

APOCALYPTIC TIMES¹

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Apocalypse begins quite near, near to ourselves – that is near to you, near to me. Apocalypse truly begins “at home”, in our own familiar world where we live and work.

Apocalypse

Apocalypse: this concept should cover everything that occurs in a revealing way and interferes in the order of human beings and their world. Not so much, though, “revealing” in the way of more or less sensational media, wanting to bring to light sooner facts and machinations preferably kept hidden. No, Apocalypse *reveals* what, as the Greek word says, is kept hidden from our regular human imaginative powers. In this way, the heavens, the worlds of the angels are coming more close to the way of perception we all share. This is why apocalyptic incidents are so frightening. Did not a poet say: “each angel is frightful”?² When they occur, such incidents are so frightful because they shock us out of our everyday life, and the seemingly so firm order of our world is being jeopardized. When this happens, presentiments of a likely end of the world tend to arise.

For many, the substance of apocalypse nowadays is mainly covered by everything regarding the end of the world, the “Last Day”. Once we human beings are confronted with incidents which exceed our own habitual measure, we easily go all out, and then frightening thoughts spring up; one’s feelings become short-circuited. Mass suggestion abounds, mass hysteria may even occasionally crop up. In trying to get in one’s grasp what is happening, one transposes such incidents into one’s own times, in such a way that they become part of one’s everyday world. Expectation of events going to happen in a far removed future thus almost inevitably becomes expectation of contemporary incidents, being part of one’s own time. Events far away appear as if they are imminent. So it was already for Paul, when Christianity was young. Fully overwhelmed by the coming presence of Christ, his coming “parousia”, he could not but believe that the impending “coming again” of Christ, his “second” coming, would be realized in his own days. (1Thess.4:13-17)

The last turn of the millennium, the one we all experienced, once more gave rise to many apocalyptic hopes and fears, as had already happened around the year 1000. Apocalyptic time, though, doesn’t conform to the specifics of chronological time in our terrestrial sense. It acts in harmony with the time of Christ, with His movement towards human beings on earth, as well as with what exists in human destiny as individual time – that critical moment which for everyone is always exactly the right one. Nowadays, in the United States groups often rather fundamentally inclined “evangelicals” are feverishly expecting the arrival of their Messiah, as something immediately at hand. Inspired by Paul’s description, they pin their hopes on “rapture” – being caught up speedily, being snatched away from the earth. Unfortunately, by clothing their interpretation of such an event in materialistic notions, moreover mixed with egoistic expectations of eternal ecstasy, their concept of being caught up therefore in fact presents only

¹ After a chapter written by Arie Boogert in *Ich sah den Himmel aufgetan* („I saw heaven opened“), a 2006 book with contributions of 17 priests and paintings by a Basle artist. Text edited by Muriel Morris.

² The German poet Rilke in his *Duineser Elegien*

a simple continuation of terrestrial realities, projected and continued into heaven. This kind of “rapture” is simple fantasy.

In everything apocalyptic or prophetic we are often dealing with what Rudolf Frieling has called the phenomenon of “shortened perspective”.³ What is about to happen is so overpowering, so stirring, and so all-embracing, that it occupies our whole spiritual range of vision – we are almost able to touch it with our fingers. Such “short-sightedness” is even based in reality. Even when it doesn’t exactly stand at the door, apocalypse happens near at hand. People with a good sense for what in reality happens in our world, for what occurs behind everyday events, have through the centuries experienced how the structure of our world has become loosened – even when thereby the world nevertheless has not fallen apart.

Shortly before Christ appeared on earth, the worlds of the angels began to rattle at our human world. Then John the Baptist appeared, crying out that “the kingdom of the heavens has come close” – a call taken over by Jesus after his baptism in Jordan. (Mt 3:2 and 4:17) Incessantly, since those days this rattling will happen wherever cracks appear in our world, where we ourselves break somewhat apart in the structure of our soul. And since the world has begun to show such cracks, groups of people, churches too, have tried to promote this kind of breaking apart of human beings in their soul. In such a state many a “revelation” can be had from another side. What “other” side this actually would be only seldom becomes clear. For revelations as these always carry the signature of their recipient, of his or her conceptual world and feelings, naturally foremost of his or her own intentions – this all being, as it were, the garments in which such revelations have to be clothed, in order that people can handle them. How otherwise would one be able to grasp such revelations? Or is there another way?

