

The Apocalypse according to Wolverton

In the early 1950s, evangelist Herbert Armstrong asked artist Basil Wolverton to create a series of horrifying scenes of the end of the world as we know it. Wolverton's work in horror and science fiction comics had prepared him well to execute this assignment in a unique and frightening way. These sixteen pieces represent some of Basil Wolverton's best work, done at the peak of his skill -- contemporary with his finest horror/science fiction comic book work, and his early work for *MAD* magazine.

The following fifteen pieces (all sixteen will be posted eventually) are not for sensitive viewers. They are disturbing, grotesque scenes of horror and destruction. Yet tens of thousands of people believe this artwork to be a prophetic vision of the future. Judge for yourself. For more details on Basil Wolverton's worldview, click [here](#).

Scriptures from which Wolverton derived the images are quoted with the enlarged versions.

The original images were rendered in black and white, because of reproduction limitations of the time. These revised images have been colored by Monte Wolverton to elicit the originally-intended reaction.

All images and text ©1998 Monte Wolverton, unless otherwise noted. Scriptures quoted from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*, ©1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used courtesy of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

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Hydrogen Bomb



Nuclear Aftermath



Famine



Terrified Faces



Meteors, Eclipse and Earthquake



Meteors, Eclipse and Earthquake



Volcano and Waterspouts



Giant Hailstones



Mass Burial



Boils



Boils



Fire from Heaven



Darkness and Boils



Earthquake and
Volcanoes



Utter Destruction

Basil Wolverton's Worldview

Longtime aficionados of Basil Wolverton are aware that he is somewhat of a paradox. On the one hand he was a Christian minister -- quiet, humble, generous to a fault -- morally and socially conservative -- always ready with a word of encouragement or humor. On the other hand, he created some of the most terrifying religious art since Hieronymus Bosch. And much of Wolverton's bizarre, frenetic secular work wasn't any less shocking. Like Bosch (an excellent cartoonist himself), the key to understanding Wolverton is an understanding of his religious convictions. The threads of Wolverton's creativity and his religion are inextricably woven together.

Wolverton's beliefs derived largely from the bizarre and eclectic teachings of Herbert Armstrong, a Chicago advertising and marketing man who had experienced an economic downturn in the early 1920s. Armstrong had moved his family to Oregon, in search of greener pastures. There, among a group of seventh-day sabbatarians, he became convinced that the Anglo-Saxon people were part of the descendants of the "Lost Ten Tribes of the House of Israel." A high-school dropout with no formal theological education, Armstrong thought he had discovered the heretofore lost key to all biblical prophecy, and that the Tribulation spoken of in the book of Revelation would shortly fall on the United States and the nations of the British Commonwealth.

Not unlike many evangelical preachers of the early 1930s, Armstrong adopted a dispensationalist paradigm, with a with a pre-millennialist, literal interpretation of the apocalyptic sections of scripture -- albeit with his own particular spin. The Bible, he taught, predicted imminent worldwide calamities, followed by the return of Christ and a happy Millennium, followed by the destruction of the wicked, followed by the advent of new heavens and earth.

As he began his ministry in Eugene, Oregon, Armstrong quickly fell into the delusion that God had chosen him to bring a warning message to the world -- that he was the *only* true messenger of God in this age. To proclaim his message, Armstrong began a radio program, *The World Tomorrow*, and a magazine, *The Plain Truth*. As Armstrong's following grew, so did the threat of a second world war. He believed this was it -- the Beast, the Antichrist, and the whole end-time enchilada. Armstrong, of course, was wrong -- and this would not be the last time.

In the late 1930's, Herbert Armstrong's radio broadcast attracted the attention of a Vancouver, Washington comic artist, Basil Wolverton. The son of devout Christian parents, Wolverton had slipped into agnosticism. Armstrong changed that. Wolverton was baptized in 1941 and ordained an elder in 1943. During these years, Wolverton was also busily producing his comic book features --

such as *Spacehawk*, *Powerhouse Pepper*, *Rockman*, *Disk-Eyes the Detective*, *Scoop Scuttle*, and *Mystic Moot and His Magic Snoot*.

