

Ezekiel 38:

**“...Every Man's Sword Shall Be
Against His Brother.”**

Brett Blackwell - March 18, 2023

Reprint 5852

February 15, 1916

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER: BITTERNESS AND PASSION INCREASE

In STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. IV., we have clearly pointed out the things now transpiring, and the worse conditions yet to come. We have said in so many words that this great Time of Trouble will manifest fully that the **civilization of our day**, of which we have so greatly boasted, is **merely skin deep--merely a veneer**. Already we have seen manifestations of this in various quarters, and our understanding of the Bible teaching is that these matters, so deplorable, will grow from bad to worse. National animosities will become personal animosities until, as the Bible foretold, there will be no peace to him that goes out, nor to him that comes in, because “every man’s hand will be against his neighbor.” (Eze 38:21.)

Discussion on Ezekiel 38 and R5852

- **Civilizations of our day** will be manifest by the Time of Trouble as “**merely a veneer**”
- We’ve already seen **examples** of this (up to 1916)
- Bible teaching tells us that this will go from **bad to worse**
- **National** animosities will become **personal** animosities
- As a result there will be **no peace**
- ...and **every man’s hand** will be **against his neighbor**

What can we expect, now that it’s 2023?

Discussion on Ezekiel 38 and R5852

- [Ezekiel 38](#) and specifically, [Ezekiel 38:21](#) — “Every Man’s Sword Shall be Against His Brother”
- Ezekiel is challenging **prophecy** to understand for most of us
- A basic understanding of Ezekiel 38 (and other Biblical history and prophecies) should help us to answer our question: *What can we expect, now that it’s 2023?*
- *How should our hearts be prepared?*

Approach

- Consider the “Civilization of Our Day” — up to 1916 **and** 2023
- “Bible teachings” micro view — Ezekiel 38:21 and similar scriptures
- “Bible teachings” macro view — Ezekiel 38, Revelation 16, Jeremiah 30
- Summarize what can be expected
- Thoughts on preparing our hearts

Approach

- **Consider the “Civilization of Our Day” — up to 1916 and 2023**
- “Bible teachings” micro view — Ezekiel 38:21 and similar scriptures
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- Summarize what can be expected
- Thoughts on preparing our hearts

Background — “Civilization of Our Day”

Characteristics of Civilizations

All civilizations have certain characteristics. These include: large population centers; monumental architecture and unique art styles; shared communication strategies; systems for administering territories; a complex division of labor; and the division of people into social and economic classes.

Development of Civilization

Civilizations expand through trade, conflict, and exploration. Usually, all three elements must be present for a civilization to grow and remain stable for a long period of time.

Fall of Civilizations

Many civilizations have flourished and then failed or fell apart. There are many reasons for this, but many historians point to three patterns in the fall of civilizations: internal change, external pressure, and environmental collapse. The fall of civilizations is never the result of a single event or pattern.

“Civilization of Our Day”

Volume IV — pps 15-16

The nations of so-called Christendom have had privileges above all the other nations, in that, to them, as to the Israelites of the previous age, have been committed the oracles of God. As a result of the **enlightening influences of the Word of God**, both directly and indirectly, have come to these nations all **the blessings of civilization**; and the presence in their midst of a few saints (a “little flock”), developed under its influence, has been as “the salt of the earth,” preserving it to some extent from utter moral corruption. And these, by their godly examples, and by their energy in holding forth the Word of life, have been “the light of the world,” showing men the way back to God and righteousness. But only a few in all these favored nations have made proper use of their advantages, which have come to them as an inheritance by reason of their birth in the lands so blessed with the influences of the Word of God, direct and indirect.

SUNSHINE OVER ALL.

"What folly, then," the faithless critic cries,
 With sneering lip and wise, world-knowing eyes,
 "While fort to fort and post to post repeat
 The ceaseless challenge of the war-drum's beat,
 And round the green earth, to the church-bell's chime,
 The morning drum-roll of the camp keeps time,
 To dream of peace amidst a world in arms;
 Of swords to plowshares changed by Scriptural charms;
 Of nations, drunken with the wine of blood,
 Staggering to take the pledge of brotherhood,
 Like tipplers answering Father Mathew's call.

* * * * *

Check Bau or Kaiser with a barricade
 Of 'Olive leaves' and resolutions made;
 Spike guns with pointed Scripture texts, and hope
 To capsize navies with a windy trope;
 Still shall the glory and the pomp of war
 Along their train the shouting millions draw;
 Still dusky labor to the parting brave
 His cap shall doff and beauty's kerchief wave;
 Still shall the bard to valor tune his song;
 Still hero-worship kneel before the strong;
 Rosy and sleek, the sable-gowned divine,
 O'er his third bottle of suggestive wine,
 To plumed and sworded auditors shall prove
 Their trade accordant with the law of love;
 And Church for State, and State for Church shall fight,
 And both agree that might alone is right."

Despite the sneers like these, O faithful few,
 Who dare to hold God's Word and witness true,
 Whose clear-eyed faith transcends our evil time,
 And o'er the present wilderness of crime
 Sees the calm future with its robes of green,
 Its fleece-flecked mountains, and soft streams between,
 Still keep the track which duty bids ye tread,
 Though worldly wisdom shake the cautious head.
 No truth from heaven descends upon our sphere
 Without the greeting of the skeptic's sneer:
 Denied, and mocked at, till its blessings fall
 Common as dew and sunshine over all.

—Whittier.

CHAPTER III.

THE BIBLE AS A DIVINE REVELATION VIEWED
IN THE LIGHT OF REASON.

THE CLAIMS OF THE BIBLE AND ITS SURFACE EVIDENCE OF CREDIBILITY.—ITS ANTIQUITY AND PRESERVATION.—ITS MORAL INFLUENCE.—MOTIVES OF THE WRITERS.—GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE WRITINGS.—THE BOOKS OF MOSES.—THE LAW OF MOSES.—PECULIARITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT INSTITUTED BY MOSES.—IT WAS NOT A SYSTEM OF PRIESTCRAFT.—INSTRUCTIONS TO CIVIL RULERS.—RICH AND POOR ON A COMMON LEVEL BEFORE THE LAW.—SAFE-GUARDS AGAINST TAMPERING WITH THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE.—THE PRIESTHOOD NOT A FAVORED CLASS, HOW SUPPORTED, ETC.—OPPRESSION OF FOREIGNERS, WIDOWS, ORPHANS AND SERVANTS GUARDED AGAINST.—THE PROPHETS OF THE BIBLE.—IS THERE A COMMON BOND OF UNION BETWEEN THE LAW, THE PROPHETS AND THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS?—MIRACLES NOT UNREASONABLE.—THE REASONABLE CONCLUSION.

THE Bible is the torch of civilization and liberty. Its influence for good in society has been recognized by the greatest statesmen, even though they for the most part have looked at it through the various glasses of conflicting creeds, which, while upholding the Bible, grievously misrepresent its teachings. The grand old book is unintentionally but woefully misrepresented by its friends, many of whom would lay down life on its behalf; and yet they do it more vital injury than its foes, by claiming its support to their long-revered misconceptions of its truth, received through the traditions of their fathers. Would that such would awake, re-examine their oracle, and put to confusion its enemies by disarming them of their weapons!

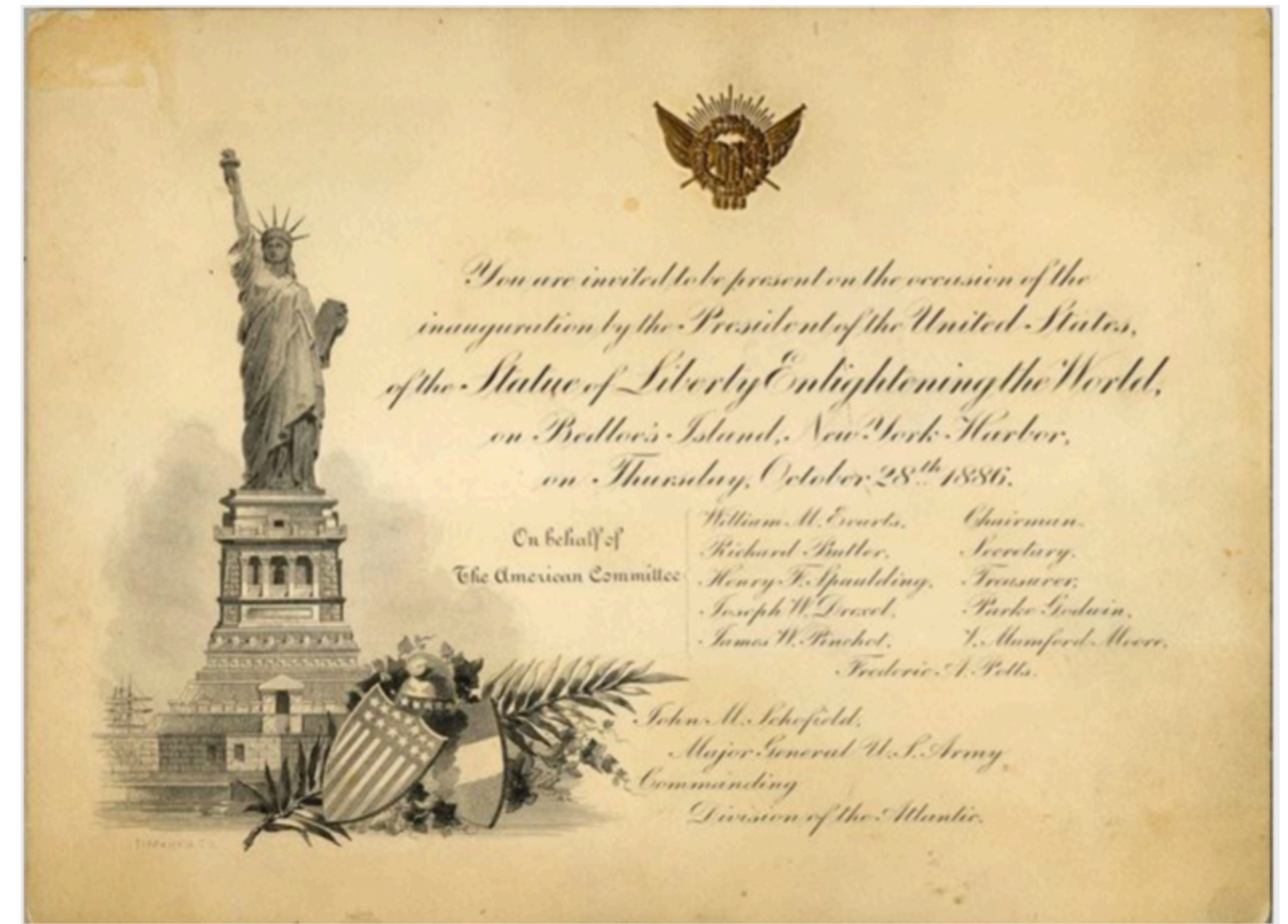
Since the light of nature leads us to expect a fuller revelation of God than that which nature supplies, the reasonable, thinking mind will be prepared to examine the claims of anything purporting to be a divine revelation, which

"The Bible is
 the torch of
 civilization and
 liberty."