Near – yet far away

To be sure, there are people, people with let’s say a high degree of objectivity, who are able to deal with what the worlds of the angels want to be known to us human beings. John of Patmos, who recorded the “Revelation to John”, was one of those who perceived that “the time is near”. (Rev 1:3) The disciple whom the Lord loved, he had been one of those who had been properly prepared to deal with all kinds of revelations. Part of this preparation we find in the Gospel, in the part which occasionally is called the Mount of Olives Apocalypse. The last Tuesday before his death and resurrection Christ, looking across to Jerusalem with his disciples, answered their questions, how they would recognize the time when everything would be fulfilled. (Mt 24, Mk 13, Luk 21)

With these words Christ further develops his instructions, already given to his disciples when he sent them out. As heralds of the kingdom of God they had gone out, to cleanse and heal people, to oust everything demoniacal and unclean. Without any personal fall-back or protection they were to move among people, accepting what would be given to them. Hostility, defamation and persecution should be received and borne, composedly and with an alert mind and heart. Now that the kingdom of God has come so near that it even has begun to rattle at the world of human beings, yet something more is required. Disciples of Christ are called to move among their fellow humans with an unerring and sound judgment, not letting themselves be intimidated by rumors and tales, nor to be swept along by a faint-hearted mood evoked by catastrophes, dreaded to come upon earth and mankind. For such catastrophes will not be truly

³ Rudolf Frieling in his *Christianity and Reincarnation*, Floris Books, Edinburgh, page 83

revealing yet, not yet *apocalyptic*, as with the words of Mark (13:8) they are “but the beginning of the birth-pangs” – pangs of a birth within every individual human being. Indeed, who will want to endure in the midst of apocalyptic happenings will need living birth forces, even when still dormant, needed when “birth is at hand” – which at the moment might well be still dormant. Christ’s disciples are called to stand in the world as individual beings with an open mind, independent, not intimidated by events interfering in such a rousing way – not even, when they themselves are being caught up in those events. Now, sharing a community of fate with their contemporaries, they will have to prove that they are His disciples.

During the first Christian centuries, as Christ foresaw, it would be those on the way to become Christians who would be persecuted. Afterwards, and often for many centuries, they themselves would be persecutors of others. In the meantime, each of us has the potential to be denounced when he or she happens to be bothersome to the government of the day – either by proclaiming awkward truths or by opposing acts of terrorism by random states or groups of people. Even those belonging to one’s own acquaintances may trigger off such persecution, would they benefit from it. In the course of these instructions now added, and that’s surprising, the disciples are once more cautioned not to fall back upon old arguments or acquired knowledge, but to act in a free way according to the situation. “Then you will receive the inspiration you need”. (See for instance Mk 13:11)

A disciple of Christ will have to stand totally free in the world, not anymore burdened by the suction of objects around him, not anymore carried by the kind of prestige one enjoys among others maybe because of one’s social standing. Everything which binds one to the familiar world will be a handicap, holding one back. Everything which holds one back, one will have to sweat out in the course of one’s birth pangs.

Who, like John on Patmos, after such a preparation will be exposed to the call of the world of angels, to such a person apocalypse will be something quite close, if only by its impact. Such a person, though, will at the same time be able to detach him- or herself from what happens, will be capable to keep his or her distance, in order not to be swept along fully. – Only in such a way, near yet at the same time far away, will this kind of apocalypse be truly re-vealing to us, human beings. Then we will be able to battle through those wrappings in which it makes itself known, wrappings conditioned by time and by personal elements. What we would then need, according to the Gospel, is: to be watchful.

The Day of the Son of Man

Looking at apocalypse in the way we did, we have been rather looking from the outside. Such abstractions change at the moment when things become personal. This happened to John on Patmos when, precisely on the Lord’s Day, he “was born anew out of the Spirit”. (Rev 1:10) Then he heard a voice talking to him, and turning to see who was speaking he saw one like a son of man – a being like a human being, but as if newly created, fresh. This being charges him to write down what is present and what will take place later on. In meeting him, who is *like a son of man*, the apocalyptic ability in himself is awakened, the ability to distinguish between the here and now and the future. With an inner painful jolt born anew out of the Spirit, he is carried away off into the other world.

