



# The *Parousia*: From Anxious Waiting to Grounded Presence

*A re-examination of fulfilled eschatology and the transition from promise to reality.*

Most believers define faith by what is coming rather than what has arrived. We have framed hope as something deferred—a ‘not yet’ that solves the tension of the present. But what if the decisive moment is not ahead of us, but behind us?

This deck explores the ‘Fulfilled View’ (Preterism)—not just as a historical argument about AD 70, but as a shift in spiritual identity. It asks what happens when we stop waiting for the end of the world and start inhabiting the world that has already been established.



# Why We Prefer to Wait

**Key Insight: Waiting has been moralized.  
We mistake endurance for faithfulness.**

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## The Safety of Deferral

It feels safer to wait. It keeps the ultimate test at a distance. As long as the “End” is future, resolution is suspended.

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## The Virtue Trap

We have elevated patience and perseverance as the primary markers of spiritual maturity. We measure faith by how long we can wait without complaining, rather than how well we embody truth.

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## The Cost

The result is spiritual fatigue. When resolution is always “coming soon” but never arrives, the present becomes a place of suspension. We live alert but unresolved. We are faithful, yet perpetually unsettled.

# The Fear of a Finished Story



## The Misconception

We instinctively hear "fulfillment" as termination—like a contract that expires and is thrown away. We fear that if the 'End' has happened, faith loses its urgency and life becomes disenchanted.

## The Reality

Biblical fulfillment is realization. The Exodus did not lose meaning once it happened; it became the foundation for Israel's identity.

## The Shift

Meaning is not generated by delay; it is generated by reality. Fulfillment does not empty the story of significance; it anchors it in history. The question shifts from "What will happen?" to 'What now follows?'

# The Problem of Nearness

**“Nearness was not a controversial claim that needed justification. It functioned as a common horizon.”**

## Urgency was Normal

Jesus and the apostles did not speak in open-ended terms. They spoke with compression and immediacy. Watchfulness was demanded because the event was approaching them.

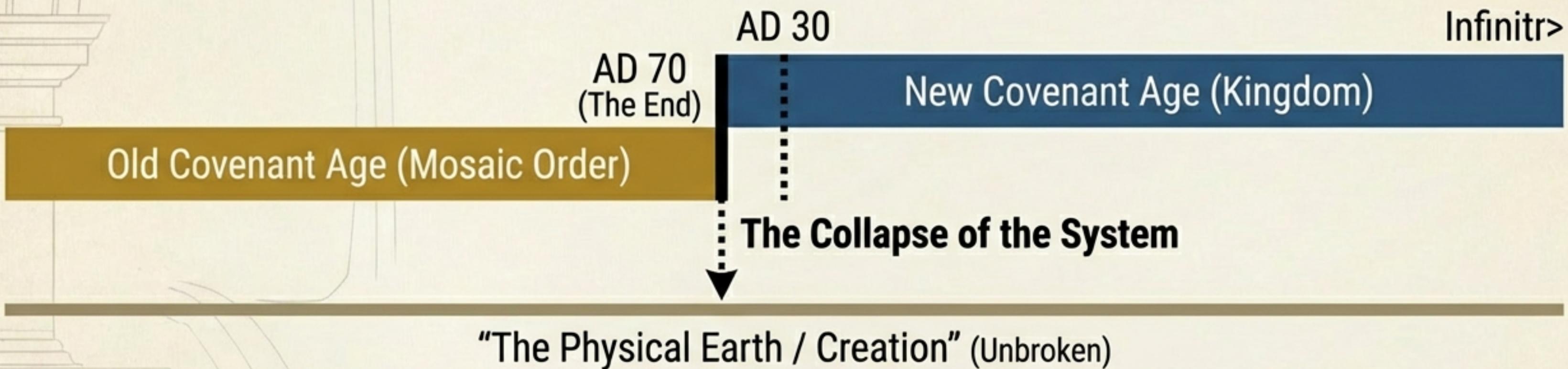
## The Deafening Silence

There are no footnotes in the Epistles warning readers not to take “soon” literally. There are no corrections explaining that “near” actually meant 2,000 years.

## The Conclusion

If the early church understood nearness as abstract or symbolic, they would have needed clarification. They didn’t. They expected a covenantal change within their generation because that is exactly what was promised.

