



*This is the world,
brutal and cruel, that Troy tried to withstand.
Cruelty wins in the end.
Our little clearings of civilization may seem real,
but mindless wilderness always lurks,
may take its time,
but in the end overwhelms all our pretensions to decency.
We revert to beastliness. (Seneca, Trojan Women, Lines 985-990)*

The four horsemen of the apocalypse **p**art 5 of 5—the pale horse and its rider **R**evelation 6.¹⁻⁸

¹*I watched as the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures invite, with a voice like thunder, "Come!"*

²*Then I saw—imagine this!—a white horse. Its rider held a military bow and was granted a crown. He went off triumphantly, intending to conquer.*

³*And when he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature invite, "Come!"*

⁴*And another horse, this one red, went off, its rider given power to take peace from the earth, to the extent that they kill each other. He was equipped with a vicious sword.*

⁵*And when he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature invite, "Come!"*

Then I saw—imagine this!—a black horse. Its rider held a set of scales in his hand. ⁶I heard something like a voice coming from the four creatures, announcing: "A quart of wheat or three quarts of barley costs a day's wage, while olive oil and wine you are not to impact."

⁷*And when he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature invite, "Come!"*

⁸*And I saw—imagine this!—a pallid horse. As for its rider, his name was Death, and hell accompanied him. And he was given dominion over a large swath of the planet to slay with the sword and with starvation and with death and with earth's wild beasts.*

We have now examined three of John's Four horsemen of the Apocalypse with their plotline of continuing and escalating human violence. The violence begins as a seemingly unremarkable and inconsequential seedling: the seed of desire. A national leader, and the nation he leads desires to conquer and dominate other leaders and other nations. It looks so innocent and pure—like a pure, white horse. It seems so just. So inevitably right. The revelator's choice of a white horse is appropriate to the lie, so innocently and "righteously" propagated by this, the first of Revelation's many "anti-Christ's" and their followers. The lie, however, will soon enough be exposed for what it is.

Taking root in the national soil, this seed becomes an expanding tree. Inevitably, the personal and national desire to conquer leads to a license to kill. War, bloodshed, and violent death flow from the mad desire. Deaths multiply. The lie of the white horse's purity is exposed. The horse turns from white to red as it becomes splattered with human blood. Not so innocent after all.

But the tree produces more than one kind of deadly fruit. Sadly, and contrary to the practiced and deceptive propaganda of the militarists, the death certificates that multiply as a result of war are not limited to the brave volunteers or the trained and skilled warriors who die on the glorious field of battle. In a world gone mad with wars and rumors of wars, there is no such thing as non-combatants. "Civilian" men, women, children, and even babes in arms—are drafted into the violence. They are drawn into "the war effort" as resources, particularly economic, are diverted, ruined, and destroyed in the ruthlessness of war. Economic devastation brings poverty with its accompanying hunger, starvation, and, finally, slow, tedious death. The black horse has arrived. The world turns black. Black with shattered hopes. Black with smoke. Black with burnt and smoldering crops. Black with starvation. But, mostly, black with dried, crusty human blood on the muscular flanks of the rider's horse.

Would to God that it ended here. But it does not. There is another horse and another

rider, this one building upon the mad, psychotic destructiveness of the former three. Like those who came before, this rider has ridden roughshod over the globe not once or twice or a hundred times, but thousands upon thousands of times. In every age and in every land its pestilence has been poured out upon earth's foolish and mostly complicit inhabitants—complicit, if only in their silent acceptance of the madness that poses as reason. We now turn to this fourth and final horse and rider.

Before doing so, just a reminder. John's vision of the four horsemen is not only descriptive of mad violence. It is a warning sign to those who would follow Jesus, King of Kings, who, even in his arrest, trial, sentencing, torture, and death refused repeated invitations and, likely, even more temptations, to take matters into his own hands and conquer through violent resistance. John's vision is a call to action. It calls the reader to follow and imitate their Master. It calls for discerning, sincere, active, and consistent non-violent resistance to the mad desires, actions, and forces that the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse represent.

the pale horse

If the definition of insanity is “doing the same thing over and over again but expecting a different result,” then, by definition, homo-sapiens is an insane race. Notwithstanding the warnings of history, each generation imagines that it is exempt from the natural and inevitable consequences of unholy desire for dominance and its attendant war, suffering, death, and hell. They can, they vainly imagine, keep it under control. But this is delusion. Once unleashed, the violence of desire cuts its own wide swath of human misery. Once set in motion, humankind is nearly powerless to stop it.

