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Can the World Be Restored?

Acts 3:20-21: (NASB) ²⁰And that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, ²¹whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.



Our world is a mess. Our people are a mess. Our governments have no answers. We live in a time of the greatest enlightenment, the greatest knowledge and the greatest progress history has ever recorded; yet at the same time are experiencing the utter collapse of morality, respect and integrity. Was this all part of God's plan or are we beyond His scope? Can this world be restored or is it a hopeless loss?

Today's journey through prophecy will be based upon the approach of man's view of what matters through history, observations and music. All of what we see, fear and hope for as a race can be determined through these venues. Music of the ages tells you what people were thinking about.

Introduction, *History Channel Special (2011)*

- *December 21, 2012: Welcome to the last day on earth. Disaster has descended from the sky and the earth is shaken to its core. The oceans consume our shores and beyond. All modern technology fails. The world has shut down.*

These are obviously outdated expectations, yet they do seem to echo Bible prophecy: **Daniel 12:1** **Zephaniah 3:8:** It can all sound so ominous and permanent - as though all of our effort is for nothing!



"Dust in the Wind," Kansas

Don't hang on, nothing lasts forever but the earth and sky

It slips away, all your money won't another minute buy

Dust in the wind/All we are is dust in the wind/Dust in the wind/Everything is dust in the wind

In the 1960's and 1970's in America, (especially in the context of the Vietnam War) there was a real sense of wanting to reclaim peace for the world. The music of the era reflected this.

2 Peter 3:10-12

Even Jesus, with all the hope and forgiveness he brought, spoke of earth shaking trouble!

Matthew 24:29-31

Introduction, *History Channel Special (2011)*

- *For thousands of years, prophets around the world have predicted the end of days. More than one suggests the Apocalypse is fast approaching. We call this theoretical convergence between Doom's Day prophecies and today's events - the Nostradamus Effect. It is a date that has become synonymous with the end: December 21, 2012. Why do so many people believe that on that day the world will experience an unprecedented cataclysm? Modern researchers point to unusual correlations across diverse cultures, all of which seem to predict that 2012 may be the year when we meet our demise.*

Is all of this what we have to look forward to - the doom and destruction of the world?

1 Corinthians 3:19-20 **Where is the answer?** Acts 2:1-4

The answer is there, but there is a waiting and a faith requirement first: Psalms 46:1-3

Romans 8:19-22: So, the world does long for an answer; they just do not understand it in the context of God's timing.

I Have a Dream, *Martin Luther King, Every Valley Exalted*

- *I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted and every hill and mountain shall be made low; the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together. (Describing Isaiah 40:3-5) This is our hope; this is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair*

a stone of hope. With this faith, we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith, we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

Isaiah 40:3-5: This is all part of the leveling process! Mountains in Scripture symbolically picture governments. The earthly governments will be reduced to rubble in order to make room for God’s kingdom wherein the glory of the Lord will be revealed. ALL flesh will see it!

 **Asteroid DA14, Brian Williams, NBC (2012)**

- You’ll be hearing a lot about this next item over the next eleven months, but astronomers have identified a new asteroid about 150 feet across which is headed our way and may come so close to earth that it will pass between us and the satellites orbiting in space above us. There is some debate in the scientific community about whether a direct hit is even possible. This is called “2012 DA14.” They say this will be the closest pass of an asteroid in the history of tracking such things and again while this pass is supposed to miss us, the experts all say there is nothing wrong with making sure your affairs are in order.*

How well does anyone remember that event? See how we build up and hype anticipation? Rather than hype the sensational, why not focus on the rational promises of God?

Acts 17:30-31

Justice is a centerpiece - through it all men will be able to choose the door of true freedom! **Romans 2:5-9:** (NASB) ⁵But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, ⁶Who will render to each person according to his deeds: ⁷to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; (these are the true followers of Christ) ⁸but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. (Everybody else) ⁹There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek,



“Sounds of Silence,” Simon and Garfunkel

And the people bowed and prayed/to the neon god they made/And the sign flashed out its warning in the words that it was forming/And the sign said, the words of the prophets are written on the subway walls/and tenement halls/And whispered in the sounds of silence.

What are the words of the true prophets? Zechariah 8:20-23 Isaiah 62:1-2:

Man’s future is built upon the foundation of the sacrifice of Jesus: Isaiah 42:1-4:

Peace does come through turmoil! Let’s finish the verse we started at the beginning of this program: Zephaniah 3:8-9 Zephaniah 3:20: Restoring something implies going back to its original form. So much needs restoring!



“New World Coming,” Mama Cass Elliot

There’s a brand new morning/Rising clear and sweet and free/There’s a new day dawning That belongs to you and me/Yes, a new world’s coming/The one we’ve had visions of Coming in peace, coming in joy/Coming in love

Mama Cass Elliot was right...there IS a new world coming!