In the three years they had walked with Christ, the disciples had in fact received many impressions of the Son of Man. He had stood before their inner eye as one who is indeed in this

world, yet not out of this world; as one who on earth has no fixed abode. Through his repeated prophecies of the Passion, the picture had consolidated in them that Christ would identify himself with the Son of Man. And they had been able to sense the Son of Man working in an apocalyptic way, driving a wedge between human beings: between those who would inherit the kingdom with which they had been connected onwards from the foundation of the world, and those others who would yet need other trials. A first separation, they had felt, would happen on “one of the days of the Son of Man”, in an individual way. Paul also did recognize that such would be based on individual destiny. He draws attention to the fact that apocalypse, in every instant, breaks through for human beings “at one’s individual time”. (1 Tim 6:14sq)

Yet what happens in this coming separation is still couched in the pictures of catastrophes of older times, as those of Noah and Lot. But now things will become totally individual; one “will be taken”, the other “left behind”. The time has come that the kingdom in which the Son of Man moves, the “kingdom of the heavens”, “the kingdom of God”, has to be grasped in one’s innermost soul. “The kingdom of God is within you”, it is “in the midst of you”, in the midst of your human world. (Lk 17:21⁴) Now, it is all about an inner presence.

Beset by catastrophes, in this human world many will die, others will go their individual way. Does maybe the reminder, frequently heard within the circle of disciples: “He who cares about his soul-bearing life loses it, and he who hates it in this world, will keep it living throughout the ages” (for instance Jn 12:25), point to a kind of inner destiny? At a kind of destiny which leads into yet another dimension, different from the stratum of destiny in which after death one’s own deeds are converted and assimilated into the higher world? Are we being referred here to the evolving destiny of the individuality itself?

Could it be that, in a situation characterized by lightning flashing and lighting up the sky from one side to the other, the destinies of people, in whatever situation they find themselves, are becoming a kind of inner destiny? Does something like that really exist, that destinies become inner destinies? Would there, on the one hand, be a stratum of external destinies, maybe manifesting itself thanks to birth, growing up and aging in the course of life? The realm of the Son of Man is indeed such that for him there is no place “to lay his head” (Mt 8:20); no-one, then, could anymore trouble himself with elemental obligations as for instance burying one’s own father. (Mt 8:21 sq) A rather shocking picture, which makes clear, though, what it is all about. When the Son of Man comes near, we have, helped by an increased watchfulness, to make the attempt to open ourselves up for the world of the angels and their deeds. This kind of watchfulness also requires that one knows that ties of an earthly nature should be fully left behind. Was not that rich man told to sell all that he possessed, to give it to the poor – that man who felt that there was something still lacking, even when he had observed the commandments? Only then, unhampered by concerns of a temporal nature, by private ties, would he have “treasure in heaven” and be able to follow Christ. (Mt 19:20sq)

Human destinies

To be sure, our human power to persevere is amazingly robust, manifesting itself in a profound urge to keep settled down. History tells us about many great migrations of nations, and around the middle of the last century Europe began to exert a great attraction on the inhabitants of the many former colonial lands, scattered around the world. Neither volcanic eruptions, floods,

⁴ Luke 17:21 after Kalmia Bittleston and the Revised Standard Version

mighty hurricanes and so on, regularly coming upon specific parts of the world, will have been the direct cause of these old and new migrations. For people living in such areas, these calamities seem to belong to life, as it were; even when often they ask many sacrifices. Remaining loyal to their own patch of earth, on the strength of an instinctive certainty, human beings seem not willing to let themselves be expatriated because of calamities as these. Would they even be supported by an instinctive certitude as, according to the book of Genesis, sounded from the mouth of God: "While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease" (Gen 8:22) – words heard after the great Atlantian flood?

Many examples could be given about this kind of loyalty to the earth. A child, I lived in a part of the world where the earth constantly rumbled – we ourselves, though, in those thirteen years did not experience much more than some ash rain. Yet notwithstanding all regular eruptions, streams of lava and earthquakes, the island of Java as well as all the other greater and lesser Indonesian Sunda islands are densely populated; Java, the main island, even extremely so. The curve of this chain of islands, from about Timor in the east to Sumatra in the west, as we now know, has been caused by the shape of the Eurasian continental plate, here nudging the Indian-Australian one. Here, as everywhere else in the world, at such boundary positions friction develops, easily manifesting itself in earthquakes and eruptions.

