

### SIGNS OF JESUS RETURN

#### Sharing

1. Many people look at the troubles in the world around us and are terrified of what is coming on the world. Others see the events as signs of Jesus' soon return. How do you see the events happening all around us?
  - Discuss your answer: \_\_\_\_\_
2. We can't set a day and an hour for Jesus' return, but can we extrapolate from current events an approximate 'season' of His coming?
  - Explain: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Many very intelligent scientists scoff at the idea of an end to the world and view it as mere panic-mongering. There is even a popular song, "*It's The End of the World As we Know It (and I feel fine)*" by REM that mocks the end of the world. What is your opinion?
  - Discuss: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Studying

4. We are living in a period of time that is of overwhelming interest to all. Thousands observe the intensity that is taking possession of every earthly element, and they realize that something great and decisive is about to happen—it appears that the world is on the verge of a most tremendous crisis. Should God's people be fearful?
  - Read John 14:1-3 "“Let not your heart be \_\_\_\_\_; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.” Even in the midst of trouble, God wants the hearts of His faithful people to remain calm because He is greater than whatever event we are experiencing.
5. No man knows when the world will end. The day and the hour was not even communicated by the Father to the human nature of His Son, Jesus (Matthew 24:36). We cannot set dates for the end of the world. However, we are instructed by God's Word to know the 'season' when the coming of Jesus Christ is near.
  - Read Matthew 24:32,33 "Now learn this arable from the fig tree. When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these \_\_\_\_\_, know that it is near—at the doors!"
6. We find signs of Jesus' coming in Matthew 24 with parallel passages in Mark 13 and Luke 21 in 2 Timothy 3:15 and elsewhere in Scripture.
7. **Major signs that have already occurred:**
  - **Destruction of Jerusalem:** Matthew 24:1-3; 15-20. Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70 .
  - **Dark Ages of Tribulation:** Matthew 24:21,22. This was the 1260 year prophecy: A.D. 538-1798.
  - **Signs in the heavens.** Matthew 24:29. The Dark day occurred on May 19, 1780. The stars fell on November 13, 1833. (Compare Joel 2:10,31; Amos 8:9; Isaiah 13:10; Mark 13:24,25; Luke 21:25; Acts 2:20; Revelation 6:12,13.

## 9. Signs that are happening today:

- **Read Daniel 12:4** “But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall \_\_\_\_\_.”
- ⇒ **Many run to and fro:** For thousands of years, the fastest mode of transportation was on the back of a horse at a maximum speed of about 25 mph. Now man has traveled over 25,000 mph on the way to the moon. Over 1 billion people fly each day in the world. There are over 18 million flights in the world per year. About 1,000 flights cross the Atlantic every day. These flights alone total about 400,000 flights a year. The US alone has 45 airlines. This prophecy certainly is being fulfilled.
- ⇒ **Knowledge shall increase:** According to Norman Edmund, founder of the Edmund Scientific Company with computers and the internet, the accessibility of information and knowledge is doubling every year and, at the present rate, will double every 73 days by the year 2020. In the past 150 years our nation has moved from the industrial society, to the informational society to the, digital society. Knowledge has most assuredly increased. We must also see the fulfillment of this prophecy in the fact that BIBLICAL knowledge also has increased. Today, because of history, we see the accuracy of the fulfillment of Daniel’s prophecies and we understand them.
- **Read Matthew 24:4,5** ““Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My \_\_\_\_\_, saying, I am the Christ, and will deceive many.”
- **Read 1 Timothy 4:1** “In latter times some will depart from the \_\_\_\_\_, giving heed to deceiving spirits.” (Revelation 16:14 tells us they are the spirits of demons.)
- ⇒ **False prophets (teaching false doctrines):** The growing religion of Spiritism in the world. In 1897 they claimed 8 million members. Today there is an estimated one billion or more believers with thousands of churches in every country of the world. This movement has adopted practices of many Christian religions. For example some of them Pentecostal charismatic practices and adopt prayers from Catholicism like ‘Hail Mary’ or they adopt Jewish prayers. Meditation is important and they believe in a spirit guide for each person. The churches vary from culture to culture but there are three points upon which they are all united: 1: Belief in God as a higher power; 2: immortality of the soul; 3: belief in communication with the dead; 4: ecumenical unity. This movement is fulfilling prophecy. GC p. 557 “...*Spiritualism is now changing its form and...is assuming a Christian guise.*”
- ⇒ From this base of millions and millions of adherents who are conditioned to believe that the dead aren’t *really* dead (see programs 15 and 16) Satan has designed a platform from which to deceive the entire world. Satan will come as an angel of light and billions of people will be deceived.
- **Read Matthew 24:6,7** “And you will hear of wars and rumors of \_\_\_\_\_ . See that you are not troubled for all these things must come to pass but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.”
- ⇒ **Wars and rumors of wars:** In World War I there were 20 million killed. In World War II there were 50 million killed. Today we have the unique power, for the first time in history, to blow ourselves up—to destroy the world through nuclear weapons.
- **Read James 5:4,8** “The wages of the laborers...which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the \_\_\_\_\_. Be patient...for the coming of the Lord is at hand.”
- ⇒ **Trouble between capital and labor:** Trouble between capital and labor, between those who have money and those who need it, is predicted for the last days. All you have to do is turn on the news and watch the protests against Wall Street and listen to the clamor of people rallying against big business for fulfillment of this prophecy.

