



Does the Bible Tell Us How the World Will End?

Psalm 46:1-2: (NASB) *¹God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. ²Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change and though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea.*



Talking about the end of the world is scary. The amazing thing is that predicting the end of the world has been going on for thousands of years. A 2009 *Smithsonian Magazine* article states, "An Assyrian clay tablet dating to around 2800 B.C. bears the inscription: 'Our Earth is degenerate in these later days; there are signs that the world is speedily coming to an end; bribery and corruption are common; children no longer obey their parents; every man wants to write a book and the end of the world is evidently approaching.'"

Does the Bible actually tell us how the world will end? It does not, but the more appropriate question is, does it give us prophecies that describe how the world will dramatically change? Absolutely! We are not piling on to the mountain of end-of-the-world predictions here. Instead, we are seeking to interpret world changing events as prophesied in scripture.



In light of the present world events as we witness Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, we want to center our thinking on Psalm 46. It is a prophecy that can really look ominous but is actually very comforting.

We will unfold this in small pieces:

Psalm 46:1: (NASB) *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

Observations:



- This Psalm is viewing the troubles it reveals through the eyes of those who are faithful and trust in God.
- It is NOT saying those who trust in Him will not have trouble, but they will have *help through* trouble.
- Their help comes from God in the form of shelter (*refuge*), external strength and His availability (He is *present* with them).

So far, this is encouraging.

If we read the next verses with a literal mindset, they sound terrifying and terminal:

Psalms 46:2-3,6: (NASB) *²Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change and though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea; ³Though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains quake at its swelling pride. Selah. ⁶The nations made an uproar, the kingdoms tottered; He raised His voice, the earth melted.*

We (the faithful) *will not fear*, but all this sounds a little scary. What happened to the comfort part? It seems that while it begins with comfort, then the bomb drops! We will unfold this prophecy as we go.

However, verse 10 tells us plainly that all of this chaos is symbolic:

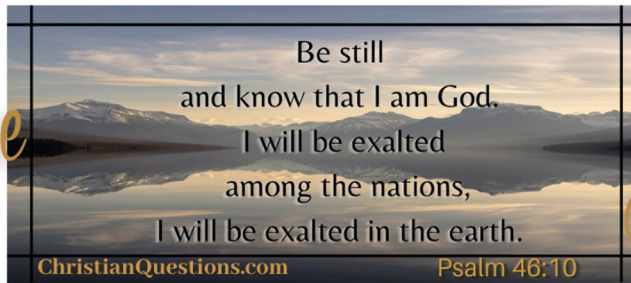
Psalm 46:10: (NASB) *Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.*



Verse 6 said *the earth melted*. This is obviously symbolic or how could God be *exalted in the earth* after it is all over? And this Psalm ends with verse 11 saying God is with us, so that is good. Psalm 46 is like a “comfort sandwich” with hope on both ends and a lot of trouble in between.



Hope



Hope

What does all this chaos mean? And what gives us the authority to say that somehow this is a prophecy that affects our day?

As we unfold the symbols, it becomes obvious that it fits today. Let's address the answer after we put some of the symbolism in order.

We want to define three symbols:

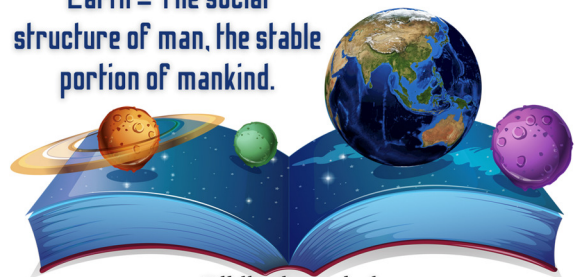
EARTH: The earth is solid and stable, especially in contrast with the sea.

Its symbolism includes stability. For example:

Psalm 66:4: (NASB) *All the earth will worship You, and will sing praises to You; they will sing praises to Your name.*

The literal planet does not sing. The **earth** represents the people in a stable environment.

Earth = The social structure of man, the stable portion of mankind.

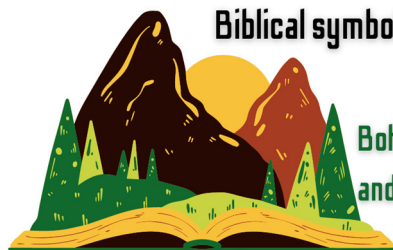


Biblical symbol:

MOUNTAINS: Mountains are large, controlling natural structures that impose their presence on man. When we have a mountain in our way, it dictates where and how we will live in order to adjust for its presence.

Micah 4:1: (NASB) *And it will come about in the last days that the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established as the chief of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, and the peoples will stream to it.*

Biblical symbol:



Both the government of God and the governments of man

Mountains = Kingdoms



SEA: The sea is large, unstable and uncontrollable.

Isaiah 57:20: (NASB) *But the wicked are like the tossing sea, for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up refuse and mud.*

The *tossing sea* represents the *wicked* here, but it is not just the wicked; it is the restless masses. When we look at the restlessness of the sea as being the restlessness of humanity, it fits well. The sea is big and incredibly powerful in its restlessness.



