



Jesus Gives His Premier End-Time Prophecy

It was during the “Passion Week!”

- It started with Christ’s Sunday *triumphal entry*.
- Then came the second temple cleansing.
- Jewish hatred against the Savior hit a boiling point.
- Plans to kill Jesus were completed.
- Then, in the boldest move of His ministry, He walked in on a joint meeting of the Jewish leaders AND judicially condemned them to eternal damnation! (Matthew 23) They seemed powerless – but were seething with anger.



“Never before had such a scene
been witnessed.” (DA 610)

This was Christ's final address to those Jewish leaders. Calvary was now two days away.

“Jesus stood calmly before them, with the dignity of a king. As one invested with the authority of heaven, He looked unflinchingly upon His adversaries, who had rejected and despised His teachings, and who thirsted for His life. They had assailed Him in great numbers, but their schemes to ensnare and condemn Him had been in vain.



(continued)

“Challenge after challenge He had met, presenting the pure, bright truth in contrast to the darkness and errors of the priests and Pharisees.... Yet another work remained for Christ to do. Another purpose was still to be accomplished.”

(DA 610)

(continued)

“The character of the priests, rulers, and Pharisees must be more fully exposed.” (DA 612)

- We don't know how long that discourse lasted. Large numbers of people were there, watching and listening. Some needed to hear His indictments, those who would later follow the Master!
- Jesus pronounced seven curses/woes on those leaders. Though Jesus had already said that the Jewish nation would cease to be His special people (Matt. 21:43), this became the “legal sentence” that severed all hope.
- **Their probation had closed!**

What follows the end of probation?
What is the *terminal event* that God
has set on His prophetic calendar?



First comes “desolation” – everything is destroyed. Then He finally takes steps to “reverse creation!” Then total destruction by fire!

At the end, nothing is left! Following Christ’s damning pronouncement, He gave an extremely important prophecy on how that end would come.

The “preface” to that time:

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem ... Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” (Matt. 23:37-38)

“Your house is left” is present tense passive. It didn’t need to have occurred. It happened because of their apostasy. “My church, my people, are desolate, because ...”

Jesus said these words weeping, His voice choked with anguish. (DA 620)

That emotion was part of Jesus’ “separation struggle ... his mysterious farewell” to the Jewish people – but prophetically represents His reaction to the last-day Christian church in rebellion, called Babylon. (DA 620)

What now follows are the sequenced events that Jesus gave the disciples which would lead up to that “end.” It is the story of what occurs just before that “desolation.”

What brings God to begin that desolation?
What is the sin or abomination that makes Him become **a reactive God**?

Jesus gave seven concerns or woes to those Jewish leaders. Ezekiel 8 gives four abominations that lead up to the end. But, for **our** day – there is one overriding transgression He calls “*abominable!*”

One Sin





Let's *first* return to Christ's special end-time story. Jesus and the disciples are presently leaving the Temple that fateful day.

Christ was the victor of truth and reason. He didn't vaunt silencing those Jewish leaders. It was a mission supremely executed. Right and wrong were profoundly delineated.

As He left the precincts of the temple, the disciples came to Jesus and pointed out "*the unique structure of the temple.*" (Matt. 24:1)

Ignoring them, Jesus began to describe the extent of that desolation! Remember – this is the **outcome**, the **final end**, of apostasy and one of the key elements of all apocalyptic prophecy!

“Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? [pointing to the massive stones making up the temple] verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”
(Matt. 24:2)

Stunned to silence, Christ and His disciples slowly made their way to the garden on the Mount of Olives. Then they began further questioning!



To best understand the stunning messages that Jesus then gave them, it is important to look at the structure of His discourse.

Prophecy can be confusing unless one studies how it is “put together.” When one sees the key areas of Christ’s emphasis, an amazing picture unfolds.

1. Prophecy is event-driven. We must look for key things that will happen.
2. It is always couched within a framework of time. Thus, we must observe any special “prophetic clocks.”

