Thursology 108: "*Signs Of The Times*"—They're Not What You Think*!!!*

(*Thursology Live!* 2/1/24)

--The popular view of the meaning of the "Signs of the Times"

--Matt 24:3, 6-8: As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, *when* will these things happen, and *what* will be the *sign* of Your *coming*, and of the end of the age?"…Jesus answered…You will be hearing of *wars* and *rumors of wars*. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, *but that is not yet the end*. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be *famines* and *earthquakes*. But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs.

--The popular view of this passage: These are the "_____" that will _____ the return of Christ

--A misunderstanding…with a lot of momentum

--The "signs" that Lindsey wrote about in *Planet Earth 2000 A.D.*

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

--A contrary view—Four reasons why the "popular" view of the "Signs of the Times" is wrong

--Reason #1: The _____ frequency and intensity of the "Signs of the Times" is actually in _____

--Wars

--Death in armed conflicts by type-Worldwide
--Global Deaths in armed conflicts since AD 1400
--Global Battle Deaths/100,000 population since 1940
--Percentage of years in which the Great Powers fought-AD 1500-2015

--A reasonable summary: While some might argue that the _____ of global war is high…there is no *persuasive* evidence that either the intensity or frequency of war has been _____ in recent history.

--Famine:

--Annual rate of death due to famine-Global, per decade-1860 to 2016

--A reasonable summary: While there is always the potential for widespread famine…there's no *persuasive* evidence that the severity or frequency of famine has been _____ in recent history.

--Pestilence:

Epidemics leading to at least 1% of the world's population dying

Rank	Epidemics	Disease	Deaths	Global loss	Regional loss	Years (AD)	Location
1	Black Death	Bubonic plague	40m	**35%**	45% of Europe	1346–1353	Europe, N. Africa
2	Justinian Plague	Bubonic plague	60m	**30%**	50% of Europe	541–549	N. Africa, Europe, W. Asia
3	Antonine Plague	Smallpox/measles	8m	**4.5%**	30% of Romans	165–180	Roman Empire
4	Spanish flu	Influenza A/H1N1	60m	**3.2%**		1918–1920	Worldwide
5	Cocoliztli epid.	Unidentified	10m	**2%**	50% of Mexico	1545–1548	Mexico
6	Mexico smallpox	Smallpox	7m	**1.5%**	30% of Mexico	1519–1520	Mexico
7	Japanese smallpox	Smallpox	2m	**1%**	33% of Japan	735–737	Japan

--A reasonable summary: While there is always the potential for new and deadly infectious diseases to emerge…there's no *persuasive* evidence that the severity or frequency of epidemics and pestilence have been _____ in recent history.

--Earthquakes:

The Ten Most Powerful Earthquakes in History

Rank	Date	Location	Event	Magnitude
1	**1960**	Chile Valdivia, Chile	Valdivia earthquake	9.5
2	**1585**	Aleutian Islands (now Alaska)	Aleutian Islands earthquake	9.3 (estimated)
3	**1730**	Valparaiso, Chile	Valparaíso earthquake	9.2 (est.)
4	**1964**	Prince William Sound, Alaska	Great Alaska earthquake	9.2
5	**2004**	Sumatra, Indonesia	Indian Ocean earthquake	9.2
6	**2011**	Japan, Pacific Ocean	Tōhoku earthquake	9.1
7	**1737**	Kamchatka Peninsula, Russia	Kamchatka earthquake	9.1 (est.)
8	**1837**	Valdivia, Chile	Valdivia earthquake	9.1 (est.)
9	**1575**	Valdivia, Chile (Spanish Empire)	Valdivia earthquake	9.0 (est.)
10	**1604**	Arica, Chile (Spanish Empire)	Arica earthquake	9.0 (est.)

--Annual Global Earthquake Deaths/million population-1900 to 2010

--A reasonable summary: There's no *persuasive* evidence that earthquake frequency, severity, or mortality has been _____ in recent history.

--Key Concept: It's best to understand catastrophic events such as war, pestilence, famine, and earthquakes as _____ signs of the "Final Age"…rather than _____ signs that will *identify* the time of Christ's return.

--Reason #2: In Church history…there have been *many* times when the Church was absolutely _____ that the "Signs of the Times" _____ that the Lord was returning…_____*!!!*

--Reason #3: The *dramatic intensification* of the "birth pangs" occurs _____ the 7-Year Tribulation…not _____*!!!*

--Matt 24:8: But *all these things* are *merely the beginning* of birth pangs.

--V. 9: Then they will deliver you to *tribulation*…"

1. Massive _____
--Jesus' prophecy [Matt 24:7]: "…and in various places there will be…*earthquakes*."
--Fulfillment [Rev 16:18]: And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a *great earthquake*, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so *great* an *earthquake* was it, and so *mighty*.

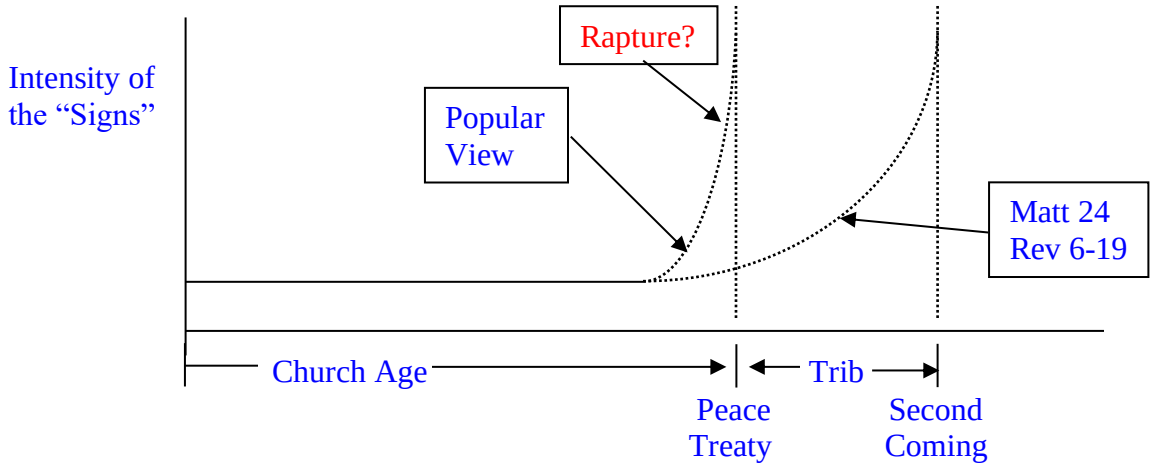
2. Devastating _____
--Jesus' prophecy [Matt 24:7]: "…and in various places there will be *famines*…"
--Fulfillment [Rev 6:5-6]: When He broke the *third seal*, I heard the third living creature saying, "Come." And I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard something like a voice…saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius…"

