

Signs of the Lord's Coming

The New Testament is clear that we are in the "last days. The New Testament Eschatology (study of last things).

- Hebrews 1:2 – [2] *but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son...*
- Acts 2:17 – [17] *"And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh..."*
- James 5:3 – [3] *... you have laid up treasure in the last days.*
- 1 Peter 1:20 – [20] *He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you.*
- 1 Corinthians 10:11 – [11] *Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.*
 - One SCHOLAR – "It is not open to doubt that, according to Scripture, with the ascension of Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit, the last period of the world's history has begun. This present period in which we live is the last on the divine program."
- We must remember what Peter says Turn to - 2 Peter 3:8 – [8] *"But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."*

Matthew 24:36 – [36] *"But Concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only."*

There are Two QUESTIONS asked by the DISCIPLES: Verse 3 – [3] *Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"*

1) Birth Pangs

Now there are Three BASIC INTERPRETATIONS to the Olivet Discourse.

- 1) *The Preterist Interpretation* (*praeter* in Latin means past) – It views all the EVENTS as having taken place in 70 A. D.
- 2) *The Futurist Interpretation* that there is a DUAL MEANING. Some refers to the past. EVERYTHING also REFERS to the FUTURE.
- 3) *The Separate Issue Interpretation.* – Some details reference 70 A. D. only whereas other details refer to the 2nd Coming of Christ only.

Jesus answers the 2nd QUESTION FIRST These are the SIGNS that WILL take PLACE before the END. Before His Second Coming.

False Christs - Matthew 24:4 – [4] *And Jesus answered them, "See that no one leads you astray. [5] For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray.*

- Many have come claiming to be the MESSIAH. The historian Eusebius comments on this... many false-Messiahs came in the NAME of CHRIST.
- Many in the First CENTURY claimed to be the MESSIAH.
- And MANY more will lead PEOPLE astray.

Wars and Rumors of Wars - Matthew 24:6 – [6] *And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. [7] For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom...*

- Of course in the TWENTIETH CENTURY we had more men die than any other CENTURY combined.
- They called WW1 the War to end all wars.
- I was reading about Tarawa – they said HELL on EARTH.
 - If you raised an arm above the seawall it would be shot off.
 - Jesus said – do not be ALARMED by these things.

Natural Disasters - 24:7b – [7b] *there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. [8] all these are but the beginning of the birth pains.*

- Famines, sicknesses, earthquakes.
- Acts 11:27 mentions a famine and a need for relief for the saints.
- Acts 16:26 mentions an earthquake.
- Clearly these occurrences have continued ever since.
- They TESTIFY to a FACT of the LORD's RETURN, but not NECESSARILY its TIMING.

These are all PICTURES of the Final JUDGMENT.

2) The Great Apostasy

Matthew 24:9 – [9] *Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake.*

- The Christian will be delivered up to “TRIBULATION.” And Death.
 - Of course afflictions are part of the Christian LIFE all the way THROUGH.
 - 1 Thess 1:6 – [6] ...having received the Word in much affliction (thlipsis)
 - 2 Cor 1:8 – [8].. for do not want you to be unaware brothers of the affliction that came to us in Asia.
- But this is a FINAL TRIBULATION... When HEARTS will GROW cold to CHRIST.
 - Revelation 7:14 – [14] *“These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation...”*affliction
 - Christians everywhere will be HATED.
- The BEAST of the SEA – CAUSES this GREAT TRIBULATION. Revelation 13:1-8. The Beast is a composite of the Nations of Daniel's VISION.
- As a RESULT there will be a REBELLION.
 - 2 Thessalonians 2:2 – [3] *Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come unless the rebellion comes first...*
- For that reasons, Jesus says Matthew 24:10 – [10] *And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. [11] And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. [12] And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. [13] But the one who endures to the end will be saved.*
- 2 Timothy 3:1ff – [1] *But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. [2] For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, [3] heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal not loving good, [4] treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, [5] having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power.*

- Jesus will say later in the Olivet Discourse– that the DAYS will be like the Days of Noah (only 8 found righteous on the EARTH).
- But the ONE who ENDURES to the END will be SAVED.

3) The Great Commission Completed

The DELAY of the Lord’s COMING is so that the gospel can go to all nations. All (ethnos). It means a people group of a shared culture/language/tradition

- Matt 24:14 – [14] *And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*
- There is a COMPLETION of the EXPANSION of the GOSPEL. And a COMPLETION of the GREAT COMMISSION which our LORD will give to the DISCIPLES in MATTHEW 28.
- JESUS doesn’t SAY that all the NATIONS of the EARTH will be Christianized.
 - That’s the POST-MILLENNIAL HOPE.
 - Of EDWARDS. B. B. Warfield. That the Lord Jesus would essentially come back to a CHRISTIANIZED WORLD.
- But the SCRIPTURES do not SPECIFY that the WORLD will be CHRISTIANIZED.
 - It says that the gospel will be proclaimed throughout the whole world.
- NATION – doesn’t just mean a geographic boundary... but it means PEOPLE GROUPS.
 - 3.3 Billion People out of nearly 8 Billion are still unreached. It’s about 42%
 - Most of the UNREACHED are Hindu and Muslim.

So the GOSPEL is EXPANDING to all NATIONS yet at the same time, hearts are GROWING COLD.

- There are wheat and tares.
- It’s the growth of the KINGDOM yet massive OPPOSITION to the KINGDOM.

4) The Conversion of the Jews

Paul teaches that a large gathering of JEWS will be brought into the KINGDOM.

- Romans 11:14m – the jealousy of the JEWS will lead to their own SALVATION.
- Romans 11:25 – [25] *Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. [26] And in this way all Israel will be saved.*
 - Now the QUESTION – what does “all Israel” refer to.
 - Three MAIN SCHOOLS:
 - 1) All the true, spiritual Israel: Both Jew and Gentile
 - 2) The full number of elect Jews through history.
 - 3) A large number of Jews will be saved at the end of history.
 - Does it mean every Jew without exception throughout history? Clearly Not.
 - Does it mean the ELECT. All the Believers. “The True Israel”? I don’t think context will allow for that.
 - Does it mean something about the NATION and Israel ruling the nations? Nothing is said about that!
 - I side with Martyn Lloyd-Jones and John Murray. This is a large ingathering of JEWS at the END.
 - Paul says in 2 Cor 3:16 – [16] *the veil is taken away...*

4) Notice That there is a TIME of the GENTILE... contrasted with the JEWS.

5) When the FULLNESS of the GENTILES are SAVED...

6) And the time of the MASS CONVERSION of the JEW will come.

5) The Appearance of the 'Man of Lawlessness'

The PHRASE antichrist was first coined by the apostle John.

- 1 John 2:18 – [18] *Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come.*
 - Antichrist are those who advance false-religion and deny the deity of Christ. They deny the absolute Lordship of Christs.
 - 1 John 2:22 – [22] *Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son.*
 - 2 John 7 – [7] *For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.*
 - They are driven by Satanic power. They WORK against the lordship of CHRIST.
 - 1 John 4:3 – [3] *and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.*
 - In the LAST hour, history is FILLED with those who exhibit the spirit of antichrist.

This is mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 – [3] *Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, [4] who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. [5] Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? [6] And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. [7] For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. [8] And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.*

- But there will be a FINAL man of lawlessness.
- Daniel says in Daniel 7:21 (11:33) *that he will make WAR against the SAINTS and rule over them.*
 - Daniel 11:36 – [36] *he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods.”*