3. Most prophecies have “commentary inserts,” where there are important “Oh, by the way” thoughts before going on. Virtually all prophecy has more than one timing application! (Nichol, ed., 1BC 1017 – 1953)
4. Prophecy is forward-looking not backward-reviewing! If there are historical issues, they are only anchor points to clearly see what lies ahead.
5. It is always presented in metaphors, symbols or in some special story form. Why? God simply does not want a careless observer “toying” or “speculating” with His Holy Word through a “quick, shallow understanding!”

6. Finally – a penetrating issue: *“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”* (I Cor. 2:14)

Did you catch that?

This means that when we study these special prophecies, we must be under the influence of **God's Spirit**.

He must be there, right inside us, working, wooing, influencing, teaching, guiding.

There were only four disciples on the mount with Him that evening: Peter, James, John, and Andrew.

But – isn't it interesting, it was Matthew, Mark and Luke who wrote about what Jesus said. The four disciples must have transmitted that instruction with excitement and intensity.

Those disciples asked Jesus three questions:

“And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, [1] when shall these things be? and [2] what shall be the sign of thy coming, and [3] of the end of the world?” (Matt. 24:3)

THREE QUESTIONS:

1. “When” shall these things be?
(a timing question)
2. “What” shall be the sign of thy coming?
(an event-driven question)
3. “What” shall be the sign of the end of
the world? (an event-driven question)

Jesus is about to answer each of these questions! You will be stunned to know that He focuses most on the “when” question!

Let's now look at the "themes" Jesus covered:

1. There is a list of several warnings.
2. He outlines many signs or events that we must pay attention to.
3. There are general timing issues.
4. There are specific timing issues.

Here is the amazing thing we will discover:

When we get to #4, we will be invited by Jesus to continue our study in the book of Daniel!

Did you know that Jesus actually asked us to go to that book to "finish" His story? Stay tuned!

“To the period just prior to the appearing of the Son of man, the prophecies of Scripture point, and here their warnings and threatenings pre-eminently apply. The prophetic periods of Daniel, extending to the very eve of the great consummation, throw a flood of light upon events then to transpire. The book of Revelation is also replete with warning and instruction for the last generation. The beloved John, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, portrays the fearful and thrilling scenes connected with the close of earth’s history, and presents the duties and dangers of God’s people. None need remain in ignorance, none need be unprepared for the coming of the day of God.” (RH, September 25, 1883)

Now a detailed look into those end-time themes that Jesus gave to the disciples.

Theme One: Warnings

1. “And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.” (Matt. 24:4)
 - He embellished this several times by talking about false Christs. (vs 5 on)
 - This refers to more than people who try to be like a Messiah or call themselves “Christ.”

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- It refers also to anyone who has “truth” that is at variance with His Word, the Bible.
- The Book of Revelation tells us in over 50 places of how at the end, Satan will mimic many things that God is trying to teach or do!

“Christ had foretold that deceivers would arise, through whose influence ‘iniquity’ should ‘abound,’ and ‘the love of many’ should ‘wax cold.’ Matthew 24:12. He had warned the disciples that the church would be in more danger from this evil than from the persecution of her enemies. Again and again Paul warned the believers against these false teachers. This peril, above all others, they must guard against; for by receiving false teachers, they would open the door to errors by which the enemy would dim the spiritual perceptions and shake the confidence of those newly come to the faith of the gospel.” (AA 473-474)

Theme One: Warnings — continued

2. Please look very carefully at this one!

When one sees all these things coming together as when a fig tree puts forth its leaves, His coming is “*even at the doors.*”
(Matt. 24:33)

This is further clarified by Luke’s record:

“*And when **these things begin** to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads [don’t just raise your eyebrows or your eyes – lift up your heads!]; for your redemption draweth nigh.*” (Luke 21:28)

This may be one of the most
informative warnings from Jesus!

