

SOME REASONS WHY WE SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR CHRIST'S RETURN:

5 PEACE AMONG THE NATIONS

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And he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming down from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its boulevard. And on either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him, and they shall see His face, and His Name shall be on their foreheads (Revelation 22: 1-3).

PREVIOUSLY:- I have given four reasons for why we should be looking for, indeed, be on tippy-toe with earnest expectation for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ ...

1. I WANT JESUS TO GET WHAT HE DESERVES ... Universal honour and glory and victory. I want Jesus to get his reward.

2. I WANT THE DEVIL TO GET WHAT HE DESERVES ... I want to see Satan slither off in shame. I want to see the Devil bow the knee before our King Jesus. I want to see Satan undignified exit under God's eternal justice for the way he has disfigured and hated God's world! I want the Devil to get the boot he's got coming!

3. I WANT TO SEE THE PHYSICAL WORLD GET WHAT IT DESERVES ... Freedom from its bondage and slavery to corruption. A regenerated nature, harmonious environment, happy birds and animals. Everything in Edenic harmony.

4. I WANT TO SEE THE JEW GET WHAT S/HE DESERVES... Justice and universal honour after millennia of persecution and horrendous abuse.

Here is my fifth reason why I want Jesus to come back ...

5. I WANT TO SEE THE NATIONS GET WHAT THEY DESERVE ... Peace.

When you **Google** the question, 'Since recorded history began, how many years have humans been at peace?' The answer is, 'Of the past 3,400 years, humans have been entirely at peace for 268 of them, or just 8 percent of recorded history.' The other 3,132 were years of wars. This answer was submitted in 2003, and we can be sure from our own observations that the 20 years since have been full of wars and bloodshed somewhere. So make that 3,152 years of wars on earth since recorded history began.

So, the overall history of mankind from earliest times is the story of violence on the earth, tribe against tribe, nation against nation. The brutalisation of innocent people by violence has been with us since **Cain, who was of the Murderer, Satan,** slew his brother.

HAMAS

The first reason given in Scripture as to why God had to supernaturally intervene to save the planet from destroying itself was because of unrelenting universal violence ...

The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth ... [and] the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and **the earth was filled with violence** (Gen. 6: 5, 11).

Now those of us who do not read the original Hebrew (and its sister language Aramaic) fail to see that this word **violence** is actually the word hamas! That's right, the terrorist organisation sponsored by the state of **Iran** is the Semitic word for violence!

When the Psalmist prays that God would deliver him from those who **breathe out violence** against him he literally prays for the LORD to deliver him from hamas (Ps. 27: 12)! It stands to reason why the current terrorist group which operates from **Gaza** with the avowed mission of obliterating Israel is called Hamas. **Hezbollah** (supported by the Shiite Muslim faction) are beginning to exercise their terrorist muscles by aggressive anti-Israel intentions from Lebanon.

As I write the **U.S President Joe Biden** is in Israel to shore up support for Israel. But have you noted that at the same time, Russia's president **Vladimir Putin** has been visiting **Xi JinPing**? The evil axis of **Russia, China, Iran & North Korea** is consolidating and represents a very real lethal confederacy against the West, of which Israel is the flash point — just as the Bible foretold..

THE BLACK FLAG OF WAR!

In **Iran**, an historic **black flag of war** has been raised over the **Razavi memorial mosque**, indicating total war against Israel and the West. Almost the entire Arab world is against the West, driven by an implacable hatred of its support of Israel. The escalation is reaching insane levels of intensity now.

With America stretched on two fronts currently (supporting the Ukraine war and pledging whatever military supplies may be necessary for Israel) no wonder there is growing talk about China's eye on Taiwan and World War 3. Everyone is holding their collective breath.

You recall our Lord Jesus warns that just before his return, just before his *parousia*, conditions will be as they were in the days prior to the Great Flood. The earth will be filled with violence!

THE BEAST FROM THE SEA.

And I saw **a beast coming up out of the sea**, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names (Rev. 13: 1).

This grotesque multi-headed beast or, as one old commentator called it, "**polycephalous brute**", arises from **up out of the sea**.

Many ancient cultures believed the tossing stormy sea was where such composite monsters of chaos emerged. Certainly Babylonian, Persian and Egyptian mythology believed so. Even the Hebrews believed that the LORD God had to bring order out of the watery chaos in the very beginning (**Gen. 1: 2**).

The truth behind John's apocalyptic picture here surely indicates that the end-times' turmoil of international upheaval and politico-social unrest is the fertile ground (sorry to mix the metaphors!) for the Antichrist and his reign of terror through the machinery of godless nations. It has often been the case that lawlessness, revolution and bloody coups have spawned cruel dictators and murderous oppressors.

Civil unrest, the breakdown of law and order, the disappearance of common decency and respect for the persons and property of one's neighbour, create the conditions for multi-headed beast-monsters — "**polycephalous brutes**"!

This, of course, is inseparably related to reason number three we considered earlier. For, until the nations and governments of this world, until the peoples of this world can live in harmony and good will, then the environment, and the physical world can never enjoy lasting goodness. How could it when we have war and bombs, scorched earth from broken treaties, and national treachery and distrust?