# The End of the World vs. The End of the Age



**Defining “World”:** In the biblical text, “world” often refers to an order of life—a system shaped by law, temple, and priesthood—not the physical globe.

**Cosmic Language:** When prophets spoke of suns darkening and stars falling, they were using established metaphors for the collapse of ruling systems and nations, not astrophysics.

**The Event:** “The End” was the termination of the Old covenant order. It was the collapse of a specific world—the world of Levitical sacrifice—not the annihilation of creation.

# What Changed and What Remained

## WHAT CHANGED

(The Decisive End)

- **Covenantal Structure:** The Mosaic system, the priesthood, and the Temple economy ended.
- **The Locus of Presence:** God's dwelling moved from a stone temple to a living people. Access is no longer restricted or mediated by a caste.
- **The Age:** The “Old Age” of shadows and types gave way to the “New Age” of reality.

## WHAT DID NOT CHANGE

(The Continuity)

- **The Physical Universe:** Creation is the arena of God's glory, not a mistake to be burned up.
- **Human Responsibility:** We still have moral agency and the call to grow.
- **Suffering & Struggle:** Fulfillment does not mean “Utopia.” It means the meaning of suffering has changed, not that difficulty has vanished.

# Reading Scripture as Witness, Not Suspense



## The Futurist Lens

Treats the Bible as a book of suspended outcomes. We mine passages for clues about a future we haven't seen. Context is secondary; prediction is primary.

## The Fulfilled Lens

Treats the Bible as a witness to God's completed work.

- **Prophecy:** Becomes covenantal speech that confronted a specific audience.
- **Narrative:** We see the story arc: Promise > Crisis > Resolution > Continuation.
- **Application:** We apply the text to form wisdom now, rather than rehearsing for a future age. The text is operative, not waiting to be activated.

# Judgment: From Terror to Reckoning

## The Historical Event

The “Great Judgment” urged in the New Testament was the covenantal reckoning of the 1st Century. It vindicated the early martyrs and closed the book on the Old Covenant.

## The Present Reality

Judgment is no longer a looming torture chamber at the end of time.



## Formative Accountability

Today, judgment operates as “formative accountability.” Our choices have consequences. We live responsibly not because we are afraid of a future catastrophe, but because we are accountable to the Truth that has already won. Fear is replaced by sober, grounded maturity.

# Resurrection as Victory

## More Than Biology

In prophetic language, “resurrection” often described national restoration—a people brought back from the grave of exile.

## Corporate Reality

The New Testament describes believers as already raised. We have been transferred from the realm of Death (separation/Law) to the realm of Life.

