

What Changes Does the Bible Predict for This Planet?

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Everyone is interested in the future. The proliferation of predictions, prognostications and prophecies near the beginning of the third millennium causes people to inquire what may be certainly known about the future. Only one source gives reliable information and that is God's message to men, the Bible.

While many believers are well taught in the area of prophecy, most churches suffer from a lack of end-time teaching. Informed believers are frequently asked about certain prophetic statements of the Scriptures or prophetic speculations by sensationalist. The Apostle Peter enjoins mature believers to "*be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear*" (1 Peter 3:15).

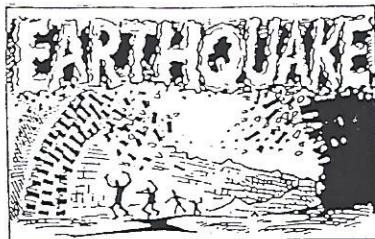
To help the believer understand certain general truths about the future of our planet, it was thought to be convenient to study certain comprehensive prophecies, prophecies that posit a gloomy near future for the earth and the unbeliever but ultimately a glorious future for our planet and the believer. Our close examination of several major biblical predictions affords a bad-news—good-news scenario.

I. Changes in the Tribulation—the Bad News.

The Bible predicts major catastrophes for our planet, far exceeding the doomsday predictions of films such as Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth." A holy God will settle His account with sinful man.

A. Earthquakes.

There will be at least seven major earthquakes between the rapture and the Second Advent, resulting in unprecedented topographical changes.

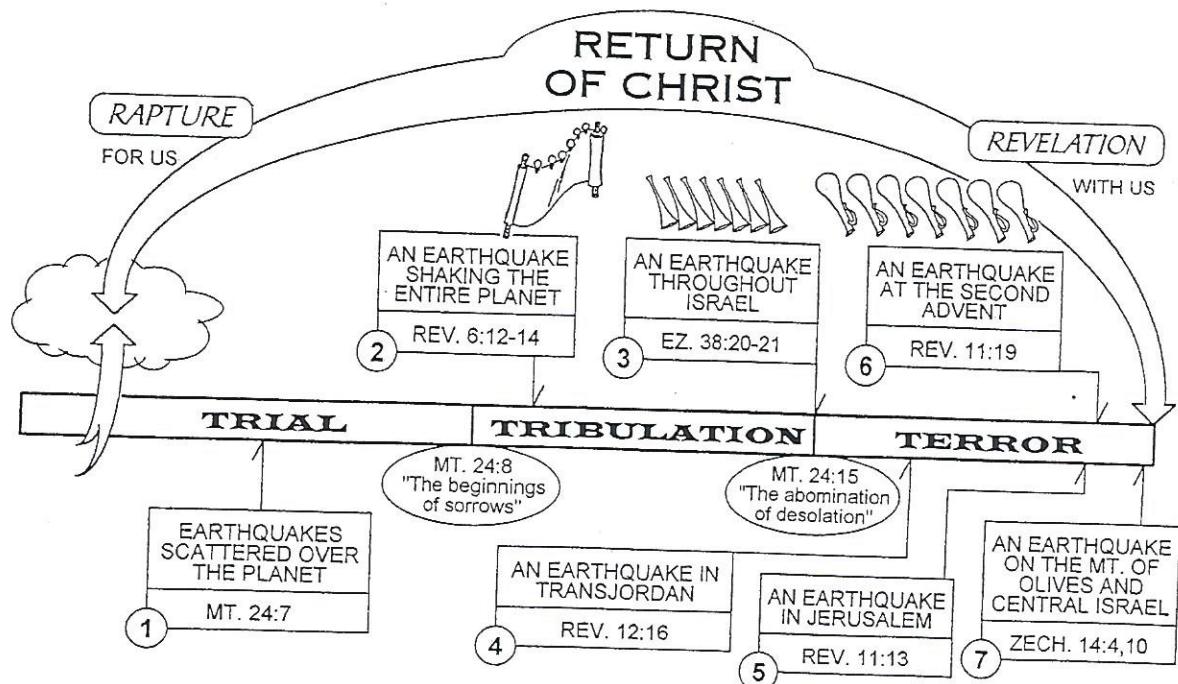


1. Soon after the rapture, before the tribulation itself commences, widely scattered earthquakes will bring about devastation (Mt. 24:7).
2. At the middle of the tribulation cosmic disturbances will shake the entire planet, horrifying world leaders (Rev. 6:12-16).
3. When Russia invades Israel in the middle of the tribulation, God will punish the invaders with an earthquake that will cause the collapse of every wall in Israel (Ez. 38:20-21).
4. As Satan is cast out of heaven to earth and viciously attempts to drown Israel with in a flash flood, a divinely initiated earthquake in Trans-Jordan will swallow up flood (Rev. 12:16).
5. After the two witnesses in Jerusalem are killed and then come back to life and ascend to heaven, an earthquake will destroy part of Jerusalem, crushing to death 7000 individuals (Rev. 11:13).