It doesn't matter how many peace treaties the governments of the world organise, how many UN General Assembly council meetings there are, we will never see universal peace with nations living harmoniously until the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ returns to set up his Kingdom. This was Jesus' inspired vision — the world living under the blessing and peace of his God and Father.

This was the goal that drove him onwards against all doubt and opposition. Jesus' dream was for the Kingdom of God on earth — universal justice and peace for all peoples — to love God first and their neighbours as themselves! And please note the Scriptural order — **grace reigns through righteousness (Romans 5: 21)**. Before peace there has to be righteousness, justice, fairness for everyone. God's law and order *first!* No righteousness, no peace.

THE METEORITE FROM HEAVEN

Oh, how we need a change of world government! And I don't mean what the global elites are calling their NWO (New World Order). I don't mean **Agenda 21**.

I don't think we can even begin to imagine what government will be like under our righteous King Jesus and the saints of the Most High God; unilateral disarmament and armies disbanded — what a day! This was the vision Daniel interpreted for **King Nebuchanezzar**. Remember how the awesome colossus representing succeeding world empires stood tall and proud? Its feet and toes were **partly of iron and partly of potter's clay**?

Daniel saw a Day coming when **a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold.** This is a graphic prophetic picture of how the world systems will be pulverised into submission before the God of heaven when He sends His Messiah into the world to inaugurate the Kingdom of God amongst the nations of mankind ...

And the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed ... and it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but will itself endure forever (Daniel 2: 44). Are you looking for this meteorite that comes flashing forth with God's glory to usher in peace for the nations forever? It smashes all evil opposition and brings in a right Royal Theocracy.

All His life Jesus lived out this dream from the heart of his Father God. Remember when Jesus was born how the heavenly host rang out their praises, **Glory to God in the Highest and on earth, peace and goodwill towards men (Luke 2:14)?**

Our opening text tells us the nations who enter the bliss of the Kingdom of God will finally come to sit down by the **river of the crystal clear water of life,** where the **leaves of the tree of life are for the healing of the nations.**

Justice for all peoples! Peace for the nations of the earth! This is the promised hope God is planning for all who will repent and believe His Gospel and prepare for the coming Kingdom on earth! And that means the citizens of that Kingdom will be non-violent now. **Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth ... Blessed are the peace-makers for they shall be called the sons of God!**

JESUS BEFORE PONTIUS PILATE

Paul wrote to Timothy that **Christ Jesus testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate (I Timothy 6: 13).** What was that **good confession** Jesus spoke? Well, I think a very real part of Jesus' testimony to Pilate was that the Empire he represented --- the mighty Roman Empire --- would pass and that God's Kingdom would come in the future. Jesus confessed to Pilate, **"My kingdom is not of this world ... My kingdom is not from this realm"** (John 18: 36).

Some get the wrong impression from the way that's translated. They think Jesus was saying, "My Kingdom is not a part of this physical world. My kingdom is spiritual. My kingdom will be away up there in the heavens somewhere." That being the case, why should we be concerned for any social, environmental, cultural or political ideals since the whole lot is condemned? And so a kind of Christian escapism has gripped some sections of evangelical Christianity.

But what Jesus actually said was, **"My kingdom is not from this world".** ^(¹) His kingdom has a different origin, and therefore a different spirit. It does not arise from the oppressive, violent systems of this present evil age.

¹ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου

Friends, by faith in God's unfailing Kingdom-promise we can see a Day on the horizon when the nations of the earth **will beat their swords into ploughshares (Is. 2:4)**. By the way, that specific promise is repeated by the prophet Micah, **And many nations shall come, and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD ... and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. (Micah 4: 2-3)**.

Genesis 49:10 "Unto him shall the gathering of the people be" (or, the obedience of the nations).

Daniel 7: The cruel beast-like nations as represented by roaring lion, raging bear, butting goat, swift leopard, swooping eagle, etc. will finally give way to the gentle Son of Man and his redeemed saints.

No more oppression for the people and nations of the world! Is it not significant that the first thing mentioned after **the healing of the nations** is that we are told **there shall no longer be any curse?!** Yes, what a curse all the heaving, tossing, fighting, pillaging and murdering between the nations has been and is.

Hard to imagine a world where every man, woman and child may live in total security and safety, without incoming rockets and bullets, is it not?

Hard to imagine a world where there will be no kidnapping, molesting, trafficking of innocents, is it not?

Hard to imagine a world with the curse of wars forever lifted, is it not?

Isaiah 9:6-7 Unto a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and he shall be called the Messenger of great counsel ... his government shall be great, and of his peace there is no end ... the zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

There won't be one kind of justice for the rich and another for the poor.

There won't be one kind of justice for men and another for women.

There won't be one kind of justice for the wealthy nations and another for the weak nations.

There won't be one kind of justice for the white and another for the coloured or the minority. Jesus will be the King of all kings forever. The Servant King!

No more monsters ascending out of the seas of international turmoil! No more **"polycephalous brutes"**! The earth is going to be flooded with peace.

Don't you long for, dream for, work for, pray for that kind of a world? That's my fifth reason for longing for the Second Coming of Christ to this earth. I want the nations of the world to get what they deserve --- universal justice and everlasting peace under King Jesus and his saints. What a day when the knowledge of God will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