In that area this has been attested by two mighty eruptions happening in the recent past. On the island of Sumbawa, at the easternmost part of this chain of islands, on the 10th/11th of April, 1815, the Tambora volcano exploded.⁵ Now about 3665 ft lower, it has an immense crater with a 3.7 m diameter. Ash fell as far as 808 m away and about 92,000 people will have been killed at once. As a consequence of the eruption, another 82,000 may have died. As has been said, the year 1816 has been "the year without a summer"; in the northern hemisphere, temperatures were abnormally low far into autumn. To a very large degree, harvests all over the world failed, causing extensive famines. Some presume that this eruption has been the most massive volcanic eruption in historic times.

Further to the west in Strait Sunda between Java und Sumatra, where this chain of islands begins to curve to the north, on the 26th/27th of August, 1883, the Krakatau volcano blew up, destroying major parts of the island and giving birth to Anak Krakatau, its "child" – a new active volcano. The explosion is said to have been heard as far away as Australia, 2200 m away, as well as on the island of Rodrigez off Madagascar, 2890 m removed. Window-panes were broken by the waves of the explosion, up to 99 m away. In the immediate vicinity it stayed dark for three days, a kind of darkness which could be experienced even 260 m distant. A 124 ft tidal wave laid waste to the coasts of Java and Sumatra; more than 36,000 people were killed. For a few years, average temperatures on earth were up to 2.1 degrees Fahrenheit lower, and did not become normal before 1888. As late as three years after the eruption the most magnificent sunsets could be experienced.

On the day after Christmas, 2004, to the far north of this chain of islands, before Sumatra's west coast a seaquake developed, triggering off a monstrous tidal wave such as meanwhile has become known by its Japanese name "tsunami". Not only continental coasts and many islands in this part of Asia became flooded; as far as Africa the waters raged. Most of those falling a victim to the floods came from the province of Aceh itself, the northernmost part of Sumatra; for the whole of the eleven countries concerned, including their islands, the full number of victims has been estimated to be around 180,000 dead and 50,000 missing. Pictures and reports of

⁵ NOTE: Data vary mightily, depending on the source. Mine was, I think, the Encyclopedia Britannica

what happened are still present to our minds. The next year, on Monday after Easter, March 28th, 2005, this seaquake was followed by a only slightly less powerful quake in the ocean not far from the island of Nias, somewhat more to the south offshore of Sumatra's western coast; once more especially on the shores of Sumatra itself people fell a victim to the waters.

For all that, people will continue to live there, keeping together and staying. They will continue to stay, in spite of all people becoming victims, despite massive devastations – even when the earth stays restless and quakes do not cease, as once again happened in the same area at the end of July, 2005: a seaquake occurring this time west of the Nicobar islands to the north of Sumatra. Shared destiny keeps them united, the living and the dead, and this seems to carry more weight than all inroads into their personal destiny. Whoever, born elsewhere, happens to be a guest in such an area and at such a time meets his or her personal destiny, after death will take part in the same shared destiny: one's many unspent forces will be carried into the preparation of the next life. In death they all will grasp their destiny in a new way, to shape it strongly thanks to the forces staying with them after sudden death. Together, with new objectives they will within the community of human beings be able to be active in their new life.

In such a situation, people experience the kind of destiny that, coming from without, sweeps them along. Is this kind of destiny different from destiny which is initiated by terror acts, by war and persecution?

Terror

Even more victims are falling to war and anarchy than to such elemental terrestrial events like earthquakes and floods, epidemics and famines. On closer inspection, these are always caused by one or another mode of greed, of avarice – be it on the personal or on the national level. Caused by elemental human occurrences, in other words. Wars, even in our present days, let they be tribal or world-wide, are caused by the supposedly beneficial consequences for one's own particular tribe or nation. The First World War was being welcomed by those participating as a "vigorous merry war", because both the population and the military were still living with the memories of a romanticized war in the shape after one last waged. Nobody did reckon with the machine gun and its hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of victims. During the Second World War, national ambitions were made acceptable with slogans like "Lebensraum", living space, or a "Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere". Around the last turn of the century, catchwords like "democracy" and "freedom" have been used in trying to legitimize wars of aggression. As before, the issues were oil or other mineral resources, or (in the case of Afghanistan) the need once more to kick-start drug trafficking, its raw material having become rare because of the Taliban.