— Charles Taze Russell, 1886

“Civilization of Our Day”

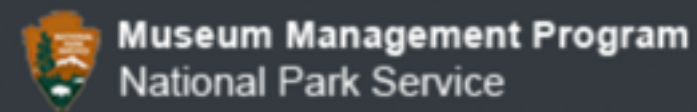
Bartholdi's **Statue of Liberty**
Enlightening the World is true to the facts,
but whatever blessing there is in the light
which shines from Liberty's torch is the
light of the Gospel. NS666:1



There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.

— *John 1:9*

“Civilization of Our Day”

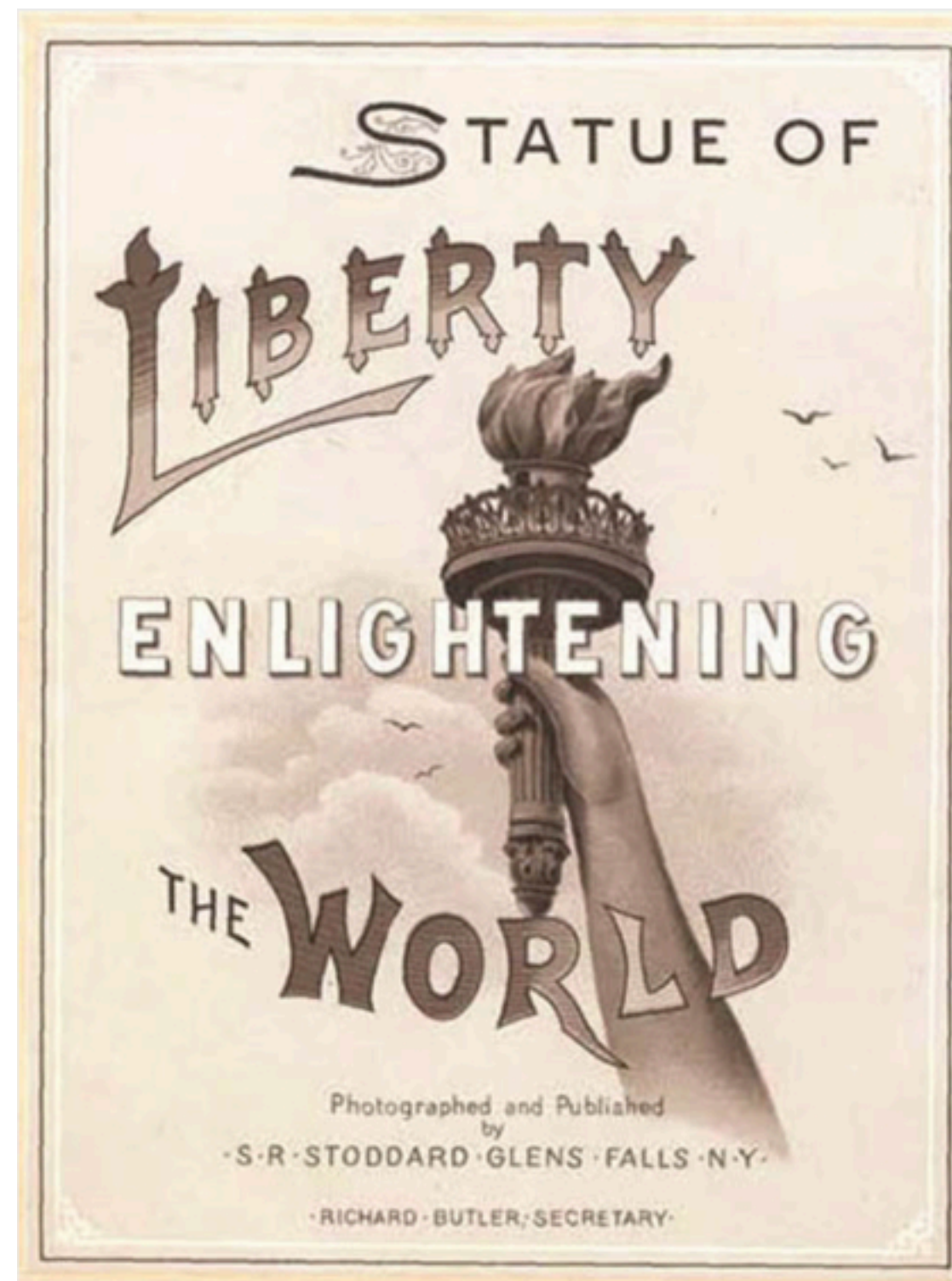


Guidebook

S. R. Stockard, publisher/photographer;
Louis Glaser, lithographer
ca. 1886 – 1890

This guidebook, another souvenir from the day, depicts the experience visitors could expect during a visit to the Statue, including a view of the interior stairway.

Paper, ink. L 16.8, W 13.2 cm.
Statue of Liberty National Monument,
STLI 31



IT IS PROPER that the torch of the Bartholdi statue should *not* be lighted until this country becomes a free one in reality. "Liberty enlightening the world," indeed! the expression makes us sick. This Government is a howling farce. It can not or rather *does not* protect its citizens within its *own* borders. Shove the Bartholdi statue, torch and all, into the ocean until the "liberty" of this country is such as to make it possible for an inoffensive and industrious colored man in the South to earn a respectable living for himself and family, without being ku-kluxed, perhaps murdered, his daughter and wife outraged, and his property destroyed. The idea of the "liberty" of this country, "enlightening the world," or even Patagonia, is ridiculous in the extreme.

Newspaper Clipping

Cleveland Gazette
November 27, 1886

Excerpt from the November 27, 1886 edition of the African American-owned Cleveland Gazette.

‘Shove the Bartholdi statue, torch and all, into the ocean until the “liberty” of this country is such as to make it possible for an inoffensive and industrious covered man in the South to earn a respectable living for himself and family, without being ku-kluxed, perhaps murdered, his daughter and wife outraged, and his property destroyed.’

“Civilization of Our Day”

STUDY VII

THE NATIONS ASSEMBLED AND THE PREPARATION OF THE ELEMENTS FOR THE GREAT FIRE OF GOD'S INDIGNATION

How and Why the **Nations are Assembled**—The **Social** Elements Preparing for the Fire—The Heaping of Treasures—The Increase of **Poverty**—**Social Friction** Nearing Combustion—A Word from the President of the American Federation of **Labor**—The **Rich** sometimes too Severely Condemned—**Selfishness and Liberty in Combination**—Independence as Viewed by the Rich and by the Poor—**Why Present Conditions Cannot Continue**—**Machinery** an Important Factor in Preparing for the Great Fire—Female Competition—Labor's View of the Situation, Reasonable and Unreasonable—The **Law of Supply and Demand** Inexorable upon all—The Outlook for **Foreign** Industrial Competition appalling—Mr. Justin McCarthy's Fears for England—Kier Hardie, M.P., on the Labor Outlook in England—Hon. Jos. Chamberlain's Prophetic Words to British Workmen—National Aggression as Related to Industrial Interests—Herr Liebknecht on the Social and Industrial War in Germany—Resolutions of the International Trades Union Congress—**Giants in These Days**—List of Trusts and Combines—Barbaric Slavery vs. Civilized Bondage—The Masses Between the Upper and Nether Millstones—**The Conditions Universal and Beyond Human Power to Regulate.**

“Civilization of Our Day”

The Social Elements Preparing for the Fire (Volume IV - p272-3)

Looking about us we see the “elements” preparing for the fire of this day--the fire of God's wrath. Selfishness, knowledge, wealth, ambition, hope, discontent, fear and despair are the ingredients whose friction will shortly set aflame the angry passions of the world and cause its various social “elements” to melt in the fervent heat. Looking out over the world, note what changes have taken place in respect to these passions during the past century, and especially during the past forty years.

The satisfied contentment of the past is gone from all classes--rich and poor, male and female, educated and ignorant. All are dissatisfied. All are selfishly and increasingly grasping for “rights” or bemoaning “wrongs.” True, there are wrongs, grievous wrongs, which should be righted, and rights that should be enjoyed and respected; but the tendency of our time, with its increase of knowledge and independence, is to look only at the side of questions closest to self-interest, and to fail to appreciate the opposite side. The effect foretold by the prophets will be ultimately to set every man's hand against his neighbor, which will be the immediate cause of the great final catastrophe.

“Civilization of Our Day”

STUDY VIII **THE CRIES OF THE REAPERS**

The Conservative Element of Society--Peasants, Farmers--New Conditions in Christendom--Agrarian Agitation--Its Causes--Gold and Silver Standards are Factors--The Scripture Prediction Fulfilling-- These Things Related to the Battle of The Great Day.

“Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath.” Zeph. 1:18

Pages 385-412

“Civilization of Our Day”

STUDY IX

THE CONFLICT IRREPRESSIBLE

THE TESTIMONY OF THE WORLDLY-WISE

General Intelligence a New Factor in all Reckonings—Senator Ingall's Views—Views of Rev. Lyman Abbott—Views of Bishop Newman (M.E.)—Views of a Noted Jurist—Views of Col. Robert Ingersoll—Hon. J. L. Thomas on Labor Legislation—Wendell Phillips' View—Historian Macaulay's Prediction—Hon. Chauncey Depew's Hopes—Bishop Worthington (P.E.) Interviewed—W. J. Bryan's Reply—An English View—Edward Bellamy's Statement of the situation—Rev. J. T. McGlynn's Opinion—Prof. Graham's Outlook—Views of a Justice of the Supreme Court—A French View, a "Social Melee.”

Pages 413-468

“Civilization of Our Day”

STUDY X

PROPOSED REMEDIES--SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL

Prohibition and Female Suffrage--Free Silver and Protective Tariff-- "Communism"--"They Had All Things in Common"--"Anarchism"--"Socialism" or "Collectivism"--Babbitt on Social Upbuilding--Herbert Spencer on Socialism--Examples of Two Socialist Communities--"Nationalism" --General Mechanical Education as a Remedy--The "Single Tax" Remedy--Henry George's Answer to Pope Leo XIII on Labor--Dr. Lyman Abbott on the Situation--An M. E. Bishop's Suggestions--Other Hopes and Fears--The Only Hope--"That Blessed Hope"--The Attitude Proper for God's People Who See These Things--In the World but Not of It.

Pages 469-526

“Civilization of Our Day”

STUDY XI

THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON

The Approaching Trouble Variouslly Symbolized by the Prophets--Typified in Israel's Fall, A.D. 70, and in the French Revolution--Its General Character and Extent--The Lord's Great Army--"The Worst of the Heathen"--"The Time of Jacob's Trouble"--His Deliverance--The Discomfiture of Gog and Magog.

