

Bible Doctrines

Those who crucified Christ will be raised just previous to His coming in order to see Him appear as Christ told them at the time they condemned Him to death. Matthew 26; 64; Daniel 12: 2.

Matthew 25: 31

All the angels will accompany Christ. Matthew 24:31.

Matthew 16:27

The Second Advent will be an event of magnificent [Luke 9:26] glory.

3. Events Connected with the Second Advent.

(a) The righteous dead will be raised. 1 Thessalonians 4: 16; 1 Corinthians 15: 22, 23.

(b) The righteous living will be made immortal and caught up with those who are resurrected to meet Christ in the air. 1 Thessalonians 4: 17; 1 Corinthians 15: 51-53; Matthew 24: 31.

(c) All unbelievers will be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's appearing. Luke 17:26-30;
2 Thessalonians 1: 7-10; Revelation 1:7; 6:14-17; 2 Thessalonians 2: 8.

(d) The earth will be devastated. Revelation 6: 14; 16: 17-21; Psalm 50:3-5; Isaiah 24.

4. Warnings and Admonitions in View of the Second Advent.

Matthew 24: 44. Be ready.

Mark 13: 32-37. Watch and pray.

1 Thessalonians 5: 1-6. Let us not sleep in spiritual things.

1 Thessalonians 5: 23. Be sanctified, or holy in life.

MEMORIZE: John 14: 1-3.

Questions on the Lesson

1. How did Christ assure us of His Second Advent?
2. What promise was made at the time of Christ's ascension?
3. What shows that Christ's promise to come again did not refer to the coming of the Holy Spirit?
4. How are Christians to relate themselves to the promise of Christ's return?
5. What is the last promise in the Bible? How did the one who wrote it respond to it?
6. Show that the doctrine of the Second Advent is a primary doctrine of scripture.
7. What statements were made by the following which show that they anticipated the Second Advent:
Enoch, Job, David, Isaiah?
8. How and why did Jesus stress the importance of knowing the manner in which Christ will appear?
9. What false views will some advocate concerning the appearance of Christ?
10. Describe the manner of the Second Advent.
11. What events will occur at the Second Advent?
12. What admonitions does Christ give in view of His coming? How does Paul give similar instruction?
13. How fully are we to be prepared for Christ's return?

For Further Study

1. Notice the prominence of the doctrine of the Second Advent in the Epistles to the Thessalonians.
2. Who are the "saints" referred to in Jude 14?
3. How is the destruction of the unprepared of the last days brought about?
4. Why is Christ coming again? Give Scripture support for your reasons.
5. What features of the Second Advent would Satan be unable to counterfeit?
6. How do you suppose men in the last days will be saying "peace and safety"?

35. SIGNS OF CHRIST'S RETURN

1. The Nearness of the Second Advent Can Be Known

Although the exact day and hour of Christ's return to this world has not been revealed, the Lord expects His followers to know when His coming is near at hand. In order that His people may know when to expect His return, he has told them of certain events and conditions which they may recognize as omens

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or signs that His coming is near. We should acquaint ourselves with these signs and be able to recognize them when they appear.

- Matthew 16: 1-3. The Jewish leaders were condemned for their failure to recognize the signs of the times which were connected with the first advent.
- Matthew 24: 3. The disciples inquired, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the world?"
- Matthew 24: 4. Jesus answered their inquiry by outlining a series of signs leading tip to the end.
- Matthew 24: 32-35. By observing the signs we are to know when Christ's coming is near.
- Matthew 24: 36. The day, and hour of Christ's appearance have not been revealed. (Mark 13: 32.)

2. Signs in the National World.

- Matthew 24: 6, 7. Strife will exist among the nations.
- Luke 21: 25-27. Nations will be distressed and perplexed, fearful at what is coming on the world.
- Revelation 11:18. The close of earth's history will be marked by the anger of nations and by the devastation of the earth by man.

3. Signs in the Social World.

- Matthew 24: 12. Iniquity shall abound. "Because wickedness is multiplied." (R.S.V.)
- Matthew 24: 37-39. Men will be so interested in material things that God is forgotten. (Cf. Genesis 6: 5, 11-11)
- 2 Timothy 3: 1-5. Prevailing wickedness will be widespread under a form of godliness.
- 2 Timothy 3: 13. Evil will increase.

