



# The God of Hope and the End of the World

*By John Polkinghorne*

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Science states that the universe will end in cosmic collapse. If so, can there be credible hope of a personal existence after death? In answering this, this work draws on science, culture, scripture and theology to consider what might be the grounds for hope in a destiny beyond death.

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In the 1990s, Polkinghorne (*Belief in God in an Age of Science*) met regularly with an interdisciplinary group of scholars to address what Christian theology and scientific inquiry might have to say about the end of the world. In 2000, the group issued an essay collection, *The End of the World and the Ends of God*, but they also assigned Polkinghorne to write a briefer, more accessible volume about their work for the general reader. The excellence of this book shows that their faith in Polkinghorne as a writer and theologian was not misplaced. Polkinghorne argues that the world will not end with some grand attainment of human perfection, "but in the whimper of cold decay or the bang of fiery collapse." Either alternative "is a challenge to which theology must respond." In the opening chapters, he posits that a credible eschatological Christian theology will include both continuity and discontinuity; in other words, the new world God creates will have some similarities with this one, but it will also be a truly unique creation. This fascinating argument is followed by chapters on biblical precedents for eschatology. Polkinghorne is the first to admit that he is not a biblical scholar, but he does a fine job of crystallizing difficult concepts. He does this not through storytelling or personal anecdotes, but through a careful yet concise explication of ideas. Readers interested in the ongoing explorations of Christian faith and cosmology will not want to miss this volume, particularly since Polkinghorne takes on fellow theology-and-science writers such as Arthur Peacocke.

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From [Booklist](#)

**\*Starred Review\*** The rarest of hybrids, theoretical physicist and Anglican priest Polkinghorne sees in modern cosmology's grim predictions of universal decay the absolute necessity for a theological affirmation of human hope. That hope, he insists, depends upon the faithfulness of God, as revealed in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. To decipher what that miracle means for humanity and all other creatures, Polkinghorne scours the scriptural record, weighing not only the astonishing words but also their disquieting emotional tone. Surprisingly, Polkinghorne consults pioneering information theorists in interpreting these ancient texts. The puzzlement, even fear, of early witnesses of the risen Lord Polkinghorne regards as the understandable human reaction to the first-ever glimpse of a transformed and glorified life that transcended the natural cosmos and that will eventually redeem it. And modern science offers help in explaining how that transformed life could inhere in souls that--through God's grace--survive death as information-bearing patterns. Through this highly sophisticated exegesis, Polkinghorne thus reclaims a Christian doctrine--that of the physical Resurrection--discounted by many modern theologians as impossibly literal and naive. Though the casually religious will find him too technical, thoughtful Christians will find much to praise in this modern Aquinas. *Bryce Christensen*

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Review

"This is a delightful, enlightening and edifying book written for thoughtful Christians whose faith requires an intelligent defense as their intelligence yearns for the comforts of faith."

## Users Review

**From reader reviews:**

**Alan Sours:**

As people who live in the actual modest era should be upgrade about what going on or info even knowledge to make them keep up with the era that is certainly always change and progress. Some of you maybe may update themselves by studying books. It is a good choice for yourself but the problems coming to you is you don't know what type you should start with. This The God of Hope and the End of the World is our recommendation so you keep up with the world. Why, because book serves what you want and wish in this era.

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