

Great Controversy Series

01 Signs of the End of the World

Terrorism, violence, fighting and confusion fill the news. Humanists expected that with the close of the Dark Ages and the coming of the Enlightenment that humanity, through education, would abandon violence, racism, thievery, crime and wars. It didn't happen. Through the internet the world's libraries and knowledge databases are in the hand of every child on their smartphones yet crime, far from disappearing, has multiplied. Education did not become a solution for sin.

Don't get me wrong. Education is important and valuable. I am not downing education. But look: in the old days they used try to rob a bank by going in there with a rifle and a pistol. Now, through education, the thieves stay home and get on the internet with their computers and they transfer the bank's money to themselves. How about that! Very smart thieves, very educated. Even if I wanted to do I couldn't do it myself.

Educated people join terrorist organizations and with high tech they plan their horrible attacks and kill innocent people. High education. No morality. No humanity. Education did not give morality.

Some world leaders say, "We will overcome violence and terror and crime and we will achieve tranquility." May God be pleased with their request. May God bless our leaders. They have good intentions! Jesus said:

Matthew 5:9 Blessed *are* the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.

It follows that to try to make peace is God's work, however the way of the world is not going toward peace and morality and it will not. I am painting a rather pessimistic picture. Why? Because the Bible says so.

2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

Why will the Lord burn the world? Will He burn it because everything is beautiful and peaceful?

2 Timothy 3:1-5 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: ² For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴ traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

This is why the Lord will destroy this world. Humanity is not going toward goodness but it is and will go toward evil. Jesus is coming again. But when He comes, He will not come as a cuddly baby. We see this awesome symbolic picture in the book of Revelation:

Revelation 19:11-16 Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³ He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. ¹⁵ Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶ And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Not before but after Jesus comes we can expect that evil will be eliminated.

Revelation 21:1-4 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ² Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. ⁴ "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

Our hope is not in vain.

Matthew 5:8 Blessed *are* the pure in heart, For they shall see God.

Jesus did not leave us with no clues about His second coming. Jesus told to His disciples main events and important signs that would take place from the time of His first coming until His second coming. Today we will look at these in summary and later in a more detailed way.

Matthew 24:1-3 Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. ² And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not *one* stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down." ³ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

Based on the popular understanding of the people, the disciples thought that the Messiah would appear for awhile and then disappear and then come out again. When the Messiah returned no

one would know from where He came. So in the minds of the disciples of Jesus, if the temple were to be destroyed, it meant that end of the age would be at the same time. This was not right, but while the disciples were still arguing among themselves about who would be the greatest in the kingdom, they were not ready to understand details of Christ's second coming. But Jesus shared these important events and signs:

- The temple, the pride of Jerusalem, would be destroyed in a war.
- There would be a time of persecution. Matthew 24:9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.
- There would be a long period of tribulation. Matthew 24:21 "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.
- There would be signs in the sun, moon and stars. Matthew 24:29 " Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.
- The gospel of Jesus will be preached in all the world. Matthew 24:14 "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.
- Then Jesus will come again. Matthew 24:30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

When Jesus comes again, all the tribes of the earth will mourn. Why will they mourn? Don't they want to see Jesus? Are they afraid of the One who will judge the world and what it did? Will they mourn because they did righteousness and made peace? When Jesus comes all the tribes of the earth will mourn because they are not ready.

Revelation 6:14-17 Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. ¹⁵ And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, ¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! ¹⁷ "For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

This world will not come to an end from global warming. This world will not end with a world war. This world's order will not continue because it achieved an age of peace. Jesus, the Lamb of God will return and this world's order will finish. Who is able to stand?

Matthew 24:37 "But as the days of Noah *were*, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

God beforehand destroyed the world by flood. Next time He will do it by fire. But in the same way that God provided a way of escape with Noah's ark, He will provide a way of escape for us. But very few people believed the preaching of Noah. Very few people got on the ark. When Jesus comes again, it will be the same way. Few people will be saved.

Now is the preparation time. Don't put it off. Jesus extends His hand of mercy and forgiveness of sins.

Matthew 24:44 "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.