So, as the apocalyptic scene passes from third to fourth horseman, things have indeed spiraled out of control. Now rides forth a pale horse, a horse the color of a human corpse. Appropriate to the horse's color, the rider is named, ‘Death.’ The horse's color, however, does not reflect the color of one corpse, but of many. With the rider of the red horse, we witnessed multitudes dead from the violence of battle. With the rider of the black horse, we

witnessed multitudes dead from starvation and other economic privations. Sword and famine have already done their deadly work. Now, with the rider of the pale horse we witness multitudes of dead from... Death! What does this mean? What does the Revelator see?

Half a millennium before the Revelator, another visionary, Jeremiah, foresaw that a similar scenario would play itself out in the experiences of his own people. He saw that

“Such as are for death, to death;
And such as are for the sword, to the sword;
And such as are for the famine, to the famine;
And such as are for the captivity, to the captivity.”¹

Like the Revelator, Jeremiah mentions “death” as a means to “death” along with sword, famine, and captivity. Earlier, Jeremiah had warned Judah of Yahweh three instruments of death. The nation would be “consumed” “by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.”² So death by death might, among other things, mean death by pestilence or plague.

So, let me tell you what I see when I see people being killed by death.

I see the ground littered with rotting corpses; for there are so many dead that the living cannot gather and bury them all. Birds, rodents, dogs, and who knows what all else pick at the rotting corpses. Blood and gore and putrid juices ooze from the corpses, soak the ground, foul water sources, and breath disease into the air. Flies swarm and maggots sliver bringing the gifts of poisonous disease and death from the dead to the living. Again, Judah had many years earlier experienced such death.

“For thus saith the LORD concerning the sons and concerning the daughters that are born in this place, and concerning their mothers that bare them, and concerning their fathers that begat them in this land; ‘They shall die of grievous deaths; they shall not be

¹ Jeremiah 15.²

² Jeremiah 14.¹²

lamented; neither shall they be buried; but they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth: and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; and their carcasses shall be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth.”³

At roughly the same time, a similar scene played itself out on the opposite side of the globe, as recorded by the Book of Mormon prophet, Ether.

“And so great and lasting had been the war, and so long had been the scene of bloodshed and carnage, that the whole face of the land was covered with the bodies of the dead. And so swift and speedy was the war that there was none left to bury the dead, but they did march forth from the shedding of blood to the shedding of blood, leaving the bodies of both men, women, and children strewed upon the face of the land, to become a prey to the worms of the flesh. And the scent thereof went forth upon the face of the land, even upon all the face of the land; wherefore the people became troubled by day and by night, because of the scent thereof.”⁴

As horrific as this is, I see more. Death is a creative killer. There is another, even more common way that death brings death. Even today, we see it operating in many parts of the world. It has been going on, for example, between Israeli and Palestinian for generations. One death leads to two deaths. Two deaths lead to four. On and on it goes, bodies piling up as death’s survivors seek retribution. Vengeance. Pay back. Tit for tat. This is one of the reasons that it is so hard to turn off the tap of death once it has been turned on. Death’s multiply exponentially as grieving survivors seek to inflict an equal or greater portion of pain and death on the ones who inflicted them with pain and death.

This drive for retribution, to restore “honor” has a long and inglorious history. The inspired authors and editors of Genesis inform us of its existence early on in human history. They suggest through their storytelling that it would become a principle bringer of death among our species. They allow a certain Lemek and the stern warning he delivered to his two trusted wives to make their point.

³ Jeremiah 16.³⁻⁴

⁴ Ether 14.²¹⁻²³

“‘ādā and Şillâ, Listen to what I have to say,
You wives of Lemek, give ear to my words.
‘Because I have killed a man for a trifle,
and a young man for merely striking me;
though an offense against Qayin might bring vengeance seven
times more severe than the offense,
one against Lemek is avenged seven times seventy.’”⁵

One need not imagine such a man’s reaction to a real offense, a death, for example, among those who were part of his circle.

There are of course, all sorts of other creative ways death can kill. One thinks of the sorrow of those left behind after a loved one has died a violent death, a sorrow that sometimes overwhelms the sufferer and brings them to the point of suicide. Yes, death is ingenious. Violent death, more creative and vicious yet.

