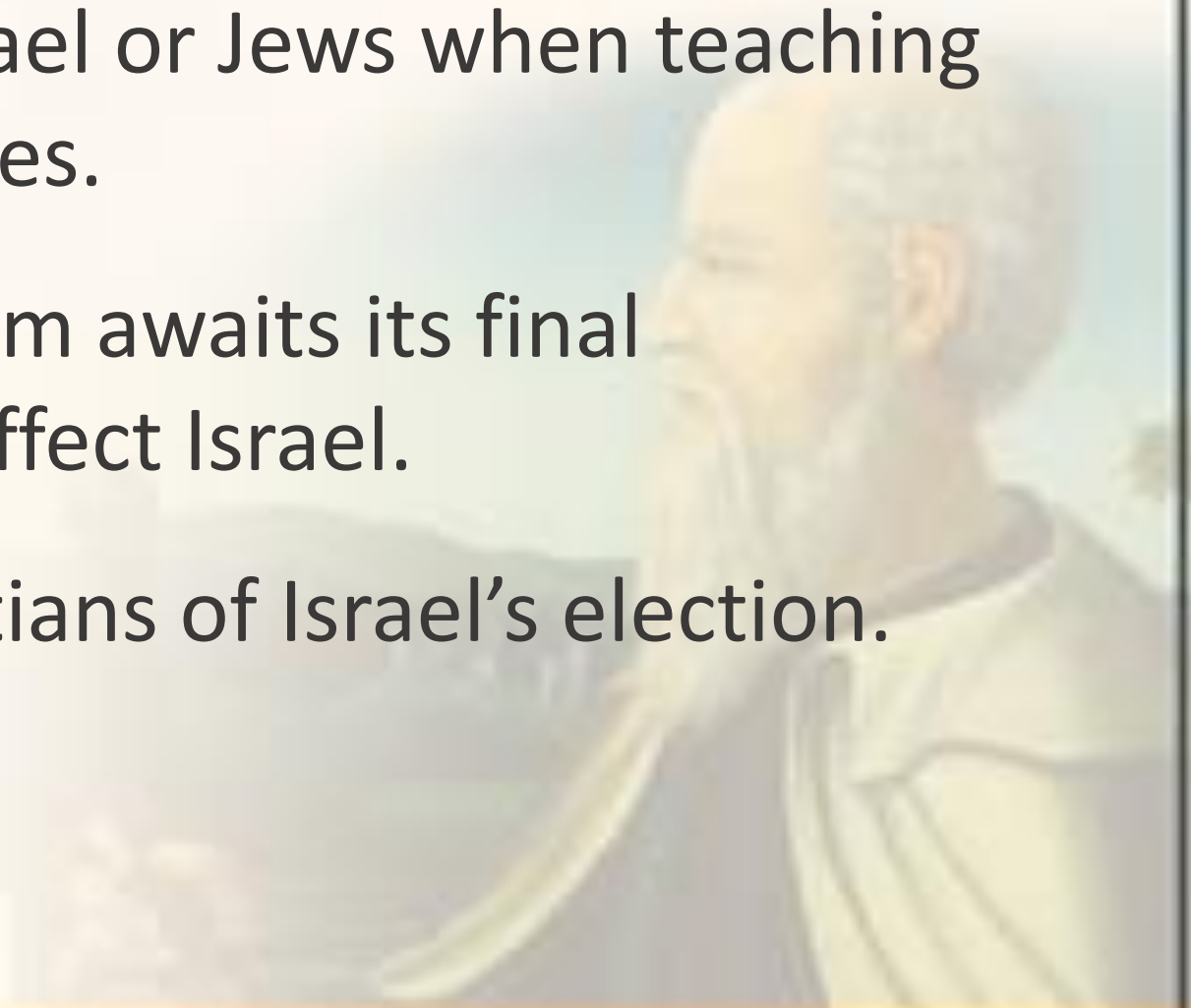
- The author included several passages that indicate believers will face judgment and be given eternal life or eternal death.
- Paul also assured believers that the state of their salvation would be confirmed at the time of judgment.
 - Believers will receive either a reward or condemnation.
- Paul aimed to comfort those who were concerned about salvation while also warning those who were too comfortable in their status as believers.