## Operative Power

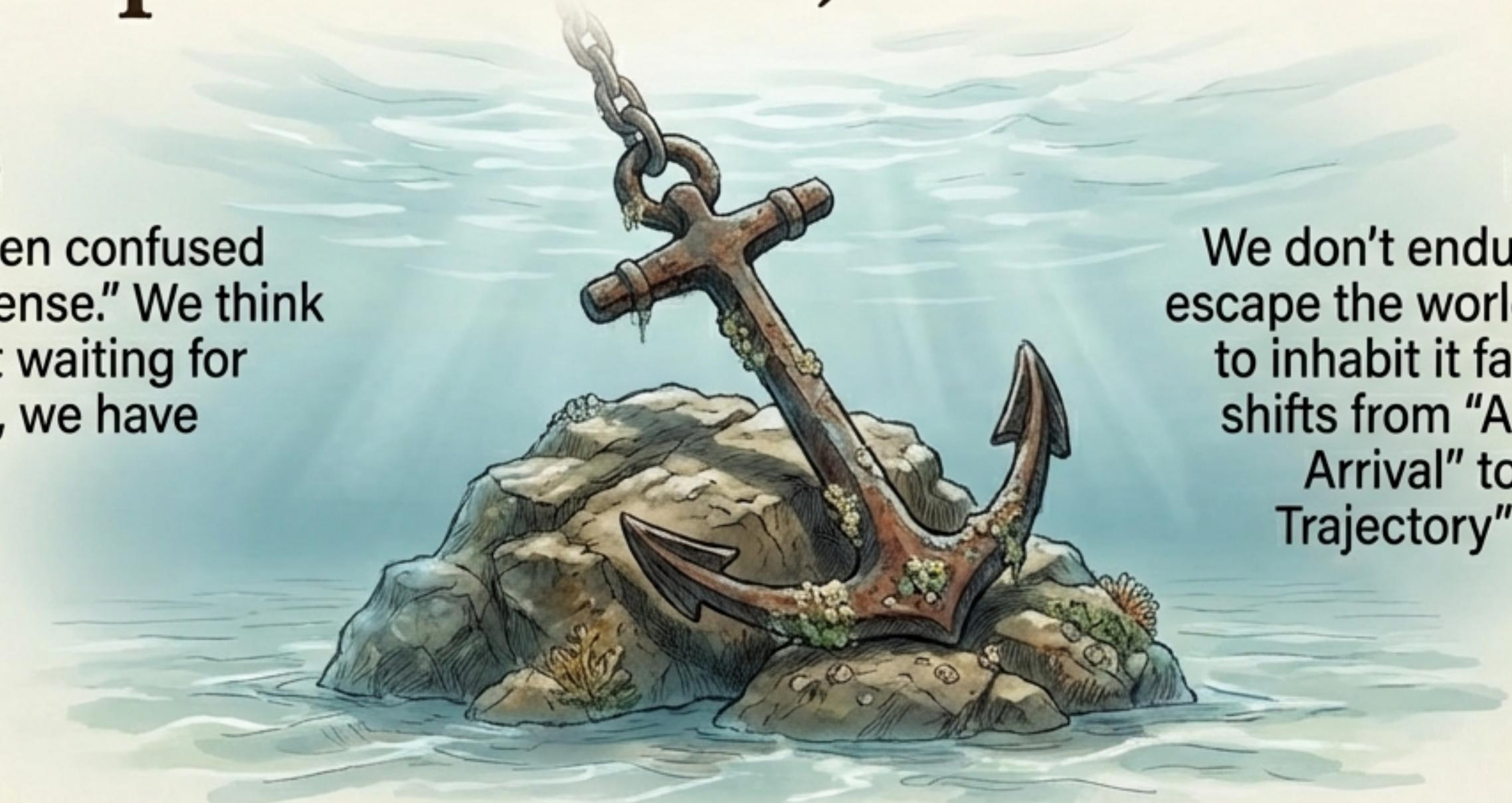
Resurrection isn’t just an afterlife insurance policy. It is the defining status of the Church now. We are the “Children of the Resurrection.” We don’t wait for victory; we walk in it.



# Hope Relocated, Not Removed

## The Shift

Hope is often confused with “suspense.” We think if we aren’t waiting for something, we have no hope.



## Endurance

We don’t endure in order to escape the world. We endure to inhabit it faithfully. Hope shifts from “Anticipation of Arrival” to “Trust in the Trajectory” God has set.

## Confidence in Presence

Fulfilled hope is anchored in what has been established. It is the conviction that the work is done, the foundation is secure, and the Kingdom is present.

# Life Without Deferral

**The “Someday” Trap**  
Futurist theology allows us to subconsciously defer holiness.

“I will be fully whole when the Kingdom comes.”

“Justice will happen when Jesus returns.”