6. Immediately prior to the Second Advent an earthquake will cause great destruction upon the earth (Rev. 11:19).
7. At the moment of Christ's return with the saints to the Mt. of Olives, a terrifying earthquake will split the mountain in half (Zech. 14:4).

Is it any wonder that Isaiah , in his "Little Apocalypse" (Is. 24) predicts that "the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard" because of the divine punishment of human transgression (24:20)?

EARTHQUAKES IN THE TRIBULATION



B. Emptiness:

It is difficult to conceive of a world with most of its population decimated by the middle of the tribulation. War, drought, famine, pestilence, wild beasts and demonic hordes will greatly reduce the world population. (Rev. 6:8; 9:15). When a fiery objects plunges into the ocean, one third of its waters turn to blood and one third of the individuals in the sea will perish (Rev. 8:8-11).

Again, Isaiah summarizes the catastrophic condition resulting from divine judgments, "The Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste. . . the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and **few men left**" (Is. 24:1, 6).

How wonderful to know that those of us who have trusted in Christ as Savior are exempt from that "wrath to come" (1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Rom. 5:9)!

THE TERRIBLE TOLL OF THE TRIBULATION

The Fourth Seal,

The Pale Horse

Rev. 6:8

8 And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him: and power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.



The Sixth Trumpet,

Four Demons

Rev. 9:15

15 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.



The Second Trumpet,

A Burning Mountain

Rev. 8:9

9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

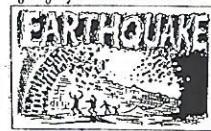


The Two Witnesses,

Earthquake

Rev. 11:13

13 And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.



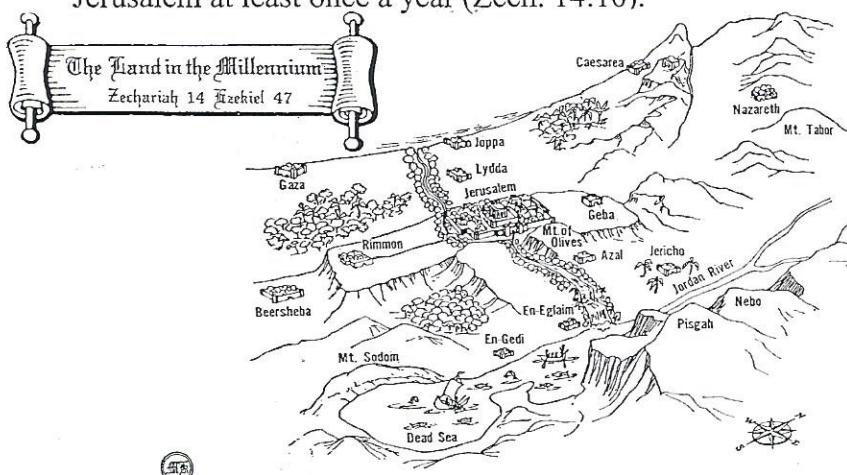
II. Changes in the Millennium—the Good News.

A. Changes in Topography:



With the return of the King a series of dramatic changes take place in Israel and presumably around the world. These changes involve a deep east-west valley in the Mt. of Olives (Zech. 14:4) and an elevation of Israel's central mountain range into a plateau. Jerusalem will serve as the world's capital above the surrounding area (Zech. 14:10-11). Due to these cataclysmic changes, many familiar biblical sites will vanish. (If you, dear friend, have always harbored the wish to visit Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Bethany and Shiloh, better visit Israel [with us now] before these places in the Holy Land either vanish or are changed beyond recognition!)

In the Millennial Kingdom people will flock to Jerusalem that "is exalted above the hills" (Mic. 4:1). Leading up to it is a splendid new highway for the worshippers (Is. 11:16; 35:8) who will make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem at least once a year (Zech. 14:16).



