

HOPE FOR HUMANITY

REVELATION TODAY

PRESENTATION 8 • HUMANITY'S FINAL DELIVERANCE

It is neither inappropriate nor alarmist to wonder where it all ends, and whether or not it can end well. We've mentioned this already, but it bears repeating. Without a clear understand of the issues that are really at stake, all we can see is the outside. But what we see from the outside makes us question.

SLIDE • PLANET. How long can a planet allow international political tensions to persist without plunging into conflict? Already there are armed conflicts around the world with blood being shed. There is political brinkmanship and saber-rattling, as one country dominates another, or seeks to do so.

SLIDE • MONEY. This country is currently \$29 trillion dollars in debt. If you spent a million dollars a day, it would take 2,800 years to spend a trillion dollars. To spend out national debt at a million dollars a day would take you more than 80,000 years. That's a lot of debt.

SLIDE • ENVIRONMENT. You don't have to be an environmentalist to realize we're polluting this planet at an incredible rate. And you've noticed that the world is becoming uglier.

SLIDE • UNCIVIL PEOPLE. There is less civility. Remote control Popular entertainment is routinely violent, nasty. You don't need to do a university study to figure out it's not good for people. Popular music today is ugly. The Beatles sang "I Want to Hold Your Hand," but that was almost 50 years ago. Music has moved on since then, and it isn't pretty.

SLIDE • KIDS AND DEVICES. Children are growing up much faster than they used to, thanks in large part to television and the internet, introducing them to things they are not equipped to process. You've noticed that rates of depression are up. It is very common for young children to be medicated today.

SLIDE • MEDICATION. The CDC reported in 2019 that a couple of years ago, 1 in 10 children had been medicated for their mental health. You know I'm not finding fault with the children or their families, but that's an alarming statistic.

SLIDE • DIGITAL DEVICES. In the marketplace, consumers are being tracked and manipulated by something that's being referred to today as "surveillance capitalism." Your personal details are collected and trafficked. It's a fascinating world.

Jesus talked about this from a social and spiritual standpoint.

SLIDE • MATTHEW 24:12. "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."

He said the love of many would wax cold. That iniquity would abound.

Look at how Paul described the religious world.

SLIDE • 2 TIMOTHY 4:3–4 KJV. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

He said people would...

SLIDE • 2 TIMOTHY 3:5 KJV. “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.”

He also wrote that someone or something he called “the man of sin” would be revealed.

SLIDE • 2 THESSALONIANS 2:3–4 KJV. “And that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”

And then we see things getting heated in the book of Revelation. A beast, a decree, persecution...

Let's be frank. If the world goes on the way it's going, there's soon going to be nothing left. We're sliding into an abyss. We have not learned from our mistakes as a planet, and it seems we're not learning from what's going on in front of us.

So the question is, Where's it all going to end?

Some people are very excited about what you'd have to describe as conspiracy theories. There's a shadowy group, a leader somewhere, someone with an agenda, and they're going to take over the world. And there's always just enough “evidence” to almost convince you it's plausible. There's one organization that has talked about a Great Reset, and that's the WEF, founded in 1971 to “improve the state of the world.” We'd have to conclude they have failed in their mission. 50 years on, we're not seeing progress.

Now, we can't find fault with their intent. They've said,

SLIDE • QUOTE. “Drawing from the vision and vast expertise of the leaders engaged across the Forum's communities, the Great Reset initiative has a set of dimensions to build a new social contract that honours the dignity of every human being.”

Prince Charles is quoted as saying,

SLIDE • QUOTE. “We need nothing short of a revolutionary paradigm shift, one that inspires action at revolutionary levels and pace.” “The only limit is our willingness to act. And the time to act is now.”

So do we look at Davos or Clarence House with fear and trepidation, or with suspicion? I don't think we do. Because we see in the Bible that there's coming a real, and a very GREAT reset. It's the remedy for everything that ails humanity, and it's the best thing you've ever heard of. It's what we want, what we've been looking forward to.

Revelation 21:4 says,

SLIDE • REVELATION 21:4 VERSE 4 says, “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.” Hard to imagine, isn't it? No more death. Grandma is always there! No more sorrow. No more crying. No more pain? Wouldn't that be something? No more back pain or neck

pain or joint pain, no migraines, no nerve pain. The Bible promises us, no more pain. What in the world is going to happen to make this possible?