3. Overwhelming _____
--Jesus' prophecy: [Luke 21:10-11]: Then He continued…"Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be…*plagues*…"
--Fulfillment: [Rev 6:7-8]: "When the Lamb broke the *fourth seal*, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, 'Come.' And I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and…Authority was given to them over *a fourth of the earth*, to kill with…*pestilence*…"

4. Unprecedented global _____
--Jesus' prophecy: [Matt 24:6-7]: "You will be hearing of *wars and rumors of wars*…For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom,

--Fulfillment: [Rev 6:3-4; 16:13-14]: "When He broke the *second seal*, I heard the second living creature saying, 'Come.' And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to *take peace from the earth*, and that men would *slay* one another; and a great sword was given to him…" → "And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon…three unclean spirits like frogs; for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the *whole world*, to *gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty*."

The "popular" versus the biblical view of the "Signs of the Times"



--Reason #4: The Olivet Discourse doesn't _____ about the actual, biblical "signs of the _____"…*at all*!!!

--Matt 24:3-8 (excepts): As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, *when* will these things happen, and what will be the *sign* of Your *coming*, and of the end of the age?" And Jesus answered…You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars…For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs.

--The difference between the *popular concept* of this passage…and what it *actually says*: The "Sign__ of the _____"…versus…the *sign* of the _____ of Christ

--Matt 24:3: "…Tell us, *when* will these things happen, and what will be the *sign* of Your *coming*, and of the end of the age?"

--Vv. 29-30: But immediately *after the tribulation* of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And *then* the *sign of the Son of Man* will *appear* in the *sky*, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will *see* the Son of Man *coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory*.

--The "Sign Fact": The "*Sign* of the Coming of the Son of Man" will be His awesome _____ in the sky…in _____ and great _____*!!!*

--A shock to the popular "Signs of the Times" teachers: The *Sign* of the Coming of the Son of Man will happen at the _____ of the Tribulation…and will be a _____-time sign…not a _____ of increasingly frequent signs.

--Application: Every believer should be on a great _____…to reveal the _____ "Signs of the Times" to a _____ world*!!!*

--Matt 16:1-3: The Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Jesus, they asked Him to *show them a sign* from heaven. But He replied to them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' And in the morning, 'There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern *the signs of the times*?

--The attributes of the Signs of the Times:

1. It was given in the context of the _____…not the _____

2. _____ Jesus' words in Matthew 16 were meant to instruct 21st Century Christians about the Last Days…then the words meant _____ to the Pharisees and Sadducees to whom Jesus spoke.

3. This passage has _____ to do with the _____ Coming of Christ
   --Matt. 16:3-4: "Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern *the signs of the times*? An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and a sign will not be given it, except *the sign of Jonah*."
      --What is the sign of Jonah? A messianic prophecy that would allow the world to identify the _____ coming of Christ!!

   --A big surprise: The biblical "signs of the times" are the 330 signs that _____ the Jewish Messiah…so that it would be impossible to _____ Who He was when He came to save the world…the _____ time*!!!*

   --Key Concept: The Church's mission isn't to identify signs that point to a _____ coming…but to point to the _____ signs that identify the Savior Who has _____ come!!!

--A Key…and Challenging…Question: Can you open your Bible and _____ the _____ seeker to the Savior???

--Matt 16:13-16: Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

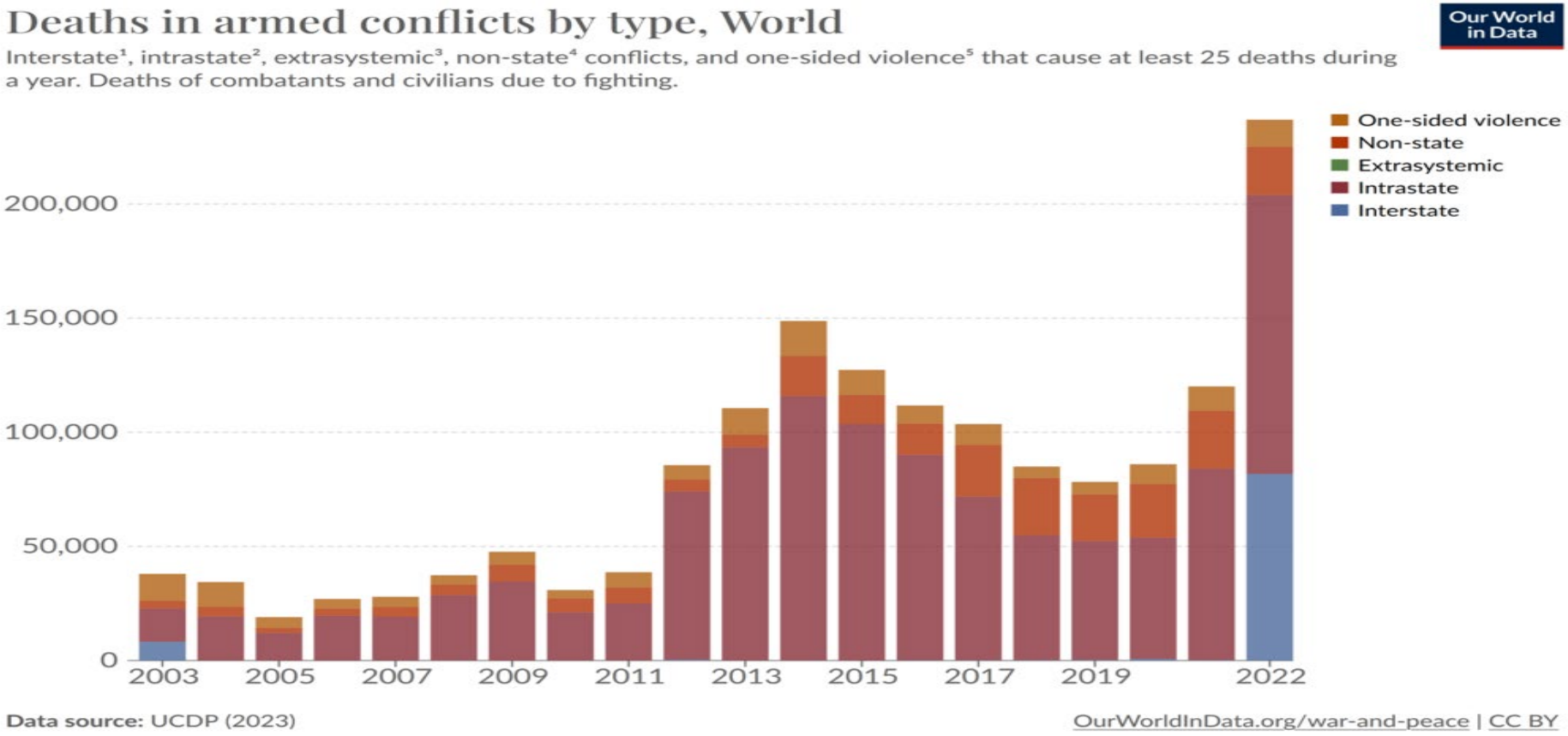
--Vv. 16-18: Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon *this rock* I will build My church; and the gates of *Hades will not overpower it*.