# BIBLE BREAKTHROUGH

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- **Read Matthew 24:7** "...And there will be famines..."
  - ⇒ **Famines:** In 1995-1998 over 2,000,000 people died from famine in Korea. There are 6,000,000 million people who starve to death each year in the world. It is estimated that 13,000 children go to bed hungry in the United States each night. We praise God for all who help feed the hungry!
- **Read Matthew 24:7** "...And there will be famines and pestilences..."
  - ⇒ **Pestilences:** Pestilences refer to diseases of all kinds that would be severe and unusual just before Jesus comes. When we look at the world-wide increase in cancer, and the nearly 50 million people who are suffering from aids we see this prophecy is being fulfilled. Each year there are new strains of viruses that our scientists struggle to control and suppress in order to save lives. Jesus truly saw the future!
- **Read Matthew 24:7** "...And there will be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in various places."
  - ⇒ **Earthquakes:** For years Christianity preached that the great Lisbon earthquake of 1755 was a sign of the end because it destroyed over 10,000 people. Let's just look at earthquakes within the past 10 years: in 2004, Sumatra lost 227,000. In Pakistan in 2005, 86,000 died. In China in 2008, over 70,000 lost their lives. In Haiti, in 2011, over 250,000 perished. This prophecy is being fulfilled.
- **Read Luke 21:25** "...and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the \_\_\_\_\_ roaring;"
  - ⇒ **Tsunamis:** In 2004 in the Indian ocean there was a 9.1 magnitude under water earthquake that lasted almost 10 minutes that triggered a tsunami with waves 98 feet high. 230,000 people were killed in 14 countries. In 2011 an earthquake in the pacific ocean, 9.0 magnitude produced waves 133 feet high and hit Japan, moving 6 miles inland. This quake moved Hoshu, the largest island in Japan, 8 feet to the east and shifted earth on its axis between 4 and 10 inches. It left 16,000 dead, 4,000 missing and 27,000 injured. The prophecy of the sea and waves roaring was literally fulfilled.
- **Read 2 Timothy 3:1-4** "In the last days...men will be lovers of \_\_\_\_\_...unloving...without self-control...despisers of good...having a form of godliness but denying its power."
  - ⇒ **Immoral, self-centered and godless:** We currently live in a culture obsessed with our looks, sex, and unrestrained emotional impulses to have anything we want—immediately. We tell ourselves, 'We deserve it.' The fall out is that we are impossible to live with (therefore the divorce rate is very high), we are miserable because we don't realize that the fault lies within our godless minds (therefore the suicide rate is the highest in history), and we're inundated in debt from which we will never recover. Nothing short of coming to the Lord will stem the tide of the evil that engulfs us.
- **Read 2 Timothy 3:1-4:** "...men will be...lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of \_\_\_\_\_. Having a form of godliness but denying its power..."
  - ⇒ **Pleasure-lovers:** Our world has gone crazy for pleasure. Only a very small number of our citizens attend churches regularly, yet most claim to be Christians. If they do attend church on Sunday, they then go about their business, shopping or attending amusements in the afternoon. Americans jam pleasure resorts, ball parks, stadiums and concert events. Pleasure-mad Americans waste billions of hours in front of the television set in direct fulfillment of 2 Timothy 3:4. In the last 5 years Carnival Cruise Lines made 11.3 BILLION dollars in profit. Las Vegas draws 38 million people to their hotels each year and there are 18,000 conventions there each year. Sixteen million people go to Disney World each year—averaging about 44,000/day. America loves to have fun!

