

IS THE END NEAR ?

TEXT: "So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." Matt. 24 : 33.

THE end will come sometime; the Judgment will set; probation will close; Christ will return. God has promised it. We believe it. Do you? Why may it not be near? Somebody will live to see it. Why not we? Do you say that you see no signs of its coming? The people in the days of Noah saw no signs of the flood, and yet it was right upon them. Matt. 24 : 38, 39. So it will be in the last days. "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." 2 Pet. 3 : 3, 4.

Reader, be careful that you do not fulfill this very prophecy yourself. Have you watched for the signs? Have you thought upon this subject? Do you know what the signs are to be? If they should come to pass, would you recognize them? Have you studied the Bible upon this point, or have you been so intent upon other matters that you have given this subject no thought? Or, if you have thought of it, has it been with anxiety

and effort to ascertain the truth? God does not force men to see and believe his truth.

The advent of Jesus is ignored and scoffed at by many. We warn you to be careful that that day does not come upon you unawares. In Dan. 2:31-44, God has given a prophetic outline of the history of the world, under the image of a man. Commencing with Babylon, there were to be four great kingdoms, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Grecia, and Rome, the last divided into ten parts. Then the end of the world should come. Please read that chapter. All admit that this prophecy is now fulfilled, except that part relating to the end. The great prophecy of the 2300 years of Dan. 8:14, pointing to the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary, the work of the Judgment, also ends about this time. See Scott, Fletcher, and others upon this question. There are ten distinct chains of prophecy in the Bible, each one pointing to the end of time and the setting up of God's kingdom. It is now generally admitted that we are in the last link of each of them. Many ministers in all denominations are now preaching the end near. All classes are expecting some great revolution soon to occur, though they know not what it is to be. See Luke 21:25-32.

In answer to the question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matt. 24:3, Jesus says, "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. Matt. 24:14. He does not say that all nations shall believe the gospel, be converted by it, and have a thousand years' millennium before the end. No; it is simply to be preached to all nations for a witness against them. *Then*, not a thousand years after, shall the end come. Every nation has now heard the gospel. The prophecy

of Jesus is fulfilled. Will his promise now fail? No, never. Then the end is at hand.

Another fact has a strong bearing on this question. The light of God's truth commenced in Asia. Steadily it has been making its course westward, till, like the sun, it has gone around the world. Asia had it first; next, Africa stretched out her hands to God; then Greece and Italy were lighted up by the labors of Paul and his successors, and the heart of Europe was warmed by the great Reformation, in the days of Luther. It has shone across the waters of the Atlantic, and lightened up America. And now, quite across this continent, yea, among all the islands of the Pacific, this light is shining clearly. The end has been reached, the globe has been girdled, all nations have heard; God's appointed time has come,—the harvest of the Lord.

As a definite sign of the end, and to show when the last generation has come, the Lord foretold that the sun and moon should be darkened, and that the stars should fall. This sign is made very prominent in the Bible, every time in the same order, with the same events following. See the following scriptures: "And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come." Joel 2:30, 31.

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send

his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

“Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.” Matt. 24:29-34.

“And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.” Luke 21:25-28.

“And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free-man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his

wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"
Rev. 6 : 12-17.

All three of these signs have been remarkably fulfilled. May 19, 1780, the sun was darkened according to the prophecy. Beginning to grow dark about the middle of the forenoon, it became so dark at noon that persons could not see to read without lighting their lamps. The Legislature of Connecticut, being in session, had to adjourn; it was so dark that the fowls went to roost; cattle came lowing to the barn-yard; frogs began to peep; the night-hawks came out, and everything bore the appearance of, and was shrouded with, the gloom of night. The uncommon darkness lasted fourteen hours, or till after midnight. It could not have been an eclipse of the sun, as the moon was full, and a total eclipse lasts only about five minutes. Scientific men have never been able to give a reason for it. So remarkable was this day that Noah Webster has noticed it in his dictionary as "THE DARK DAY." See Explanatory and Pronouncing Vocabulary of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary. That night, though the moon had fullled the day before, was so dark that white paper could not be distinguished from the blackest velvet a few inches from the eyes. One writer says it was so dark that the darkness could be felt. The general impression was that it was a sign of the day of God, and that the Judgment was at hand.