When Armstrong moved his growing operation to Pasadena, California in 1946, he relied on Wolverton to pastor a small congregation in the Portland area. That same year, Wolverton achieved national fame outside of comics as winner of Al Capp's *Lena the Hyena* contest. This led to his grotesque drawings and caricatures being featured in *Life* and *Pageant* magazines. In the early 1950s, Wolverton also produced his finest comic book work -- 17 horror and science fiction features, including "Brain -Bats of Venus" and "The Eye of Doom." The early *MAD* magazine utilized Wolverton's unique talents -- and they continue to use his art today.

Meanwhile, Armstrong's Radio Church of God (later renamed Worldwide Church of God), and Ambassador College were growing, as were his broadcasting and publishing efforts. In the early 1950s, he commissioned Wolverton to begin work on two projects. One was writing and illustrating a story of the Old Testament, which began serial publication in *The Plain Truth* magazine in 1958 -- later to be published in six volumes. The other was this series of spectacular illustrations depicting shocking scenes from the Book of Revelation, to accompany a series of articles on that subject in *The Plain Truth*. -- later reprinted in two booklets, 1975 in *Prophecy* and *The Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last*.

During the 60s and 70s, Wolverton continued to be active in local ministry, while continuing to work on his story of the Old Testament, while continuing to create increasingly bizarre humorous work for a variety of publications and clients: *Plop* magazine, Barker greeting cards, Topps, and others.

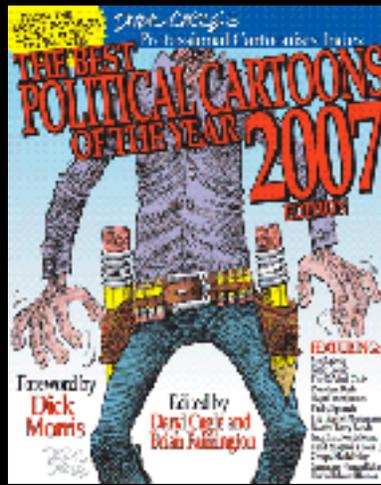
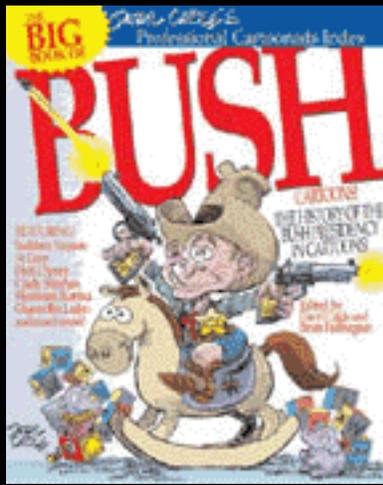
Basil Wolverton died in 1978. Herbert Armstrong died in 1986. Shortly thereafter, a reformed Worldwide Church of God abandoned Armstrong's unorthodox doctrinal constructs, including Anglo-Israelism, an emphasis on prophecy, and ecclesiastical exclusivism. [Plain Truth](#) magazine continues publication, albeit by a different organization (Plain Truth Ministries) and with very different content.

Wolverton's apocalyptic drawings are an important historical record, not only of a fanatically (albeit well-intentioned) literal view of biblical prophecy, but of the mindset of the mid-1950s. The bomb -- the threat of disorder and the breakdown of society -- radioactivity -- disease epidemics -- cataclysms -- things which caused the 1950s citizen to break out in perspiration. These are things (perhaps no less impending -- who knows?) at which we yawn today. But as you gaze upon Wolverton's images of the ultimate cataclysm, you just might find a few beads of sweat breaking out on your forehead.

THE WEEKLY WOLVERTOON



- ◆ **WOLVERTOONS ARCHIVE**
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Monte Wolverton's work is included in these three great collections of the best editorial cartoons. Click [here](#) for more details about how to order these essential additions to your library!

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Monte Wolverton produces the Weekly Wolvertoon -- an editorial cartoon appearing in fine newspapers and periodicals around the world. It is syndicated and distributed exclusively by Caglecartoons at www.caglecartoons.com

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PREVIOUS WOLVERTOONS

Feast your frontal lobes on these
Wolvertoons of 2007 and 2008!

click on image:



Stem Cells
to Iraq



Gonzo Can't
Remember



Georgie Off His
Meds



The Influencer



The End of the
Ride



Immigrant
Families



The Ignorer



Bush War
Machine



Phil and Ted's
Excellent
Caricature



Throw Hamas
From the Train



Bush,
Bathwater
and Babies



Why Cheney
Talks Out of
Only One Side
of His Mouth



Slouching
Toward the
Right



The Next
Surge Will Be
Better



Potus' Polyps



When Iraq
Stands Up



Covering Up
the Tillman
Cover-up



Hook, Line and
Sinker



Big Coal and
Risky Mining



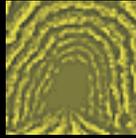
The Credit
Squeeze



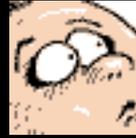
Bush Bail-
Outs



Homeland
Security Six
Years After



Iraq: the Light
at the End of
the Tunnel



No Child Left
Alive?