Pages 527-562

Up to 1916

- Capital/Labor Struggle
- Slavery/Black Suffrage
- Kings (Worldwide)
- Women's Suffrage
- Rising Socialism/Facism
- Religious Freedom/Revival
- Emergent 'Higher Criticism' & Evolution Theory (No God)
- Underground Deviance
- Opportunity
- Depression/Bank Failures
- Radio, Telegraph
- World Population: ~1.6B (1900)

National Interest

20th Century

- Workers' Rights/3rd World Mfg
- Civil Rights/Equality
- Experimental Regimes/Revolution
- Women's Rights
- Revolution
- Church/State/Family Values
- Scientific Expansion/Creation Contention
- Emergent Gay Visibility/Rights
- Social Mobility
- Depression/Boom Cycles
- Household Phone, Television
- World Population: 3.7B (1970)

**National Interest
Individual Expression**

2023

- Off-shoring/Globalism
- Social Justice/Equity
- Autocracies/Democracies
- Equality/Equity
- Extremism
- Govt/Education - Remove God
- Convergence in Science/Creation (God Denial/God Exists?)
- LGBTQIA+ Support
- Instant Influencer
- Financial Extremes
- Always Connected, AI/ML
- World Population: 7.95B (2020)

Individual Liberty

Up to 1916

20th Century

2023

- Capital/Labor Struggle
- Slavery/Suffrage
- Kings/Emperors
- Women's Suffrage
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- Civil Rights/Equality
- Experimental Regimes/Revolution
- Women's Rights
- Social Revolution
- Gay/Trans Rights
- Social Mobility
- Depression/Boom Cycles
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- Off-shoring/Globalism
- Social Justice
- AI/Robotics
- Terrorism
- Govt Education - Remove God
- Convergence in Science/Creation (God Exists?)
- LGBTQIA+ Support
- Influencer/Cancel Culture
- World Population: 8B (2020)

Stability of Civilization

Knowledge & Liberty

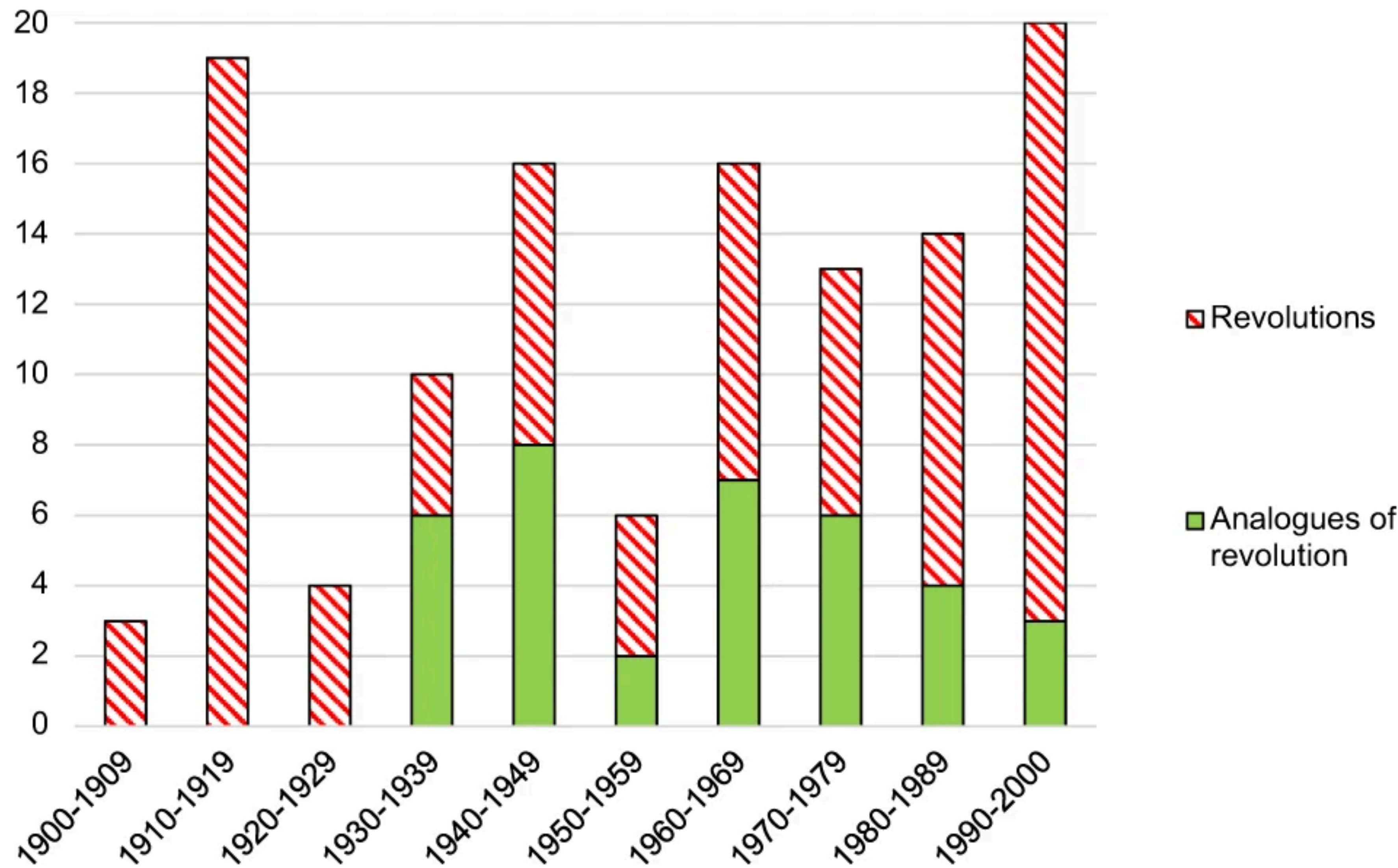
under Selfishness

National Animosities

Personal Animosities

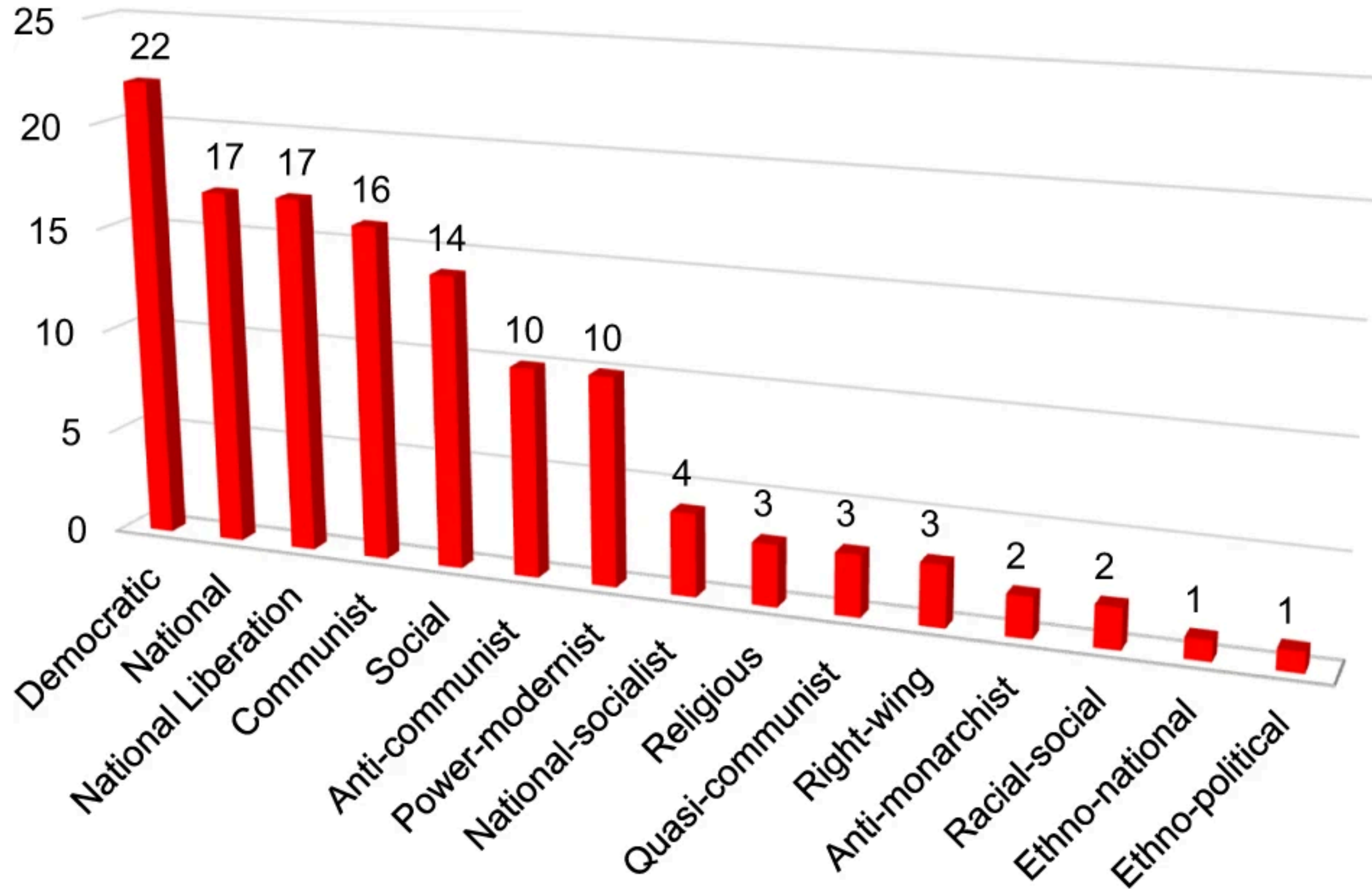
Number of the 20th Century Revolutionary Events Started per Decade

From: [20th Century revolutions: characteristics, types, and waves](#) [nature.com](#)



Distribution of the 20th Century Revolutions by Type

From: [20th Century revolutions: characteristics, types, and waves](#) [nature.com](#)



Civilization's Veneer

Up to 1916

2023

Health of & Respect for:

- Governmental Authority
- Class System
- Social Norms & Morals
- Generational Traditions
- Monarchy/Constitutional/
Parliamentary Law
- Religion-based Values & Morals
- Parental Honor
- Financial System
- Human Life