To be sure, such hellish scenes are not pleasant to contemplate. Perhaps the reader has winced at some of the description found above. But we ignore the warning these horsemen of the apocalypse contain to our own detriment and destruction. And speaking of hell, Hell rides with Death. Many, many of those who die go to hell. Many, many of those who survive become hardened, living only to go to hell upon their eventual death. Again, the Book of Mormon describes these mechanisms.

“Now, they were sorry to take up arms against the Lamanites, because they did not delight in the shedding of blood; yea, and this was not all—they were sorry to be the means of sending so many of their brethren out of this world into an eternal world, unprepared to meet their God.”⁶

“But behold, because of the exceedingly great length of the war between the Nephites

⁵⁵ Genesis 4.²³⁻²⁴, author’s translation

⁶ Alma 48.²³

and the Lamanites many had become hardened, because of the exceedingly great length of the war...”⁷

Yes, war is hell on earth. War’s most gifted practitioners, demons from the bottomless pit. Those who wage war on earth will, in death, return to that same bottomless pit from whence they drew their inspiration for war.

Now, we should say a word about the magnitude of the violence and death that is found in this fourth seal. It has led many to conclude that the scene playing out before the Revelator was extraordinary. They assume it hasn’t happened yet. They assume, therefore, that it is a scene that could only be played out in a uniquely wicked “latter-day” or “end-times” setting. Obviously, I have a different understanding of all four horsemen than many more orthodox readings. I do not argue that the scene found in the fourth seal cannot play itself out in end-times—indeed, why should the end-times be any different than the former times. But for several reasons, textual and otherwise, I believe the common assumption, the inclination to assign the fourth seal *only* to the latter-days to be in error. In fact, the error, it seems to me, makes the appearance of yet more horsemen like that of John’s fourth horsemen all the more certain.

The Revelator witnesses that Death and Hell hold sway over “a large swath of the planet.” This, according to our translation. The King James Version reads a very literal, “the fourth part of the earth.” As our translation suggests, we need not understand the Greek text’s “one quarter of the earth” as a mathematical literalism. Rather it represents a way of saying, “a great deal,” “a whole bunch.” Large swaths of the earth and its populations were given over to, or, perhaps better, gave themselves up to the dominion of violent Death and insatiable Hell. With this unchecked dominion came unimaginable death. The text, then, does not demand that we anticipate 25% of the planet being dominated by violent Death and Hell. Nor does it demand that we anticipate a 25% death rate among human beings hunted by Death and Hell. In fact, as we shall see, the death rate can, and often has climbed much higher.

Even if we were to resort to mathematical literalism and assume that one quarter of the

⁷ Alma 62.⁴¹

earth's population (or more) was engaged in warfare and, perhaps, one quarter of the earth's population (or more) lay dead and dying on the ground, there would be no reason to assume that we were viewing a unique and future catastrophe.

The number of individuals who have been emmeshed in war and died a violent death is staggering, truly astronomical. Have a look, for example at the chart in this endnote.^a It reports the number of people who died of “democide,” or death at the hands of one's own government—only one of many forms violent death can take—during just one century, the 20th. Look at those numbers! How is this not insanity?⁸

Now, imagine a chart that adds the number of military deaths as a consequence of war. Now, add to that chart the number of civilian deaths as a consequence of war. By some counts, such deaths could be as high as 100 million during that same dark 20th century alone, and as many as one-half to a full billion throughout human history. Now calculate the number of people who have died of violent murder. Calculate the number of women—far more likely to be war victims than is appreciated—who have been violently raped, killed during war and peace. Calculate the number of children whose lives have been shattered, if they survived at all, as they were left bereft of one or both parents and made homeless through the violence of war.

Even if what the Revelator sees is a 25% violent death rate, it need not be thought of as either a purely future and “end-times” phenomenon, nor a matter of poetic license and hyperbole. We have already witnessed something like it in the 20th century. Likely, every century has seen something like it. It all confirms the Revelator's larger point: Earth is one hell of a violent place.