B. The Division of the Land:

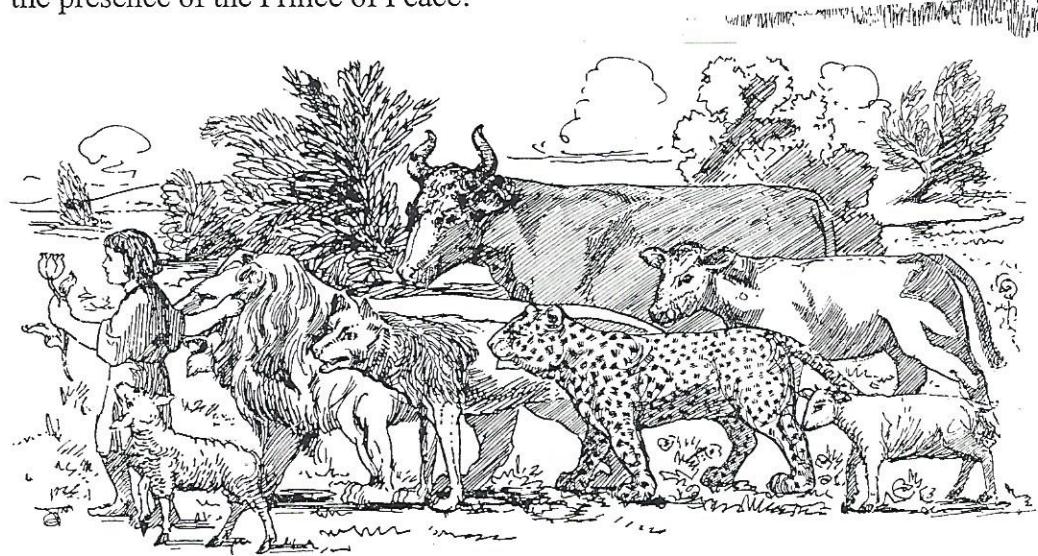
Redeemed Israel will inherit the land from the Nile to the Euphrates as promised to Abraham so long ago (Gen. 15:18). The Promised Land will be portioned in horizontal segments among the twelve tribes of Israel (Ez. 48). With their Messiah King dwelling with them (Is. 12:6), redeemed Israel will sing this exuberant hymn of praise, “The Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation” (Is. 12:2).

C. The Lifting of the Curse.

Isaiah paints of vivid picture of peace and security in the Millennium. The curse will be lifted from nature and the animals, so that “the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb. . . the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them (Is. 11:6-9; cf. 33:24; 65:25). Seasonal rains will be restored (Joel 2:23) and a new river, emanating from the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, will bring abundant life to the formidable Judean desert and the Dead Sea (Joel 3:18; Zech. 14:8; Ez. 47). In fact, all the desert areas of the earth will be healed (Is. 35:6) as waters gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert.

In stark contrast to the drought and devastation of the tribulation period, this extreme fruition of nature will afford multiple harvests each year (Amos 9:13-15). Human longevity will increase (Is. 65:20). No one will die without attaining full age. If anyone dies at the age of one hundred, he is considered a mere youngster.

The Lord reigning from Jerusalem is not simply the source of spiritual but of physical life as well. How wonderful to know this Lord as Savior and to anticipate with Isaiah the end of “sorrow and sighing,” so characteristic of our earthly existence. If we have trusted in Christ as Savior we can even now contemplate our glorious future on the millennial earth. There we will join in our glorified bodies the earthly saints in adoration and worship with “songs and everlasting joy. . . and gladness” (Is. 35:10) in the presence of the Prince of Peace!

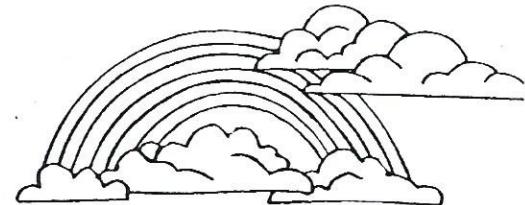


The Scriptures' Divine Pronouncements In the Light of Ecology's Dire Predictions

1. The Preservation of Life on Earth:

Genesis 8:22

22 "While the earth ⁹remains,
 Seedtime and harvest,
 Cold and heat,
 Winter and summer,
 And ¹⁰day and night
 Shall not cease."



2. The Promise of the Rainbow:

Genesis 9:11-13

11 And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a ¹¹flood to destroy the earth.

12 And God said, This is the ¹²token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:

I do set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

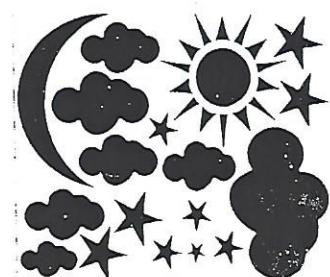
3. The Permanence of God's Promises:

Jeremiah 33:19-21

19 ¶And the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, saying,

20 Thus saith the LORD, "If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season;

21 Then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers.



4. The Picture of the Latter Days:

2. Timothy 3:13-14

13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