--The *greatest* problem with the popular teaching of the Signs of the Times: It gives the impression that _____ has to happen _____ Jesus returns!!!

   --Key Concept: Jesus' return isn't imminent because of "The Signs of the Times"…it's imminent because it has _____ been imminent…and because not _____ thing needs to happen before He returns…and because *every* Christian generation has always lived in the _____ hour*!!!*

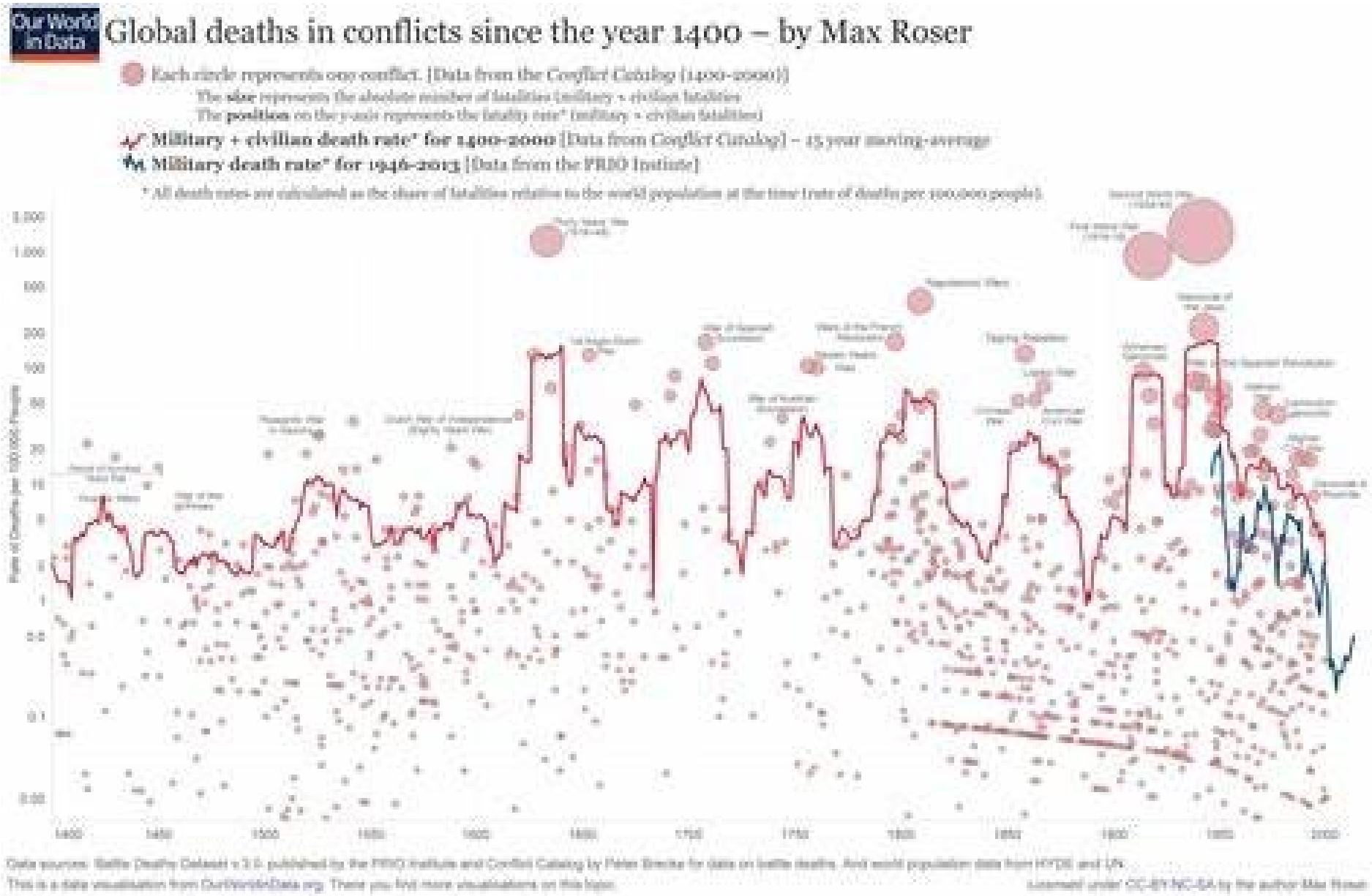
--Matt 24:40-42. 44: Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left. "Therefore *be on the alert*, for *you do not know* which day your Lord is coming…For this reason you also must *be ready*; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour *when you do not think He will*.