Waging war will never again be a "vigorous, merry" affair – if ever it has been. Regions have been systematically chemically contaminated, as in South East Asia, or like in the Middle East by nuclear waste used to harden missiles. Their inhabitants as well as many soldiers will carry the consequences with them in their bodies, bodily seeing these consequences before their eyes in their own deformed children.

Terror has always been part of the accepted way of making war. Since the Second World War, terror has come out of the skies. Terror attacks on cities like Warsaw, Rotterdam, Coventry and London had been intended to compel the various countries to surrender quickly. As the war continued, the German cities had their turn. Since those years, again and again

local wars have happened, much too often tribal wars or revolutions with or without creative foreign support. We have further seen how all over the world nationalism has been increasing in a frightening way.

“A terrorist is one with a bomb but without an air force” – such an observation acknowledges that terrorists are small people imitating mighty nations. It might never be clarified whether the 9/11 terrorists will consciously have picked this date in recollection of the bloody 1973 Pinochet-putsch in Chile, overthrowing the Salvador Allende government with its dangerous social concepts, staged with the help of the US secret service. In Chile, the following dictatorial years, about exactly as many people will have been killed as in the US on that September 11, 2001. This vicious circle will not be broken, as long as all governments concerned won't own up that state terror spawns individual terror. An occupying power governing an invaded country with a strong hand never has evoked anything but resistance – as is witnessed by places like Lidice in former Czechoslovakia, Oradour-sur-Glane in France, Putten in Holland, Falluja in Iraq, places and their inhabitants being cut down and massacred in retaliation. The situation has not been much different in Italy or Poland, in the former Yugoslavia or Chechnya.

Apart from such massive terror acts always there has been terror aimed at individual people, at those who, in the eyes of the government of the day, have in one way or another been deemed suspect – or still are. These last hundred years, both states as well as religious bodies have been persecuting individual persons on the most varied pretexts.

One might be helpless in the face of massive blind terror. Faced with individual terror, one can as a human being try to hold one's own – even when this kind of terror exactly wants to strike down one's humanity. The Gospel, when counseling that one should not from the outset be concerned what to say when this happens to oneself, anticipates the situation which has come about for us human beings by Christ's ascension. Now the “heavens are open”, and we humans are now able, in an inner way to begin a movement towards the heavens. At the right time we will receive the help we need, provided we won't close our mind to it. Situations on earth may bring death; but it will be a different kind of death from the one caused by elemental terrestrial events. When in such a situation suddenly the spirit is released, flaming out, the one who dies gains life-forces. All who die in such a way will see their forces strengthened; their destiny will assume a new form.

Practical Eschatology

Destiny, beginning to take on a new form in human beings, comes into being in the pangs of birth sweeping those into death who are caught up either in such terrestrial events or in human elemental events. After death, according to their destiny they will find new strength in the company of their companions who have shared the same destiny. Such events, we have seen, belong to regular human life where everything takes its regular course. They have nothing yet in common with the “last things”, with what is meant by eschatology.

“Eschatology” is understood to mean the doctrine of the “last things” – the world coming to an end and moving into a new stage. As in the case of every abstraction which became doctrine, though, we can try to re-enliven the kind of reality put into such a straitjacket. For this purpose, here we will use the word “practical eschatology”, indicating our personal position on what in the Gospel has been prophesied about the world setting out into a new stage. Would it really be possible to do more than living in expectation of what will come – either fearfully, composed, or

maybe eagerly awaiting all that's coming? Here, we can learn much from the school of prayer, focusing above all on the Lord's Prayer.

What is praying other than that one, through the power of one's praying words, wants to create the reality of what is said in speaking?⁶ "Thy kingdom come": speaking this, the kingdom of the Father comes into motion. "Thy will be done": at this moment, the will of the Father comes to pass. Through prayer, the word itself manifests its own reality, in manifesting itself in our world. Praying, we affirm a new reality, which at the moment does not yet generally exist in our world. In this way, in our regular daily prayers we practice eschatology. We should not confuse this with what happens, when the expectation of events, which might be going to happen in a far removed future, becomes expectation of contemporary incidents becoming part of one's own time, imminent. Praying, we draw a distant future into our own time – affirming it in the word of prayer. This is possible, when our praying consciousness is carried by our will; that for a moment what still belongs to the future be present in our own present.