A brief overview of the chaos of Psalms 46 (just verse 2 for now) has to do with the strength and imposing power of the governments of man being shaken and pulled down by the restless and protesting masses of the people.

recap
recap

Let's read again with its symbols:

Psalms 46:2: (NASB) *Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change (though the present social order be entirely overthrown) and though the mountains (governments) slip into the heart of the sea (restless masses of mankind overwhelming the governments with anarchy).*

When we look around right now, what do we see? In 2022, we see the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the fear and uncertainty it brings. This is the first large-scale military confrontation we have seen in decades, and this is the first war the world can pretty much watch in real time.



We are horrified by what we are seeing - hospitals and maternity wards destroyed, bodies in the streets, land mines, attacks on rescue workers, families torn apart. It is shocking. One of our Christian Questions volunteers, John, is even closer to what is happening and wanted to share his experience. For those listening on the Christian Questions app, our friend John was responsible for creating it, and he helps us with other technical issues behind the scenes.



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Moldova experience, Thy Kingdom Come, John Bivol

- I was born in Moldova, a little country next to Ukraine. When I was seven years old, our country experienced the exact same events. The Soviet Union came apart and right after that, Russia invaded our country and claimed the territory of our country as theirs. I can feel for the children and people living in a country of war. We lived farther away from the battlefield line, but it's still fresh in my mind. Soldiers would come from the war and use their guns in our village. It's just not healthy as a child to witness such terror, fear and people doing anything they can to survive. However, for the people in Ukraine, unfortunately the worst is yet to come. It will take years to rebuild what was damaged in a few days. After that war in Moldova, we lived many years with just a few hours per day with electricity, shortage of food and produce. The stores would sell only in limited quantities, currency lost its value and in no time people ended up with a lot of money and empty stores. We had only one option - to choose what the Lord permitted us to go through. To be content and thankful. As I look back, I see the Lord's hand in our family and in my life. For me personally, He helped me to have a baseline in my life to be thankful for everything we have because we are very blessed in this country, and we need to thank God for that. My heart is with all those affected in any way by this. I have been to Ukraine many times. My wife was born there and came to the United States when she was eight years old. We have relatives, close friends, and brothers and sisters in Christ there. We all hear of tragedies happening around the world and how people are so ready for a change and are praying for God's kingdom. I want to personally testify, that I was never touched so much until now, when I pray "Thy kingdom come," I mean it like never before.*



What John went through as a child affects him deeply decades later. We are grateful that it brought him closer to God, as it does not always turn out that way. One of the things John said to us was, "Most of us thought that these kinds of events are behind us; however this is just another proof that the world is not getting better without God's help."



(Source: U.N.: 1 out of 4 of the world's population live in areas affected by violence: NPR
<https://www.npr.org/2022/03/31/1089884798/united-nations-conflict-covid-19-ukraine-myanmar-sudan-syria-yemen>)




According to the United Nations, two billion people, or a quarter of the world's population, now lives in conflict-affected areas. This includes places like Yemen, Myanmar, Syria, Sudan and Ukraine. That means 1 in every 4 humans live in areas affected by violence.



- ✍ This is the highest number of violent conflicts since World War II was ending in 1945.
- ✍ The UN Secretary General said on February 23, 2022, that an estimated 84 million people were "forcibly displaced because of conflict, violence and human rights violations," and an estimated 274 million people will need humanitarian assistance due to conflict.

When we read these statistics and listen to John's testimony, we realize the world is really in a stage of unrest, a stage of doubt. This is what Psalm 46 predicted. There are definitely "restless seas" of people against "quaking mountains" of governments.


IS GOD ENDING THE WORLD? OR IS GOD CHANGING THE WORLD?



Bible prophecy can be overly scary, especially if we look at its elements literally when we should be seeing them symbolically.

Let's begin with two keys:

1. No Bible prophecy should be interpreted without referring to other prophecies to back it up.
2. Most Bible prophecies unfold over a period of time - they are not instant chaos!



Bible prophecy looks to the future from the mind of God. It is a gift from God! We need to strive to use it as the tool of understanding it was meant to be.

**Have the governments of men already fallen into the sea,
or is that happening now or in the future?**

Yes, all three! As we shall soon see, this particular prophecy is classic when it comes to its fulfillment taking time - it takes lots of time to happen. God has allowed evil to rule our world for thousands of years. When the time comes for that evil to crumble, it is only reasonable that its dissolving will not be a dramatic, overnight event. This is an important aspect of understanding Bible prophecy.

John's Ukrainian wife shares what she is going through:

🔊 **Julia's personal experience, *Julia Bivol***

- *I moved out of Ukraine with my immediate family when I was only eight years old, but I have traveled back to visit extended family and friends many times, even with my husband and three young children. We have beautiful memories of fellowship together and their hospitality. It's hard to believe and it breaks my heart to see the devastation in the country.*





One of my very good friends is in Ukraine and her husband and children are now split in three different countries. We've spoken over the phone many times in the past month, and she tells me she fears for her children more than for herself. We have cried together but also shared our hope in God's promises for a better future. After watching the news, she turns to the Bible, God's word, and trusts in His love and encourages her children to do the same.