Death in armed conflicts by type, World. NOTE-At least 25 casualties/deaths per year

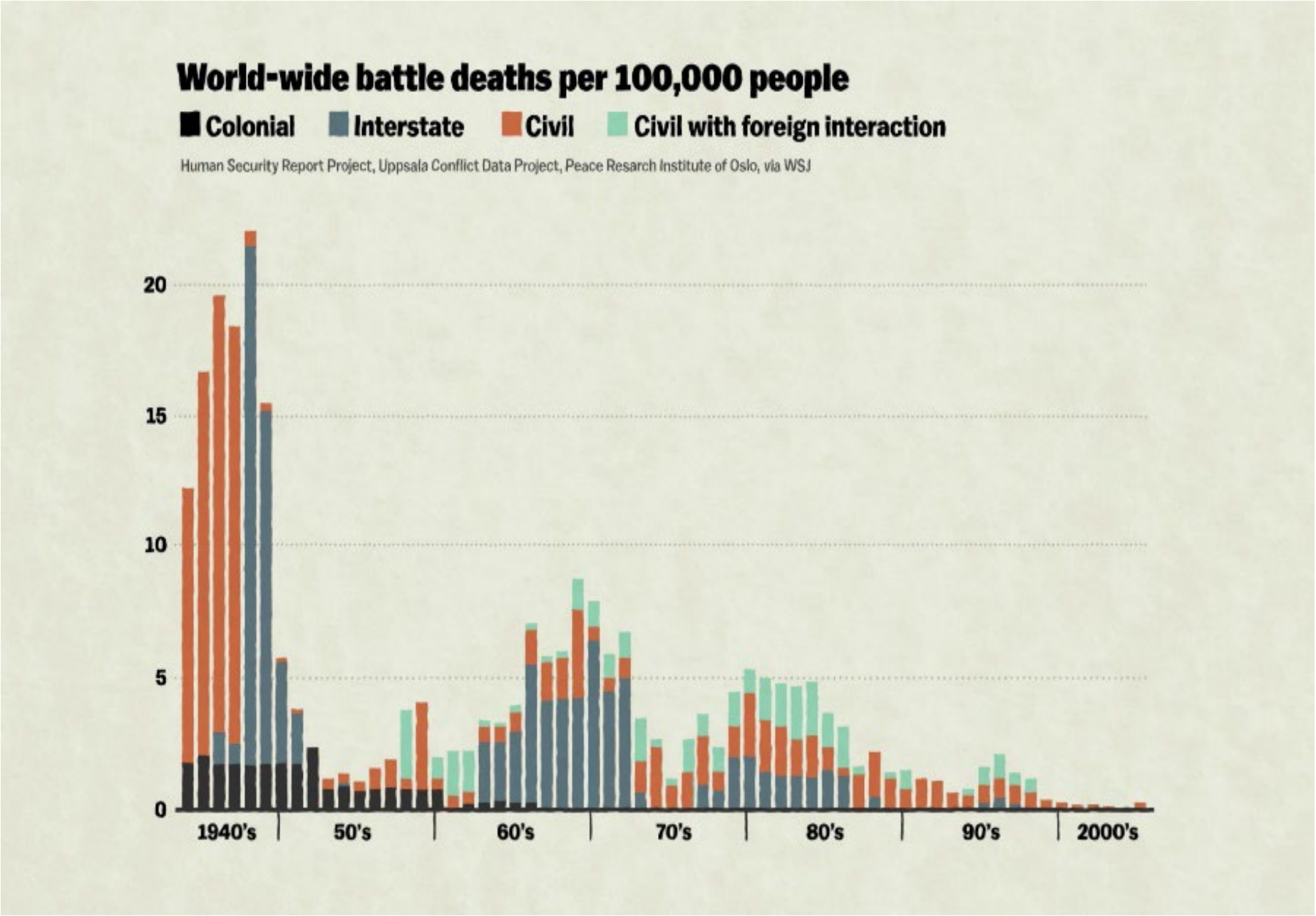


1. **Interstate conflict**: A conflict between states.
2. **Intrastate conflict**: A conflict between a state and a non-state armed group. Internationalized if a foreign state is involved, non-internationalized if not.
3. **Extrasystemic conflict**: A conflict between a state and a non-state armed group outside its territory.
4. **Non-state conflict**: A conflict between non-state armed groups.
5. **One-sided violence**: The use of armed force by a state or non-state armed group against civilians.

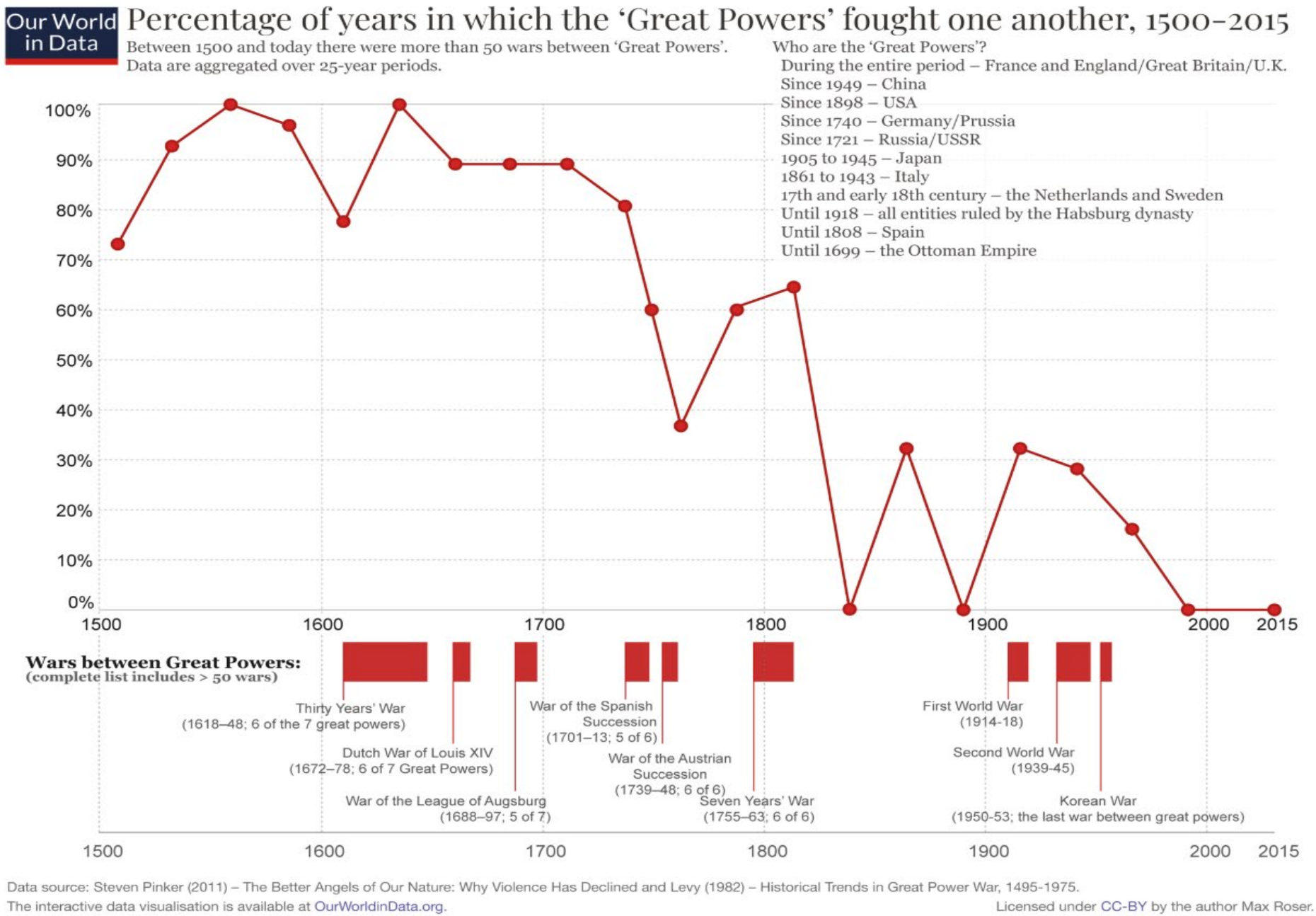
Global Deaths in armed conflicts since AD 1400. NOTE-At least 50,000 soldiers involved