How utterly appropriate it is that the Bible reports as its very first story about mortal beings the story of a violent murder; Cain, driven by the desire to excel and conquer, killed his brother, Abel. Few things are more appropriate to or emblematic of the human condition than

⁸ What percent of America's native population died violent death at the hands of white Europeans during the 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th centuries? The estimates run as high as 80%. That's a hell of a lot higher than 25%. Even the supposed “innocent” perpetrator of death—European born diseases—were often purposefully inflicted upon populations with the sure knowledge that it would kill them.

violence. Violent death is no stranger in this strange land called 'Earth.'

This. This, with much else, is what the Revelator seeks to lay bare with his four horsemen of the apocalypse. And still, we ignore him. Still, we go on our merry way buying up armies and navies and reigning with blood and horror on this earth. Lunacy. Madness. Surely there can be no doubting the accuracy of "The Preacher's" inspired and tragic observation.

"The heart of the sons of men is full of evil,
and madness is in their heart while they live."⁹

We can almost hear the Revelator shout a loud, "Amen, brother."

Illustration

With each horse, we have turned to the Book of Mormon and its account of Amlici and Amalickiah, two conspiracists turned military leaders, turned monarchs. We did this for two reasons. First, these two men illustrate the insights that John was sharing through his violent horsemen. Second, the two men illustrate that the phenomenon that John is exposing through his four horsemen are not limited to "end times," but have been present throughout human history.

In examining the white horse and its rider, we saw that both Amlici and Amalickiah were consumed with the same unholy desire to conquer, dominate, and rule at any cost. Violence was their go-to instrument for dominance. In examining the red horse and its rider, we saw that their desires for dominance and willingness to utilize violence as a means to that dominance sent their and surrounding nations into bloody war. Deaths multiplied. In examining the black horse, we saw that death was not limited to military personnel. Civilians died violent and agonizing deaths both through the violence of war itself and through economic privations brought on by war. Now that we have examined the pale horse, we return to the Book of Mormon to illustrate the truths that the Revelator reveals through his

⁹ Ecclesiastes 9.³

final horse and rider.

With the pale horse, war and violence and death have spiraled out of control. The number of individuals—military personnel and civilian—dead and dying are astronomical. People are dying at rates so high that survivors find it impossible to bury them. Many are not buried, their corpses scattered across the landscape serving as food for all sorts of vermin and a breeding ground for all sorts of diseases. Hell feeds on the dead with all the gusto of the rats and dogs and wild beasts.

We see the level of carnage in a Book of Mormon passage such as this.

“And it came to pass that the Nephites who were not slain by the weapons of war, after having buried those who had been slain—now *the number of the slain were not numbered, because of the greatness of their number*—after they had finished burying their dead they all returned to their lands, and to their houses, and their wives, and their children.”¹⁰

We see the unburied bodies.

“Yea, they were met on every hand, and slain and driven, until they were scattered on the west, and on the north, until they had reached the wilderness, which was called Hermounts; and it was that part of the wilderness which was infested by wild and ravenous beasts. And many died in the wilderness of their wounds, and were *devoured by those beasts and also the vultures of the air; and their bones have been found, and have been heaped up on the earth.*”¹¹

We have already referenced an earlier Book of Mormon manifestation of this phenomenon.

“And so great and lasting had been the war, and so long had been the scene of bloodshed and carnage, that *the whole face of the land was covered with the bodies of the dead.* And

¹⁰ Alma 3. ¹, emphasis added

¹¹ Alma 2. ³⁷⁻³⁸, emphasis added

so swift and speedy was the war that there was *none left to bury the dead*, but they did march forth from the shedding of blood to the shedding of blood, leaving the bodies of both men, women, and children strewed upon the face of the land, to become a prey to the worms of the flesh. And the *scent thereof went forth upon the face of the land*, even upon all the face of the land; wherefore *the people became troubled by day and by night, because of the scent thereof.*¹²

Alma records the inhumanity of mass death and the careless attitudes that the living developed toward the dead and dying.

“Now the number of their dead was not numbered because of the greatness of the number; yea, the number of their dead was exceedingly great, both on the Nephites and on the Lamanites. And it came to pass that they did cast their dead into the waters of Sidon, and they have gone forth and are buried in the depths of the sea.”¹³

The same writer was discerning enough to see the same companion riding with death that John witnessed: Hell.