**At Risk!
Some Respect**

**Fractured!
Eroded**

GUN VIOLENCE ARCHIVE 2023

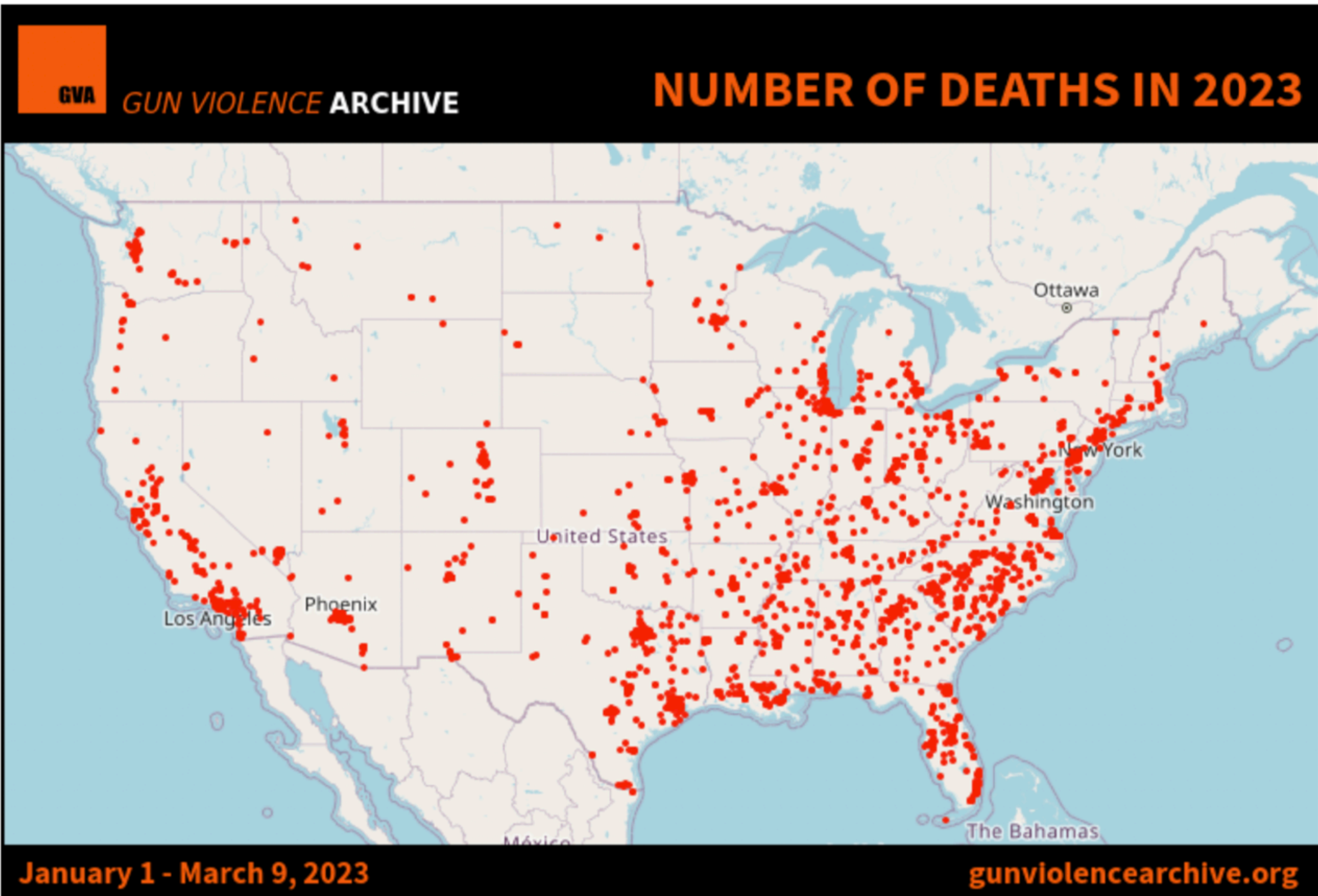
Evidence Based Research - since 2013

PUBLISHED DATE: March 15, 2023

Total Number of GV Deaths - ALL Causes ⁴		8,517
Homicide/Murder/Unintentional/DGU ¹		3,633
Suicide ³		4,884
Total Number of Injuries ¹		6,389
Mass Shootings ²		112
Mass Murders ²		11
Number of Children (age 0-11) ¹	Killed	48
	Injured	114
Number of Teens (age 12-17) ¹	Killed	288
	Injured	727
Officer Involved Incident ¹	Killed	11
Officer Killed or Injured	Injured	78
Officer Involved Incident ¹	Killed	276
Subject-Suspect Killed or Injured	Injured	167
Defensive Use ²		215
Unintentional Shooting ²		307
Murder/Suicides Incidents ²		148

Gun violence and crime incidents are collected/validated from 7,500 sources daily - Incident Reports and their source data are found at the gunviolencearchive.org website.

Civilization's Veneer



GUN VIOLENCE ARCHIVE 2023

Evidence Based Research - since 2013

PUBLISHED DATE: March 15, 2023

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	Injured	114
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--	--------	-----

	Injured	727
--	---------	-----

Officer Involved Incident ¹	Killed	11
--	--------	----

Officer Killed or Injured	Injured	78
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Officer Involved Incident ¹	Killed	276
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Subject-Suspect Killed or Injured	Injured	167
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Defensive Use ²	215
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Unintentional Shooting ²	307
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Murder/Suicides Incidents ²	148
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Gun violence and crime incidents are collected/validated from 7,500 sources daily – Incident Reports and their source data are found at the gunviolencearchive.org website.

GUN VIOLENCE ARCHIVE 2023

Evidence Based Research - since 2013

PUBLISHED DATE: March 17, 2023

Total Number of GV Deaths - ALL Causes ⁴	8,729
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Homicide/Murder/Unintentional/DGU ¹	3,713
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Suicide ³	5,016
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Total Number of Injuries ¹	6,532
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Mass Shootings ²	113
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Mass Murders ²	11
---------------------------	----

Number of Children (age 0-11) ¹	Killed	48
--	--------	----

	Injured	116
--	---------	-----

Number of Teens (age 12-17) ¹	Killed	300
--	--------	-----

	Injured	734
--	---------	-----

Officer Involved Incident ¹	Killed	11
--	--------	----

Officer Killed or Injured	Injured	79
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Officer Involved Incident ¹	Killed	280
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Subject-Suspect Killed or Injured	Injured	171
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Defensive Use ²	219
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Unintentional Shooting ²	311
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Murder/Suicides Incidents ²	150
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Gun violence and crime incidents are collected/validated from 7,500 sources daily – Incident Reports and their source data are found at the gunviolencearchive.org website.

“In periods of decivilization, ordinary people fail to find common ground with one another and lose faith in institutions and elected leaders. Shared knowledge erodes, and bonds fray across society. Some people inevitably decide to act with violence. As violence increases, so does distrust in institutions and leaders, and around and around it goes. The process is not inevitable—it can be held in check—but if a period of bloodshed is sustained for long enough, there is no shortcut back to normal. And signs of decivilization are visible now.”

— *Adrienne LaFrance*

Anarchy

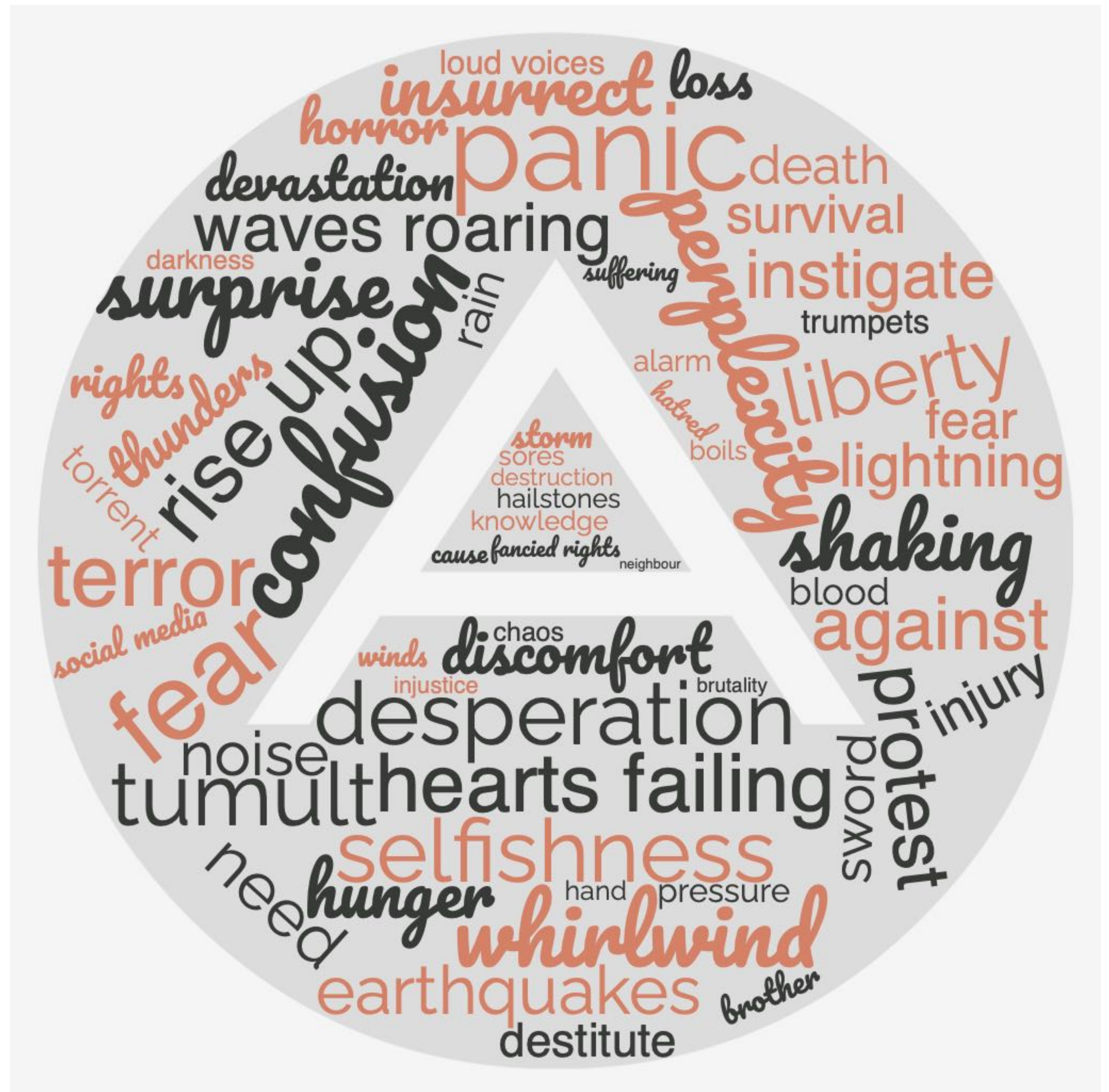
Up to 1916:

Br. Russell mentions the word “Anarchy” well over 500 times in his writings.

Overland Monthly, p. 419

All these nations will become more and more weakened, revolution everywhere will follow, and they will be crumbled into dust. Every one of them will pass away. Not a kingdom will be left in all Europe. Then what will come? Anarchy, naturally enough.

...all claim that they are fighting for the good of the human race, for the advancement of progress and civilization.



APRIL 2023
THEATLANTIC.COM

THE NEW ANARCHY

America faces a type of extremist violence it does not know how to stop

By Adrienne LaFrance

A

The Atlantic
EST. 1857

Mark Leibovich
on Arnold
Schwarzenegger

Amy Weiss-Meyer
on Judy Blume

Patricia Lockwood
on Virginia Woolf

George Packer
on forbidden words

Jennifer Senior
on the weirdness of aging

Nicole Chung
on an adoption experiment

Plus: Fiction by Mona Simpson

In November, the Department of Homeland Security issued a bulletin warning that “the United States remains in a heightened threat environment” due to individuals and small groups with a range of “violent extremist ideologies.” It warned of potential attacks against a long list of places and people: “public gatherings, faith-based institutions, the LGBTQI+ community, schools, racial and religious minorities, government facilities and personnel, U.S. critical infrastructure, the media, and perceived ideological opponents.”

