

The End of The World

Holocaust or Harmony

“The end of the world” is often expressed in humor as well as in fear, yet its reality is readily speculated but little understood. World conditions point to uncertainty. Scientists foresee problems occurring for many reasons because of human living patterns. Society rebels at the lack of control we have over the deterioration of our planet. Yet so many fool themselves or blindly accept the inevitable as part of modern living.

Will the world end by a holocaust of nuclear reaction, or planets careering out of control, a failure of the ozone layer, scorching and wasting of the land, or freezing the land into another "ice age"? Will we eventually destroy ourselves by over population and abuse of our natural environment?

Or, are we on the verge of great reforms and discoveries to heal social disharmony and bring prosperity, restoration and protection of our natural environment, or restoration of the rights and principles of life, to herald in the thousand years of peace?

If left to themselves, which way will humanity go? How will the scales balance? What will trigger the switch?

The answer is clear if we wholly trust in God's Word. It explains when, how and why the end of the world will come.

Prophecies About the End of the World

The prophet Ezekiel saw the world's end coming, not with peace, but much trouble! “Also, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord God unto the land of Israel; An end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land. . . . Thus saith the Lord God; An evil, an only evil, behold, is come. An end is come, the end is come: it watcheth for thee; behold, it is come. The morning is come unto thee, O thou that dwellest in the land: the time is come, the day of trouble is near, and not the sounding again of the mountains.” Ezekiel 7:2, 5-7.

Bible prophecies of the end of the world are always connected with the second coming of Christ. The disciples understood that the end of the world was coming and that it was connected with the Saviour's return: “. . . Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” Matthew 24:3.

When Jesus explained the parable of the wheat and tares (i.e., the children of God and the children of the evil one), He said that: “. . . the harvest is the end of the world . . .” Matthew 13:39.

Considerable instruction and many prophecies have been given that we may know what is to take place. Signs may be seen today. Therefore nobody should be ignorant.

Signs of the “Time of the End”

1. Signs in the Political World

Many nations in the world are expending efforts to place themselves in a prominent position. Violence and wars, armament and military might are a sad fact of life.

“But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by. Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.” Luke 21:9, 10.

Prophecy foretells that the most insignificant countries would take part in demonstrating their power to maintain their so-called, major position: “Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong.” Joel 3:9, 10.

While prominent representatives discuss the existing problems among the nations to establish treaties, their own countries stockpile their arsenals and drill their armies for war.

“For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them.” 1 Thessalonians 5:3.

2. Signs in the Social World

“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 Timothy 3:1-5.

People during the last days will think mainly of eating and drinking, parties, sports, the cares of this life, and forget God and salvation: “And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.” Luke 17:26-30.

Enmity among individuals will increase, with a total lack of natural affection, even among family members: “Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.” Mark 13:12.

Strikes, unemployment and extortion will exist. On one hand, there will be large fortunes and on the other hand, great poverty: “Go to now, ye rich men, weep and, howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just and he doth not resist you.” James 5:1-6.

Love toward God and fellow beings is almost extinguished.

3. Signs in the Religious World

“And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.” Luke 21:8.

The truth of God’s word would be appreciated by only a faithful few. Most of the inhabitants of the earth would take heed of fantasies and imaginations rather than true godliness: “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” 2 Timothy 4:3, 4.

Before the end of the world the compromise of pure truth will prepare the religious world for accepting false worship: “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4.

Scoffers would come and laugh at the Bible teaching about the end of the world: “Knowing this first, that 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 Peter 3:3, 4.

Although most people are not interested in religion, there are a few who still keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. Despite opposition they preach the Gospel to the world: “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 24:14.

4. Signs in the Scientific World

Scientific knowledge was suppressed for centuries. The Dark Ages of 538 to 1798 have left their sad record. Since 1798 great inventions and knowledge have increased rapidly: Daniel the prophet was told by an angel that this would happen: “But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” Daniel 12:4.

The following select list of inventions illustrates the reality: gaslight, 1798; vaccine, 1798; steam printing press, 1803; steamer (ship), 1807; loom, 1808; railway engine, 1814; phosphorus, 1820; photograph, 1822; harvester, 1834; electrotpe, 1837; telegraph, 1837; bicycle, 1840; sewing machine, 1846; submarine, 1854; typewriter, 1867; DDT, 1874; telephone, 1876; electric light, 1878; motorcycle, 1885; linotype 1886; tram, 1889; automobile, 1895; aspirin, 1893; x-ray, 1895; cinematograph, 1895; wireless telegraph, 1896; aeroplane, 1906; wireless telephone, 1915; radio, 1921; radar, 1922; television, 1928; penicillin, 1928; nylon, 1930; helicopter, 1936; atomic bomb, 1939; computer, 1940; jet propulsion, 1941; atomic energy, 1942; transistor, 1944; supersonic aeroplane, 1944; solar battery, 1954; spacecraft, 1957; laser, 1958; video tape recorder, 1958; 1st man in space, 1961; electronic watch space station, 1962; electronic calculator, 1963; man on the moon, 1969; floppy disk recorder, 1970; x-ray scanner, RAM chip, micro computer, 1972; pocket TV, 1977; personal computer, 1981.

5. Signs in Nature

“For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.” Isaiah 13:10.

This prophecy was repeated by Jesus: “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.” Matthew 24:29.

These signs of the sun, moon, and stars have been exactly fulfilled. On May 19, 1780, about 10 a.m. the sun started getting dark and at noon it was as dark as night. People and animals retreated for home with great foreboding. Objects could not be distinguished except by candle light and then but dimly. Scientists could not explain the phenomenon, but those who read the Bible were able to understand that this was the fulfilment of the Word of God.

That same night the moon became as red as blood, exactly as written in the words of the prophets.

Fifty-three years after the dark day, the next sign was fulfilled in the falling of the stars. Although we understand it as falling meteors, the continuous stream of falling stars persisted from 9 p.m., and daylight obscured the spectacle. The people at that time thought the end had come. The phenomenon could be seen from the Gulf of Mexico to Halifax (Canada). The Lord said these were signs which would herald the “time of the end.”

Besides these things there would occur frightful calamities that would make the hearts of men fail for fear.

“And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.” Luke 21:11.

The greatest earthquake that has ever happened was the Lisbon earthquake, which occurred in 1755. Since then earthquakes have occurred with increasing frequency.

As we come closer to the end, we see droughts of fearful magnitude, floodings with frightening consequences, cyclones bringing devastation. All these are signs telling us how close we are to the end. These are God’s judgments which at present are still mixed with mercy.

It is the purpose of God to warn people and to give them opportunity for repentance, that they may be prepared for the end of the world.

How Will This World End?

Only the sure word of prophecy can tell us how our world will come to its end. It will not come according to the suppositions of scientists but according to the word of God. “But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. . . . But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” 2 Peter 3:7, 10.

It is not possible in our world for justice and righteousness to abide together. Therefore the Lord will bring this world to an end in justice. Then He will make a new world in righteousness where the redeemed can dwell: "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter 3:13.

This very planet, after being purified and freed from sin and all evil, will be the earth made new.

Whether we are prepared, or unprepared, the end of the world will come. Will you be ready?