

7 Sobering End-Times Scenarios That Could Likely Happen: What's Next?

"This is a seismic event in United States history that will be recalled for generations to come." –Historian David Brinkley

Christians, Jews and Muslims all venerate the Old Testament prophet, Samuel. As a boy he said a prayer I repeat almost daily: "Speak, Lord, for Your servant listens" (1 Sam. 3:9).

The first time he prayed this God gave him a warning to convey "which will make both ears ring of every one that hears it" (v. 11). Subsequently thousands of people died (34,000) seeking "rescue" from their plight as "they fled every man into his tent" (1 Sam. 4:10).

In this sequestered season I've sensed God saying: "Don't miss this moment. Don't waste it. 'The goodness of God leads you to repentance' (Rom. 2:4). 'Sin no more lest something worse happen to you'" (John 5:14).

What is Ahead?

People are peppering conversations with speculation about the post-pandemic period. Certainly most of us try to tilt optimistically as we hopefully and incrementally return to some normalcy.

But are we dangerously close to not responding the way God intended in this catastrophic event?

Will we miss the moment the way they did in Jesus' day when He actually "wept" referring to a crisis and upbraided the unperceptive people: "you did not know the time of your visitation" (Luke 19:44)?

If this unprecedented, divine disruption doesn't have its intended effect, will we have to "take another lap"? Deuteronomy 1:2 laments Israel wandering 40 years in the wilderness for what should've been an 11-day journey. The older generation never entered their land of promise and it can happen to us as well.

Wall Street Journal commentator Robert Nicholson wrote, "A Coronavirus Great Awakening?" asking, "Will Americans shaken by the reality of a risky universe rediscover the God who proclaimed Himself sovereign over every catastrophe?" (March 26, 2020).

Hitting the Snooze Alarm?

Simmering tensions with England's overlords and moral declension were catalytic in the First Great Awakening in the 1700s.

Throughout history God has redemptively used societal signals to grab the attention of people to bring us back to Himself. Unfortunately, once the storm passes, people hit the snooze alarm and go back to sleep.

As New York became the epicenter for the coronavirus, "Roman Catholic" Gov. Andrew Cuomo, a pro-abortion, gay marriage supporter who cohabitated with a woman for eight years, spoke with humility and desperation in appealing for medical personnel and supplies to relieve the escalating crisis.

As the crisis began subsiding, Cuomo brashly declared, "God did not do that. Faith did not do that. We brought the number down!" How sad and different from the Psalmist who cried out for God to rescue him in crisis and then declared, "I am poor and in pain; may Your salvation, O God, set me secure on high. I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving" (Ps. 69:29-30).

Time to Get Serious

God is faithful to fulfill His purposes revealed in Scripture. There will be a generation that communicates the gospel of the kingdom to all peoples (Matt. 24:19); experiences the great end-time harvest (Matt. 13:39); is part of "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:27); and will see the actual return of Jesus (Acts 1:11) as He promised to vanquish His enemies, judge all peoples and establish His kingdom here in the "new heaven and a new earth" (Rev. 21:1).

What a day of rejoicing that will be, but we must be engaged in hastening it, as we "consider the goodness and severity of God" (Rom. 11:22).

I'm not sharing "doom and gloom" by alerting us to awaken and avert what might be subsequent shockwaves sent to get the job done. Let's consider some of the scenarios as we purify ourselves, and pray and proclaim truth promoting national repentance, revival in the church and a third Great Awakening.

7 Sobering Scenarios

May we not be like the church at Laodicea, saying, "I am have need of nothing, yet do not realize that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and " (Rev. 3:17, 19 excerpts).

Jesus and the New Testament writers describe in great detail many apocalyptic events on the prophetic calendar not to produce fear, but rather, readiness and repentance. I am not an alarmist or conspiracy theorist. Scripture tells us "there shall come scoffers in the last , all things have continued as they were" (2 Pet. 3:3-4). What follows are very real possibilities that should put the fear of God in us, provoke us to share the gospel and call people (starting with ourselves) to repent.

1. A secondary surge of the coronavirus contagion, this time

worse than the first or an adversary utilizing biological warfare igniting an airborne pathogen outbreak and the “famines and epidemics” Jesus predicted for the end of the age (Matt. 24:7)? Dr. Fauci said recently a second wave of the virus is “inevitable.”

2. A severe stock market crash or global economic collapse (national debt is now a mind-boggling \$24 trillion and configured on a teetering house of cards)? David Stockman, Ronald Reagan’s former budget director, warns, “All hell is about to break loose!”

3. A massive power outage shutting down computers, canceling jobs, hindering human interaction and striking fear into the hearts of citizens? Jesus warned us: “Men fainting from fear and expectation of what is coming on the inhabited earth” (Luke 21:26).

4. War erupting? Possibly on the Korean Peninsula (there never was an end to the war; only an armistice/cease-fire). Or warfare in the Middle East as enemies surround Jerusalem like Jesus foretold (Luke 21:20), with Iran launching a barrage of missiles on Israel, causing catastrophic disruption, especially in the Strait of Hormuz (through which 20% of the total world’s gas supply passes).

5. Massive earthquakes as Jesus for foretold (Matt. 24:7)? Scientist Dr. Lucy Jones delivered this dire warning to the Los Angeles City Council not long ago: “Infrastructure crippled; power grid and communications knocked out; water supply disrupted; 1,800 fatalities; 53,000 injured and 1/2 of the buildings unusable” (this is not the “Big One” coming to San Francisco after their previous one killed over 3,000 people and left 400,000 homeless).

6. The ultimate unimaginable: a nuclear holocaust or the very real, dreaded EMP (electromagnetic pulse) disaster causing devastation by paralyzing America as power lines burn out and

darkness prevails? Scientists describe the situation in different ways, but the synopsis is: cities darkened, food spoils, homes falling silent. Cities collapsing from a crushing attack or severe solar storm.

7. An amalgam of unexpected, swift events exploding in tandem with each other? Maybe another coordinated terrorist attack; outbreak of a new AIDS-like sexual epidemic; assassination triggering political chaos, violence and riots as cities degenerate into centers of marauders and looters.

Can't happen? Ponder three years of explosive economic prosperity pulverized in three weeks plus everything else unthinkable from the "silent enemy" of COVID-19.

Call for Repentance and Readiness

May I be so bold as to offer that God is passionate for His people in America to radically repent and return to our covenantal heritage honoring Jesus Christ as Lord. This can launch the long-awaited Great Awakening, the only hope for our nation and the wonderful end-times harvest of what some prophetic people believe will be a billion saved!

Jesus emphatically pointed out the necessity of alertness and discernment in the face of disasters and calamities. In Luke 12:54-56 He confronted those assessing the weather but not discerning the times. Then people asked Him about a tower crashing and killing 18 people. He took advantage of the opportunity to call people to "repent" or they would "likewise perish" (Luke 13:4-5).

In 2 Chronicles 7:14 God promises to "...hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." We must give equal weight on the conditions for the intervention: "If My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways."

Here's the deal: An exciting end-times vision propels us

forward! Jesus warned of difficult times, “I have told you these things so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). “Therefore watch always and pray that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will happen and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36).

[Editor’s note: Be sure to listen to Larry’s opening podcasts this week with an exclusive interview with Dr. Michael Brown on his new book *When the World Stops* for further insights on this theme!]