“Civilization of Our Day”

Three realities mark the current era of political violence in America as different from what has come before, and make dealing with it much harder. The first—obvious—is the universal access to weaponry, including military-grade weapons.

Second, today’s information environment is simultaneously more sophisticated and more fragmented than ever before... Hateful ideas... are not only easy to find online; they’re actively amplified by social platforms...

The third new reality goes to the core of American self-governance: people refusing to accept the outcome of elections, with national leaders fueling the skepticism and leveraging it for their own ends. In periods of decivilization, violence often becomes part of a governing strategy.

— *Adrienne LaFrance*

“Civilization of Our Day”

Sermon Book, p. 385,6 — All Are Debtors to Grace Divine

In other words, they [Christendom] have developed along the lines of love and liberty, while they have not developed along the lines of consecration and realization of responsibility to God. As a consequence we are rapidly approaching a time when these poorly balanced conditions will mean the wreck of our present civilization. Growth in **liberty**, independence, etc., in connection with growth in **selfishness**, is liberty working out a condition of things which the Scriptures portray in respect to the closing of this age, in which—throughout Christendom especially—**every man’s hand will be against his neighbors**. Selfishness gone to seed will bring forth anarchy, the overthrow of all human government and restraints, the precipitation of the most awful trouble the world has ever known.

Approach

- Consider the “Civilization of Our Day” — up to 1916 and 2023
- **“Bible teachings” micro view — Ezekiel 38:21 and similar scriptures**
- “Bible teachings” macro view — Ezekiel 38, Revelation 16, Jeremiah 30
- Summarize what can be expected
- Thoughts on preparing our hearts

Ezekiel 38:21 and Similar Scriptures

“And I shall call for a sword against him on all My mountains,” declares the Lord GOD. “Every man’s sword will be against his brother.”

— *Ezekiel 38:21*

You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD.

—Leviticus 19:18

Also let none of you devise evil in your heart against another...

—Zechariah 8:17

Ezekiel 38:21 and Similar Scriptures

And he will be a wild man; **his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him**; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

— *Genesis 16:12*

“You keep going backward. So **I will stretch out My hand against you and destroy you; I am tired of relenting!**”

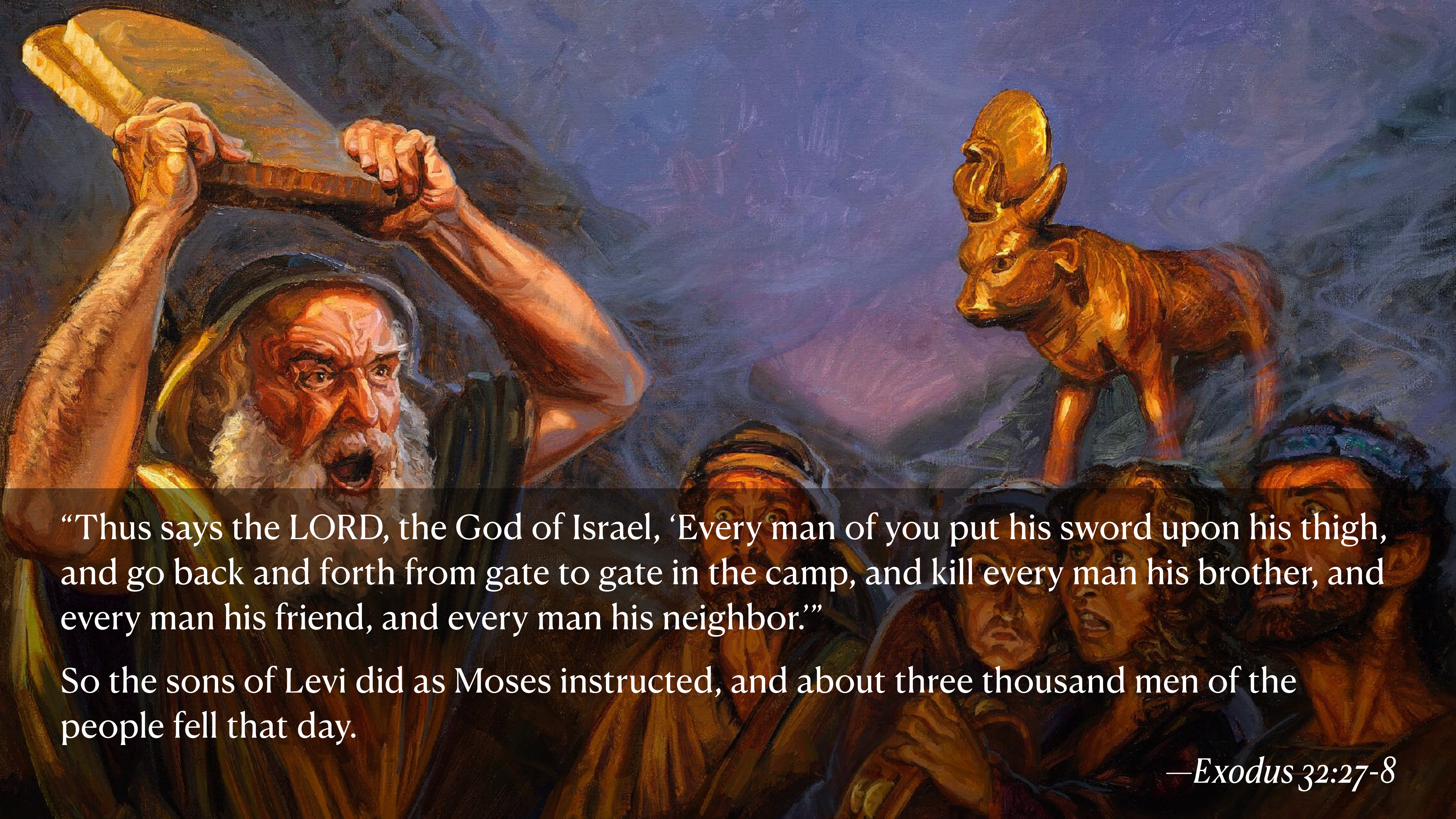
— *Jeremiah 15:6*

...for him who went out or came in there was no peace because of his enemies,
and **I set all men one against another.**

— *Zechariah 8:10*

Ezekiel 38:21 and Similar Scriptures

- Israel — aftermath of the golden calf (Exodus 32:27,28)
- Gideon — defeating the Midianites (Judges 7:22)
- Jonathan — surprising the Philistines (1 Samuel 14:6,13-15)
- Benjamites — unwilling to give up criminal (Judges 18)
- Reforms of Asa — vexations, adversity, no peace to Judah's enemies (2 Chron 15:4-7)
- Jehoshaphat — defeat of Moab, Ammon and Mount Seir (2 Chron 20)
- Judgment against Israel (Isaiah 9)
- Prophecy against Egypt (Isaiah 19)
- End time prophecies in Zechariah 8, 11, 14



“Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Every man of you put his sword upon his thigh, and go back and forth from gate to gate in the camp, and kill every man his brother, and every man his friend, and every man his neighbor.’”

So the sons of Levi did as Moses instructed, and about three thousand men of the people fell that day.

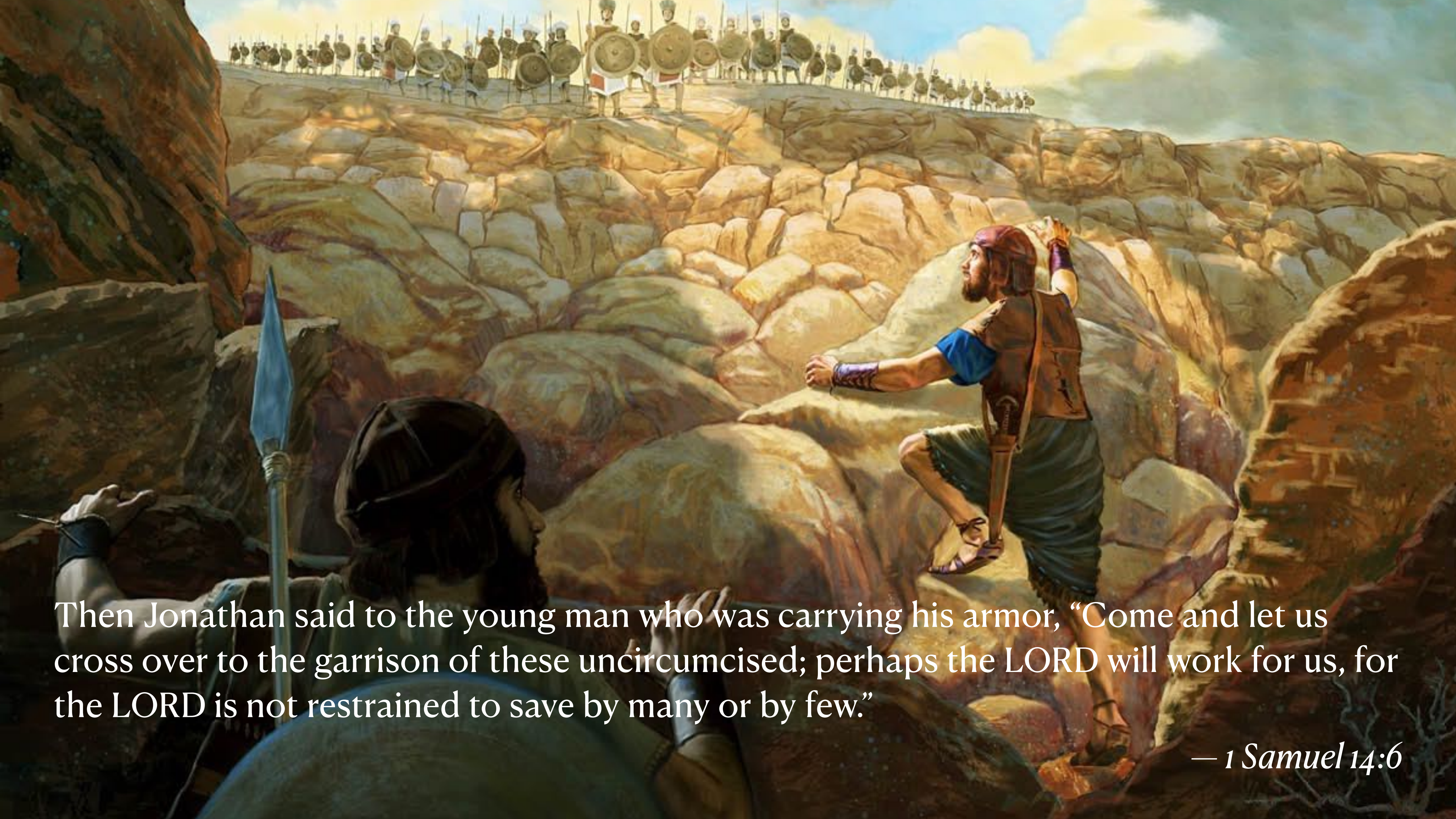
—*Exodus 32:27-8*

Gideon & the Battle of Midian

When they blew 300 trumpets, the
LORD set the sword of one against
another even throughout the
whole army...