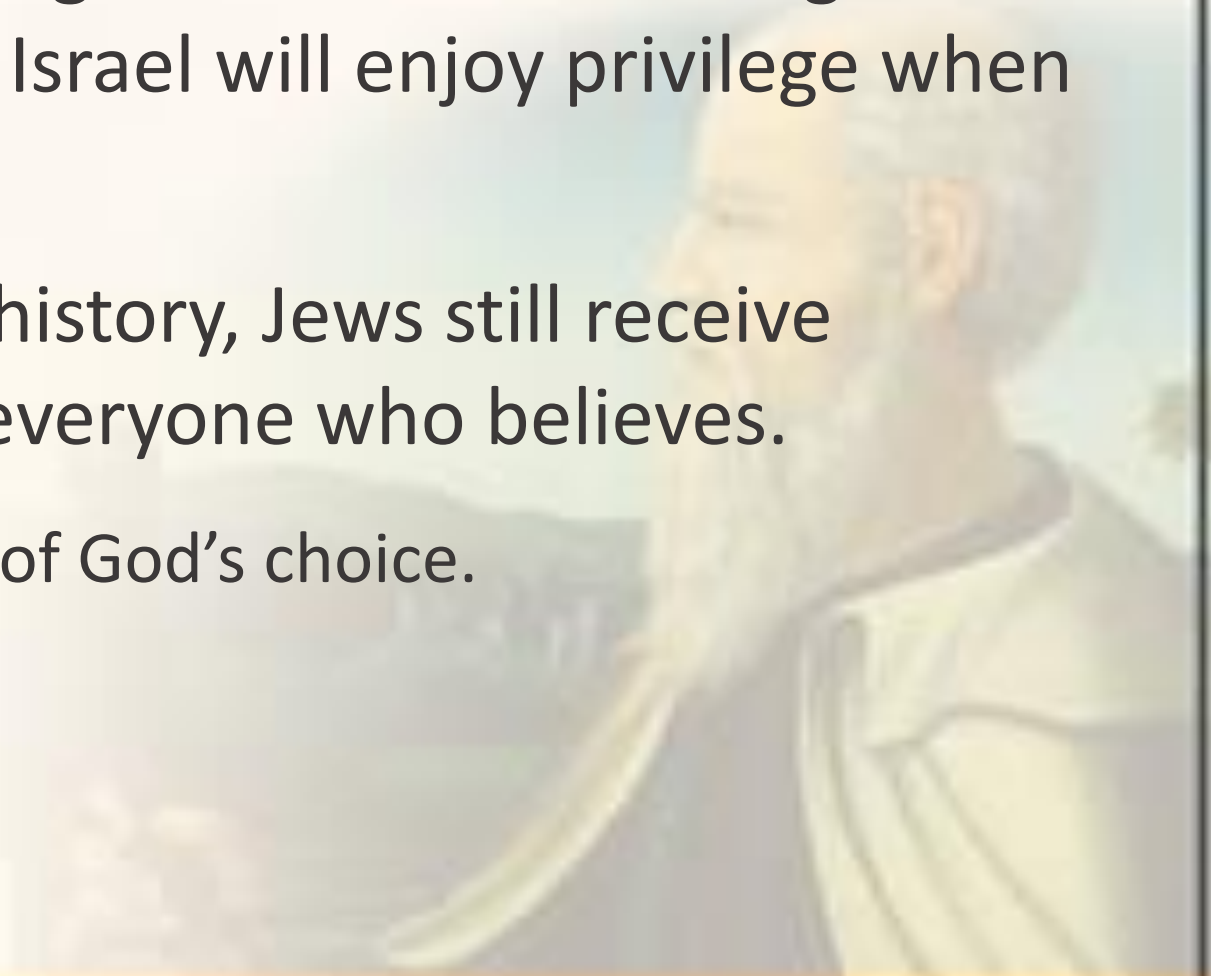
Israel

- Paul believed that the Old Testament promises to Israel would be fulfilled in Christ and the new-covenant people of God.
 - The author believed that ethnic Israel does still have a future.
 - The sequence of salvation history indicates that all of Israel will be saved, either as an ongoing process or at some point in the future.
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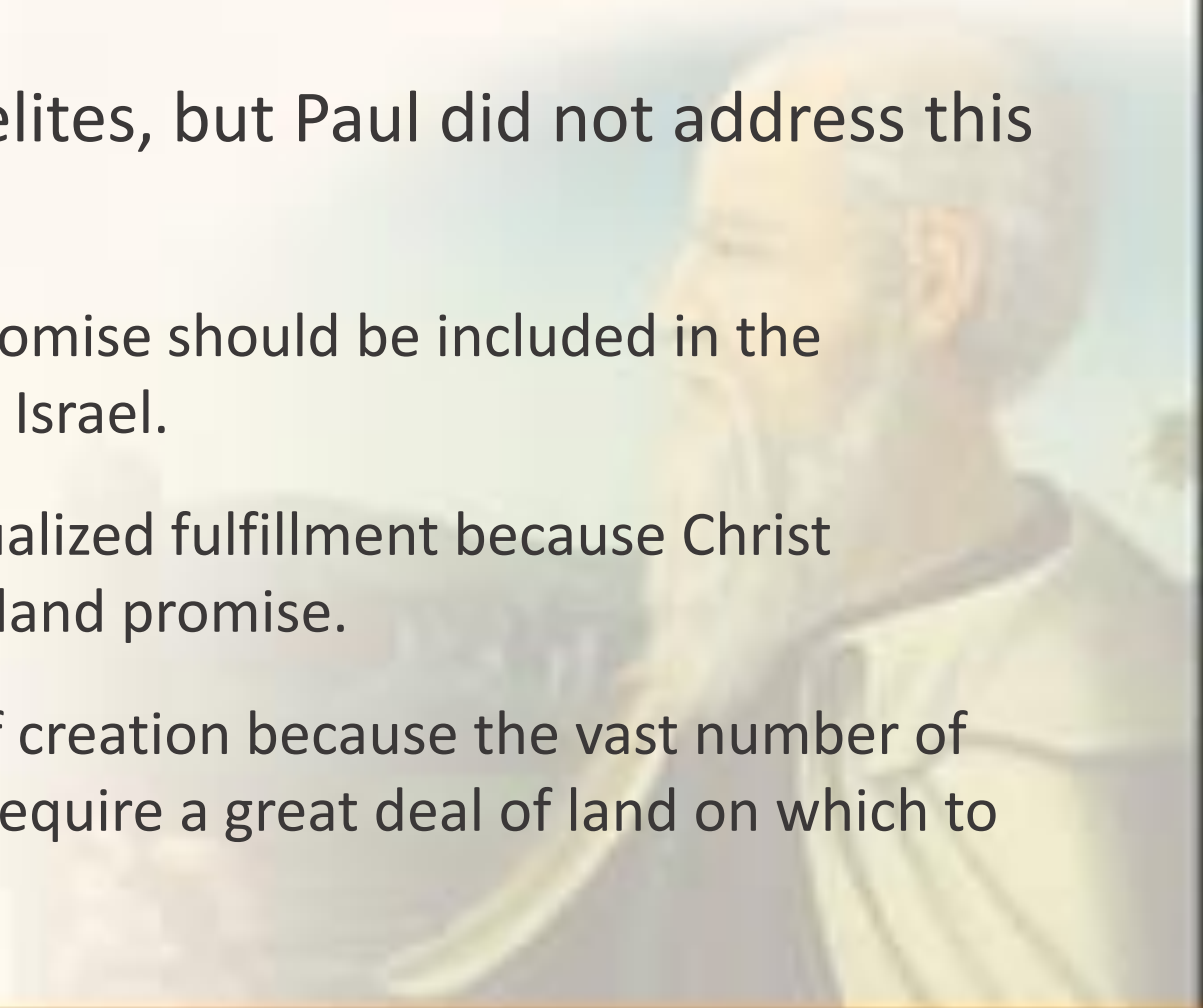
- Paul typically mentioned Israel or Jews when teaching about the inclusion of gentiles.
- God's covenant with Abraham awaits its final consummation, which will affect Israel.
- Paul reminded gentile Christians of Israel's election.



- Paul had to balance his teachings that Israel is no longer the most favored nation and that Israel will enjoy privilege when Christ returns.
- In the new stage of salvation history, Jews still receive privilege, but salvation is for everyone who believes.
 - Ethnic identity is not the basis of God's choice.