"Have faith", is the message of the Gospel, have the kind of faith which moves mountains. "If you believe that you received everything for which you pray and for which you ask, then so it will be for you." (Mk 11:24) Through faith and by its resulting affirmation in the words of prayer, a small part of the future is being brought into the present time. Everything which, as the new reality in our world, seemed only quite close by in the way of a shortened prophetic perspective, will be apocalyptically at hand in its realization in prayer by means of such a personal deed.

Here we come to the heart of the mystery of the parousia, the presence of Christ, which is only for our consciousness his "second coming". In reality, he is omnipresent through his resurrection and ascension, even when for our perception a distance has grown when he "ascended into heaven". This is exactly what the Greek word expresses, speaking of the presence of Christ which, in His movement towards us human beings on earth, *for us* is still approaching – which in the image of Ascension is expressed by the gesture with which he blesses his disciples: "And lifting up his hands he blessed them. And it happened that as he blessed them, he passed from their sight." (Lk 24:50sq) Exactly because of what thus has happened, it has become feasible for every single person to exercise practical eschatology; which means, to make apocalypse part of his or her present-day life – by an act of consciousness carried by one's will (let's not forget that!).

Being disciples in an apocalyptic sense

What, then, is the meaning of all this?

It means, that indeed apocalypse is still far away, originating as it is in the heavens which in our daily life seem to be to us so far distant. This is why events in the realm of our earth as well as among human beings, which commonly are called apocalyptic, at best can be considered to be pangs of birth, announcing how the worlds of the angels are coming close.

True, for some time already the inner order of our world has become loosened, cracks having developed between the world of human beings and the world of the angels – the angels making themselves known to us human beings. In his movement towards humanity on earth, in our days Christ has become present to human consciousness in a novel way. Both in the words spoken in private prayer and in words of shared liturgical prayer, since his ascension into the heavens his world of resurrection has at all times been present on earth, affirmed by faith. Only

⁶ After Hans-Werner Schroeder in his (German) book on prayer

now the world of the angels has begun to rap at the innermost being of each of us, calling upon us to become apocalyptic - that is, to become fully conscious of this reality.

The images used by the Gospel are speaking clearly. Noah as well as Lot had been able to follow the call of his God, in this way avoiding being caught up in the suction of events bringing doom and destruction on earth. By leaving everything behind, they became as it were newly established on earth, wrested from “the death of matter” – in the language of Luke 17: “they were taken”. In a similar way, by giving free access to Christ’s world of resurrection in one’s own daily life, in our times each of us will have the opportunity to hear the call to become apocalyptic – at exactly the time which for him or her will be individually the right time. As John on Patmos did already experience, indeed “the time is near” (Rev 1:3), the hour is coming that we will meet our own specific destiny.

In the days of the Son of Man destiny will indeed become wholly individual, as the pictures in the Gospels tell us. “One will ... the other will....”, because only now fully individual time will matter – the kind of time called *kairos* in Greek, which is the exactly right moment in which individual destiny is open to the call of the angels. This call goes out to everyone in his or her time, as already Paul experienced in going through his own moment of destiny before Damascus. Likewise in our times, on *one of the days of the Son of Man*, the world of the One who Rose from the Dead and Lives will open up to human beings – the world which is yet so close to us, even when its motion and dynamics are hidden in the clouds. In this realm of the clouds, in the skies, the movement of Christ towards human beings on earth meets the movement of human beings towards Christ.

People in a position “to be taken” are those who have prepared themselves and have acquired an inner openness, independent of whatever limits have been imposed by our existence on earth. Their destiny will continue to model itself on Christ. “*Enraptured*”, that is, “born anew out of the Spirit”. (as in Rev 1:10) they will experience the future of both earth and humanity beginning itself – out of reach and beyond events caused by earthly or human agents. Such people will become servants, willing to do what is their duty.

People will be “*left behind*” as long as they, through their bearing, will not be capable to relate to the reality of unfolding apocalypse. This is precisely defined by the words of the new 20th century Creed: that Christ “will in time unite, for the advancement of the world, with those whom, through their bearing, he can wrest from the death of matter”.⁷ Those though, who are able to find the connection they need, will begin to prepare themselves to be disciples in an apocalyptic sense. Here, yet quite a lot will have to be learned, to be practiced, to be done.

⁷ From the Creed in The Christian Community