—*Judges 7:22*





Then Jonathan said to the young man who was carrying his armor, “Come and let us cross over to the garrison of these uncircumcised; perhaps the LORD will work for us, for the LORD is not restrained to save by many or by few.”

— *1 Samuel 14:6*



Then Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet, with his armor bearer behind him; and they fell before Jonathan, and his armor bearer put some to death after him.

That first slaughter which Jonathan and his armor bearer made was about twenty men within about half a furrow in an acre of land.

And there was a trembling in the camp, in the field, and among all the people. Even the garrison and the raiders trembled, and the earth quaked so that it became a great trembling.

Now Saul's watchmen in Gibeah of Benjamin looked, and behold, the multitude melted away; and they went here and there.

Then Saul and all the people who were with him rallied and came to the battle; and behold, every man's sword was against his fellow, and there was very great confusion.

— *Samuel 14:13-16, 20*

Ezekiel 38:21 and Similar Scriptures

Lessons from the examples

- Obedience to God's commandments — powerful lesson to take each other's lives
- Lord let Gideon win the battle with a blast, shout, torches and few men — and plenty of confidence-building providence in advance — 300 vs. 135,000!
- Great faith — Lord is not restrained by too many or too few — “trembling” fear grew into very great confusion of the Philistines

Ezekiel 38:21 and Similar Scriptures

Practical Examples of Sword or Hand Against Brother

- What Esau wanted to do to Jacob (literal brother); what Jacob's sons almost did to Joseph
- Civil War (countrymen)
- Revolution (local to country-wide)
- Insurrection (countrymen)
- Domestic terrorism (local to country-wide)
- Honor killings
- Regicide (several Scriptural examples of many)
 - Israel: Baasha slew Nadab, son of Jeroboam, and all of Jeroboam's kin
 - Israel: Zimri slew Elah, son of Baasha, and all of Baasha's kin
 - Assyria: Sennacherib's sons, in Nineveh

“Every Man’s Hand Against His Neighbor”

What this might feel like...

“...blood grows hot, and blood is spilled. Thought is forced from old channels into confusion. Deception breeds and thrives. Confidence dies, and universal suspicion reigns. Each man feels an impulse to kill his neighbor, lest he be first killed by him. Revenge and retaliation follow. And all this, as before said, may be among honest men only. But this is not all. Every foul bird comes abroad, and every dirty reptile rises up. These add crime to confusion.”

—*Abraham Lincoln*
October 5, 1863

Ezekiel 38:21 and Similar Scriptures

And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: every man's sword shall be against his brother.

And I will plead against him with **pestilence and with blood**; and I will **rain** upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an **overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone**.

Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and **I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the LORD**.

— *Ezekiel 38:21-23*

Ezekiel 38:21 and Similar Scriptures

It will come about in that day that a great panic from the LORD will fall on them; and they will seize one another's hand, and the hand of one will be lifted against the hand of another.

—Zechariah 14:13 (NASB)

Approach

- Consider the “Civilization of Our Day” — up to 1916 and 2023
- “Bible teachings” micro view — Ezekiel 38:21 and similar scriptures
- **“Bible teachings” macro view — Ezekiel 38, Revelation 16, Jeremiah 30**
- Summarize what can be expected
- Thoughts on preparing our hearts

Ezekiel 38, Revelation 16, Jeremiah 30

Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.

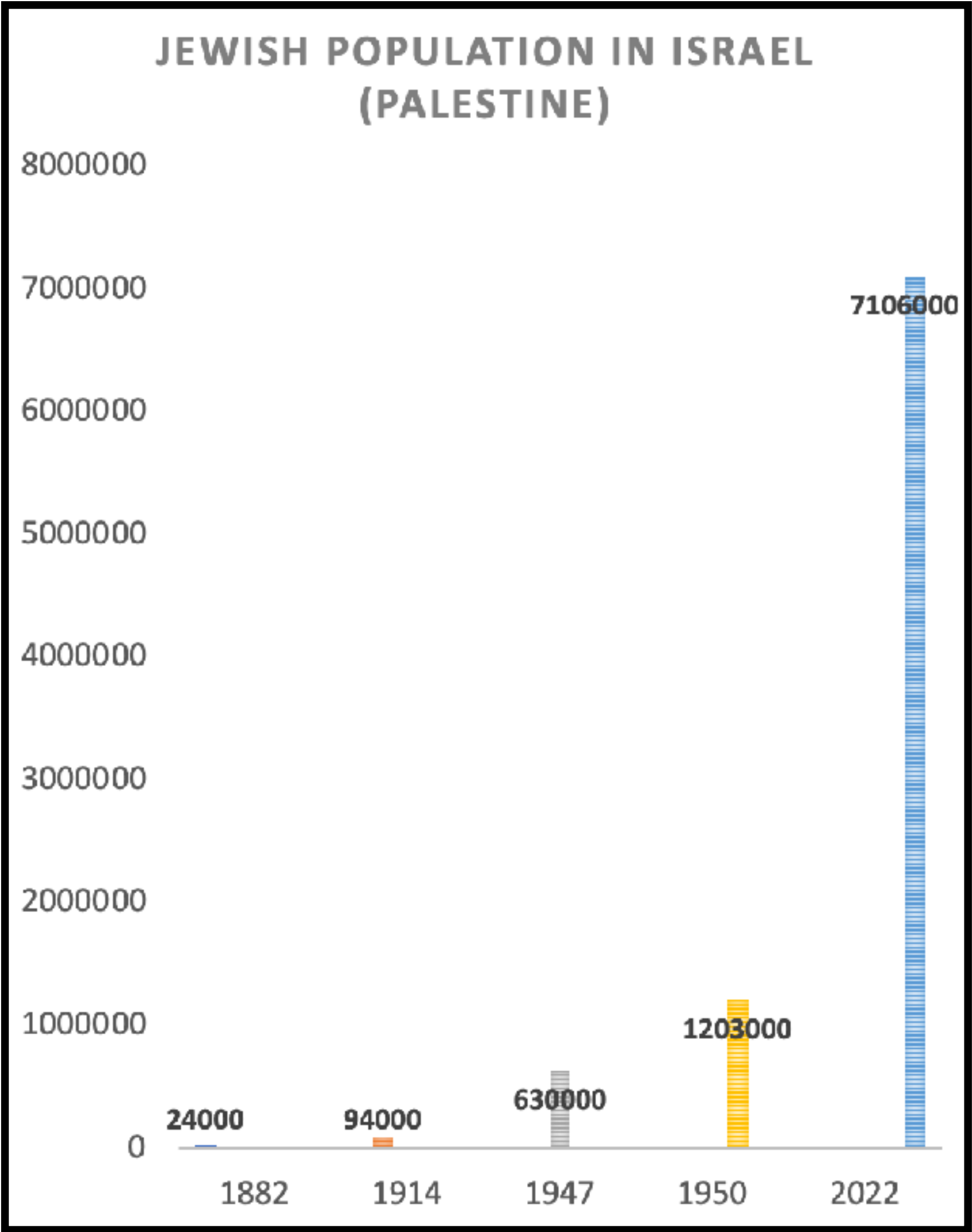
—*Nahum 1:6*

Ezekiel 38

- LORD is against you, Gog (from the land of Magog) who is the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal (3)
- LORD will direct you (hook in the jaw, like a bridle) and bring you forth with all of your offensive and defensive weapons (4)
- Persia, Ethiopia and Put will join you with their weapons (5)
- Gomer and his tribes, and the House of Togarmah and all his tribes — many will be with you (6)
- Prepare yourself and get them all ready (7)
- After many days, in latter years you will come into land restored from sword (Israel), whose people are living securely (8)
- You will come up like a storm, like a cloud, with all your troops and peoples (9)
- It will be your evil plan (Gog's) to go to unwalled villages at the center of world who have cattle and goods, to take a spoil and a prey (10-12)
- Sheba, Dedan, Tarshish will question your intentions (13)
- Son of Man prophesies to Gog, indicating he has returned to earth's atmosphere (2,14)
- You (Gog) will come from the north on horses, a great assembly, like a cloud to cover the land (15-16)
- God asks, "Are you the one that was prophesied as coming against Israel?" (17)
- When Gog comes against land of Israel, God's fury will mount in his anger (18)
- God declares great earthquake in Israel, fishes, birds, beasts, all creeping things, all men shaken; mountains, steep places, walls thrown down (19,20)
- God will call for a sword against him, then every man's sword will be against his brother (21)
- God will judge him with pestilence, blood, rains: torrents, hail, fire & brimstone (22)
- God will be magnified and many nations recognize Him (23)

After many days you will be summoned; in the latter years you will come into the land that is restored from the sword, *whose inhabitants* have been gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel which had been a continual waste; but its people were brought out from the nations, and they are living securely, all of them. — *Ezekiel 38:8*

Year	Jews (core population)	Non- Jews	Total Population	% Jewish
1882	24,000	276,000	300,000	8.0%
1914	94,000	595,000	689,000	13.6%
1946	543,000	1,267,037	1,810,037	30.0%
1947	630,000	1,324,000	1,970,000	32.0%
1948	716,700	156,000^	872,700	82.1%
1950	1,203,000	167,100	1,370,100	87.8%
2020	6,870,000	2,421,000	9,291,000	73.9%
2021	6,998,000	2,452,000	9,450,000	74.1%
2022*	7,106,000	2,550,000	9,656,000	73.6%



^ State of Israel formed

* Dec 29, 2022

Nations of Ezekiel 38

Verses 3, 5, 6, 13

“young lions thereof”



⊗ = Israel

- No descendants from Shem, other than Israel, in Ezekiel 38 (see Genesis 10)
- Yellow lines show likely **partial** migrations based on historical, DNA, linguistic and other studies (Josephus puts Meschech, Tubal, Gomer and the House of Togarmah in Turkey)

China and Iran Play Interesting Role

AP

U.S. News World News Politics Sports Entertainment Business Technology Health Science Oddities Lifestyle PI

China, Russia, Iran hold joint naval drills in Gulf of Oman

March 15, 2023



FILE - In this file photo provided by the Iranian Army, warships sail in the Sea of Oman during the second day of joint Iran, Russia and China naval war games on Dec. 28 2019. Naval forces from China, Iran and Russia – all countries at varying degrees of odds with the United States – are staging joint drills in the Gulf of Oman this week, China's Defense Ministry has announced. Other countries are also taking part in the "Security Bond-2023" exercises, the ministry said Tuesday, March 14, 2023, without giving details. (Iranian Army via AP, File)



WSJ NEWS EXCLUSIVE

Iran Agrees to Stop Arming Houthis in Yemen as Part of Pact With Saudi Arabia

Yemen war is key test for China-brokered deal to restore relations between the regional rivals

- Treaty negotiated by China between Saudi Arabia and Iran (mid-March 2023)
- Joint Military Exercises between China, Russia, Iran (pre-Ukraine war & March 2023)
- China - U.S. Relations at Critical Stage (March 2023 drone incident)
- China - Russia Relations Are Warm (talk of China supplying lethal aid, March 2023)

China on Twitter:

President Xi will be in Moscow
meeting with Vladimir Putin,
March 20-22, 2023

Xi to Visit Russia For First Time Since Putin's Invasion of Ukraine

By Bloomberg News, March 17, 2023, 3:11 AM EDT, updated at March 17, 2023, 5:11 AM EDT



talks at a leader level with China since the war broke out, while also urging Beijing to take a more critical stance against Russia.