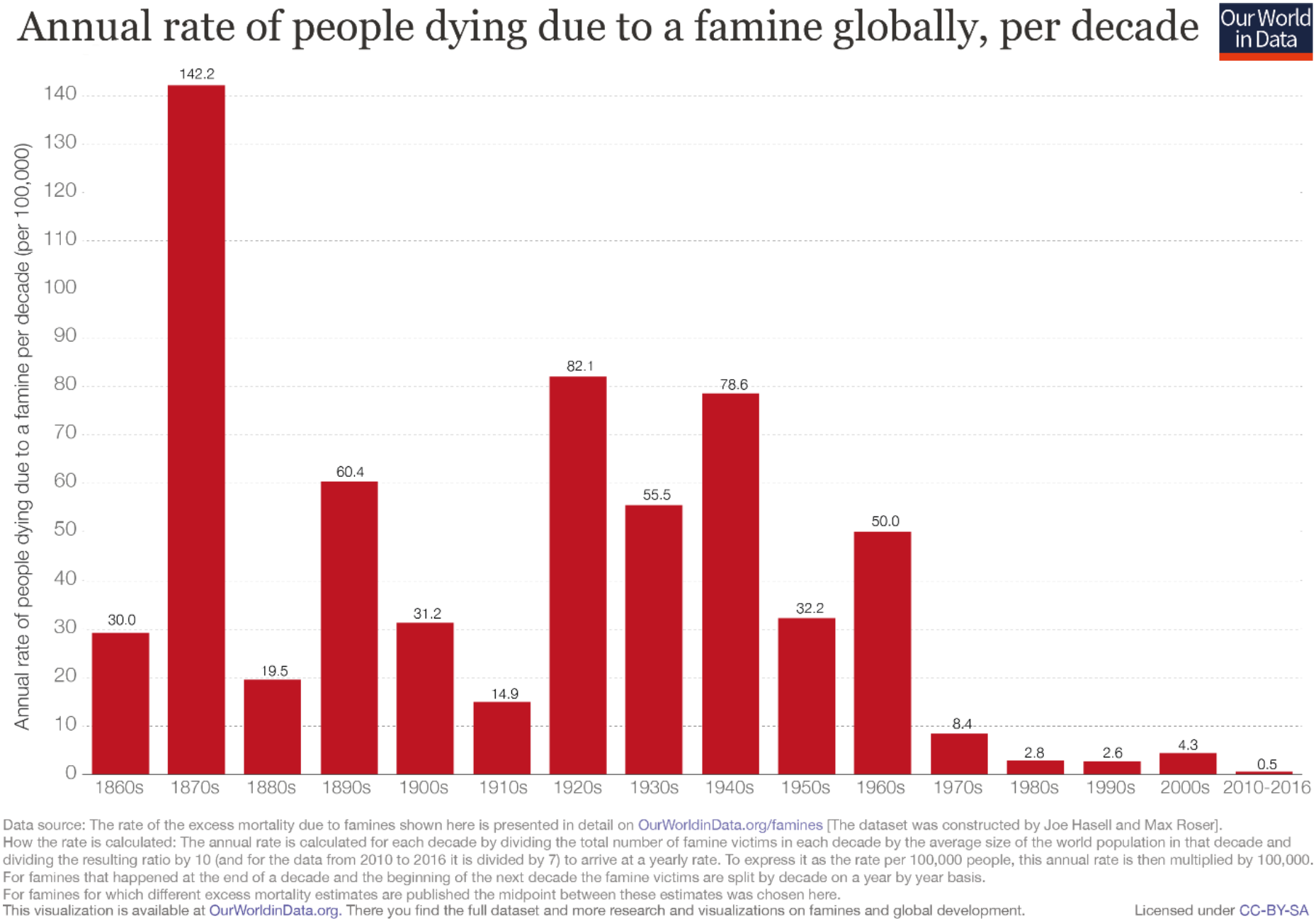
Global Battle Deaths/100,000 population since 1940. NOTE-At least 50,000 soldiers involved



