

One other aspect of Jesus' teaching is important to emphasize before continuing on to consider his understanding of the afterlife. That is the thoroughly apocalyptic character of his views.

I have discussed Jewish apocalypticism a number of times on the blog—including some months ago on the current thread. I don't want to repeat all that here in the same form, but I do want to summarize what the view is and discuss its underlying assumptions.

In a small nutshell, apocalypticists believed that this world was being controlled by evil forces responsible for this terrible mess of things (corrupt governments; natural disasters; persecution of the righteous), but that God, who was ultimately sovereign, was soon to intervene in the course of human affairs, overthrow the forces of evil, and establish a utopian kingdom here on earth.

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