Julia talks about her friend - that she, her children, and her husband are in three different countries! Let that sink in - this is just one family's tragedy among the millions of tragedies that are happening in this conflict. This is a shocking thing for us to be watching in our world today. We want to see how all these things fit into worldwide prophetic pictures from God.

Let's consider the Psalm in more detail:

Psalm 46:2-3: (NASB) ²Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change and though the mountains slip into the **heart <3820>** of the sea; ³Though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains quake at its swelling pride. Selah.

Verse 2 seems to show us the conclusions of what takes place in verse 3:

- **The earth** (the social structure of man) changes.
- **The mountains** (the governments of man) fall or *slip into the heart of the sea* - **the sea** (the restless masses of mankind).

How do the governments *slip into the heart of the sea*?



Because we see the symbolism of the sea as clearly being the restless masses of mankind, let's look at the definition of **heart** with that in mind:



Heart: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #3820 *leb*; a form of #3824; the heart; also used (figuratively) very widely for the feelings, the will and even the intellect; likewise for the center of anything

How do the governments fall into the feelings and the intellect of the restless masses?

For thousands of years the kings and governments of earth overwhelmingly operated without the input and consent of those they ruled. In the last 100+ years there has been a massive shift to those who are governed not only having a voice in how they are governed but having choices as to who governs them as well. Governments today are by and large subject to the desires and thinking of the people- their heart and intellect. The mountains HAVE fallen into the "heart" of the sea.



We mentioned how prophecy is confirmed by other prophecies. In describing the time of the end, Jesus says:

Luke 21:25-26: (NASB) ²⁵There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, ²⁶men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

In other words, this is a time of the leveling of human society.



We propose that history shows us the fulfillment of this prophecy, and it has been happening at a “lightning-fast” pace since 1914, the beginning of World War I.



We might not realize just how unique a time the last 100 or so years have been. For thousands of years, humanity’s nations lived mostly under autocratic governments.

Autocracy is when unlimited and absolute power is concentrated in the hands of one person or an elite group of people. They hold all political, economic, social and military power. A dictatorship is a form of autocracy. Think about all the kings who have ruled in history, the emperors of Rome and Nazi Germany. In modern times, North Korea is an example of an autocracy run by a dictator.



See: <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-autocracy-definition-and-examples-5082078>

This kind of government led to the colonization of countless other nations:

A **colony** is a territory ruled by a foreign country. The United States, for example, was a colony of England until the year 1776. At the beginning of the 1800’s, approximately 85 percent of the world’s population was under autocratic rule or was colonized. Think of this as having little or no say in the direction of your country.

There are two more types of government - **anocracy** and **democracy**.



An **anocracy** is a dictatorship with some democratic features - a hybrid regime. There might be some freedom of competition for ruling positions, as well as formal elections, but they are not fair or free. The choices of candidates are pretty much determined by those in power. Russia is currently considered to be an anocracy.

A **democracy** is where the people get to elect their governing representatives. Opposition parties are allowed and there is an independent judicial system. The average person has a clear representation and voice in the direction of their country.



At the beginning of the 1800’s, anocracies and democracies accounted for only about five percent of the world population. That is 85 percent autocratic rule and colonization, five percent anocratic and democratic. The other 10 percent or so were not definable (either in transition or not documented enough to determine the government).

There is a dramatic focus on pushing people around and not giving them a choice or a voice in their lives. This gives us an historic picture of the *mountains* or governments that ruled in the world throughout most of its history.

With this history in mind, let’s now look at verse 3:

Psalm 46:3: (NASB) *Though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains quake at its swelling pride. Selah.*



The waters, (like the sea, the restless masses of mankind) **roar <1993>** (great commotion, tumult, rage) and shake the mountains with their swelling pride or arrogance.

Roar: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #1993 *hamah*; to be in great commotion or tumult, to rage, war, moan, clamor

Imagine the mountains shaking due to the waters roaring and the commotion in their restlessness around them. This symbolizes the people clamoring for their rights. This is both powerful and positive. The problem comes when the “rights” become wrong. In demanding rights, human nature takes it too far until they trample on the rights of others. That is our human inclination.

The governments of this present evil world swell with pride - this being their downfall. The governments and the sea are two opposing forces.

The commotion that began with World War I only intensified over time. After World War II, we find a rapid decline and essentially a disappearance in colonization, and a rapid increase in democracy. The roaring and arrogance of the people is being heard! Colonization occurred in 35-40 percent of the world for thousands of years, but after World War II, it rather quickly decreased to almost nothing. Most of us do not realize this because we are too young to remember the situation of the world prior to World War I and II.

Please see **BONUS MATERIAL** for an important chart from ourworldindata.org that shows how the world's governmental rule has changed over time.



FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS, MANKIND WAS UNDER THE THUMB
OF THE INDIVIDUAL RULERS OF AUTOCRACIES.

