

THE SIGNS



ARE TODAY'S HEADLINES FULFILLING **BIBLE PROPHECY?**

He was at the end of his rope. In the past year, he had lost everything important to him—his business, his money, and his position in the community. A freak accident left him facing months of painful recovery and stripped him of everything that he valued. Deciding that death was preferable to life, Ruben prepared to end it all. Just as he was ready to slash his wrists, his radio spontaneously changed channels. He stopped in his tracks. His radio had never changed channels by itself before! As he listened, Ruben heard a message of hope. Ruben discovered that life, even without money and prestige, was worth living. Ruben met a Friend who would never leave him, and discovered the happiness of following Jesus Christ.

Ruben had listened to the very first AWR broadcast in Argentina. The radio channel went live at the exact moment Ruben was ready to end his life.

**ALL OVER THE WORLD, PEOPLE
ARE SHARING THIS GOOD NEWS.
WHETHER YOU LIVE IN THE CITIES
OF THE **UNITED STATES**, OR THE
RURAL JUNGLES OF THE AMAZON,
GOD'S LAST DAY MESSAGE OF
HOPE IS FOR YOU.**

A GLIMPSE OF MATTHEW 24

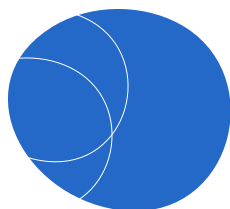
Back during the time of the Babylonian empire, the king dreamed a dream of an image. Outlined in Daniel chapter 2, it depicts a mammoth statue that contains the answer key to the history of the world's nations and kingdoms. Looking back over the history of our world, we see that kingdoms have come and gone, just as the image predicted. Now we see ourselves in the toes of this Biblical image, in the very last days of this world's history, and we ask the obvious question, "What comes next?"

This question has perplexed thinkers throughout history. In fact, right before His death, Jesus' disciples questioned Him about this very thing.

In **Matthew 24:3**, they asked,

When shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?

The disciples were gathered on the Mount of Olives, overlooking the temple of Jerusalem. In their minds, the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world would happen simultaneously. Jesus had talked about the destruction of Jerusalem, and they wanted to know more. As Jesus answered their questions, He shared events that would transpire before His return.



The **signs of the second coming** that Jesus shared tell us what the religious, political, and social environment of the world will be like right before Christ's return. They help us to understand natural disasters that are taking place around us, as well as why the continuous search for world peace is so elusive.



Are any of these signs happening? Is this current global pandemic part of the conversation that Jesus shared so long ago? How can we be sure we are ready for Christ's return?



SIGNS IN THE RELIGIOUS ENVIRONMENT

In **Matthew 24:11**, Jesus warned that in the last days **“many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.”** It’s easy to think, “Oh, I can’t be deceived—that warning must be for other people.” Yet, Jesus goes on to say, in verse 24, that even the “very elect” have a chance of being deceived.

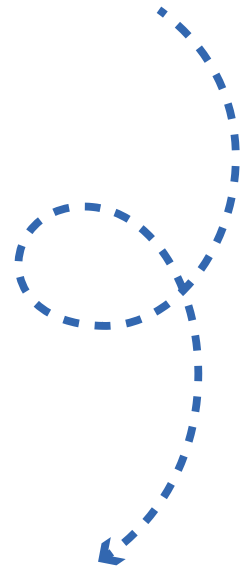
One of the things we know for sure is that God will never lie. In fact, His character is such that it is impossible for Him to lie (Titus 1:2). Unfortunately, false prophets and false christs will work with every deception and lie that they can manufacture so that they can make their deceptions believable.

We must be hyper-vigilant to make sure we do not fall for any of their lies. We don’t want to be deceived about the **great day** of the Lord’s second coming. This is a life-and-death concern, and we don’t want to take any chances with deception.

