

Capturing God's Visionary Plan for Humanity

With a world that is so filled with hate and troublesome conditions that could easily lead to mass destruction and warfare on a much wider scale, including potential circumstances that could ignite World War III, does humanity stand any chance of avoiding complete self-destruction?

By BILL WATSON

This question weighs heavily on the minds of many people around the world. A major reason is that complete self-destruction is indeed *CURRENTLY* possible. The weapons existing today that are in the control of humanity are enough to destroy the world's population many times over in just a few hours, let alone those weapons we don't know about, which exist in the clandestine "black ops" category. Yes, we are living in a time like no other—it definitely has the right label: *the latter days!*



As a matter of fact, in Acts 2:15–21, Peter declares at that time the last days began (verse 17)—some 2,000 years ago! He draws on the prophet Joel to explain why he believes this and proceeds to quote scriptures proving it to be true. In addition, the Apostle Paul fully expected Christ would return in his day by indicating in 2 Thessalonians 2:1–5 that the false prophet, that man of perdition, would enter into the *EXISTING Temple* (in Paul's day) and trigger the coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18).

Watching the Times of Trouble Develop

The Bible is filled with warnings about *times of trouble*—described as the “beginning of sorrows” (Matthew 24:8)—in the last days. Yes, these times of trouble are expected to develop and gain momentum as we proceed toward the birthing event (a.k.a. the resurrection) of the sons of God!

In Revelation 6:1–8, the description of the four horsemen portrays this building momentum. These riders and their steeds are directly related to the conditions described in Matthew 24:4–8; Mark 13:5–8; and Luke 21:7–11.

Read these scriptures slowly and connect them to the four horsemen. You will discover the first horseman represents false prophets and teachings. This has been going on since the beginning of the New Testament Church. The second is war—nations rising against each other. Over the last two millennia, this has also increased, with destruction commensurate with the development and sophistication of weapons man has developed.

The third horseman follows up with famines, earthquakes—natural disasters and pestilence—like virus outbreaks, deadly diseases, sicknesses of various sorts, and, sadly, bio-weapons. These horsemen will ultimately culminate in a war depicted by the fourth horseman—that destroys 25 percent of mankind, as mentioned in Revelation 6:8. This describes a horrific time of trouble but, unfortunately, is just the beginning of many more sorrows to come.

This is what is so sobering about some of the prophetic descriptions listed in our Bibles. Interestingly, as has been described in the past, the book of Revelation outlines three sets of seven destructive prophetic categories, each consisting of seven events—the Seven Seals, the Seven Trumpets, and the Seven Last Vials/Plagues. As you read through them, these “*literal*” descriptions depict devastating events resulting in so much destruction that if Jesus Christ didn’t return, “no flesh would remain alive” (Matthew 24:22).

Keep in mind, this kind of destructive devastation could never be accomplished until the development of the kind and type of weaponry we have today! The very fact that this weapon technology exists *lends enormous credibility* to identifying the day and age we live in as the last days. Unquestionably, never in the history of mankind have weapons of such mass destruction existed, and they are now at the “fingertips” of human beings. Just the push of a button and cities the size of Tokyo, London, Moscow, or New York City and L.A. could collapse into total paralysis, or disappear in a bright flash of light! It’s a far cry from bows and arrows or catapults and cannons! It really is an *incredibly dangerous* time we find ourselves living in.

Clearly, *troublesome conditions* appear to be accelerating, gaining momentum along distinct and separate axes of power! These sovereign powers also retain distinctly different ideologies as well, which makes the situation more volatile, especially when considering the inventory of weapons of mass destruction some of these nations have in their arsenal!

So, it would appear, anyway you “slice and dice” it, the nations of the world seem to be hurtling toward a confrontation that, according to our Bibles, has the potential of *initially killing 25 percent of mankind!* Notice: “And I looked and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell [hades/grave] followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth [25 %] to kill with the sword and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth” (Revelation 6:8).

This fourth horseman describes the culmination of the previous three horsemen, resulting in the destruction of 25 percent of the human population. Immediately following this mortifying ruin, the Fifth Seal describes a horrendous outbreak of *Christian persecution and martyrdom*.

Notice this metaphoric description of those Christians that were killed down through history: "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw...souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.... And they cried with a loud voice saying, How long...do you not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? ...and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled" (Revelation 6:9–11).

The Sixth Seal follows or overlaps with the heavenly signs (Revelation 6:12–17) that mark the arrival of the Seventh Seal described in Revelation 8:1-2. This introduces the Seven Trumpets, which describe more ravaging waste and painful events that continue God's destruction of mankind's accomplishments. What we're being told from the pages of the Bible is what will be used to "destroy" humanity's world of idolatry and its enmity toward the living God and Jesus Christ.

Where Is All This Leading?

But regardless of the many waves and varieties of calamities, God will allow humankind to use its weapons of mass destruction and obliterate its material achievements. Nevertheless, His plan of reconstruction and restitution will not be thwarted! He has far too much invested in this plan of redemption. And though it may look gloomy and bleak at times, eventually the waste places will be rebuilt, and a whole new way of life will emerge upon the earth, giving a fresh meaning to the cultural hegemony of humankind!