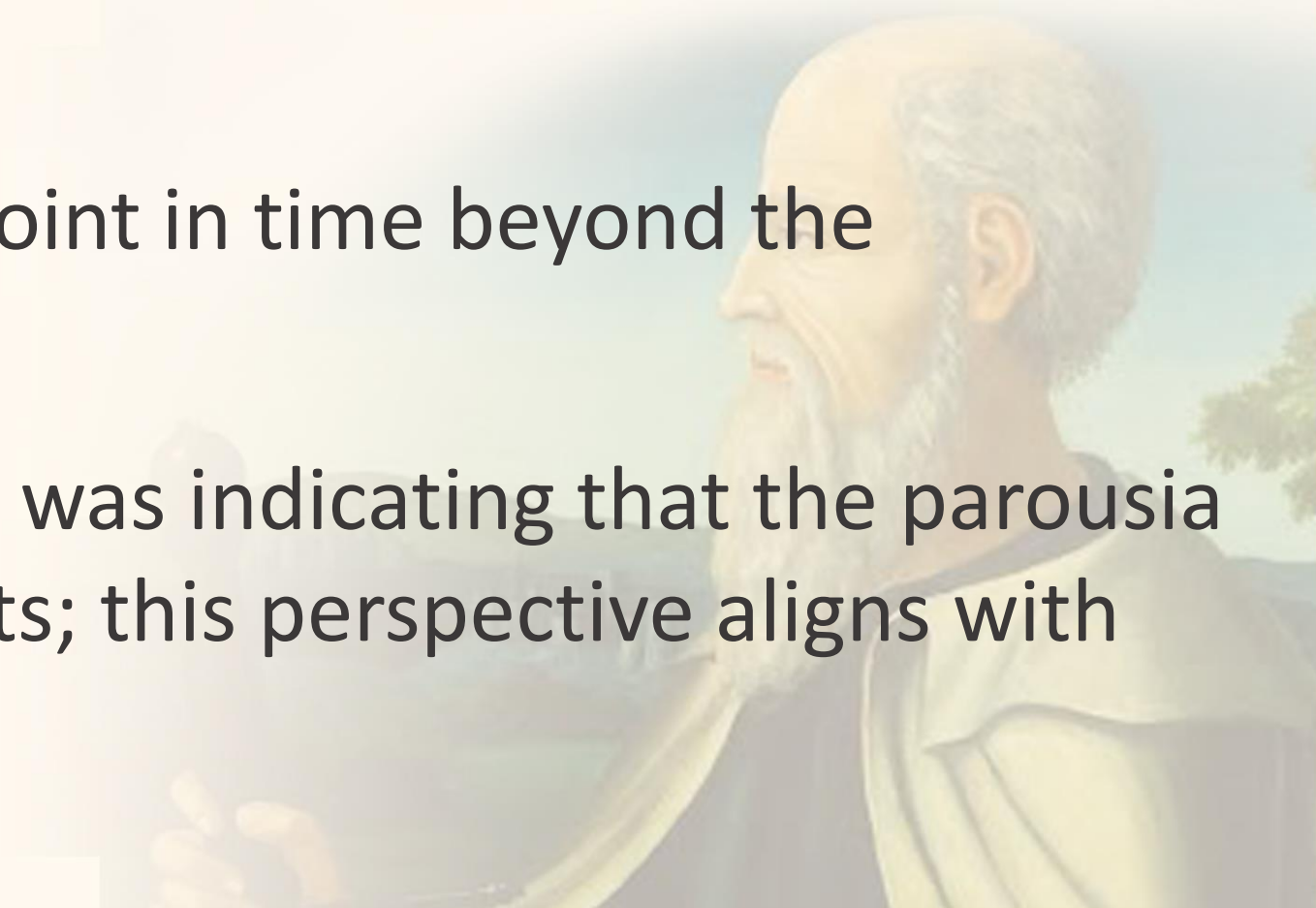
- Paul affirmed a future for Israel, but he did not give the extent of the future.
- God promised land to the Israelites, but Paul did not address this land in the last days.
 - Some believe this geographic promise should be included in the culmination of God's promise to Israel.
 - Others believe it will be a spiritualized fulfillment because Christ embodies the fulfillment of the land promise.
 - The promise might include all of creation because the vast number of Abraham's descendants would require a great deal of land on which to live.



- Obedient children of God are promised long life on earth.
 - The author believed that Paul may have been teaching that Christians can enjoy long life on earth and also in the new heaven and the new earth.
- The author believed Paul taught that the consummation of the new realm will create a revival in Israel that will lead Jews to turn to Christ.
- He didn't believe Paul was referring to physical land because the people of God are promised the new heaven and the new earth.

Beyond the Parousia?

- Paul didn't refer to any point in time beyond the parousia.
- The author believed Paul was indicating that the parousia would usher in end events; this perspective aligns with content in Revelation.



New Creation

- Paul used the phrase “new creation” to refer to the new realm.
- All of creation will find freedom when God’s human creations are able to rule as they were initially designed to do.
- Paul did not refer to humans’ disembodied existence in heaven, but he taught that resurrected bodies will enjoy