On one of his missionary trips, the **Apostle Paul** found that the believers in Berea were more studious than the believers he had just taught in Thessalonica, **“in that they (the Bereans) received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”** (Acts 17:11). We must be like the Bereans, and make sure that our beliefs are in line with what the Bible teaches.

Is it possible that those who claim to work for God could be “false prophets”? Is it possible that a miracle that we can see with our eyes may not be from God? Again, we must return to the word of God for answers. Jesus spoke to His disciples, **“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).

How can we tell if someone is a false teacher? Looking at the Bible once more, in **1 John 2:4**, we learn the criteria for a true teacher: **“He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in Him.”** God’s teachers will always agree with God’s written word. **Because God can’t lie, His Word stands the test of time and the changes of culture. The Bible is the ultimate guide for finding truth about the end of time and how we can be ready for Christ’s return.**



SIGNS IN THE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

Jesus told His disciples that in the last days, **nation would rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom.** Men would try to legislate peace, only to have war and rumors of wars continuously break out all over the world. In looking back over the last century, we see the fulfillment of this sign of the end times. No sooner has one war ceased, and countries made agreements to be peaceful, than war has broken out in another place. So much strife and bloodshed! So many good men and women are losing their lives in these conflicts.

From wars fought by soldiers on horses with swords and spears, to the sophisticated technology of today, knowledge has increased, and war has become an art. War, and the technology behind war, has advanced to such a place that we have enough weapons to totally annihilate one another.

Attempts at world peace, while laudable, have not succeeded. War has taken its awful toll on every generation in recent history. Jesus says, **“all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.”**



SIGNS IN THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

He goes on to say, ***"and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places"*** (Matthew 24:7). In the last hundred years, we have seen a marked increase in natural disasters. Earthquakes, tornados, hurricanes—these disasters continue to rock our world at an ever-increasing rate of frequency. In 2019, 40 billion dollars was spent on weather disasters alone!

The word "pestilence" is defined as a contagious or infectious epidemic disease that is poisonous and lethal. COVID-19 fits neatly into this definition, as well as many other outbreaks we've seen. The lives it has claimed, the fear it has created, and the hunger and famine that are resulting from it are all indicators that it is a sign of Christ's soon return.



SIGNS IN THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Does the current moral climate indicate anything about the nearness of **Christ's return**? In **Matthew 24:37**, Jesus said that ***"as the days of Noe (Noah) were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."*** What was it like in the pre-flood world? People were self-absorbed and unwilling to listen to Noah's urgent warnings. Even the miraculous appearance of animals entering the ark without human intervention failed to arouse them to a sense of urgency.

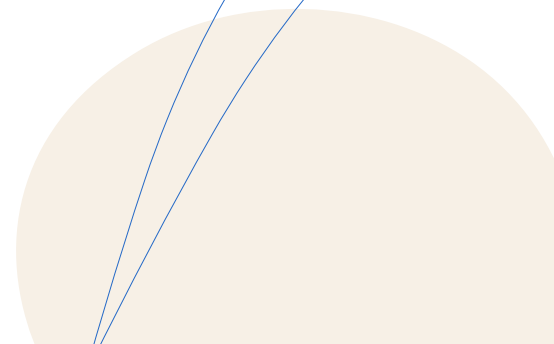
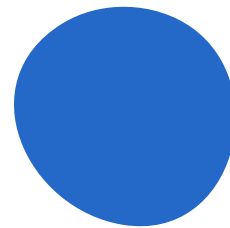
In Noah's day, people were interested in partying, in pursuing their own pleasure, and in trusting their own ideas of what the future held. The unbelievably sad truth is that all of those people, except for eight, perished in a worldwide flood. This was totally unnecessary! Every single person had an opportunity to avoid death by joining Noah and his family in the ark. Noah preached and miraculous signs confirmed the

truth of his words. Unfortunately, people were too busy to listen and too absorbed in their own plans to take his message to heart.

When you look at the climate of today's society, there are many similarities to Noah's time. We are a culture that desires instant gratification, wanting what we want when we want it, and we are ***"lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God"*** (2 Timothy 3:4).