Percentage of years in which the Great Powers fought-AD 1500-2015



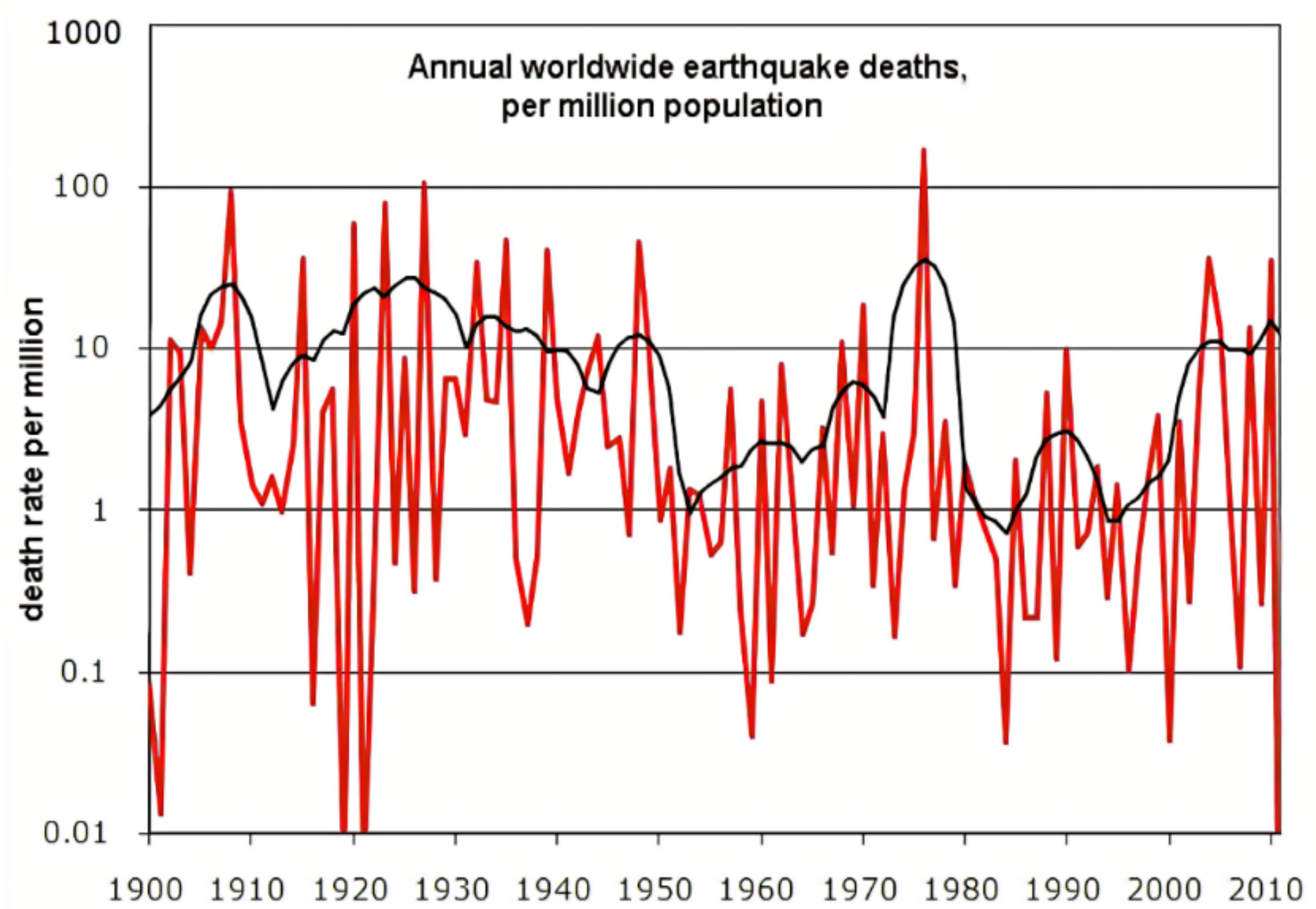
Annual rate of death due to famine-Global, per decade-1860 to 2016



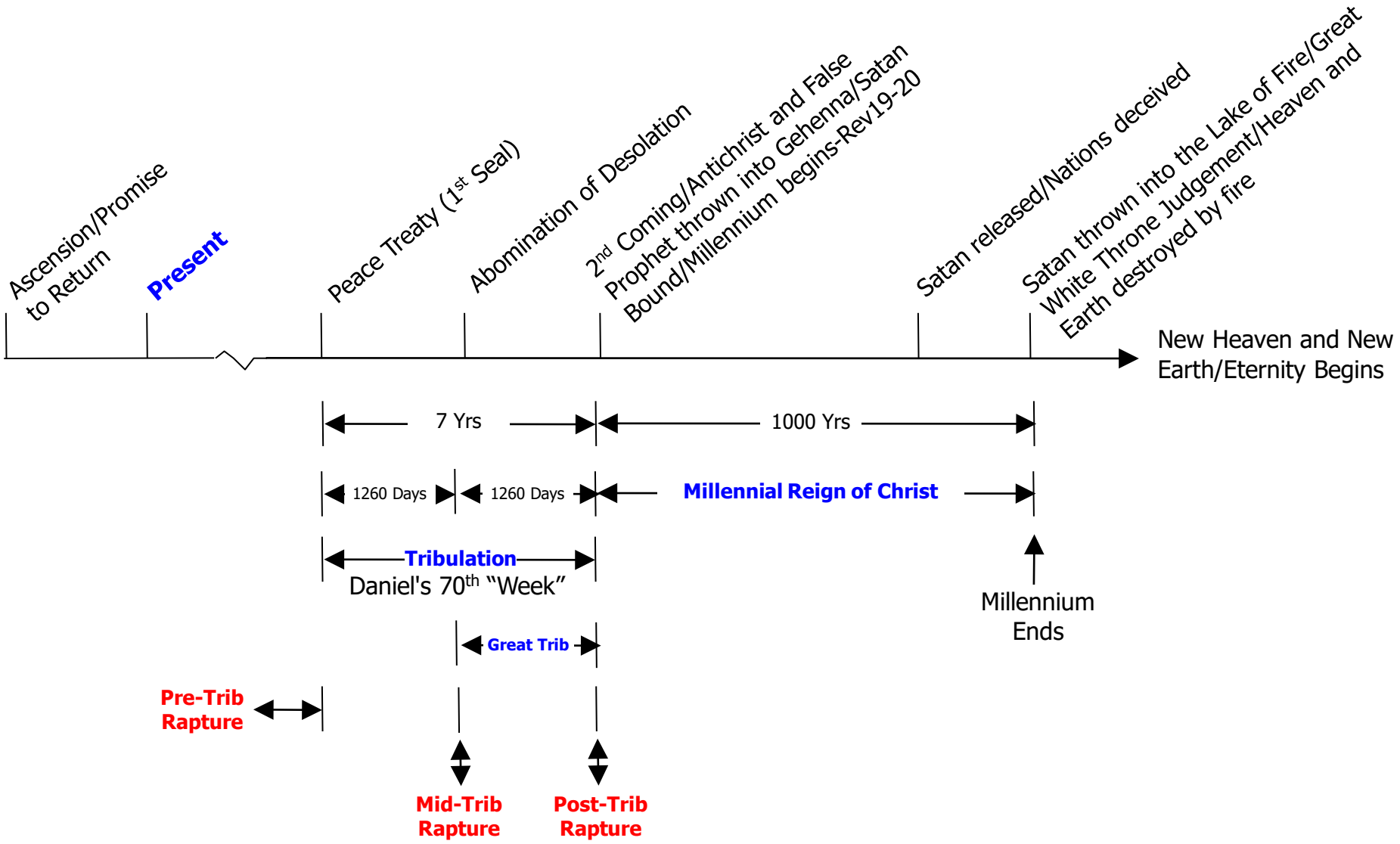
Data source: The rate of the excess mortality due to famines shown here is presented in detail on OurWorldinData.org/famines [The dataset was constructed by Joe Hasell and Max Roser].
How the rate is calculated: The annual rate is calculated for each decade by dividing the total number of famine victims in each decade by the average size of the world population in that decade and dividing the resulting ratio by 10 (and for the data from 2010 to 2016 it is divided by 7) to arrive at a yearly rate. To express it as the rate per 100,000 people, this annual rate is then multiplied by 100,000.
For famines that happened at the end of a decade and the beginning of the next decade the famine victims are split by decade on a year by year basis.
For famines for which different excess mortality estimates are published the midpoint between these estimates was chosen here.
This visualization is available at OurWorldinData.org. There you find the full dataset and more research and visualizations on famines and global development.