This kingdom - this new world - truly does belong to everyone! **Isaiah 45:22-24:** Wouldn’t God have failed if He created this earth just to have it burn with most of His creation? Good thing the Scriptures tell us differently. A faint promise began all the way back in the Garden of Eden with Genesis 3:15 and the promise that *the seed* (Jesus) *of the woman* would *bruise the head of the serpent* (Satan). Even though things went badly off course for humanity, there was a sense something great was already planned. Revelation 13:8 tells us that the Lamb was slain *before the foundation of the world*. God had it all in hand before it happened, but He allowed the experience of sin, evil, degradation and death to exist as an education. Mankind will never want to repeat those mistakes.

Zephaniah 1:18: We also ought to feel fine because we have the sure word of God's prophecies that help us to understand it is not the end of all things; it is the end of an age. God has a greater plan in store. **Some things are promised to never change:** Jeremiah 31:35-37,40: God set the basic functions of the earth in order. These will be restored because God said so.



"From a Distance," (Verse 1) Bette Midler

From a distance/We all have enough/And no one is in need/And there are no guns, no bombs and no disease/No hungry mouths to feed/From a distance/We are instruments/Marching in a common band
Playing songs of hope/Playing songs of peace/They are the songs of every man/God is watching us/
God is watching us/God is watching us/From a distance

From a distance, God is not only watching us, he is assuring us through prophecy that all is in hand - what God promises, God does: Isaiah 55:8-11: God's word is as sure as the cycles of nature that we can plainly see.

So, from a distance comes this prophecy that war will forever cease! Isaiah 2:2-4



Something is going on, News story on solar flares (2012)

- *This is a serious story because the latest round of solar flares captured in this incredible video - take a look at this - is from NASA overnight. The burst that you're seeing there - charged particles erupting off the surface of the sun and we saw an even bigger solar flare Tuesday night. Right now all those particles are racing towards the earth about four million miles per hour and it's growing as it gets closer to us. On top of that, the problems will arise when the flares reach the earth's magnetic field. Apparently that is when we could see mass power outages...*

The earth and the systems of the universe are meant to perpetuate life, not destroy it! Ecclesiastes 1:4-7: God has a plan, not only for the earth, but for all of mankind through the ransom of Jesus.



"From a Distance," (Verse 2) Bette Midler

From a distance/You look like my friend/Even though we are at war/From a distance
I just cannot comprehend/What all this fighting is for/From a distance/There is harmony
And it echoes through the land/And it's the hope of hopes/It's the love of loves
It's the heart of every man/It's the hope of hopes/It's the love of loves/This is the song of every man

From a distance we have the promises. Now we need to get ourselves in harmony with them - the stronger our harmony the stronger our belief!

Jesus taught us to pray for God's kingdom here on earth: Matthew 6:9-10

Daniel 7:13-14: It feels safe and secure!



Imagine, John Lennon

Imagine there's no countries/It isn't hard to do/Nothing to kill or die for/And no religion too
Imagine all the people/Living life in peace/You may say I'm a dreamer/But I'm not the only one

We really don't have to imagine, when it is all written down for us!

Isaiah 65:21-25: (NRSV) ²¹They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. ²²They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. ²³They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they shall be offspring blessed by the LORD and their descendants as well. ²⁴Before they call I will answer, while they are yet speaking I will hear. ²⁵The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox; but the serpent - its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all My holy mountain, says the LORD.

It feels complete!



New World Coming, Mama Cass Elliot

Yes a new world's coming/The one we've had visions of/Coming in peace, coming in joy, coming in love

Because the price has been paid, the delivery of this kingdom is guaranteed! Isaiah 9:6-7: It feels overwhelmingly right!



Blowin' in the Wind," Peter, Paul and Mary

How many times must a man look up/Before he can see the sky?
How many ears must one man have/Before he can hear people cry?
How many deaths will it take till he knows/That too many people have died?
The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind/The answer is blowing in the wind.

No! It is too true to be ignored! Psalms 145:9-13



"I Want to Live," John Denver

We are standing all together, face to face and arm in arm/We are standing on the threshold of a dream/
No more hunger, no more killing, no more wasting life away/
It is simply an idea and I know its time has come
I want to live/I want to grow/I want to see/I want to know/ want to share what I can give/I want to be/
I want to live/I want to grow/I want to see/I want to know/I want to share what I can give/
I want to be/I want to live

**We are at the threshold - of a reality, not a dream! Revelation 21:3-4 1 Corinthians 15:22:
(NASB) *For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.***

Isaiah 35:5-10: (KJV) ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. ⁶Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. ⁷And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. ⁸And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. ⁹No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: ¹⁰And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Daniel 2:44: (NKJV) *And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.*

The kingdom of God comes in the context of the kingdoms of this world. Those old kingdoms need to be broken down to make way for the new, everlasting kingdom of God. All the prophecies about the governments falling apart have a great ending.

Revelation 11:15: **And so it is, this world in its present state will pass away, but the earth and the human creation will, by the grace of God and the sacrifice of Jesus, be granted eternity. Once God's kingdom is established, every knee will bow. There will be a unity in humankind unsurpassed in all of human history.**

**So, can the world be restored?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!**