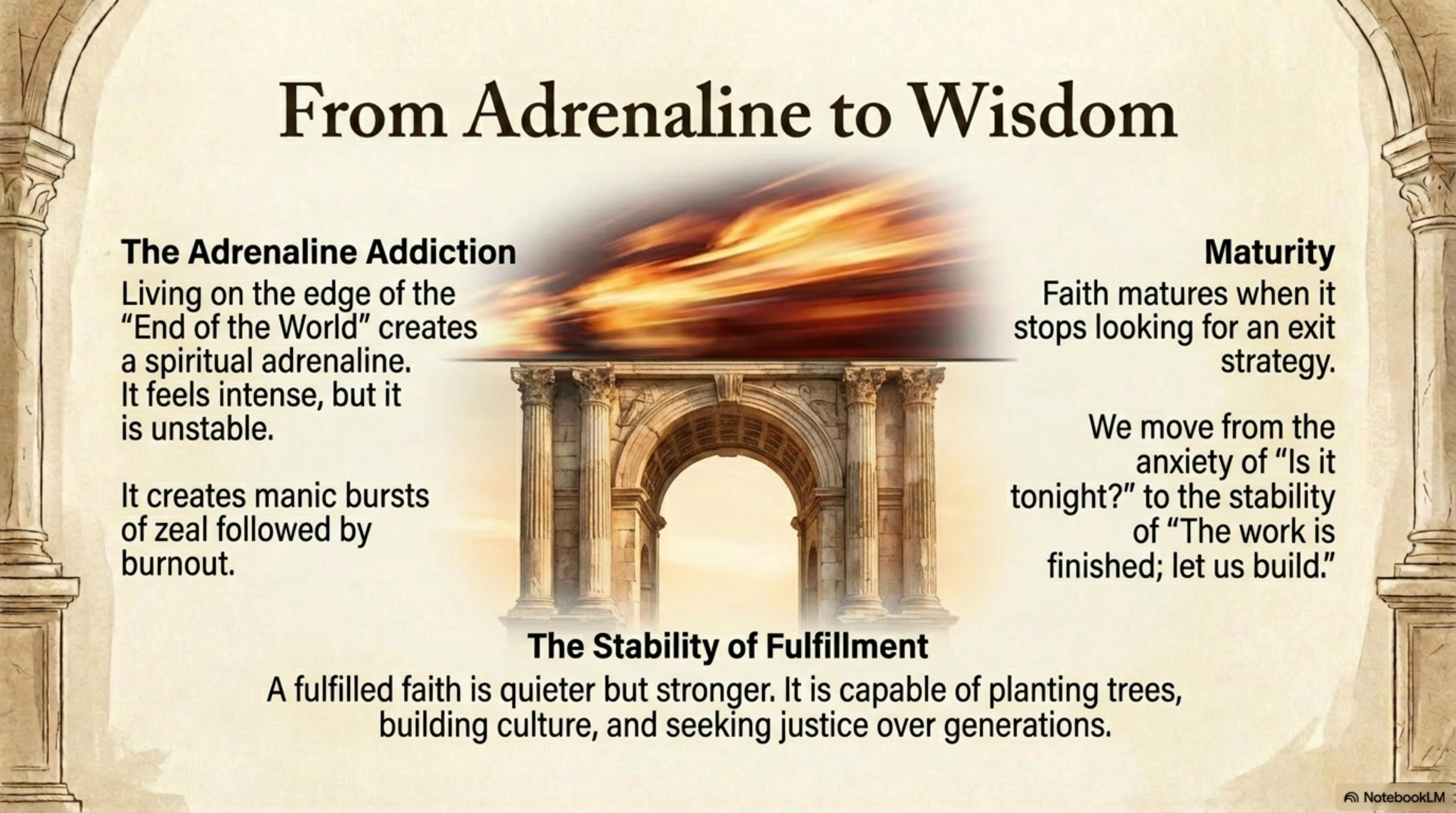


**The Immediacy of Now**  
Fulfillment removes the buffer. The Kingdom is here.

- Obedience is not a rehearsal.
- Love is not provisional.
- Transformation is not for later.

We are called to embody the life of the Age to Come in the present tense.  
There is no “later” to wait for. There is only the call to be holy now.

# From Adrenaline to Wisdom



## The Adrenaline Addiction

Living on the edge of the “End of the World” creates a spiritual adrenaline. It feels intense, but it is unstable.

It creates manic bursts of zeal followed by burnout.

## Maturity

Faith matures when it stops looking for an exit strategy.

We move from the anxiety of “Is it tonight?” to the stability of “The work is finished; let us build.”

## The Stability of Fulfillment

A fulfilled faith is quieter but stronger. It is capable of planting trees, building culture, and seeking justice over generations.

# Two Ways of Seeing

Feature	The Posture of Waiting (Futurist)	The Posture of Presence (Fulfilled)
Primary Emotion	Anxiety / Anticipation	Confidence / Gratitude
The “World”	A sinking ship to escape	A garden to tend
Meaning	Derived from what comes next	Derived from what is established
Action	Rehearsal / Evangelism as Warning	Embodiment / Discipleship as Growth
Role of Scripture	A map of the future	A witness to the Foundation
The Goal	To endure until the end	To mature in wisdom

# The Final, Question

We have spent centuries asking, “What are we waiting for?”

But if the shadows have passed, and the true light is already shining, that question is obsolete. The foundation has been laid. The transition is complete.  
The presence of God is with His people.

The question is no longer about timing. It is about embodiment.

## How, then, shall we live?