As recently as 200 years ago, nearly everyone lacked democratic rights. Now, billions of people have them. The world was nearly 50 percent democratic starting at the end of World War I and then increasing again after World War II.

How many kings rule countries today? The Bible prophesied how the “restless seas” would mix together with the “mountains” and actually change how the majority of mankind is governed. The “mountains” of government rule have been pulled down. This Psalm predicted the world changing and helps us to know where we are in the stream of prophetic time. Most people have no idea about this because we were born during the time of the growth of democracies and people having a voice in their country's government.

Let's look at a different prophecy in Psalm 2. It echoes the same unrest as Psalm 46 which, remember, was written from the perspective of the followers of Christ.



This time we see the same time period as presented from God's perspective of the governments and the futility of trying to preserve the present world:

Psalms 2:1-3: (NASB) ¹Why are the nations in an uproar and the peoples devising a vain thing? ²The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His anointed, saying, ³Let us tear their fetters apart and cast away their cords from us!

This prophecy adds the dimension of the people and the rulers standing against God Himself. In their clamor for power (those who have power want to keep it, and those who do not have power want to rise up and get it), they *all* seek to be loosed from what they perceive to be the restraints of righteousness based on godly principles.

It is all about *my power* as a government or *my rights* as an individual. God is left out of the equation. How different the world would be if everyone loved their neighbor as themselves! Selfishness justifies heinous acts against fellow humans.

When we look at what is happening today through the eyes of these two prophecies, we see how they describe the world we are living in. We will continue to look at these side-by-side to see the unfolding of the things happening now and in the future.

IS GOD ENDING THE WORLD? OR IS GOD CHANGING THE WORLD?



As we unfold an understanding of **Psalm 46**, we realize we have been living in a time of fulfilled prophecy for generations. World history gives us unmistakable proof that the world has changed and continues to change.

To realize and act upon what we are shown is to proclaim and put our faith in the forefront of our daily lives!

Therefore, it is important to go through these prophecies and understand our world. It determines how we choose to live.

It is far easier to see prophecy unfold than it is to act upon it unfolding. What are we supposed to do now?

How are we supposed to react to these massive earth-changing upheavals? Should they make us happy?

To be outwardly happy may be hard, especially if these upheavals are causing pain and suffering to us and to those around us, and to people we know and those we hear about. However, rejoicing in these things is a different story. To rejoice is to courageously accept that the Father's will is being done, even if it seems so costly at this present moment.



This is exactly what Julia and her friend in Ukraine are trying to do. We have to give them credit for having that attitude in the midst of such traumatic events.



The prophet Daniel adds clarity to the depth of difficulty:

Daniel 12:1: (NASB) *Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued.*

Distress such as never occurred since there was a nation - this gives us the sense of something that will be marked in all of human history. Statistics show the world is really changing. God uses the evil of man to expose all the horrors that godless lives are capable of producing. He uses humanity's evil deeds to each other to show us what we are capable of when we do not live godly lives.



Russian tactic, *Satan's Tactic*, John Bivol

- The tactic of Russia is to trap, surround a city, cut it off from heat, electricity, food and water, and then finally let people go - where? They open an escape corridor that leads directly to Russia. What cruel and premeditated actions to lead people to a location against their will. 1 Peter 5:8 tells us that Satan "prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." He surrounded and captured the entire world in sin, then opens what appears to be light, but it leads to his kingdom only. This keeps mankind in perpetual darkness.*

What an analogy! It is stunning - we see Russia doing just this in Mariupol, Ukraine. And John speaks from experience. He was there as a kid in Moldova - history does repeat itself, and sometimes the repeat is a lot worse because technology gets better and more destructive. Thank you, John, for sharing with us this personal perspective.

After showing all that chaos, the Psalm calms us. It recognizes our position of vulnerability within the tumult with a powerful promise of protection:

Psalms 46:4-5: (NASB) *⁴There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy dwelling places of the Most High. ⁵God is in the midst of her, she will not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns.*

This *city of God* represents those who are called to serve God in the footsteps of Jesus.

This phrase is used again in Isaiah, so let's follow the breadcrumbs:

Isaiah 60:14: (NASB) *¹⁴The sons of those who afflicted you will come bowing to you, and all those who despised you will bow themselves at the soles of your feet; and they will call you the city of the LORD, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.*

...city of the LORD - the people of God.



The **Psalm 46** prophecy assures us that those faithful to God are cared for. They are given the process needed to cope when faced with these difficult times:

- They are given a river - another symbol - the flowing waters of truth and salvation.
- They are reminded that they are the holy dwelling place of God by way of His spirit.
- They have an attitude of courage, confidence and full reliance on God. They are assured of their ability to stand firm through all tribulation.
- They will be helped - delivered - when the new morning dawns.

We have a picture of unmistakable calm and deliverance in the midst of this storm. As Christians looking at the world around us, we see that **Psalm 46** is telling us how bad the world is, but how good it is that we have faith in Christ. It shows how we can manage our fears and move forward.