SLIDE • JOHN 14:1–3. “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.” That’s a promise from Jesus Himself. I’m coming back, and I’m going to take you to my Father’s house. He’s talking about heaven. Paul wrote to Titus,

SLIDE • TITUS 2:13. “Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.” In the book of Revelation we see Jesus’ return depicted in graphic terms.

SLIDE • REVELATION 19:11, 15–16. 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... 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. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.” The return of Jesus is a cornerstone of the Bible. Even back in the book of Job—which is said to be the first book of the Bible to be written—we read this.

SLIDE • JOB 19:25–26. Job said, “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God.” Way back then, faithful Job was looking forward to the return of Jesus.

This is the great reset that is going to restore what the locusts have eaten. This is when God resets the world.

So when is the return of Jesus going to happen? I’ll tell you tonight. I will. But first -

SLIDE • MATTHEW 24:36 says: “But of that day or hour knows no man, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.” Only God knows. But we can know when it is near.

SLIDE • MATTHEW 24:32–33. “Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!”

We’ve spoken already about the kinds of things the Bible talks of as signs of Jesus’ return. False Christs. Wars and rumors of war. Disease epidemics. Pestilences. We’re seeing that now. An increase in knowledge - secular, but most importantly, spiritual or Biblical. The proclamation of the gospel. If we were thinking straight, we’d have to admit that it seems like the return of Jesus would

SLIDE • HOURGLASS. Have to be soon. We don’t need to set dates, but we can know when we’re getting close.

Many people call this return of Jesus the ‘rapture’. Rapture is not a word you read in the Bible, but the concept is there. God’s people, waiting to meet Jesus, caught up to meet Him when He returns.

You would think that an event this important to Christianity would be awaited by all believers, and that every one of them will be ready for the day when it comes. But oddly enough it isn’t. Some church folks aren’t too interested, and many people who wouldn’t describe themselves as religious maybe are living without any understanding of what is promised here. But it’s only a matter of

history repeating. Israel had been looking forward to the advent of the Messiah ever since ever. God made a promise in the Garden of Eden that Messiah would come. We saw last night that Daniel predicted with incredible accuracy the very year the Messiah would be anointed, corresponding

SLIDE • BAPTISM OF JESUS. With the baptism of Jesus in the year 27AD. They had been watching and it was there in the Scriptures all along. Remember the Christmas story? Who came from afar to see baby Jesus?

SLIDE • WISE MEN. The wise men. Why were they there? Matthew 2 says, **SLIDE • MATTHEW 2:1–2.** “Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.” Seen His star? What star was that? The wise men had evidently seen a mysterious light in the heavens. They saw a star, and searched the scrolls of the ancient records. The prophecy of Balaam had declared,

SLIDE • NUMBERS 24:17 KJV. “There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel.”

If these Magi living far away could figure it out, you’d think everyone in Jerusalem would have been expecting this Messiah to enter the picture. But they were asleep at the wheel. In fact, they were expecting the wrong kind of Messiah—not unlike a lot of people today who feel that faith ought to fit our lives rather than faith molding our lives.

SLIDE • BIRTH OF JESUS. When Jesus came the first time, Israel had been looking forward to this for almost 2000 years, and when Jesus came the Bible says “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” Isaiah said that **SLIDE • ISAIAH 53:3.** “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.”

If a people with access to the scrolls and carried a rich tradition of faith could absolutely swing and miss when it came to the arrival of Jesus, we had better at least consider the idea that people today could get it wrong when it comes to the second coming of Christ. But we don’t have to get it wrong, because the Bible says so much about it. Let me encourage you. **SLIDE • BIBLE.** Read the Bible. Pick it up. Put down the remote for a moment and pick up the Bible. Read it. Think about it. Learn from it. Chew on it. You don’t have to believe what everyone else is saying—whether good or bad. Ask God to speak to you, to show you what you need for your spiritual growth. Let me tell you a story—A fellow was on a journey—literally. He’d crossed the country with some friends, was out doing his thing, when a lady at a market just gave him a Bible when he bought some things. She gave him her Bible. He read it, and it turned his life completely around. Just read. Let me appeal to you. People tell you God isn’t good. Read the only record we have about God, and decide for yourself. People tell you God isn’t fair. Read for yourself and decide. People tell you faith in God is for the feeble-minded. Read for yourself and you’ll see one way or the other. But read—read for yourself. Taste and see. Investigate.