Hua Chunying 华春莹 

@SpokespersonCHN · [Follow](#)

China government official



This will be a trip for friendship and peace. On the basis of no-alliance, no-confrontation and no-targeting of any third party, China and Russia have been promoting greater democracy in international relations.

2:18 AM · Mar 17, 2023



[Read the full conversation on Twitter](#)



233



Reply



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[Read 83 replies](#)

The Kremlin confirmed the state visit, saying it was at Putin's invitation. The two leaders

Revelation 16 and Jeremiah 30

Revelation 16 - Plagues in Vials

- Five vials are poured out, affecting Christendom (2-11)
- Sixth vial, unclean spirits, note Returned Lord is present, speaks to Church (14,15)
- Seventh vial, great **earthquake** splits Babylon into 3 parts (18,19)
- Islands and mountains flee, not found (20)
- Hail falls on men, still blaspheming (21)

Jeremiah 30

- Cause them to **return to the land** give to their fathers (3)
- Time of Jacob's trouble; he will be saved out of it (7)
- God makes an end of nations, but will not make a full "end of thee" (11)
- Lovers have forgotten thee (14)
- They that spoil and prey on thee will become spoil and prey (16)
- Healing of wounds, voice of thanksgiving (17,19)
- Whirlwind pains head of wicked (23)

Ezekiel 38, Revelation 16, Jeremiah 30

Two Earthquakes?

- “Great earthquake in the land of Israel” — Ezekiel 38:19
- “Great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be in the earth” — Revelation 16:18

Two Phases of Anarchy:

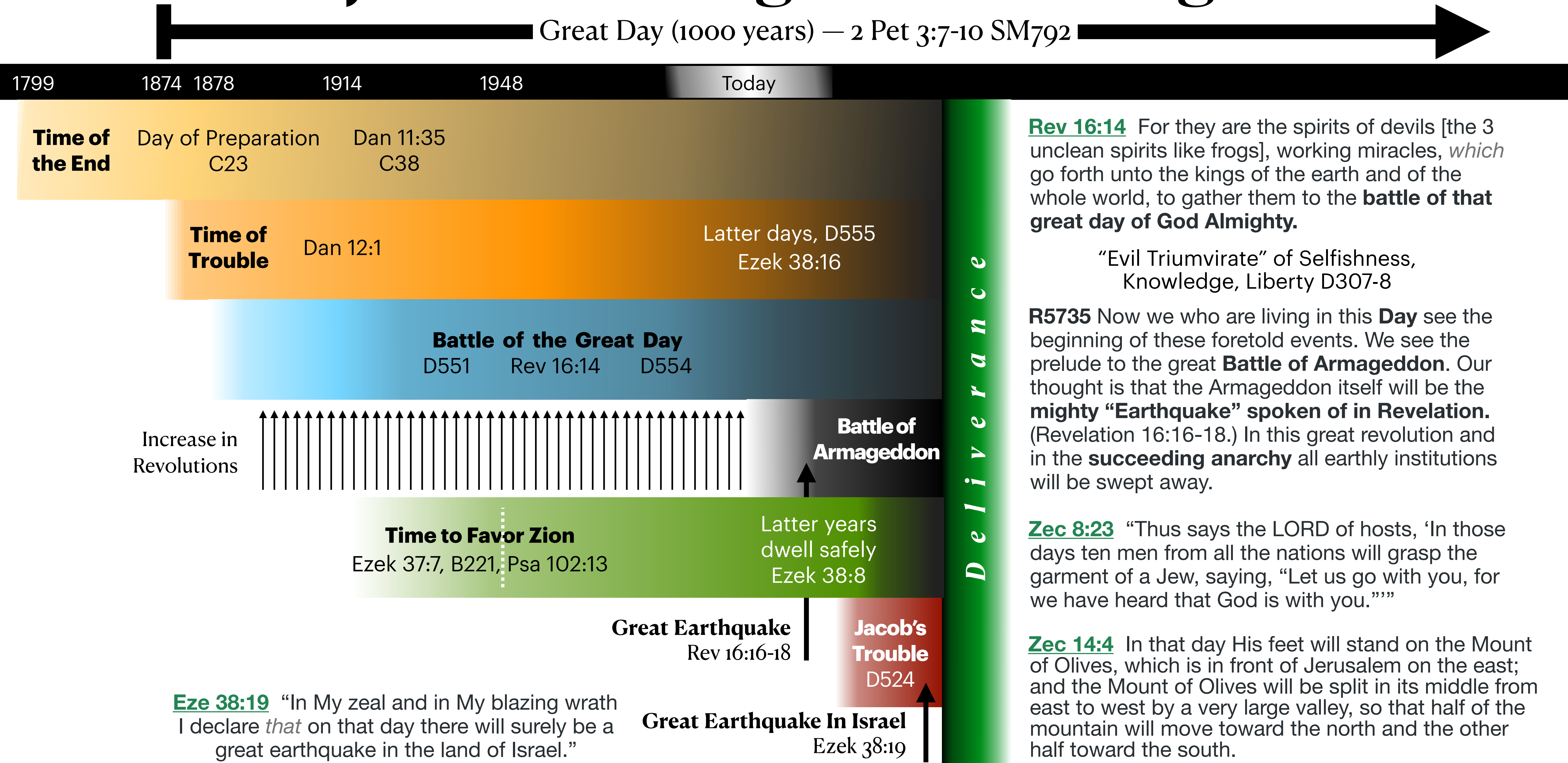
- Universal Anarchy (Ezek 38, Rev 16) — Preparing the hearts of men
- Anarchy in Gog’s hosts (Ezek 38) — Deliverance of Israel

Approach

- Consider the “Civilization of Our Day” — up to 1916 and 2023
- “Bible teachings” micro view — Ezekiel 38:21 and similar scriptures
- “Bible teachings” macro view — Ezekiel 38, Revelation 16, Jeremiah 30
- **Summarize what can be expected**
- Thoughts on preparing our hearts

Summary & Our Thoughts on Timing

** Not to Scale *
Subject to Human Error*



Summary & Thoughts on Fire

Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as **the fuel of the fire**: no man shall spare his brother.

— *Isaiah 9:19*

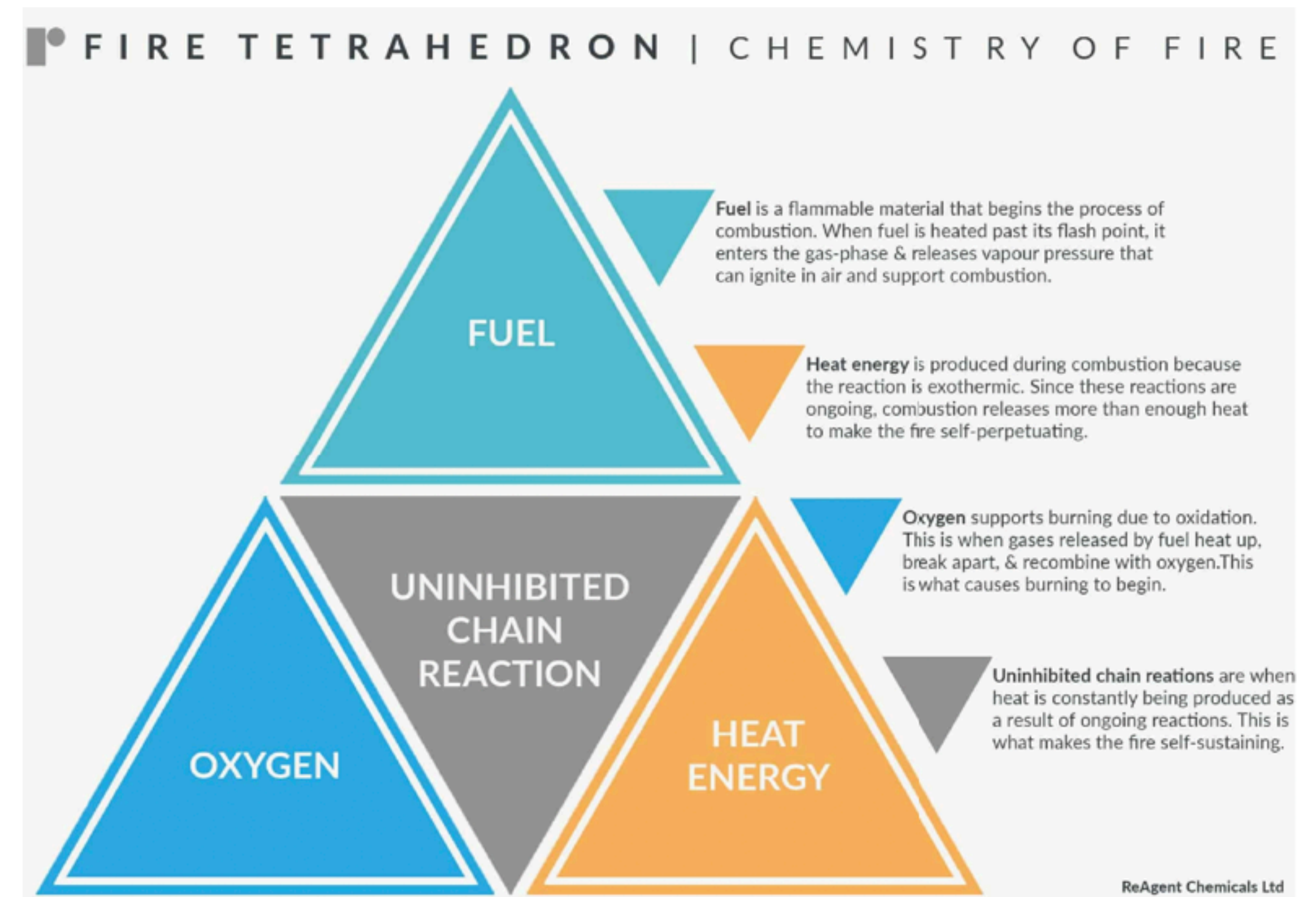
Summary & Thoughts on Fire

Facts about Fire

- Fire is self-sustaining
- Fire creates it's own heat (enabling more fuel sources)
- Fire can travel on its own at 15 mph and faster up slopes
- Fire creates and is enabled by wind
- Fires grow exponentially over time*