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Annual Global Earthquake Deaths/million population-1900 to 2010



The Revelation Timetable of the Future



Thursology 107: When Reading an End Times Passage… How Do We Know Where It Fits on the Prophetic Timeline?

(*Thursology Live*! 1/4/2024)

--Helpful Hints When Trying to Identify the Timing of a Specific Passage:

--Hint #1: When the "movement" of a passage is **UPWARD**…it's usually a **RAPTURE** passage

--I Thess 4:16-17: For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be *caught up* together with them in the *clouds* to meet the Lord *in the air*…

--Hint #2: When the "movement" of a passage is **DOWNWARD**…to the **EARTH**…it's usually a Second Coming passage

--Hint #3: **RESURRECTIONS** occur at the time of the Rapture, the beginning of the Millennium, and the end of the Millennium

--Hint #4: **JUDGMENTS** occur at the time of the Rapture and the end of the Millennium

--Hint #5: At the *Second Coming*…Christ comes to **CONQUER** and to establish His reign on **EARTH**…while at the *end of the Millennium*…the Earth is consumed by **FIRE**…**TIME** as we know it ends…and **ETERNITY** begins

--Hint #6: If a big **WAR** is going on…it's at the end of the *Tribulation*…or the end of the *Millennium*…and these wars are very **DIFFERENT**

--Hint #7: If you know the simple **OUTLINE** of Revelation…many passages fall **EASILY** into place on the Timeline

--Rev **6**: The seven-year Peace Treaty between Antichrist and Israel begins the Tribulation

--Rev **11-13**: The mid-point of the Tribulation, Abomination of Desolation, Antichrist revealed, 666 campaign starts, Great Tribulation begins and lasts 3½ years

--Rev **19**: Christ returns, wins the Battle of Armageddon, saves Israel, and throws Antichrist into the Lake of Fire

--Rev **20**: Christ reigns over the earth for a thousand years, then…at the end of the Millennium…wins the Battle of Gog and Magog, throws Satan into the Lake of Fire, judges unbelievers at the Great White Throne, destroys the present earth with fire, and ends time as we know it

--Rev **21**: This present earth is replaced with a New Heaven and New Earth, God abolishes disease, suffering, and death, and eternity begins

--Placing Scripture passages on the prophetic timeline:

--Passage #1:

--II Thess 2:1-4: Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and *our gathering together to Him*, that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless *the apostasy* comes first, and the *man of lawlessness* is *revealed*, the son of destruction, who opposes and *exalts himself above every so-called god* or object of worship, so that *he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God*.

--Where does this fit on the Timeline? At the **MID**-point of the Tribulation…the Abomination of Desolation

--Rev 13:3-4, 8: And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and *they worshiped the beast*, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?"…All who dwell on the earth *will worship him*…

--Dan 9:27: And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the *middle of the week* he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of *abominations* will come one who makes *desolate*…

--Passage #2:
--II Pet 3:7, 10, 12-13: But by His word the *present heavens and earth* are being reserved for *fire*, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men…But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which *the heavens will pass away with a roar* and the *elements* will be *destroyed with intense heat*, and *the earth* and its works will be *burned up*…because of which the heavens will be *destroyed by burning*, and the elements will *melt with intense heat*! But according to His promise we are looking for *new heavens* and a *new earth*…

--Where does this fit on the Timeline? At the **END** of the Millennium…at the destruction of the current Universe…and the creation of the **NEW** Heaven and Earth.
--Rev 20:7, 9, 21:1: When *the thousand years are completed*, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth…and *fire* came down from heaven and devoured them…Then I saw a *new heaven* and a *new earth*; for the first heaven and the first earth *passed away*…

--Passage #3:
--Zech 14:1-5, 9, 16: Behold, a day is coming for the Lord…For I will gather *all the nations* against *Jerusalem* to *battle*, and the city will be captured…Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations…In that day *His feet will stand* on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of *Jerusalem* on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley…Then the Lord, my God, *will come*, and all the *holy ones* with Him!...And the Lord will be *king over all the earth*…Then it will come about that *any who are left* of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up *from year to year* to worship the *King*, the Lord of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths.