Jesus said:

SLIDE • MATTHEW 24:37. “But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be” (Matthew 24:37). In Noah’s day, only eight people were saved. That’s a concern, isn’t it? Jesus isn’t saying that only eight will be saved when He returns, but He’s telling us it won’t be a large number. That’s a serious warning.

This is something you don’t want to miss. It’s why Jesus said in Matthew 24:44,

SLIDE • MATTHEW 24:44. “Therefore you also be ready.” It’s encouragement from a God that doesn’t want anyone to not be ready. Jesus wants you to be ready to meet Him at the second coming.

And so God tells us about the second coming of Jesus. It’s not hard to understand why Paul called it “the blessed hope.” No more death. No more separation. No more pain. No more suffering or crime or hatred or war. It’s no wonder John prayed in Revelation 22:20, **SLIDE • REVELATION 22:20.** “Even so, come Lord Jesus.” That’s the last prayer in the Bible. A prayer for the return of Jesus.

SLIDE • ACTS 1:9–11. “Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”

The angel said Jesus “will so come in like manner.” So He’s really going to return.

So, the return of Jesus is going to be

SLIDE • LITERAL. The return of Jesus isn’t a spiritual event, it’s not when you accept Him into your heart. Jesus really is going to return to the Earth.

Now notice this.

SLIDE • REVELATION 1:7. “Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”

SLIDE • 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.”

Appear.

SLIDE • MATTHEW 24:27. “For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.”

SLIDES (2) • 1 THESSALONIANS 4:16–17. Let’s read 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17: “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.” That might just be the noisiest passage in Scripture.

SLIDE • PSALM 50:3. “Our God shall come, and shall not keep silent; A fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous all around Him.”

SLIDE • LITERAL, VISIBLE, AUDIBLE, GLORIOUS.

The return of Jesus literal, visible, audible, glorious. What an amazing thing!

SLIDE • SECOND COMING. What an event this will be! The world will see. The cosmos will be shaken. And a people who have waited so long to see their Savior will see Him return in power. You’ve never seen special effects like this. Imagine what you will see. What you will hear. Imagine WHO you will see! We’ll see Jesus!

SLIDE • BUS. God wants us to take this seriously. If you've ever missed a bus, you know it's not the end of the world. It won't be long before the next bus comes along and, while you may arrive a few minutes later at your destination than you'd intended, you'll still get there, sure enough. But the return of Jesus isn't like that. There's no place for being casual about it, planning on getting ready later instead of being ready now.

SLIDES (2) • MATTHEW 24:42–44. "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

The passage speaks to the timing of Jesus coming. Because we can't know when He is returning, we're told to watch and be ready.

This is important to God.

SLIDE • 1 THESSALONIANS 5:2. "For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night."

You don't know when a thief is going to come to your home. That's why you want to be constantly vigilant, taking security precautions. You can't afford to be slack, to not watch.

STORY HERE

SLIDES (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."

Jesus wanted us to be watching for this, because He knew not everyone would be. The Bible says that when Jesus returns, some will be saved, and some will be lost.

SLIDES (3) • MATTHEW 24:36–42. "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming."

Jesus said His return would be like Noah's day.

SLIDE • NOAH'S ARK. In Noah's day, some got on the ark, and some did not. Those who took advantage of the provision God had made for their safety were saved, and those who ignored God's offer were not. We can't blame God for that. He destroyed the world because evil had very nearly removed every last trace of righteousness. There would have been no nation out of which Messiah would have come. God destroyed the world so you can have a future. Not because He is some sort of bloodthirsty tyrant. Accusing God of cruelty here would be like accusing a doctor of cruelty for amputating a toe because of gangrene. You take the toe so the rest of the body has a chance. When Satan had just about destroyed this world, God removed the evil so there would be a chance you could be saved.

So there'll be two groups. One saved, and the other...? Lost. And unnecessarily so. And God wants you to be in that group of the saved. Do we have to face the future with fear as we look forward to the second coming of Jesus? No! Jesus invites us,

SLIDE • MATTHEW 11:28. "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

SLIDE • JOHN 6:35. "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."

