

HOPE through Prophecy



Lesson 3 – The End of the World

What did Jesus expect and counsel His followers to do before His return? 24:42-3; Mk. 13:35-37; Lk. 37-39; Rev. 3:3.

What kind of things are we to “watch” for? Matt. 16:2-3.

Politics

Jesus explained what signs in the political world should alert the believers, as well as non-believers, to the imminence of His second coming at the end of the world.

1. Fear, perplexity, and distress of nations. Luke 21:25-28.
2. Wars and rumors of wars. Matthew 24:6, 7; Joel 3:9-14; Revelation 11:18. The devil is the force behind all this strife, for he delights in war. He was a "murderer from the beginning." John 8:44.

Society

1. Increase in knowledge - of Biblical prophecy and of science - and development of rapid transportation. Daniel 12:4. The past 175 years stand apart from all previous history in terms of inventions, scientific achievement, and general learning. The use of electricity, motors, mass communication, and much more came into being only in the last century. Alongside this, the understanding of God's prophetic word has been opened. The books of Daniel and The Revelation are now readily understandable to the diligent searcher. And the Bible itself is today available worldwide for the spread of God's truth concerning the last events of this world.

2. In addition, men are running "to and fro" across the earth at unprecedented speeds and in a large variety of ways. The distances between continents has shrunk to where modern statesmen and businessmen can transact business in foreign capitals across the seas and then be back in their own offices by the next day. Through rapid communication, such as satellite transmission, messages can be flashed across and around the world in seconds.

3. Moral decay. Matthew 24:12; 1 Timothy 3:1-5. One only needs to walk down the streets of any major city today to see evidence of the very conditions which existed prior to the flood in Noah's day. See Matthew 24:37-39. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire for their immorality and godless pleasure seeking. See Genesis 18:20; 19:1-7, 13, 28, 29. The standards of human decency, the sacredness of the marriage relation and the home, modest dress, and upright behavior are all scoffed at and considered inappropriate in these modern times.

Nature

1. Earthquakes, famines, and pestilences. Revelation 6:12. Each year brings an increase in both the frequency of earthquakes, the areas affected by them, and their total intensity. Matthew 24:7." "It is estimated that there are now over 1,000 earthquakes every half day, but only a small proportion are felt. At least half of them are too small to be noticed, and many occur in oceans or unpopulated areas." - Collier's Encyclopedia, 1968 ed., vol. 8, p. 486.

Along with earthquakes, there are famines and pestilences. War, revolution, and drought are causes of famine and its suffering, even in developed countries which normally would not be subject to this scourge. Today the world is struggling for food supplies. Due to population growth and changing atmospheric conditions, food reserves are low and threaten severe problems in the event of weather problems.

Religion

1. Christ warned His disciples strongly against false Christs and teachers. See Matthew 24:4, 5; 2 Peter 3:3, 4.

2. Moral decay, as mentioned earlier, is on the increase. Men love pleasure more than God. 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

3. "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Matthew 24:12.

4. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matthew 14:14.