When these things begin to
collectively start, “I’m about ready
to come.”

But – that’s not all. There’s more!

Did you notice that Jesus included two very important things in this warning?

- He used the words “*when*” and “*begin*.” So there is a “clock.”
- He used the word “*things*.” So there are events.

“And when these things begin to come to pass ...” (Luke 21:28)

That is absolutely amazing.
Jesus has given us so much information!

Theme One: Warnings — continued

3. Once these things begin to occur — all will happen in one generation!

Many may want to resist this thought:

“Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.”

(Matt. 24:34)

“Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.”

(Mark 13:30)

“Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.” (Luke 21:32)

Theme One: Warnings — continued

4. Be careful in interpreting “wars.”

- *“And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.” (Matt. 24:6)*
- It is so tempting to think the end is near from the horrific conflicts we see around us. But Jesus said, “be careful.”
- By themselves wars are NOT a sign.

Theme One: Warnings – continued

5. “Watch” – that is an imperative! If we are to watch, there must be something we can see, *observe*, something so clear that that command can be followed!
 - We’re about to uncover exactly what He meant.
 - But first, it is important to note that this is not the only place that this divine request comes to us!

Revelation 3:3: If you don’t watch, I will come as a thief (conversely, if you watch you will not be surprised). (cf. Rev. 16:15, I Thess. 5:4-6)

- Paul also has amazing insight regarding this:

“For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.”

(continued)

“Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.”
(I Thess. 5:2-6)

- Paul’s qualifier: If you “know,” He will not come as a thief! If you know the prophecies!

There are things we can know. They are found right here in Matthew and in the book of Daniel.

We can know closely the when and its associated events!

Theme One: Warnings – concluded

6. Never say: “The Lord delays His coming.”
The person who makes this assumption is called an “evil servant!”

“The evil servant says in his heart, ‘My lord delayeth his coming.’ He does not say that Christ will not come. He does not scoff at the idea of His second coming. But in his heart and by his actions and words, he declares that the Lord’s coming is delayed.

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“He banishes from the minds of others the conviction that the Lord is coming quickly. His influence leads men to presumptuous, careless delay. They are confirmed in their worldliness and stupor. Earthly passions, corrupt thoughts, take possession of the mind.” (DA 635)

Jesus will come right on time. We can know when that is “even at the doors!”

Theme Two: Signs

1. The disciples had asked: “What will be the sign of the end of 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.” (Matt. 24:14)



Warning!

Theme Two: Signs

1. The disciples had asked: “What will be the sign of the end of 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.” (Matt. 24:14)

Warning!

What does Jesus really mean?

When the gospel goes to all the world, it will be at the “Loud Cry” which will bring everyone to an eternal decision!



Then the whole world will be divided into two camps:

1. Wheat / Tares
2. Sheep / Goats
3. Righteous / Sinful
4. Right hand / Left hand
5. Purified / Wicked

How does the Bible describe the way we will know when this occurs? – IT DOESN'T!

This is going to occur during the final “cry” – the message of the “two witnesses.” The Loud Cry – if you please.

God’s people will be intent on finishing the work. There will be no value for databases then. Weekly reports, progress in baptisms, or what countries are yet in “spiritual darkness” will not be our driving interest.

God will lead and drive us forward. We will not know when this work will be finished. That is part of God’s database. It will be a signal for Him to close up the work on earth!

THUS:

The gospel to all the world will not be an anticipatory sign to tell others as an end-time warning!

This is when everyone responds to the Spirit's convicting truths. That is the key issue!

The whole world will hear earth's most dramatic presentation of the gospel, tied to time prophecies.

THAT MEANS THE MESSAGE, ITS DELIVERANCE AND RELEVANCE MUST BE 100% PERTINENT TO TIME, PLACE and PERSON!

There is a wonderful Old Testament prophecy that Joel gave, and Peter quoted in Acts 2:19-20.