“Now, they were sorry to take up arms against the Lamanites, because they did not delight in the shedding of blood; yea, and this was not all—they were *sorry to be the means of sending so many of their brethren out of this world into an eternal world, unprepared to meet their God.*”¹⁴

All of this, and much, much more, is a real-life illustration of what the Revelator portrays in his wonderfully hellish Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

¹² Ether 14.²¹⁻²³

¹³ Alma 44.²¹⁻²²

¹⁴ Alma 48.²³

We would perhaps do a disservice to the reader and leave them without one of the best illustrations of John’s four horsemen if we denied them a view of the four horsemen’s wildest ride in the Book of Mormon, a ride such as they have repeated many times over. So, before launching into our concluding remarks on this set of homilies on John’s four horsemen, we should have a look at the four Rough Riders as seen through the eyes of one of their innumerable chroniclers... and victims... Mormon.

Though Mormon did “not desire to harrow up the souls of men in casting before them such an awful scene of blood and carnage as was laid before mine eyes,”¹⁵ he nevertheless shared enough for us to see in those awful scenes John’s four horsemen as they and their horses stampeded across the landscape, stomping all life under the horses’ hardened huffs. For, says he, “I, knowing that these things must surely be made known, and that all things which are hid must be revealed upon the house-tops—and also that a knowledge of these things must come unto the remnant of these people, and also unto the Gentiles... therefore I write a small abridgment, daring not to give a full account of the things which I have seen, because of the commandment which I have received, and also that ye might not have too great sorrow because of the wickedness of this people.”¹⁶

It was, he laments, “one complete revolution throughout all the face of the land.”¹⁷ Indeed, “a continual scene of wickedness and abominations has been before mine eyes ever since I have been sufficient to behold the ways of men.”¹⁸ Having said that, he confesses his weakness in describing the full extent of the madness that every day assaulted his senses.

“And it is impossible for the tongue to describe, or for man to write a perfect description of the horrible scene of the blood and carnage which was among the people, both of the Nephites and of the Lamanites; and every heart was hardened, so that they delighted in

¹⁵ Mormon 5.⁸

¹⁶ Mormon 5.⁸⁻⁹

¹⁷ Mormon 2.⁸

¹⁸ Mormon 2.¹⁸

the shedding of blood continually.”¹⁹

But, he gives it the good ol’ college try. For example, he catalogues some of the military deaths of battle.

“*They did fall upon my people with the sword, and with the bow, and with the arrow, and with the ax, and with all manner of weapons of war. *My men were hewn down, yea, even my ten thousand who were with me, and I fell wounded in the midst; and they passed by me that they did not put an end to my life... and we having survived the dead of our people, did behold on the morrow, when the Lamanites had returned unto their camps, from the top of the hill Cumorah, the ten thousand of my people who were hewn down, being led in the front by me.

“And we also beheld the ten thousand of my people who were led by my son Moroni.

“And behold, the ten thousand of Gidgiddonah had fallen, and he also in the midst.

“And Lamah had fallen with his ten thousand;

“and Gilgal had fallen with his ten thousand;

“and Limhah had fallen with his ten thousand;

“and Jeneum had fallen with his ten thousand;

“and Cumenihah,

“and Moronihah,

“and Antionum,

¹⁹ Mormon 4.¹¹

“and Shiblom,

“and Shem,

“and Josh, had fallen with their ten thousand each...

“And* there were ten more who did fall by the sword, with their ten thousand each...”²⁰

This is just the sort of “accomplishment” that the Revelator’s four Rough Riders with their companion, Hell, could be proud. But, however proud, it is never enough until everyone suffers. Economies must be shattered.

“Whatsoever lands we had passed by, and the inhabitants thereof were not gathered in, were destroyed by the Lamanites, and their towns, and villages, and cities were burned with fire...”²¹

And everyone—men, women, and children alike, must be sacrificed to the gods of war.

“They did also march forward against the city Teancum, and did drive the inhabitants forth out of her, and did take many prisoners both women and children, and did offer them up as sacrifices unto their idol gods.”²²

Soon, the pale rider, Death, began to feed on death. Bodies are left to mold. But soon far worse happens as humans themselves join in the feeding frenzy.