SLIDE • JOHN 7:37. "On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink." You see, Jesus invites you!

The last invitation in the Bible is found just 5 verses from the end of the Bible.

SLIDE • REVELATION 22:17. "And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely."

I want to tell you a story about a woman. A true story about a woman. She had been hopeless. She had given up on life. Everyone in her life had given up on her. She felt as though there was no point living. She decided she would take her own life, but you know what happened next. Someone invited her to read the Bible, and when she did she found hope, she found a Savior who welcomed her, a Savior who loved her. She was changed, and now she's living in the hope of the return of Jesus. You know, this assures you that someone loves you. Someone cares. Someone accepts you. And not just any someone. But THE Someone. There's a loving God who says, "There's something beyond this world." And He's telling us because He knows that so many people are going through so much right now. You're looking at losing a job? God says, "There's a better day coming." You're caring for or worrying about a sick family member? God says, "One day there'll be no more sickness." You're trying to figure out how you're going to make it in this world? God says, "I've got you covered." You've had a run of bad luck. God says, "I'm blessing you, and things are going to look better before too long." You've buried someone you love. Lost a family member or a friend, and God says, "There's going to be a great reunion one day." There's a lot of pressure, a lot of struggling, a lot of hardship in this world. It might be bills you have to pay. It might be a diagnosis you got. It might be a relationship falling apart. But God says, "The best is yet to come. Don't give up on God when we have SO much to look forward to.

Go wants you to have hope about the return of Jesus, because when He comes back He's coming back for you.

Is Jesus going to come back secretly? No, His return will be something you see, something you hear. Every eye is going to see Him, according to John in the book of Revelation.

SLIDE • SECOND COMING. Imagine the King or Queen of a certain nation coming to your town. There'd be a civic reception. The news media would cover the event. It would be a big deal! When King Jesus comes to your home town to take you to be with Him forever, He's not going to slip in unannounced! You're going to know. And what an event it will be.

But notice the urgency.

SLIDE • REVELATION 22:11–12. "He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still. And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work."

So when Jesus returns, everyone's case is decided. The saved are saved, but the lost are lost, and there's nothing that can be done to change it. That's why it's important to make a decision now, and not wait. If you think you're unworthy or unready, that's all the more reason to make a decision for Jesus today, and not wait even a moment. Jesus saved the thief on the cross, and He can save you. He saved a woman taken in adultery, and He can save you. He saved the woman at the well, and He saved a demon-possessed man who was living among tombs.

And He offers you everlasting life. What will you do with that? When Jesus returns, the entire human race will be divided into two groups. The redeemed, and the rest.

SLIDE • ISAIAH 25:9. "And it will be said in that day: "Behold, this is our God; We have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord; We have waited for Him; We will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

SLIDE • SECOND COMING. Christ is coming for His people. He'll make a grand entry, befitting one who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The heavens will depart as a scroll, and Jesus will ride down the great corridors of space.

Is the blessed hope YOUR hope. Where's your confidence tonight? Do you have a future as bright as this planned? If you're without God right now, how is that working out? Where are you headed? God has something wonderful for you.

True story. A homeless man was found by some boys playing in the snow near a bridge. He had died from hypothermia. He died alone and broke, and he died not knowing that his great-aunt had died a little while before and left him nineteen million dollars. He died living homeless and penniless, when in actual fact he was very a very wealthy man. He fought hunger every day, when he could have bought the local supermarket. He didn't have a home of his own, and he could have bought the five most expensive homes in town and had plenty of money left over. He just didn't know it. Do you know how wealthy you are? Do you know what God has done for you? What God offers you today?

That man was the nephew of a wealthy woman, and didn't realize it. You're a child of the King of heaven, and you know that's true.

We, too, have hope that soon we'll be reunited with Jesus. And sure enough, soon He will return to the Earth to gather us together and take us home...

It isn't medication that's ultimately going to make this world right. It isn't a vaccine. It isn't money, and it isn't politics. What's going to set things right is the return of Jesus. And we sense it won't be long now. Paul called the return of Jesus "the blessed hope." Is it your hope right now? It can be. You can trust in Jesus—now—and claim Him as your hope. Invite Him into your life, and believe that He comes into your life. He will. Let me pray for you now.



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