4. Signs in the Religious World.

- 2 Timothy 3: -5. Men will practice the forms of religion, but fail to manifest its power in their lives. "Keeping up the forms of religion, but resisting its influence." (Goodspeed's translation.)
- Matthew 24: 11. Many, false prophets shall arise.
- Matthew 24: 23, 26. Reports will be made that Christ has appeared.
- Matthew 24: 24. Miracles will be performed by false messiahs and false prophets.
- 1 Timothy 4: 1. Many will be influenced by evil spirits. (Revelation 16:13, 14.)
- Revelation 13: 3, 8. All the world will render homage to the power of papal Rome except those whose names are in the book of life.
- Matthew 24: 9, 10. The righteous will be persecuted.
- Matthew 24: 14. The message of Christ's kingdom will be sounded in all the world. (Revelation 14: 6, 7.)
- 2 Peter 3: 3, 4. Men will scoff at the message of Christ's return.

5. Signs in the Physical World.

The Scriptures foretell three great events in the history of the physical world that are to act as sign-posts of the Christian era, by which it may be known where man is living in the course of history. The accurate fulfillment of these events in the order in which they are outlined in prophecy places the seal of reliability upon the prophecy of the Second Advent as a whole. Their occurrence certifies the occurrence of the rest of the events which are to follow them and bring the climax of history in the personal appearance of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 24: 21, 22, 29 A period of great tribulation would be followed quickly by signs in the heavens.

Note. – "Those days" of tribulation mentioned in verses 22 and 29 are referred to in Revelation 12: 6 13 14 as a period of 1260 days, or 1260 years, for a day in prophecy is used for a year. (Ezekiel 4: 6; Numbers 14:34) This period of persecution has reference to the time of papal supremacy, stretching from the establishment of the papal power in 538 to its overthrow in 1798. Although the "days" do not end till 1798, persecution had generally ceased by the middle of the eighteenth century. For the elect's sake the days were shortened.

- Mark 13: 24. The darkening of the sun was to occur in those days, after that tribulation," i.e., between 1750 and 1798.
- Revelation 6: 12, 13. The Dark Day was to be preceded by a great earthquake and followed by falling

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stars. Note-The divine order is as follows (1) Great earthquake. (2) Dark Day. (3) Failing stars. History testifies to the fulfillment of the prophecy.

(a) The Great Earthquake-The Lisbon Earthquake, Nov. 1, 1755.

The earthquake known as the Lisbon earthquake is notable as being the greatest ever recorded up to that time.

“Among the earth movements which in historic times have affected the kingdom of Portugal, that of Nov. 1, 1755, takes first rank; as it does also, in some respects among all recorded earthquakes.” - “Earthquake,” William Herbert, pages 142, 143, New York: B. Appleton & Co., 1907.

“Half the world felt the convulsion.” - James Barton, “Life of Voltaire” (two vol. edit.), Vol. 2, pages 208, 209. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1909.

“The effects of the earthquake of the first of November 1755, were distributed over very clearly four millions of square English miles of the earth’s surface; a most astonishing space! and greatly surpassing anything of this kind ever recorded in history.” J Norse, “The History and Philosophy of Earthquakes,” page 334, London, 1757.

(b) The Dark Day-May 19, 1780.

“The Dark Day, May 19, 1780-so called on account of a remarkable darkness for that day extending over all New England. In some places, persons could not see to read common print in the open air for several hour's together. Birds sang their evening songs, disappeared, and became silent; fowls went to roost: cattle sought the barnyard; and candles were lighted in the houses. The obscuration, began about ten o'clock in the morning, and continued till the middle of the next night, but with differences of degree and duration in different places. For several days previous, the wind had been variable, but chiefly from the south-west and the north-east. The true cause of this remarkable phenomenon is not known.” – “Noah Webster's Dictionary” (edition 1869), under “Explanation and Pronouncing Vocabulary of Noted Names of Fiction,” etc.

“On the 19th of May, 1780, an uncommon darkness took place over all New England, and extended to Canada. It continued about fourteen hours, or from ten o'clock in the morning till midnight. The darkness was so great that people were unable to read common print or to tell the time of the day by their watches, or to dine, or to transact their ordinary business without the light of candles. They became dull and gloomy, and some were excessively frightened. The fowls retired to their roosts. Objects could not be distinguished but at a very little distance, and everything bore the appearance acid gloom of night. The causes of these phenomena are unknown. They certainly were not the result of eclipses.” Robert Sews, editor, “The Guide to Knowledge or Repertory of Facts,” page 428. New York, 1845.