Dr. W's
Blackwater
Tonic



Spineless
Dems



Leaded
Lipstick



Nuclear
Insecurity



Phony FEMA --
and more



Pakistan --
State of
Emergency



Honey -- I
Shrunk the
Dollar!



Too Many
Earmarks



Green Energy
Until November



Anxiety Over
Religion



Torture Tapes
Entanglement



Congress
Caves



EPA Rejects
California
Emissions
Standards



The Two Faces
of Pervez



Bush's
Economic
Stimulus
Package



Shoring up the
Economy



Front-runners?



Dems in Discord



Reverencing Reagan



Swaggering Lessons



New Wind-powered Straight Talk Express



At the New Bush Presidential Library



Israeli Aggression?



What's Wrong With Waterboarding?



Red Phone at 3 a.m.



In the State Department File Room



Surge on the Verge



Hillary in Her Own Words



Bush Quagmire Dump



Bitter? Who's Bitter?



Stimulus Rebate Robbery



Honk at the Pump!



Hillajohn McClinton



Ballad of Hillary Clinton



Nation of Cows

LETTERS I GET

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Your drawings are horrible

Hi... you probably don't care about these kind of emails but I saw a few drawings of yours on MSNBC and I felt compelled to tell you this (i never did this before). Your drawings are horrible. Your job is to draw and you're not even good at it and that's what you chose to do, or perhaps didn't have the choice since you probably failed at everything else. -- *Mike Farley*

• Of course my work is horrible! At least it caught your attention! -- and, like others who do truly horrible stuff, I am able to make a living because enough people like my horrible stuff. Visit my website to see more horrible stuff! -- *Wolverton*

Whatever it takes

How many people need to get there heads cut off or how many Americans have to die so you can have freedom of speech to put this b/s out? What ever it takes to stop this needs to be done. -- *R. Maxson*

Extraordinary

Your work is really extraordinary. I read your stuff every day on Cagle. Keep it up. -- *Ivan Hetschel*

Leaded lipstick

Thanx for the [10/15/07 easel](#). I was recently terminated from an unusually large cosmetics manufacturer and distributor in So. Cal. That pretty much sums up my understanding as well. -- *Steven A. Goeb*

Invaders

You labeled the [family](#) incorrectly. They are not immigrants. They are the illegal invaders of our country. They made the choice to come here. They need to accept the consequences of their illegal acts. -- *David Bourbonnais*

Pandering

Your [cartoon](#) is deliberately misleading and disingenuous: if these illegal-alien families with anchor babies are broken up, the fault and responsibility lie with the illegals themselves, NOT with a government that seeks to enforce its own laws. Sentimentality and pandering on your part. -- *Gloria Burnell*

Us real Americans

Instead of your weepy little bleeding heart BS ['toon](#), had you drawn that axe cutting through MY AMERICA and AMERICAN lifestyle and culture, it would have been accurate. I am an AMERICAN VETERAN and did NOT go where I was sent and do what I did to allow MY AMERICA to be stolen by these CRIMINALS. What part of ILLEGAL do you not understand?? Also, since these CRIMINALS want to force their way into AMERICA, what does that tell us about how totally messed up Mexico is?? You are a traitor to AMERICAN values and us REAL AMERICANS.