“My people, the Nephites... began to boast in their own strength, and began to swear before the heavens that they would avenge themselves of the blood of their brethren who had been slain by their enemies. And they did swear by the heavens, and also by the throne of God, that they would go up to battle against their enemies, and would cut them

²⁰ Mormon 6.¹⁰⁻¹⁵

²¹ Mormon 5.⁵

²² Mormon 4.¹⁴

off from the face of the land... And when they had sworn by all that had been forbidden them by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that they would go up unto their enemies to battle, and avenge themselves of the blood of their brethren, behold the voice of the Lord came unto me, saying: ‘Vengeance is mine, and I will repay; and because this people repented not after I had delivered them, behold, they shall be cut off from the face of the earth.’”²³

As always, Hell went along on the joy ride.

“And it is impossible for the tongue to describe, or for man to write a perfect description of the horrible scene of the blood and carnage which was among the people, both of the Nephites and of the Lamanites; and every heart was hardened, so that they delighted in the shedding of blood continually.”²⁴

“They were once a delightsome people, and they had Christ for their shepherd; yea, they were led even by God the Father. But now, behold, they are led about by Satan, even as chaff is driven before the wind, or as a vessel is tossed about upon the waves, without sail or anchor, or without anything wherewith to steer her; and even as she is, so are they.”²⁵

“End-times,” indeed. End-times” for a nation. That’s the thing with “end-times.” They occur over and over again. Always have. They are not limited to “latter-days.” And, still, we learn nothing.

Indeed, the destructive antics of these four horsemen are not even limited to “earth-times,” as John the Revelator will reveal as he recapitulates the whole sordid mess later in his book. No, it all began in heaven with a megalomaniac by the name of Lucifer, who, driven by the unholy and ungodly desire to conquer, rule, and dominate sought to dethrone God—“give me thy honor”—by any means necessary, thus bringing war and spiritual death to heaven. The death rate was high—one-third of heaven’s population by scripture’s count. That is to say, a

²³ Mormon 3.^{9-10, 14-15}

²⁴ Mormon 4.¹¹

²⁵ Mormon 5.¹⁷⁻¹⁸

whole bunch!

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.”²⁶

This defeat, however, did not staunch his unholy, insatiable, and rebellious desires or put an end to his wars and rumors of wars. He simply moved his war to a new theater.

“Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.”²⁷

He has been at it ever since. And everywhere and at all times, humankind has been falling for his lies, buying up armies and navies and attempting to reign through blood and horror. This, notwithstanding a loving God’s constant warnings and wise directions. How much human blood has been spilt because humans can’t or won’t abide by the simplest, most common-sensical instruction imaginable—that found in the final and all-encompassing commandment of the Ten Commandments? The commandment that warns us about our unholy desires.

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour’s.”²⁸

Yes, it all started with a desire. It all flowed out of a deeply corrupt heart. It has overflowed to produce fields of corpses, billions of victims to human—and, often, inhuman—violence. Few have been spared, military or civilian. It has brought entire civilizations to ruin, time and time and time again.

John the Revelator exposed this whole sordid mess through his Four Horsemen of the

²⁶ Revelation 12.⁷⁻⁸

²⁷ Revelation 12.¹²

²⁸ Exodus 20.¹⁷

Apocalypse. But the revelation served to do more than inform and educate. It was meant as a call to action. True disciples of Christ, having been warned and forewarned, were ever and always to be a voice of resistance. They were to ever and always “renounce war and proclaim peace.”²⁹

But, alas, we must report the sad truth that those who profess to follow the prince of peace have all too often failed in their calling. Too often they have followed—and that enthusiastically, “patriotically”—the prince of darkness,” thus committing fornication with the GREAT WHORE, BABYLON and leaving the world without the savor of salt and vulnerable to its own dark “madness [that] is in their heart.”³⁰

The warning as been renewed in our day.

“And again, I say unto you that the enemy in the secret chambers seeketh your lives. Ye hear of wars in far countries, and you say that there will soon be great wars in far countries, but ye know not the hearts of men in your own land. I tell you these things because of your prayers; wherefore, treasure up wisdom in your bosoms, lest the wickedness of men reveal these things unto you by their wickedness, in a manner which shall speak in your ears with a voice louder than that which shall shake the earth; but if ye are prepared ye shall not fear. And that ye might escape the power of the enemy, and be gathered unto me a righteous people, without spot and blameless—”³¹

As always, we are free to choose what we will do. Will we be part of that body of Christ that is “gathered... out of every nation under heaven... the only people that shall not be at war one with another,”³² or will we continue to live comfortably in Babylon until it falls and squashes us under the weight of its own violence?