“And it shall come to pass afterward [when God’s people will be especially favored], that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.” (Joel 2:28)

That “pouring out” of the Holy Spirit is on all flesh – all mankind!

This is the time when the whole earth is drawn into those two camps. The Spirit brings convicting decisions.

- How does this happen?
- The entire world has received a knowledge of truth so complete that they now make a decision for or against God.

Again – the gospel to all the world
cannot be an anticipatory sign.

We won't know when the last
“convicting truth” comes to all the
hearts of mankind during the final
period of the “latter rain.”

“I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven. An angel with a writer’s inkhorn by his side returned from the earth and reported to Jesus that his work was done, and the saints were numbered and sealed. Then I saw Jesus, who had been ministering before the ark containing the Ten Commandments, throw down the censer. He raised His hands, and with a loud voice said. ‘It is done.’” (*Story of Redemption*, 402)

Question: Will we know before the angel reports to Jesus that the work is done? Certainly not! That means it is not a sign of warning when the gospel has gone global!

Theme Two: Signs — continued

2. The disciples then asked what the “sign” of His coming would be.



Let's analyze several texts:

“A bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said ...” (Matt. 17:5; cf. Mark 9:7, Luke 9:34) That is part of the transfiguration story.

God's presence is often associated with a cloud in numerous references/texts.

*“... came a voice out of the cloud, saying,
This is my beloved Son: hear him.” (Luke 9:35)*
Same concept.

“While they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.” (Acts 1:9)

Associated with earth imagery, the cloud
“contains” His presence; the cloud is a
“vehicle” to move His presence!

When we ascend up into heaven, we will
go up into a cloud (Rev. 11:12), where Jesus
is waiting.

Could the “cloud” be a sign?

“And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.” (Luke 12:54)

Interesting! Do you think a cloud “rising from the east” might ever be a “sign?”

“For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven ... and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” (Matt. 24:27, 30)

The clouds are the
“sign” of the arrival of Jesus.

Jesus announced to the apostate leaders in Jerusalem and to that repugnant high priest, Caiaphas, the warning “sign”:

“But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you [that is a divine decree], Hereafter shall ye see [something obvious that can be seen] the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power [apparently on a throne – He will present as a king!], and coming in the clouds of heaven.”

(Matt. 26:63-64)

The “clouds” are a sign!

“Behold He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen.” (Rev. 1:7)

In describing what this all might be like: “Soon our eyes were drawn to the East, for a small black cloud had appeared about half as large as a man’s hand, which we all knew was the Sign of the Son of Man. We all in solemn silence gazed on the cloud as it drew nearer, lighter, and brighter, glorious, and still more glorious, till it was a great white cloud.” (Broadside 1, 4-6-1846)

But – there is, again, a problem question that we **MUST** address!

If the “gospel to all the world” is not a sign we can preach about in anticipation AND the cloud is not a sign of anticipation (i.e., He will already be here!):

What is left of the things Jesus told us that **ARE** anticipatory signs of His coming?

The only things left to relate to this are the timing prophecies associated with specific events. THAT includes our referencing Daniel!

Time is the only issue Jesus focused on!

We must be exceedingly careful to teach and preach what the Bible says, so our discourse is not at variance with what Jesus really meant!

We are to understand prophecy in the context of very important clocks that God has given to us. We will discover that this weighs heavily in all apocalyptic prophecy. Let's look further at that "when" issue.



Theme Three: “When” will these things be?

Jesus has **two** “when” answers.

His first response is general.

But before we study that, we must first look at the flow of Christ’s prophetic narrative.

We’ll get back to Theme Three shortly.

Please carefully note the sequence and format of Jesus’ teaching:



Matthew 24 – narrative structure of the verses:

- 1-6 Introductory – what we’ve just reviewed
- 7-12 The first sequence of events to look for.
 This is foundational as to when!
- 13 Promise – a beatitude
- 14 Sign – end of world
- 15-20 Signs – when to “flee”
- 21-31 Time of Jacob’s trouble to the Second
 Coming, the advent sign (vs 30)
- 31-51 Miscellaneous bits of end-time topics,
 including “days of Noah,” parable of
 the unfaithful servant, judgment and
 warning against predicting the “day
 and hour”

Theme Three: “When” will these things be?