- Where does this cartoon say anything about illegal aliens or criminals? The family is clearly labeled IMMIGRANTS -- not illegal aliens. The point here is that, in my opinion, the Senate bill does not place adequate priority on keeping together families of legal immigrants. -- *Wolverton*

Honest effort to be accurate

Why are you being disingenuous regarding the impact of the immigration reform bill with your [cartoon](#) depicting an immigrant mother and father being separated with an ax. The truth is that only non immediate family members will get no preferential treatment to immigrate to the US. An illegal aliens spouse and minor children are still given preferential treatment under the bill but grandparents, uncles, aunts, brothers, sisters ect . . . are not. If you are going to be critical

of pending legislation at least maintain your credibility and make an honest effort to be accurate. Oh wait you are a cartoonist -- never mind! -- *Ray K. Ready*

- But how do you know they're the father and mother and that those are their children? Preferential treatment should be extended beyond the immediate family -- the cartoon says what I intended to say. -- *Wolverton*
-

Alberto's alzheimer's

Has anyone considered that A.G. Gonzalez is either senile or suffering from Alzheimer's disease. I am 67 and remember everything. I find it incredulous that he is unable to recall decisions he has made. Perhaps the fact that he has this disorder is reason alone to remove him. Something to think about. I like your cartoons by the way. Keep after them. -- *Pony Rein*

Vocal on Hillary

Memory -- Hey Monte, re your [cartoon](#) on Gonzales. Were you as vocal on Hillary during the Rose law firm whitewash? -- *T. J. Southworth*

- You seem to be unclear on the concept. I supported the Clinton administration. I don't support this one. -- *Wolverton*
-

Blame anything but Bush

Your cartoons blaming the problems caused by Bush on voters now wearing [bags on their head](#) and the [Fed ID chains across the country speak](#) 100% truth. I live in an area with disgustingly high conservative Republican population. They are not talking so proudly now or so loud. I am amused by the way they look for anything to blame other than Bush. As for the Fed ID, I am convinced Bush is trying to turn the US into some bizarre "capitalist" version of the old Soviet Union. -- *Rey Rivera*

Urge to Purge

One of the fired federal prosecutors was a woman. Your cartoon, [The Urge To Purge](#), showed only men. -- *Kyle Walker*

- One of the fired federal prosecutors pictured in my cartoon *is* a woman. -- *Wolverton*
-

Chains around Bush

I listened to both of your ideas of the meaning of your [Real ID cartoon](#). on Daryl Cagle's website. However, I see a different point. I would like to see the chains around Bush and America free. -- *Lamont Sweisberger*

Genetic Havoc

It is interesting to hear the comments on your cartoons at www.cagle.com. Carthage and salt? What about depleted uranium? Six of one and a half a dozen of the other? Nobody seems to know or wants to think about the genetic havoc that will cause for a long time into the future. Check the cancer rates in Afghanistan. Geezo. -- *R.A.*

True colors

Your cartoon of President Bush and Vladimir Putin shows your true colors. If you don't support our President and the troops -- then you should go live in Russia. And another thing -- how dare you give Putin a red, white and blue tie? Those colors belong to patriotic Americans -- not commies! You should have given him a pink tie. -- *Frank Spudley*

- No, thanks. I'll stay right here and be critical of the Prez. And the colors of the Russian flag are white, blue and red. Coincidence? -- *Wolverton*

MONTE WOLVERTON CARICATURE

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MONTTE WOLVERTON

FINE ART

Wolverton's images portray the ongoing conflict of free and evolving metaphysical energy with the rectilinear tyranny of inflexibly authoritarian systems. His intricate and convoluted forms, textures and gradations impart a distinctive vibrancy and resonance to his work.



Obsession
With Solids



Metaphysical
Device 6



Direct
Manifestation



Small
Metaphysical Devices



Apparition
North of the Columbia
River East of Bingen



Flagellae



Metaphysical
Device 5



Obligation



Alternative
Route



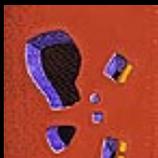
Slabs of
Night



Sentient
Leather Memo



Intransigent
Device



System
Six



Temporal
Conduits



Revenge of
the Purple Book



Conclave



Realization
of Toxins

BIOGRAPHY



Monte Wolverton is a native of Vancouver, Washington, son of comic artist and caricaturist Basil Wolverton. The younger Wolverton is an art director, illustrator and cartoonist, having worked in the Los Angeles, Seattle and Portland areas, with clients as diverse as the U.S Forest Service and MAD Magazine. He studied at Art Center College of Design and holds an MA in creativity management from Vermont's Goddard College. Wolverton's acerbic editorial cartoons and caricatures are syndicated with Caglecartoons to over 900 publications weekly. He is managing editor and former art director of *Plain Truth* magazine. Wolverton and his wife Kayte reside in Westlake Village, California with their two American Rat Terriers, Meg and Kirby.