When, oh when, will we break from the violent tyranny of John’s Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse?

²⁹ DC 98.¹⁶

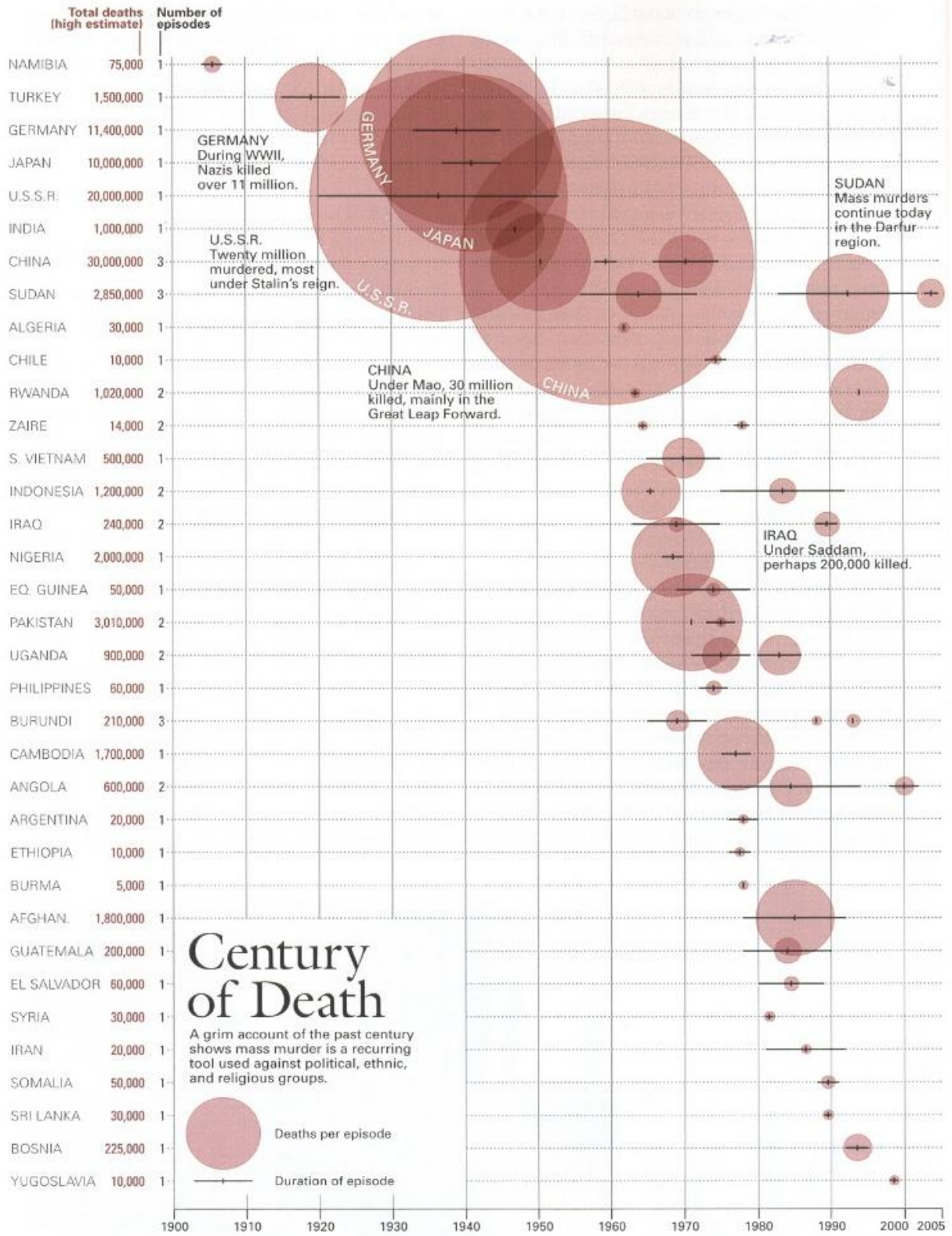
³⁰ Ecclesiastes 9.³

³¹ DC 38.²⁸⁻³¹

³² DC 45.⁶⁹

Even so, come Lord Jesus.

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SOURCE: BARBARA HARFF, STRASSLER FAMILY CENTER FOR HOLOCAUST AND GENOCIDE STUDIES, CLARK UNIVERSITY
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