--Where does this fit on the Timeline? At the Second Coming…when Christ returns to **EARTH**…saves **ISRAEL** at the Battle of Armageddon…and then reigns over the nations from **JERUSALEM**…during the Millennium.

--Passage #4:
--Ezekiel 38:1-3, 8, 11, 14-16, 18: And the word of the Lord came to me saying, "Son of man, set your face toward *Gog of the land of Magog*…and prophesy against him and say, 'Thus says the Lord God, Behold, I am against you, O Gog…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*…and you will say, 'I will go up against the land of *unwalled villages*. I will go against those who are *at rest*, that *live securely*, all of them living *without walls* and having *no bars or gates*…and against the people who are gathered from the nations…who live at *the center of the world*'…Therefore prophesy…and say to Gog, "Thus says the Lord God, 'On that day when *My people Israel are living securely*…You will come from your place out of the *remote parts of the north*…a great assembly and a *mighty army*…It shall come about in the *last days* that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me when I am sanctified through you before their eyes, O Gog…It will come about on *that* day, *when Gog comes against the land of Israel*…that My fury will mount up in My anger.'"

--Rev 20:7-9: When *the thousand years are completed*, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, *Gog and Magog*, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up…and surrounded the camp of the saints and the *beloved city*, and *fire* came down from heaven and devoured them.
--Where does this fit on the Timeline? At the **END** of Christ's Millennial reign… when the nations are deceived and come against **ISRAEL**…and the final **FIRE** falls.

--Passage# 5:
--Revelation 20:7-9, 11-13, 15; 21:1: *When the thousand years are completed*, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations…And they came up…and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and *fire* came down from heaven and devoured them…Then I saw a *great white throne* and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds…And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth…

--Where does this fit on the Timeline? The Great White Throne Judgment occurs at the **END** of the Millennium…right before **ETERNITY** begins
--Details: Thursology 6-9

--But…what does all of this have to do with me???
--Ezekiel 38:18-20, 22-23: "It will come about on that day, when Gog comes against the land of Israel," declares the Lord God, "that My fury will mount up in My anger. And in My *zeal* and in My *blazing wrath* I declare that on that day there will surely be a great earthquake in the land of Israel. And the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all the creeping things that creep on the earth, and all the men who are on the face of the earth will *shake at My presence*; the mountains also will be *thrown down*, the steep pathways will *collapse* and every wall will *fall to the ground*…With pestilence and with blood I will enter into judgment with him; and *I will rain* on him and on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, a torrential rain, with hailstones, fire and brimstone. I will magnify Myself, sanctify Myself, and make Myself known in the sight of many nations; *and they will know that I am the Lord*."'

--**Application #1**: The combined **POWER** of all the world's military forces…evaporates into **INSIGNIFICANCE** when compared to our God!!!
--Rom 8:28-29: "…neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

--**Application #2**: Beware of the tendency to **FORGET** God's power…when times get **TOUGH**
--Ezek 38:14-16a: "Therefore prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog…You will come from your place out of the remote parts of the north…a *great assembly* and a *mighty army*; and you will come up against My people Israel like a cloud to cover the land.
--Ezek 38:16: and *you will come up against My people* Israel like a cloud to cover the land. It shall come about in the last days that I will bring you against My land, *so that the nations may know Me* when I am sanctified *through you* before their eyes, O Gog."

--Key Concept #1: One of the ways that God is *glorified* in the world is when He **DELIVERS** His people from **TROUBLE**

--Key Concept #2: If God never allowed His people to be in **TROUBLE**…there would never be anything for Him to **DELIVER** us **FROM**!!!

--**APPLICATION #3**: When the victory of the Lord finally comes…it is **PERFECT** and **COMPLETE**!!!

1) Dan 6:19-23:

--Then the king arose at dawn…and went in haste to the lions' den. When he had come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled voice. The king spoke and said…"Daniel, servant of the living God, *has your God*, whom you constantly serve, *been able to deliver you* from the lions?" Then Daniel spoke to the king, "O king, live forever! *My God sent His angel* and shut the lions' mouths and *they have not harmed me*, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime." Then the king was very pleased and gave orders for Daniel to be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den and *no injury whatever was found on him*, because he had trusted in his God.

--How perfect was the deliverance? Not a **SCRATCH** on him!!!

--Vv. 25-28: Then Darius the king wrote to *all the peoples, nations and men of every language*: "…I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men are to *fear and tremble before the God of Daniel*; For *He is the living God and enduring forever*, and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed, and *His dominion will be forever*. He delivers and rescues and performs signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, Who has also delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."

--What was the result? God was **PROCLAIMED** among the **NATIONS**!!!

2) Dan 3:24-27:

--Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with wrath, and his facial expression was altered toward Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. He answered by giving orders to heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated…Then these men were tied up in their trousers, their coats, their caps and their other clothes, and were cast into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire…Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astounded and stood up in haste; he said to his high officials, "Was it not three men we cast bound into the midst of the fire?" They replied to the king, "Certainly, O king." He said, "Look! I see four men loosed and walking about in the midst of the fire *without harm*, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods!"…Then Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego came out of the midst of the fire. The satraps, the prefects, the governors and the king's high officials gathered around and saw in regard to these men that *the fire had no effect* on the bodies of these men *nor was the hair of their head singed, nor were their trousers damaged*, nor had the *smell* of fire even come upon them.

--How perfect was the deliverance? Not even the **SMELL** of **SMOKE** was on them!!!

--Vv. 28-29: Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who put their trust in Him, violating the king's command, and yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any god except their own God. Therefore I make a decree that *any people, nation or tongue* that speaks anything offensive against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego shall be torn limb from limb and their houses reduced to a rubbish heap, inasmuch as *there is no other god who is able to deliver* in this way."

--What was the result? God was **PROCLAIMED** among the **NATIONS**!!!

--The questions we're left with:

--Do I trust God enough to be willing to face the LIONS if that's His plan for me?

--Do I trust Him enough to be willing to go through the FIRE if that's His plan for me?

--Is my desire to serve Him so absolute that I'm willing even to endure hardship…if it will bring glory to Him???