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BASIL WOLVERTON

◆ [INDEX OF COMIC BOOK AND MAGAZINE FEATURES, 1938 TO 1970](#)

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◆ [WOLVERTON WORKS AVAILABLE](#)

Basil Wolverton's comic magazine features appeared in regular format comic books between 1938 and 1954. The most popular of these were *Spacehawk* and *Powerhouse Pepper*. His comic book work alone totals more than 1,300 pages. Additionally, there is his work for *Mad* and other humor magazines. His work appeared in publications as diverse as *Life*, *Pageant*, *Outboard*, *Cracked*, *Plop* and *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. Then there is his advertising work, his caricatures and his greeting card and novelty products. And then there are his apocalyptic and biblical illustrations and writings, comprising more than 1,200 pages. Wolverton was elected to the Will Eisner Hall of Fame at the San Diego Comic-Con International Convention in July of 2000, in recognition of his lifelong contributions to the contributions to the industry. He was also inducted into the Jack Kirby Hall of Fame in 1991.



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LINKS

Check out these fascinating websites!

Note: editorial comments notwithstanding, the posting of links on this page does not constitute endorsement of the contents of any of the sites so linked. Links are provided for socio-cultural research purposes only. User assumes all risk for psychopathology incurred while visiting these sites.

- [Daryl Cagle's Pro Cartoonists Index](#)-- All the editorial cartoons you'll ever need to see.
- [Caglecartoons.com](#) -- Syndicating the world's finest editorial cartoonists and columnists.
- [MAD Collectors' Site](#) -- Enormous collection of MAD things and people.
- [Greenberg](#) -- Vast array of brilliant art, illustrations and editorial cartoons by Steve Greenberg.
- [Cyberray](#) -- Penetrating political perspective
- [National Cartoonists Society](#) -- Premier professional cartoonists' organization.
- [Association of American Editorial Cartoonists](#) -- Premier professional editorial cartoonists' organization.
- [Plain Truth](#) -- Incredibly, a balanced and sensible Christian magazine.
- [Szukalski Online](#) -- Featuring all things related to the great artist and sculptor, Stanislaw Szukalski. His work is simply unbelievable.
- [Basil Wolverton Homepage](#) -- Gene Gallatin's extensive compilation of things Basil.



Hydrogen Bomb Over City

"Then another horse came out, a fiery red one. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make men slay each other. To him was given a large sword."

-- Revelation 6:4

Original b&w published in October, 1954 *Plain Truth* magazine.
Above image © 1998 Monte Wolverton

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Bomb Crater

"I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth."

-- Revelation 6:8

Original b&w published in October, 1954 *Plain Truth*, and *The Book of Revelation, Unveiled at Last*, 1959.
Above image © 1996 Monte Wolverton

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Famine

"When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, 'Come!' I looked, and there before me was a black horse! Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the four living creatures, saying, 'A quart of wheat for a day's wages, and three quarts of barley for a day's wages, and do not damage the oil and the wine!'"
-- Revelation 6:5,6

Original b&w published in October, 1954 *Plain Truth*, and *The Book of Revelation, Unveiled at Last*, 1959.
Above image ©1998 Monte Wolverton

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Terrified Faces

"There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. . . . Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken."