Another reference to this city:

Hebrews 12:22: *But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels.*

...city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem - a description of Jesus' faithful church in heaven.

We have comfort in the midst of great turmoil.

Back to our theme Psalm, as told from the perspective of the followers of God through Christ:

Psalms 46:6-7: (NASB) *⁶The nations made an **uproar <1993>**, the kingdoms tottered; He raised His voice, the earth melted. ⁷The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah.*

Roar: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #1993 *hamah*;
to be in great commotion or tumult, to rage, war, moan, clamor

We know the earth melting is symbolic because we already jumped to the end of this Psalm and saw that God ends up being **exalted in the earth**, so it cannot be burned up or melted away. We said earlier the earth represented stable, organized society.



So, what does the earth melting mean?

If something is in solid form, melting means to make it liquid so that it can be reformed. We will come back to this.

Uproar, tottering kingdoms and a melting earth, and yet we have a stronghold from the previous verses of the Psalm. In the last 100+ years, have we not seen how fragile and unstable all the kingdoms of this world are? We see governments taken down and replaced multiple times. The world has changed before our eyes.



A powerful result of all this turmoil is that when something melts it becomes pliable. It can be shaped into something entirely different. God will take the best of what there is - the stable social structures of mankind - and completely overhaul them! He will redefine human society entirely in His own way. The symbolism of the earth melting is that of reformation, NOT destruction.



While we are assured and cared for, the following Psalm shows us what that melting brings.

Remember, this Psalm describes the same time period, but this time from God's perspective looking down on the experience of humanity:

Psalm 2:4: (NASB) *He who sits in the heavens laughs, the Lord scoffs at them.*

Why does God laugh? In context, the nations resist God's rule. No wonder He is laughing at them - it is not because He does not have compassion. He is confidently laughing at the futility of the efforts of these rulers trying to maintain their power. He knows humanity's great cries for freedom and liberty will always get twisted and confused, ending up as actions of selfishness, power and ego.



As a father who raised three children, I knew there were times when my children were growing up and would stand for whatever it is they stood for, and I could see them heading right into a ditch. Many times, my wife and I let them go into the ditch if it wasn't too bad. We would kind of laugh and say, "I just want to see this one unfold." We wanted to teach them. It wasn't angry or diabolical laughter; it is saying, "I know what you are trying to do. You are just a kid; let me help you." God sees us in that way.

Let's look at these actions of selfishness, power and ego:

2 Timothy 3:1-5: (NASB) ¹*But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. ²For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, ⁴treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.*

What an awful list!

Amidst all this degraded behavior, God does exercise His anger, though not without strong hope attached to it:

Psalms 2:5-6: (NASB) ⁵*Then He will speak to them in His anger and terrify them in His fury, saying, ⁶But as for Me, I have installed My king upon Zion, My holy mountain.*

This is why He laughed at their futility. He is in the process of setting up Jesus as the king. God's righteous government is going to replace these selfish, ineffective governments of the world.



the bottom line

Jesus will take care of this sinful world and reshape it. This government of Jesus is permanent and untouchable. It is higher than ALL the “mountains.”

This is the government that was meant to be from the beginning.

There is a reason why *the mountains slip into the heart of the sea*.

They need to be replaced with something bigger and better, something stronger and eternal.

Because we have both fear and chaos with hope, we need a mindset of willingness to keep taking forward steps. This may not be easy:

Philippians 4:11-13: (NASB) ¹¹*Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. ¹²I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. ¹³I can do all things through him who strengthens me.*

Paul suffered an incredible amount of hardship (prison, shipwreck, beatings and more), but his motivation was that he could do all these things through Christ. Similarly, we cling to Psalm 46 because it is *our* perspective on the chaos of the world.

There is more good news. The leveling out (the mountains falling into the sea) of humanity’s power and rage described in Psalm 46 is a painful and necessary step. But it is a precursor to God’s grand kingdom.



There are other corroborating prophecies, such as:

Isaiah 40:3-5: (NASB) ³*A voice is calling, Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; make smooth in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; and let the rough ground become a plain, and the rugged terrain a broad valley; ⁵Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.*

This good news talks about the leveling of mountains and the glory of God revealed for the benefit of all who have ever lived. As difficult as current events are to watch (and they are - our hearts go out to all those who suffer), we are assured of a glorious future both in heaven for those who follow after Jesus now, and an opportunity for life on earth for everyone else.

Several prophecies corroborate that while the trouble is massive, the hope is far bigger. The trouble is terminal; it is short. But the hope is eternal.

**IS GOD ENDING
THE WORLD?**



**OR IS GOD CHANGING
THE WORLD?**

The further we go with our understanding of this Psalm 46 prophecy unfolding before our eyes, the more devotion and discipline we can build as disciples of Christ.

God’s plan marches forward and we need to march forward as well!



We want to stay in lockstep with God's plan. We do not want to fall behind or run ahead of it. We do that by following scriptural advice, admonition and prophecy.

With all these prophecies available, God absolutely has everything in hand!