Now we can go back to this theme and Christ’s *general* answer.

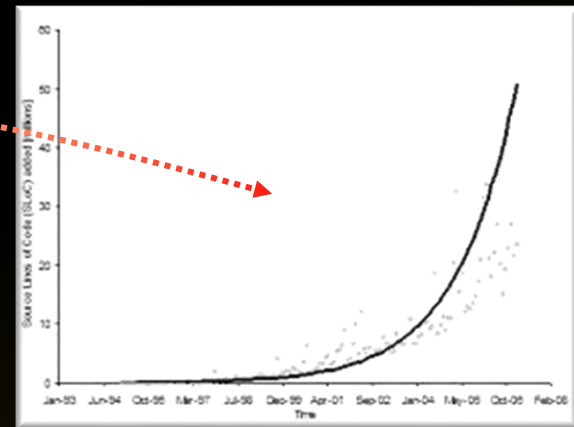
“For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.” (Matt. 24:7-8)

Remember, Christ said that when these things begin to come to pass, those corporate events related to that time of “sorrows,” “look up, your “redemption draweth nigh.” (Luke 21:28)

How do we analyze this?

How do we know what this really means?

- The “beginning of sorrows” actually means the onset of travail or “birth pangs” (*archê odinôn*).
- How do birth pangs come? They get more frequent and more severe.
- That is actually a mathematical curve, called an exponential curve.
- This is an example of such a curve: 
- Jesus said that when those things begin to come in this type of curve, it means that the end is near!



What was that list of things we were to watch for in a collective exponential curve?

1. Wars
2. Famines
3. Pestilences
4. Earthquakes
5. Celestial disasters (added by Luke)

Is this type of trend being followed anywhere?

It is – in the country of Belgium!