-- Luke 21:25,26

Original b&w published in November/December, 1954 *Plain Truth*, and *The Book of Revelation, Unveiled at Last*, 1959.
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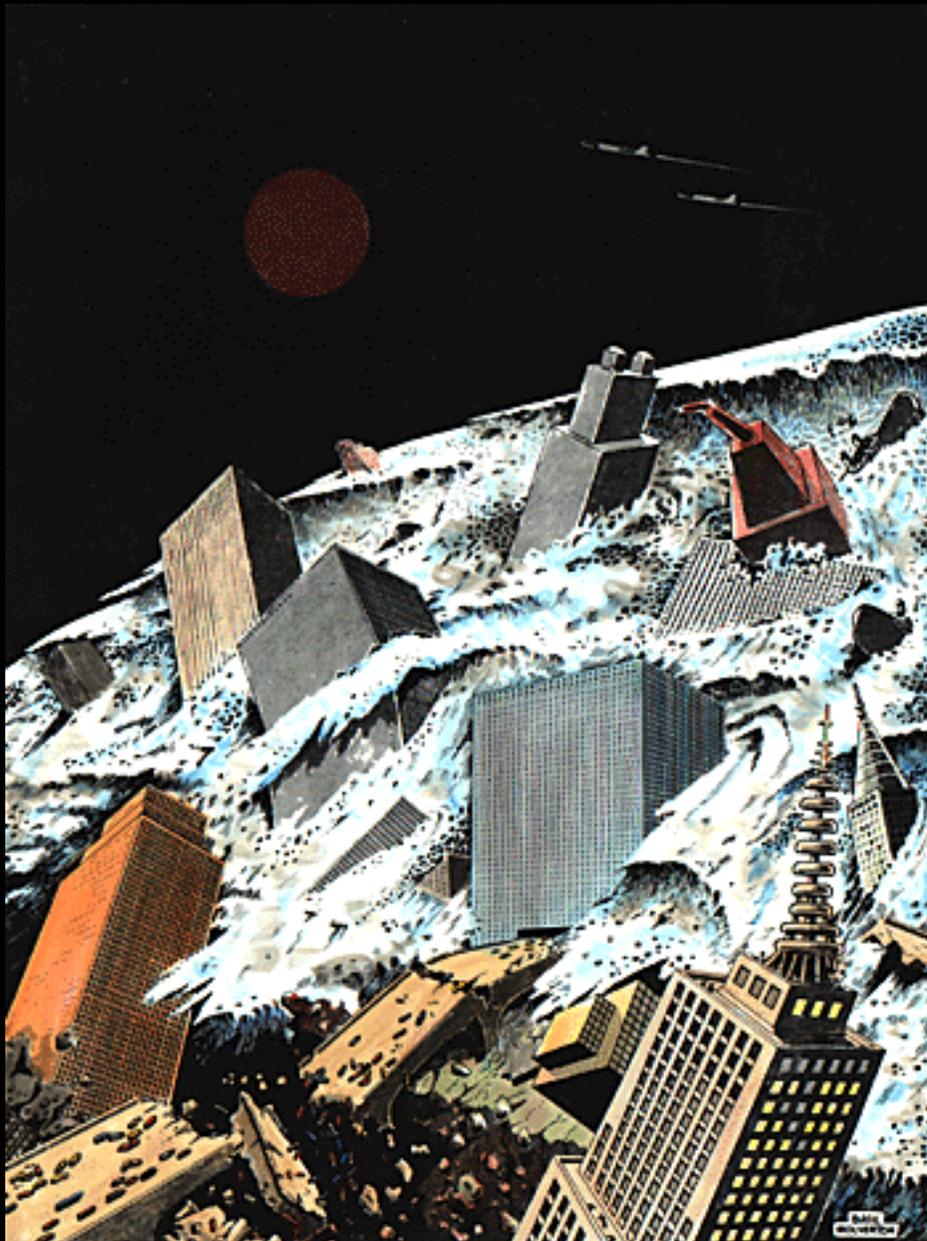
Meteor Shower with Eclipse and Earthquake

"I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red, and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as late figs drop from a fig-tree when shaken by a strong wind. The sky receded like a scroll, rolling up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place."

-- Revelation 6:12-14

Original b&w published in November/December, 1954 *Plain Truth*¹, and *Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last*, 1959.
Above image © 1998 Monte Wolverton

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Giant Tsunami

"On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea."

-- Luke 21:25

Original b&w published in the January, 1955 *Plain Truth*, and 1975 in *Prophecy*, 1956.
Above image © 1998 Monte Wolverton

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Volcano and Waterspouts

"The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a huge mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea turned into blood, a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed."

-- Revelation 8:8-9

Date and place of first publication of original b&w uncertain.
Above image © 1996 Monte Wolverton

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Giant Hailstones

"From the sky huge hailstones of about a hundred pounds each fell upon men. And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible."

-- Revelation 16:21

Publication of original b&w uncertain.
Above image © 1998 Monte Wolverton

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Mass Burial

"A third of mankind was killed by the three plagues of fire, smoke and sulphur that came out of their mouths."

-- Revelation 9:18

Original b&w published in 1975 in *Prophecy*, 1956.
Above image © 1996 Monte Wolverton

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The Plague of Boils

"Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, 'Go, pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth.' The first angel went and poured out his bowl on the land, and ugly and painful sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and worshipped his image."

-- Revelation 16:1-2

Original b&w published in November/December, 1954 *Plain Truth*1, and 1975 in *Prophecy*, 1956.