**What is the bottom line - the end result?
How does God build harmony out of such horror?**

We began this journey through the Psalm 46 prophecy saying that God's plan takes time. Having seen this one prophecy span over 100 years and counting helps us to see things from His perspective.

The changes God brings will be permanent, but they can only be brought when humanity has become desperate. That is human nature:

2 Peter 3:11: (GNT) *Since all these things will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people should you be? Your lives should be holy and dedicated to God.*

What kind of people should you be? - knowing what we know, how should we be acting? This is an important question to ask ourselves.

We are given the blessing of foreknowledge, knowing to expect that things are going to get worse before they get better, but that God is always in control. To quote a recent sermon I heard on this topic, "God has guard rails around the human experience." This is a great comfort.



Let's return to John one more time and hear how he answers the question: Knowing all of this, *what kind of people should you be?*

What is our treasure, John Bivol

- As followers of Christ, we are not to be attached to the things of this world. As we see people leaving Ukraine with just a few suitcases, we should ask ourselves, what is our treasure? Are we ready to leave everything behind and walk with a suitcase and have peace in our hearts knowing that our real treasure is in heaven?





What are the most important things to me? If everything else falters and falls, what do I want to hold onto? Is it the promises of God? Is it following in the footsteps of Jesus so that we can be a part of the heavenly calling and the reconciliation of the world of mankind to God? We have an eternal mission before us - how important is it in my everyday Christian walk?

The conclusion:

Psalms 46:8-11: (NASB) ⁸*Come, behold the works of the LORD, who has wrought desolations in the earth.*

To some this sounds like God has just gone on an uncontrolled tirade, but we have to keep reading.

⁹*He makes wars to cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariots with fire.*

He destroys the implements of our clamor. God levels things to put them where they need to be. This is such a comfort. The *desolations* destroy the elements of destruction! Now we begin to see the reason for the anger God has towards sin.

No matter our circumstances - especially when we feel discouraged or hopeless - remember that God had a plan from the beginning. This prophecy accurately describing our day was given thousands of years ago when it did not look possible that the governments could fall into the hands of the average person. It was impossible for that to have happened when the prophecy was written, and yet, we see it all over the world in our day.

¹⁰*Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.* ¹¹*The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah.*

The Psalm 46 message is clear. We now live in the time when the ways humanity governs itself have made the most radical shifts in all human history. This has happened only within the last 100 years or so. The world is different and exactly fits the way it is described in this Psalm.

These changes are good and bad. They are good because the rights of individuals have come to light, and bad because we have utterly distorted those rights into representing our prideful preferences and desires. God watches the destructiveness of humanity only for so long and then He destroys our destructiveness. He WILL bring an end to evil!



I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth - the "new earth" (or new order and arrangement of society) will exalt God and His law as over all and controlling all. The message of Psalm 46 is that *the LORD is with us*. He has a permanent plan for mankind, and here is where we find our comfort.



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WHY DOES GOD LET BAD THINGS HAPPEN?
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It is important to teach our kids that God has a plan. As the world falls further and further from godliness and into chaos and anarchy, we should instill in them at a young age that God knew all this ahead of time. This gives them hope to manage through these times knowing He will take care of this, and it all works out in eternity.

God's permanent plan for all is confirmed:

Psalms 2:7-12: (NASB) ⁷*I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to me, You are My son, today I have begotten you. ⁸Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as your possession.*

Again, **Psalm 2** is told from the perspective of God. He is plainly telling Jesus that the nations of the world are his inheritance because of his faithfulness. Jesus bought them with his blood. This is powerful!

The nations are falling apart, and Jesus will put them back together in God's way:

⁹*You shall break them with a rod of iron, you shall shatter them like earthenware. ¹⁰Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; take warning, O judges of the earth. ¹¹Worship the LORD with reverence and rejoice with trembling. ¹²Do homage to the son that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, for His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!*

Earlier in this Psalm, we learned God has already put Jesus in place, while this tumult is happening. God tells Jesus, *break them with a rod of iron*. Jesus uses the chaos caused by the restless masses in such a way that these evils will never exist again. We are God's creation and currently out of harmony with Him.



God is showing us how history will yet unfold. It is dramatic and exciting:

Psalms 76:8-10: (NASB) ⁸*You caused judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared and was still. ⁹When God arose to judgment, to save all the humble of the earth. Selah. ¹⁰For the wrath of man shall praise You; with a remnant of wrath You will gird Yourself.*

What an amazing end result - humanity's wrath ends up bringing praise to God! All the anger, chaos and rebellion end up praising God because He brings it into submission to His perfect will.

The everlasting government in God's kingdom will be that of a benevolent spiritual autocracy. It is not a humanly-installed government, but a spiritually-installed government. God, through His son Jesus and his bride (the faithful followers of Jesus), will have absolute control, but for the eternal good and benefit of all.

It will be for the benefit of all because this government was conceived and will be implemented by a mind that is higher than the mind of men. Look around - all of the chaos, all of our cleverness, all that has been achieved through the mind of men - how are we doing? Not so well. We get stuck in pride and ego; we become those restless masses: *We want; I want; it's all about me, me, me!*



I can be like God - this is a horrible representation of what man is supposed to be. These Psalms show us how all of this needs to be reformatted.