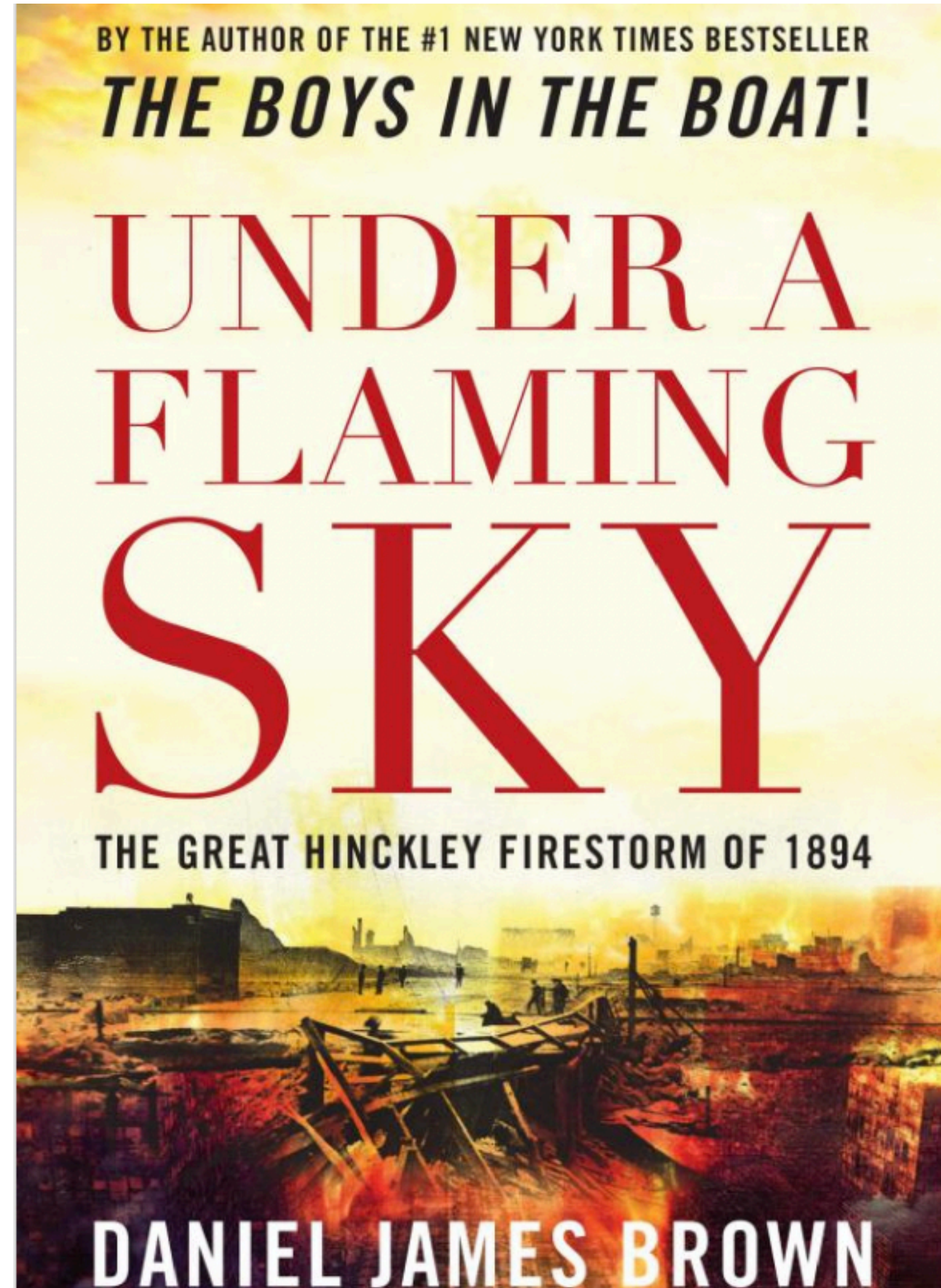
Facts about Mass Wildfires

- Mass wildfires create their own weather
- Radiant heat can kill instantly (before flames or smoke reach)
- Heat from a mass wildfire can dry out any wet fuel in its path
- Winds often reach Hurricane strength
- Firebrands can be lifted 18,000 feet high by heated updrafts (it literally can “**rain**” fire)



**MATERIAL FIRE PROPERTIES*, J. G. Quintiere, J. Torero, R. T. Long¹, S. E. Dillon², N. Wu³ and D. Heater, Department of Fire Protection Engineering, University of Maryland

Summary & Thoughts on Fire



The 13th and 14th largest fires in US History were some of the most awful:

- The 1871 Peshtigo Fire (Wisconsin) killed 1,150 people
- The Great Hinckley Fire of 1884 burned 250,000 acres in four hours

Summary & Thoughts on Fire

Destruction

- Sodom & Gomorrah
- Golden Calf
- Bullock of the Sin Offering, Lord's Goat
- Jericho
- Idols & Graven Images
- Jerusalem and Temple by Nebuchadnezzar
- Jerusalem and Temple by Rome
- Gog and his hosts (Ezekiel 38)
- Nominal Systems
- Christendom & Tares
- Babylon (Jeremiah 51)
- Nineveh (Nahum)
- Beast, Image of the Beast
- Gog and Magog, Devil and his angels (Revelation 20)
- All the Earth (Zephaniah 3)

Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD,
until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my
determination is to gather the nations, that I
may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon
them mine indignation, even all my fierce
anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with
the **fire of my jealousy**.

— *Zephaniah 3:8*

For then I will **restore** to the peoples a pure
language, That they all may call on the name
of the LORD, To serve Him with one accord.

— *Zephaniah 3:9 (NKJV)*

Summary & Thoughts on Fire

Preparation

- Three Hebrews (Dan 3)
- Refiner and purifier (Malachi 3:2,3)
- Fiery trials of character development (1 Pet 4:12)
- Baptized by the Holy Spirit and fire (Luke 3:16)

Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the **fire of my jealousy**.

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Fire as Preparer



Approach

- Consider the “Civilization of Our Day” — up to 1916 and 2023
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- **Thoughts on preparing our hearts**

*What can **we expect**, now that it's 2023?*
How should our hearts be prepared?

Preparing our Hearts

Overland Monthly, p. 321 — The Great Day of Wrath.

The Bible declares that then “every man’s hand will be against his neighbor”—all confidence will be lost—the bond of human sympathy and brotherhood will be utterly snapped in riotous selfishness.

The Scriptures identify this trouble with Messiah’s taking to Himself His Kingdom power and beginning his reign. (Dan 12:1; Rev 11:18.) Thank God! The intimations of the Scriptures are that the conflict of that time will be short. It must, however, last long enough to teach humanity a lesson never to be forgotten—that God and His arrangements must stand first and must be obeyed, if blessing is sought.

Comfort for Israel

Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.

— *Jeremiah 30:7*

Comfort for Israel

I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people,
and they shall trust in the name of the LORD.

The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither
shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed
and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.

—*Zephaniah 3:12-13*

Promises to the Church

Set your mind on the things **above**, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is **hidden with Christ** in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then **you also** will be revealed with Him in glory.

— *Colossians 3:2-4*

Promises to the Church

There 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, men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory.

But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

—*Luke 21:25-28*

Comfort for Those Who Seek God

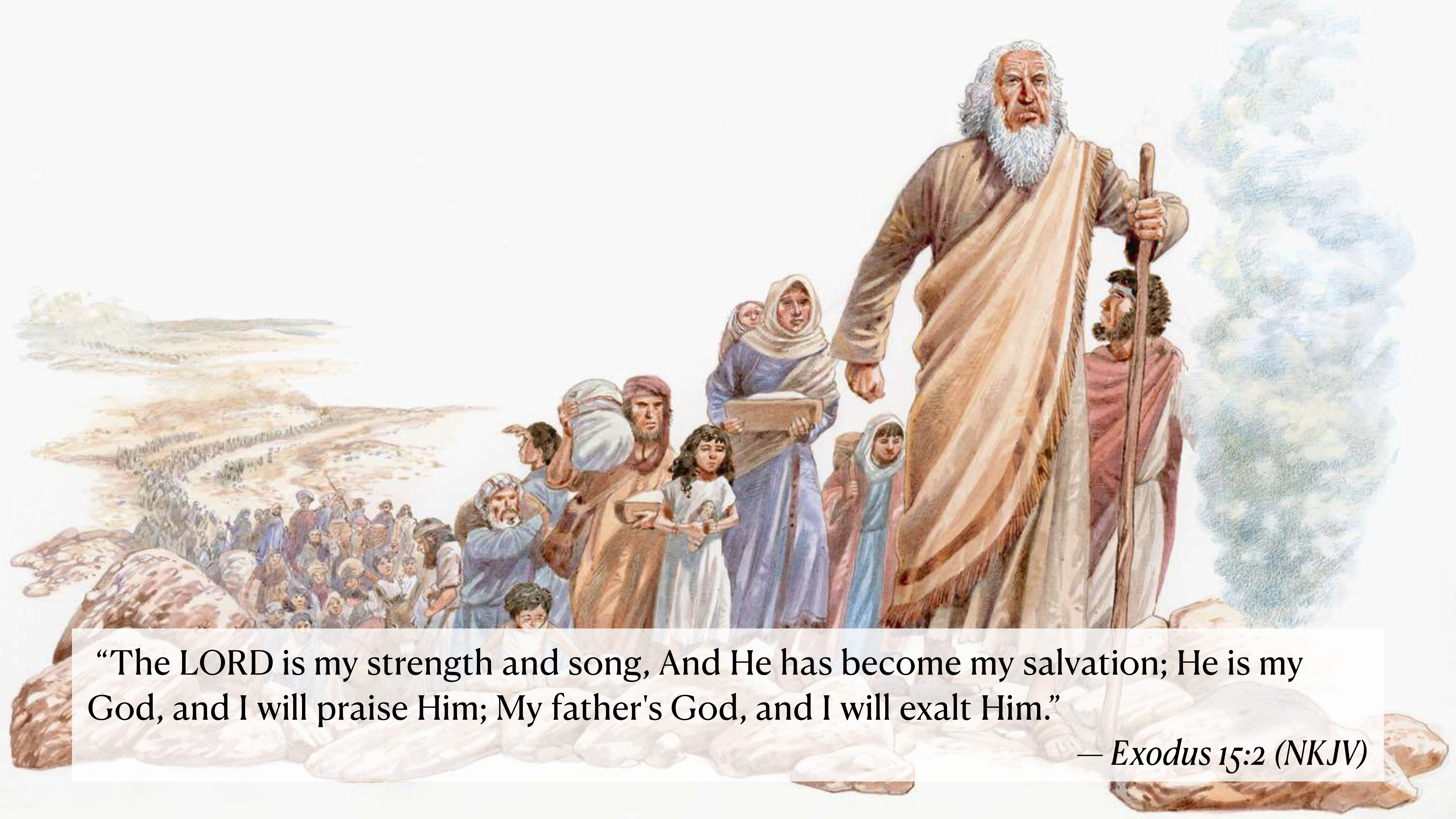
The LORD is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble, And He knows those who take refuge in Him.

— *Nahum 1:7*

Comfort for Those Who Seek God

Seek the LORD, All you humble of the earth Who have carried out His ordinances; Seek righteousness, seek humility. Perhaps you will be hidden In the day of the LORD'S anger.

—*Zephaniah 2:3*



“The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will exalt Him.”

— *Exodus 15:2 (NKJV)*