Clearly, the main cause for this "new meaning" will be the leadership and rule of the Son of God, Jesus Christ! Upon His return, He will be landing on the Mount of Olives. Notice: "And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east.... And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one" (Zechariah 14:4–9).

Interestingly, one of the first pieces of legislation passed throughout the world will be to establish the Feast of Tabernacles as a Holy Day observance. Notice what the prophet Zechariah says: "And it shall come to pass, that everyone that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.... This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles" (Zechariah 14:16–19).

Many rebuilding projects will be initiated around the world, dedicated to repairing the waste places. Notice what Amos says about this time. “In that day [the Millennium] will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.... Behold, the days come, says the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper... and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land...” (Amos 9:11–15).

Isaiah has similar prophecies. Notice: “And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations” (Isaiah 61:4). Notice what Ezekiel says about this same time and how things will be restored: “Thus says the Lord GOD; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities, I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, where as it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become *like the garden of Eden*; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced and are inhabited” (Ezekiel 36:33–35).

These are just some of the scriptures that claim a future restoration for planet Earth. This culmination into the Millennium (1,000-year rule and reign of Jesus Christ) will be set up after Christ returns and establishes His government around the world (Revelation 20:4). It will include establishing roles of leadership of those Christians that were in the first resurrection upon His Second Coming (Revelation 5:10). They will become the leaders of this new social order, with Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords!

It will be a time of world peace. Many of the weapons of mass destruction will be made into tools for peace. Notice: “It shall come to pass in the last days... the LORD’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains [nations of the world], and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come you, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD.... And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Isaiah 2:2–4).

Micah 4:1–4 says essentially the same thing as Isaiah, about how weapons will be remodeled into tools for peace. It will be a remarkable time in the historical saga of man’s legacy. Finally peace will be achieved, and earth will be as the “*Garden of Eden*” (Ezekiel 36:35).

What an incredible time that will be!! All the tension, angst, animosity, and hate among the many ethnicities throughout the world will be eliminated; and under Christ's guidance, unity and peace will actually be accomplished among all the nations! It will be a utopian event, preparatory to the climactic crescendo of the rest of the dead being brought back to life in the second resurrection (Rev. 20:5) to be introduced to and accept Jesus Christ as the Savior of mankind!

The Pathway to a New Beginning

This millennial rule, which will commence upon Jesus Christ's return, will convert the world into a paradise of peace and unity. It will be a world where things that are now at odds change in nature and then live in peace; a world secured by the cares and concerns of others as much as we have for ourselves. The Royal Law will be the rule of the land: "If you fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, you shall love your neighbor as yourself, you do well" (James 2:8). This will be reinforced by our love for God first and foremost, above all other things. Jesus said these were the two greatest commandments of God's law (Matthew 22:35–40). They summarize the Ten Commandments that God gave to Moses that underscore the Torah.

The social order will be different. Everywhere you go, people will respect the value of life and learn to appreciate the ethnic differences between the many different families around the world. Even the animals will take on a different nature. Notice: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp [snake]; and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrices den [adder's]. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain [nation]; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:6–9).

What a time this will be. Earth will finally be at peace, and the Son of God will be at the helm, ruling and guiding all of mankind into an environment of contentment never before achieved. And at the heart of this is an objective, critical to the agenda of preparing the world for the second resurrection of the rest of the dead! Notice: "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished..." (Revelation 20:5).

This event is the climax God intends for all of mankind—the ultimate and clear opportunity to accept or reject His way. Keep in mind, these people will be coming back to *physical life* and introduced to a utopian world, as it was in the Garden of Eden! It will be an obvious contrast to their memories of the world they lived in during their timeline in man's history. They will be exposed to a set of social circumstances—a cultural condition—never before experienced. It will be a real cognitive dissonance

event for all of them, as they scan their memories of the time they lived in and the discomfort, jeopardy, danger, and risk they were surrounded by in their previous material life. It will be quite stunningly shocking for all of them.

But a major point of this second resurrection is to afford God the opportunity to *exercise fairness for all of mankind*. This event will provide every man and woman who has ever lived, regardless of ethnic origin or religious belief, the opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and King.

Clearly, with the help of those resurrected saints during the Millennium, Jesus Christ will have remodeled the whole world into an undeniable condition of peace and unity that cannot be ignored. They will be able to assess whether Jesus Christ is indeed the Son of God, Savior, King of kings, and Lord of lords. You would think this would be an obvious and easy decision to make; but sadly, for some, it won't be (Revelation 20:8–9)!



How about you? Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord, Savior, and King? Is He the template for your lifestyle? Does He have influence in your life? Are you taking advice from His Word and the stories in your Bible that illustrate the principles of Christian living? If not, perhaps you should reconsider those obstacles in your life that are preventing you from answering “YES” to these questions.

Time is growing shorter for all of us. Every day brings us closer to the end of our lives. When considering death, which is inevitable, don't you think it's a good time for a *mortality check* and for seriously taking some *steps to secure our immortality* by accepting Jesus Christ as your Savior and example to live by?

If you have a clear understanding of what God is offering, you will undoubtedly agree that being a part of the *coming world* is well worth the sacrifice you'll be required to make in this life (Romans 8:18)! There will be nothing like it!