“The 19th of May, 1780, was unprecedented in New England for its great darkness. The darkness extended over several thousand square miles, though differing much in intensity in different places. Nowhere, perhaps was it greater than in this vicinity. The day was appropriately called and is still known as The Dark Day.” - Joseph Dorr, “History of the Tozen of Hampton, New Hampshire,” Volume I, page 217. Salem Press and Printing Co., 1893.

For other particulars on the Dark Day, see “Source Book for Bible Students,” Review acid Herald, 1922 edition, pages 128-136.

(c) The Falling Stars-Nov. 13, 1833.

“The morning of November 13, 1833, was rendered memorable by an exhibition of the phenomenon called shooting stars, which was probably more extensive and magnificent than any similar one hitherto recorded. Probably no celestial phenomenon has ever occurred in this country since its first settlement, which was viewed with so much admiration and delight by the class of spectators, or with so much astonishment and fear by another class. For some time after the occurrence, the meteoritic phenomenon was the principal topic of conversation in every circle.” Dennis Instead, Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy in Yale College, in the American Journal of Science and Arts, volume 25, (1834), pages 363, 364.

“The Boston observer, Olmstead, compared them, at the moment of maximum, to half the number of flakes which we perceive in the air during act ordinary shower of snow.” - Flammarion and Gore, - Popular Astronomy, page 536.

For other descriptions of the Falling Stars, see “Source Book for Bible Students, pages 175-181.

(d) Other Signs of the Last Days. Luke 21: 25. “The sea arid the waves roaring.”

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Matthew 24: 7. Famines arid pestilence.

6. The Need for Preparation.

Matthew 24:36-41. Many will be taken unawares by the Lord's coming.

Matthew 24: -13. Christ exhorts us to watch and be ready.

Matthew 25: 1-13. If we do not watch we may leave our preparation for Christ's return too late.

MEMORIZE: Matthew 25: 13.

Questions on the Lesson

1. What may we know, and what can we not know, about the time of the Second Advent?
2. How did Christ condemn the Jewish leaders for their failure to recognize His coming as the Messiah?"
3. Show that Jesus desires us to be acquainted with the things which point to the end of the world.
4. How may we know when Christ's coming is near? Relate the parable Jesus spoke to emphasize this.
5. How did Christ describe conditions among the nations in the last days?
6. What will men in the last days do to the earth?
7. To what period of the earth's history did Jesus liken the last clays? How did He describe that period?
8. Why will the love of many for spiritual things grow cold?
9. What description of last-day society does Paul give in 2 Timothy 3?
How does he indicate that there will be a profession of religion by wicked people?
10. What claims will be made by false prophets?
11. What did John foretell about the beast symbol? How will this be fulfilled?
12. Give a prophecy that points to the spread of spiritualism in the last days.
13. What important work of God must be finished before the end of the world?
How will many treat this message?
14. Name the three great signs in the physical world that help us to know where we are in the divine program of events. In what events, and when, do we see these signs fulfilled?
15. At what time does Bible prophecy locate the darkening of the sun?
What event in the physical world is to follow the falling of the stars?
16. Give a brief description of the Lisbon earthquake, the dark day, and the falling stars.
17. What did Jesus exhort His followers to do with reference to His coming?
18. What example of unpreparedness in the past should serve as a warning to us?
19. Relate the parable of the ten virgins. What purpose did Jesus have in mind in relating it?

For Further Study

1. Gather some facts about the prevalence of earthquakes in the world today. See "Source Book 'for Bible Students," page 152.
2. Go through the prophecies of Matthew 24, and note which prophecies have yet to be fulfilled.

36. PERILS AND DELUSIONS OF THE LAST DAYS

1. The Last Days Perilous.

2 Timothy 3:1. In the last days perilous times shall come.

Luke 21:26. Men's hearts will fail them for fear.

2. Perils to Life in the Last Days.

In the last days there will be external perils such as the world has never known before. Because of the prevailing wickedness of melt, combined with a marvelous increase in scientific knowledge the world will be a dangerous place to live in. Satan will reveal Himself in his true character as a murderer (John 8:44) as he takes control of minds that are yielded to his control.