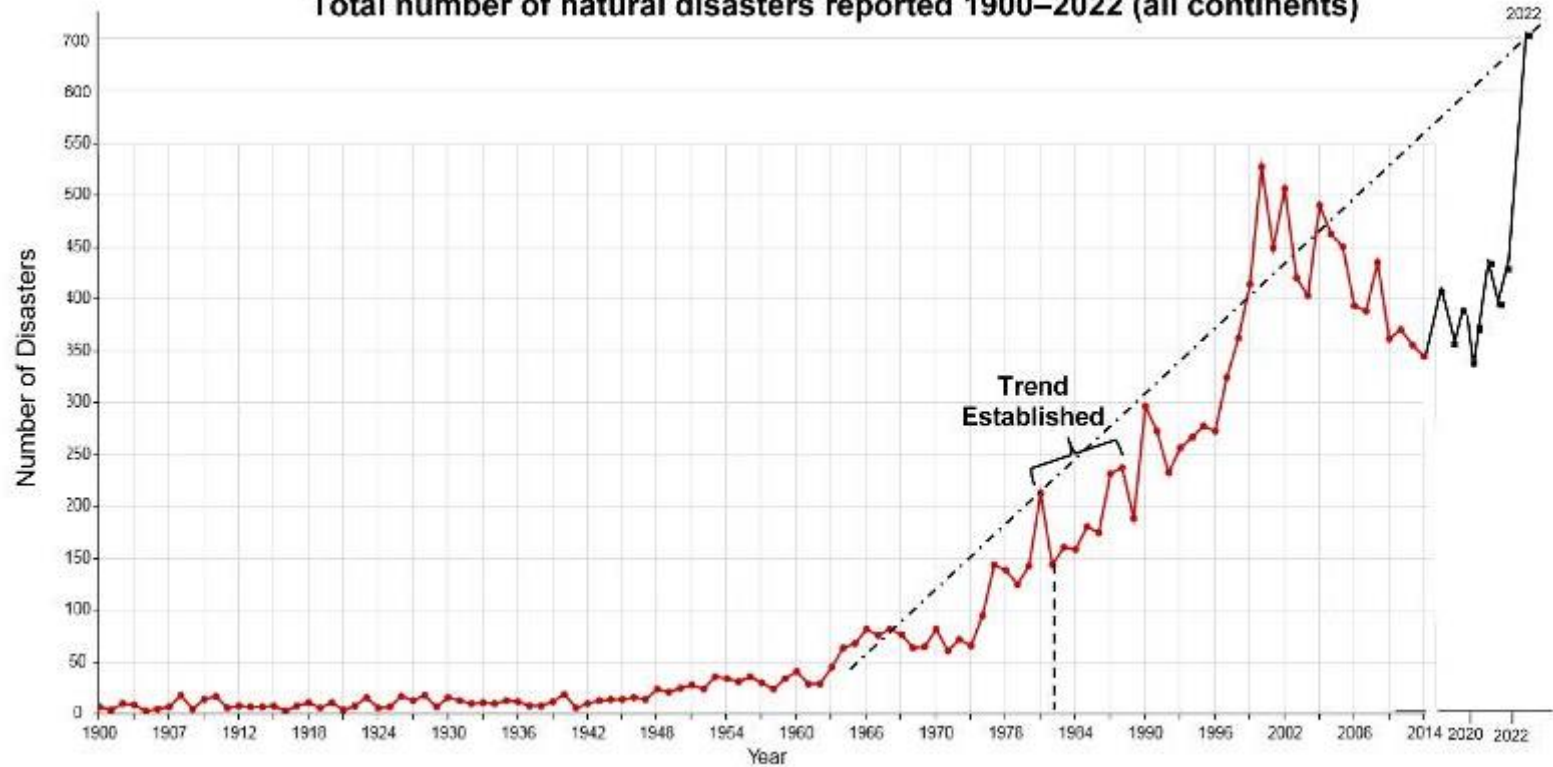
The Center for Research on the Epidemiology
of Disasters – CRED
At the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium



They have networked with many international agencies to create a very precise trend database of natural disasters.

This is what they have found:

Total number of natural disasters reported 1900–2022 (all continents)



EM-DAT: The OFDACRED International Disaster Database - www.emdat.be - Université Catholique de Louvain, Brussels - Belgium

It was approximately in the 1978 to 1982 window that the trend literally began fulfilling Christ's prophecy regarding those disasters.

We have verified this data with the Catholic University of Louvain.

There is now an ongoing upward trend, with these issues becoming more frequent and more severe.

Exactly what Jesus told us to “watch” for and how expositor White said these events would happen!

What things does all this portend?

Our redemption is drawing nigh – and we're told that all these things will be fulfilled “within one generation” – the one we are now in!!!

1. Natural disasters and wars coming together

THEN:

2. The abomination that is unveiled in Daniel

3. The time of tribulation – “Jacob’s Trouble”

4. Deliverance of God’s people (Dan. 12:1)

5. Special resurrection (Dan. 12:2)

6. Second Coming (Matt. 24:30-31)

When you see those tender fig leaves, you know that summer is nigh – when the harvest will occur!

“To the period just prior to the appearing of the Son of man, the prophecies of Scripture point, and here their warnings and threatenings pre-eminently apply. [Now notice what is within that period!] The prophetic periods of Daniel, extending to the very eve of the great consummation, throw a flood of light upon events then to transpire [future]. The book of Revelation is also replete with warning and instruction for the last generation.

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“The beloved John, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, portrays the fearful and thrilling scenes connected with **the close of earth’s history**, and presents the duties and dangers of God’s people. None need remain in ignorance, none need be unprepared for the coming of the day of God.” (RH 9-25-1883)



“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.”

(Rom. 13:11-12)

The End

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