Many times we are so busy that we don't take the time to search God's Word carefully for what He wants for our lives. The day of the Lord is fast approaching, and yet people turn a deaf ear to any mention of God and His truth.

This pandemic has caused many people to consider what lies beyond the next entertainment opportunity or the next career milestone. Let's consider these vital truths, take them to heart, and choose to be among those who will stand with Jesus Christ.

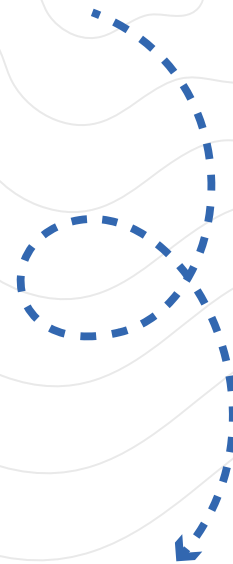
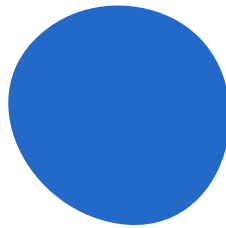


THE PARABLE OF THE FIG TREE

After Jesus shared the signs of His coming, He told His disciples the parable of the fig tree. It was common knowledge that when you saw the leaves come out on a fig tree, summer was just around the corner. So, Jesus said, ***“When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand”*** (Luke 21:31).

We certainly can see that many of the signs Jesus mentioned have happened. He tells us that ***“when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh”*** (Luke 21:28).

This is His promise: when we see these things, we can rejoice to know that we will soon see our Lord Jesus Christ, coming in the clouds of heaven.



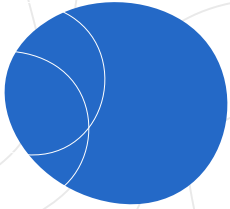
THIS GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM...

As Jesus continued to share with His disciples, He gave a promise and a commission. In **Matthew 24:14**, He stated, ***“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”*** God wants every nation and kingdom to hear the good news of His love and His salvation. He has dedicated men and women who are committed to **preach the gospel** to every person on earth.

The mission of our Lord Jesus Christ is to make sure that every person who is open to deciding for Him will have the opportunity to make that decision. The Apostle Peter tells us, in **2 Peter 3:9**,

that God is ***“not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”***

As we eagerly wait for the return of Christ, as we see signs of His soon coming being fulfilled all around us, we can rejoice that God is working to make sure that every person has a chance to accept His invitation to be part of the **kingdom of God**. He will do everything He can to make sure that people hear this **gospel of the kingdom**, and have the opportunity to follow Him. He wants all of us in heaven with Him forever. **He wants to be our Friend, and to save us for eternity.**



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

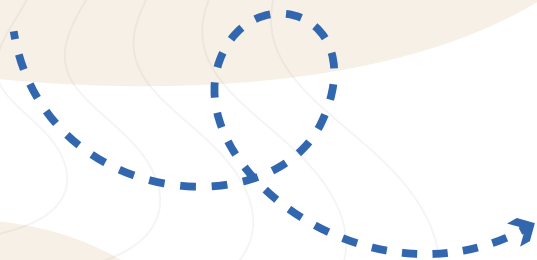
Don't be scared by the signs of His soon coming. Jesus offers hope. He offers salvation. He offers you a relationship with Him that will protect you from deception. His heart longs for you to make the decision to choose Him. He came to this earth and became the **Son of Man** to show us the way to live so that we could join Him for eternity.

As you discover **Bible prophecy** and discern the signs of Christ's soon return, would you like to acknowledge, "Yes, Jesus, I believe you are coming soon"? Do you want to be ready for the **great day** of His coming?

Is there anything in your life that would keep you from being ready? It's time to surrender that thing to Jesus. It's time to accept His invitation of hope and peace.

NEED PRAYER?

HAVE QUESTIONS?



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