

Other-Worldliness,” in *Theology Today*, Volume 1, Number 1, Page 78.

Is the End Near?

1. SITTING with His disciples one day on the Mount of Olives, looking across at the city of Jerusalem, to what sorrowful thoughts did Jesus give expression?

“When He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from your eyes.” Luke 19:41, 42.

2. What fate did He pronounce upon it?

“For the days shall come upon thee, that your enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee. And they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knew not the time of thy visitation.” Verses 43, 44.

3. With what did the disciples associate the predicted fall of Jerusalem?

“As He sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately, saying, 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.

4. How did Jesus correct this wrong impression and dissociate the two events?

“And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that you be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. All these are the beginning of sorrows.” Verses 4-8.

5. What vicissitudes would the church have-to face and endure?

“Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and you shall be hated of all nations for My name’s sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.” Verses 9-12.

NOTE. SEE study, “Through Tribulation to Triumph,” page 583.

6. What reward would endurance bring?

“But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” Verse 13.

7. Returning to the first question the disciples asked, how did Jesus forewarn them of the destruction of Jerusalem?

“When you shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.” Luke 21:20.

8. To what prophecy was He here drawing attention?

“When you therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (who so reads, let him understand:) then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains.” Matthew 24:15,16.

9. Taking the fall of Jerusalem as the starting point again, what further details did He supply of the interim period between this catastrophe and the end of the world?

“Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, nor ever shall be.” Verse 21. Compare verses 9-12.

10. How perilously near to extinction would the church come?

“And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s

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sake those days shall be shortened.” Verse 2.2.

11. Upon what internal perils of the church through the ages did Jesus next enlarge?

“Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before.” Verses 23-25.

12. With the close of the persecution what period in earth’s history would be reached?

“Some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.” Daniel 11:35.

13. What spectacular signs in the natural world would be associated with this momentous period?

“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.

NOTE - See study, “Dissolving Empires,” page 576.

14. What signs in the earth would further proclaim the imminence of the advent?

a. International upheavals. “Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring.” Luke 21:25.

b. Universal fear. “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.” Verse 26.

NOTE. “At the bottom of the political unrest lies our wounded soul crying for salvation and peace. Behind the longing for social and economic security of the masses you may sense a nostalgic cry of a homeless human heart for protection from the perils of chaos and selfishness. An atmosphere of fear, suspicion, distrust, and prejudice weighs heavily upon human souls everywhere.” - Joseph L. Hromadka, “One Year Later,” in Theology Today, vol. 4, Number 1, Page 34.

c. Widespread moral depravity. “As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the Flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the Flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Matthew 24:37-39.

d. World-wide evangelism. “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” Verse 14.

NOTE-See study, “What Do These Things Mean?” page 629.

15. By what event will the end be ushered in?

“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.” Verse 30.

16. Why did Jesus give His disciples this outline of history?

“Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is nigh: so likewise you, when you shall see all these things know that it is near, even at the doors!” Verses 32, 33.

17. Is the precise time of Christ’s return revealed?

“Of that day and hour knows no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only.” Verse 36.

18. In what state of preparedness, therefore, must the church be in the last days?

“Therefore be you also ready: for in such an hour as you think not the Son of man comes.” Verse 44.

19. What feelings will possess the believers as they see, by the fulfillment of prophecy, the advent drawing near?

“When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draws nigh.” Luke 21:28.

20. On the other hand, what tragic fate will befall those who have failed to prepare to meet God?

“If that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delays his coming; ... the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looks not for him and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites.” Matthew 24:48-51.

21. How assured may we be of the certainty of the prophetic word?

“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.” Verse 35.

7. God's, Outline of the Future

Can We Understand Prophecy?

1. How has God provided for our instruction and development in spiritual matters?

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” 2 Timothy 3:16.

2. What forms a large part of all Scripture which is to be studied and understood?

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto you do well that you take heed, as unto a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise.” 2 Peter 1:19.

NOTE-It is not generally realized how large a part of the Bible is taken up by prophecy. If we think only of the definitely prophetic books we find that there are no less than eighteen amounting to almost one quarter of the total text of the Bible. But there are also many prophecies in the other books of the Old and New Testaments, so that we may say without exaggeration that about one half of the Bible is prophecy. Obviously, then, if we neglect the prophetic word we are necessarily setting aside a large part of Holy Writ.

3. Were the prophecies of Daniel intended to be understood?

“He came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision.” Daniel 8:17. See also Daniel 9:22, 23.

4. What significant name is given to the last book of the Bible, indicating that it is to be understood?

“The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass.” Revelation 1:1.

NOTE-It would surely be ludicrous for God to designate one of the most important prophetic books in the Bible as a “revelation” or “unveiling” if it were not to be understood.

5. What specific injunctions are given to the readers of this prophecy to understand its meaning?

“Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.” Verse 3.

6. What example of study did the prophets themselves set?

“Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you.” 1 Peter 1:10. See also verse 11.

NOTE-Daniel, in captivity in Babylon, seeking to understand God's purpose for Israel, betook himself to the study of the prophet Jeremiah and “understood by books” that the period of desolation of Jerusalem was almost expired. Daniel 9:2.

7. Is human wisdom adequate for an understanding of prophecy?

“The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Corinthians 2:14.

NOTE - As divine aid is necessary to unveil the future (Daniel 2:20-23), so spiritual understanding