- **Read Matthew 24:12** “And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will wax \_\_\_\_\_.”
  - ⇒ **Lawlessness:** One of the strangest phenomenon of our times are children killing children without remorse. Violent television and violent video games play a significant role, psychologists say. Kids learn to kill without consequences. Another current trend is mothers who kill their children. More than 200 mothers kill their children each year. 50 years ago, that wasn’t even imaginable. Today everyone locks their doors at night for a reason! We all recognize that nobody is safe without the protection of God’s angels around us. (Psalm 91:11 “For He shall give His angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways.”)
- **Read 2 Peter 3:3** “Knowing this first, that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to 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 \_\_\_\_\_.’”
  - ⇒ **Scoffers:** Psychiatry and pseudo-intellectuals have replaced the Bible in men’s thinking. Even religious leaders and teachers give heed to theories of evolution and other manmade, false teachings. There has been an explosion of people worldwide who now declare themselves atheists. About 85% of folks in Sweden say they are atheists; 65% in Japan; and 9% in the U.S.
  - ⇒ **Just like Noah’s day:** “As it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of man. They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.” (Luke 17:26,27 RSV.)
- **Read Matthew 24:14** “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world, as a witness to all nations, and then the \_\_\_\_\_ will come.”
- **Gospel goes to the world:** Satellite-based telecommunication now provides the world with instant communication. English has rapidly become the global language, particularly at the world’s airports where pilots and air-traffic controllers almost exclusively use English. The plethora of language translation software opens unprecedented communication between nations!

The Word of God has been translated into 4,697 of the world’s 6,905 languages. In 1999, Wycliff estimated that it would take 150 years to translate the Bible into the remaining 2,200 languages. But the technological advances in electronic translation have caused them to revise their estimate. They now estimate that the Bible will be published in every language in less than 15 years.

Satellites, the internet, international cell phones, radios, television and teleconferencing, Skype, instant messaging—almost of all of this unknown 20 years ago—have made the world a virtual neighborhood. The gospel is going to the entire world faster than anyone could have imagined 20 years ago—in direct fulfillment of prophecy.

- **Read Ecclesiastes 9:5,10** “For the living know that they will die, but the dead know \_\_\_\_\_. Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.”
  - ⇒ **Our death prior to Jesus’ return:** Regardless of all the signs mentioned in this lesson—and there are more signs in the Bible that are not listed due to space—emphasis must be placed on the fact that if we die prior to Jesus return, *at that* moment our fate is sealed and, so far as we are concerned, Jesus has come—there will be no second chance after our death.

*“We are living in the time of the end. The fast-fulfilling signs of the times declare that the coming of Christ is near at hand. The days in which we live are solemn and important. The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth...The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude.” (9T 11.1)*

10. Jesus is longing to come back to earth and rescue His people. Those who love Him can hardly wait for this great event. They want to be united with their Savior. It is very sad that so many will reject His love, mercy and grace and **choose** to be lost. Salvation is a choice.
- Read Mark 13:33-37 Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will \_\_\_\_\_. It is like a man traveling abroad. He leaves home and places his servants in charge, each with his work, and orders the gatekeeper to be on the watch. Watch, therefore; you do not know when the lord of the house is coming, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning. May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to all, "Watch!"

## Applying this lesson

11. The need for preparation for Christ's coming, of being ready to meet Him face to face, is the real purpose of all the signs set forth in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 and many other places in the Bible.
- After studying this lesson I understand that Jesus wants His followers to watch for the signs and be on alert for every indication of His return.
  - \_\_\_\_\_A check mark at left indicates that I will watch and pray each day because I choose to be ready when He comes.
12. For one-hundred and twenty years Noah, warned by God, preached of universal destruction by a flood, yet the antediluvians were surprised when the awful disaster struck them.
- It is obvious that the same condition exists in the world today as existed in Noah's day.
  - \_\_\_\_\_A check mark at left indicates that I believe that God cleansed the earth by flood in Noah's day because He could no longer tolerate the wickedness of the people and I believe that He will come again to put an end to sin and redeem His saints from this earth.
13. Jesus will not come in the clouds of glory until the gospel is preached to the entire world. For the first time in history mankind has the technology to place the written Word of God into the hands of every language group in the world.
- I understand that the final sign before Jesus comes will be the gospel preached to the whole world.
  - \_\_\_\_\_A check mark at left indicates that I will do all in my power, personally, to reach others with the gospel message.