Let's look at one last prophecy to put the journey through Psalm 46 and Psalm 2 into a broader perspective.



This is the happy ending:

Isaiah 2:2-4: (NASB) ²Now it will come about that in the last days the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; and all the nations will stream to it.

Remember the mountains falling into the sea and how catastrophic and chaotic it was? *This mountain of the house of the LORD will be the chief of the mountains. In the end everything is under this governing body of Jesus and his true followers.*

³And many peoples will come and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that He may teach us concerning His ways and that we may walk in His paths. For the law will go forth from Zion and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

The people are going to want to go to this mountain. The new world government will be physically located in Jerusalem, Israel. Notice the people are no longer restless. There is no shaking, no earthquakes, no mishaps of any sort.

The people will stream to it, and this is why:

⁴And He will judge between the nations, and will render decisions for many peoples; and they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they learn war.

We see the end result is peace and harmony on earth. Peace on earth, good will toward men! This is what God's kingdom through Christ will bring us. This is what the Psalms promise us once we see our way through the chaos.

IS GOD ENDING
THE WORLD?

OR

IS GOD CHANGING
THE WORLD?



God's word IS the ultimate source of GOOD NEWS. No matter the circumstances of our lives or the war and unrest in the world, God's plan will put it ALL in perspective.

Knowing this...

...What kind of person will I be from this day forward?

...Will I reflect the light of hope from above or will I absorb and reflect humanity's broken and inadequate solutions?

Does the Bible tell us how the world will end?

The Bible shows us the end of the *present order of things*. That is what ends. The world - the human race and the natural environment - will be restored to something greater and more magnificent.



It is not the end of the world, but it is the end of the way we have messed up the world. By God's grace, it will be God's will, God's way, His time, preferences, justice, love and wisdom. Do we get the picture? *Thy kingdom come...on earth as it is done in heaven.*

*So, does the Bible tell us how the world will end?
For Jonathan, Rick, Julie and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*

All quoted scriptures are from the 1995 version of NASB unless otherwise indicated.



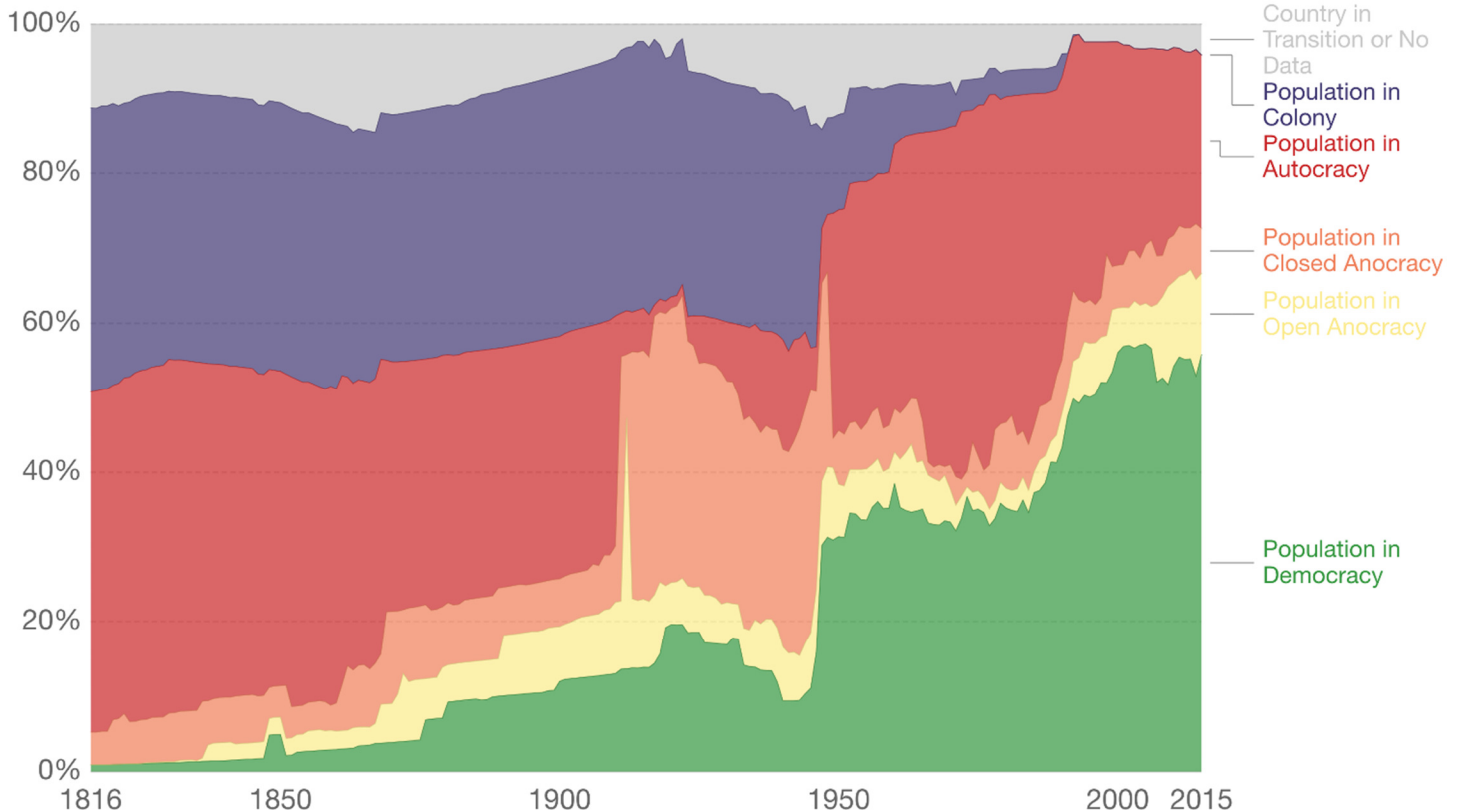
Join us next week for our podcast on April 11, 2022