Above image © 1998 Monte Wolverton

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Heat

"The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and the sun was given power to scorch people with fire. They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, but they refused to repent and glorify him."

-- Revelation 16:8-9

Original b&w published in January, 1955 *Plain Truth*, and *The Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last*, 1959.
Above image © 1998 Monte Wolverton

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Fire from the Sky

*"The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there came hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was hurled down upon the earth. A third of the earth was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up."
-- Revelation 8:7*

Original b&w published in February/March, 1955 *Plain Truth*.
Above image © 1996 Monte Wolverton

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Boils and Darkness

"The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was plunged into darkness. Men gnawed their tongues in agony and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they refused to repent of what they had done."

-- Revelation 16:10-11

Original b&w published in the February/March, 1955 *Plain Truth*.
Above image © 1996 Monte Wolverton

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Earthquake and Volcanos

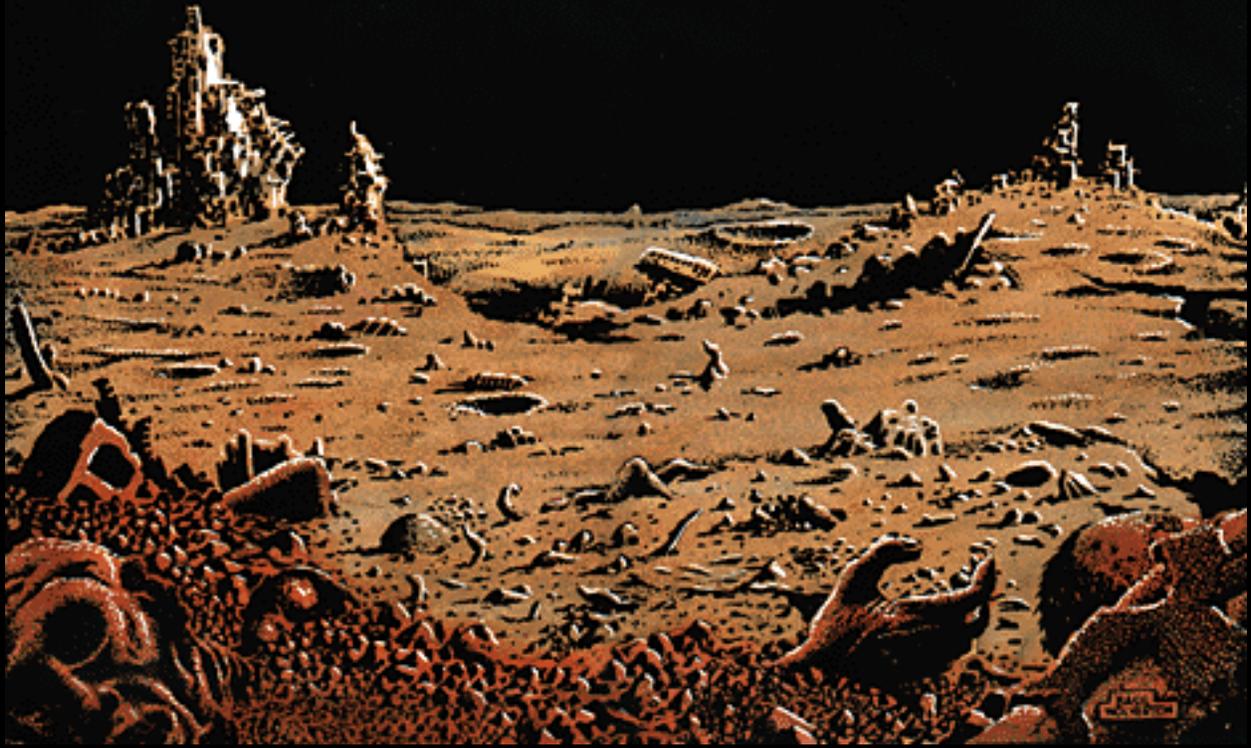
"The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and out of the temple came a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'It is done!' Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since man has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake."

-- Revelation 16:17-18

Original b&w published in January, 1955 *Plain Truth*, and *The Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last*, 1959.

Above image © 1998 Monte Wolverton

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Utter Destruction

"For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now - and never to be equalled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect, those days will be shortened."

-- Matthew 24:21-22

Original b&w published in 1975 in *Prophecy*, 1959.
Above image © 1998 Monte Wolverton

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