Nov. 13, 1833, the stars fell. Thousands are now living who witnessed that remarkable shower. Prof. Olmstead, the celebrated astronomer of Yale College, says, "Those who were so fortunate as to witness the exhibition of shooting stars on the morning of Nov. 13, 1833, probably saw the greatest display of celestial fire-works that has ever been seen since the creation of the world." So remarkable was the falling of the stars that

it is put down in books on physical geography, natural philosophy, and astronomy, as the most wonderful ever known. They fell thick and fast, like snow-flakes in a heavy storm. It looked as though the very heavens were raining balls of fire. This is just what the prophecy foretold. The Lord says, When you see these things, know that the end is near, even at the doors.

Modern spiritualism is another marked sign of the end. Many scriptures may be quoted plainly foretelling spiritualism, as the last sign just before the end. Here is one: "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief." Rev. 16:13-15. When is this to be? When Jesus is about to come as a thief in the night, and when the battle of that great day of God Almighty is at hand. Then the prophet says the spirits of devils will go everywhere over the world, working miracles to deceive the people. To the same effect see Matt. 24:23-27; 1 Tim. 4:1-3. 2 Thess. 2:8-12. Spiritualism arose in 1848. In about a quarter of a century, it made 10,000,000 converts, and it is spreading with wonderful rapidity. It does work miracles. It performs wonders. It claims to be the work of spirits. The Bible says that these spirits are the spirits of devils, and that this work is a sign of the end at hand.

Wonderful storms by sea and land, and earthquakes are to be another sign of the end. See Luke 21:25; Rev. 11:18, 19; 16:17-21. Every observer must be aware that the last few years have been remarkable in this very respect. Of

the frequency of earthquakes, the *Christian Statesman*, of July 17, 1875, says, "The continued occurrence and great severity of earthquakes has distinguished the period in which we are now living above all others since the records of such phenomena began to be generally observed." The *New York Observer* says, "There has been a perfect epidemic of sad disasters by storm and flood during the present summer." Look at the terrible fires, destructive floods, fearful storms of thunder and lightning, which have occurred in the last few years. These are only precursors of the wrath of God which is soon to destroy a guilty world. And they are fast increasing.

A spirit of war, and great preparations for war, were to be another sign of the end. See Rev. 11:18; Joel 3:9-15. Now look over the world. See the vast military camps. Not less than five millions of soldiers are in arms. See the wonderful preparations for war everywhere, the terrible weapons of destruction which are being formed. Says a secular paper, "From every quarter of the globe come rumors of wars or of warlike preparations." Again, "The nations are arming as if with a prophetic understanding that a terrible and portentous crisis is at hand." They are preparing for the battle of the great day.

Religiously, the professed church of Christ is in just the condition foretold in the Bible as another sign of the end near. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from

such turn away." 2 Tim. 3:1-5. Particularly were love of money, love of pleasure, formality, etc., to be prevalent sins among those professing godliness. This was to be the condition of things. Alas, the picture is but too truly filled up. The old simplicity and the power of God have died out of the churches. They are asleep, dreaming of a temporal millennium. Their pastors are fattening on high salaries, and feasting with the ungodly, while they are mocking at the coming of the Lord. Matt. 24:42-51. Yet, all over the land, in every city, through the villages, out in the country, everywhere, is heard the solemn message of warning. "The Lord is coming; the Judgment is at hand; the day of wrath is near." For nearly forty years this solemn cry has been sounding through the land, though hated and disbelieved by the great mass, just as Jesus said it would be. See Matt. 24:37. "Can ye not discern the signs of the times?"

Reader, stop; open your eyes, and give attention. Look at this subject. We warn you, if you do not, you will soon repent of it. Are you ready? Are you reconciled to God? Are you prepared to meet your Judge? In the words of the apostle we warn you: "Beware therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets: Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." Acts 13:40, 41.

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