Ep. 1224: Why Should Christians Care About
Israel's Deliverance From Slavery?

Bonus Material and Study Questions

Number of world citizens living under different political regimes

The Polity IV score captures the type of political regime for each country on a range from -10 (full autocracy) to +10 (full democracy). Regimes that fall into the middle of this spectrum are called anocracies.



Source: World Population by Political Regime they live in (OWID (2016))
OurWorldInData.org/a-history-of-global-living-conditions-in-5-charts/ • CC BY-SA



(Source of definitions: Wikipedia):

Autocracy:

A system of government in which absolute power over a state is concentrated in the hands of one person, whose decisions are subject neither to external legal restraints nor to regularized mechanisms of popular control (except perhaps for the implicit threat of coup d'état or other forms of rebellion).

Colony:

In modern parlance, a colony is a territory subject to a form of foreign rule. Though dominated by the foreign colonizers, colonies remain separate from the administration of the original country of the colonizers, the metropolitan state (or "mother country").

Anocracy or semi-democracy:

A form of government that is loosely defined as part democracy and part dictatorship, or as a "regime that mixes democratic with autocratic features."

Democracy:

A form of government in which the people have the authority to deliberate and decide legislation ("direct democracy"), or to choose governing officials to do so ("representative democracy").



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Study QUESTIONS

Ep.1223: Does the Bible Tell Us How the World Will End?

<https://christianquestions.com/current-events/1223-end-of-the-world/>

See:  **CQ.Rewind**
SHOW NOTES

1. Psalm 46 is written from whose viewpoint? What comfort does this psalm bring to the faithful? How is this psalm like a “comfort sandwich”? How do we know it is not literal? (See Psalms 46:1-11)
2. Define what “earth,” “mountains” and “sea” symbolize. What does Psalm 46:2 tell us will happen to the governments on the earth? What is the state of conflict in the world today? Is humanity, in general, content? Are governments, in general, stable? Explain. (See Psalm 66:4, Micah 4:1, Isaiah 57:20)
3. Describe the shift in government (the social structure of mankind) in the last 200 years. How do “the mountains slip into the heart of the sea”? In what way is this a “leveling” of society? (See Psalms 46:2-3, Luke 21:25-26)
4. Describe the general types of government listed. How do the restless masses “roar”? How do we see this happening especially after World War I and World War II? How do the perceived rights of the masses drive these changes? Are the masses correct in demanding changes? What happens as the common people gain power - does this help conditions in the world? (See Psalms 46:3, 2:1-3)
5. We know these events are necessary to bring about God’s kingdom, but how do we rejoice over these upheavals when our hearts cry for those caught in them? What do these evil deeds expose? How can God use this to educate us for the coming kingdom? (See Daniel 12:1)
6. How does Psalms 46:4-5 calm us? Who is the “city of God”? What are four pieces of comfort offered in these verses? Despite the turmoil, what are we promised here? (See Isaiah 60:14, Hebrews 12:22)
7. In what way does “melting” fittingly describe what happens to the earth prior to God’s kingdom? Why does God laugh? Why is this “leveling out” of society a necessary step? What will replace the evil and ineffectual governments of this world? (See Psalms 46:6-7, 2:4-6, 2 Timothy 3:1-5, Isaiah 40:3-5)
8. How should we be acting in crises or while observing crises? What are the most important things to you? If everything else alters and falls, what do you want to hold onto and why? How can you reflect the light of hope from above? (See 2 Peter 3:11)
9. How does God wreak desolation in the earth? Why are the changes in earth’s governments good? Why have changes not always created better conditions for the common man? How does Jesus use the chaos caused by the restless masses for good? (See Psalms 46:8-11, 2:7-12)
10. What kind of government will God’s everlasting kingdom be? Is this a good thing? What happens to “the humble of the earth” in this kingdom? Why will the people welcome this kingdom? Do all of the scriptures we have looked at describe the end of the world? Explain. (See Psalms 76:8-10, Isaiah 2:2-4)