



Can We Know When The World Will End?

ON SEPTEMBER 8, 1985, 16-YEAR-OLD SEAN SELLERS AND A COMPANION KILLED A CONVENIENCE-STORE CLERK. SEAN DESCRIBED THE MURDER IN THESE WORDS: "WE DIDN'T TAKE ANY MONEY. WE DIDN'T TAKE ANY MERCHANDISE. WE JUST TOOK THE LIFE OF AN INNOCENT MAN FOR SATAN." THE 16-YEAR-OLD KILLER WASN'T EVEN A SUSPECT IN THE CASE UNTIL SIX MONTHS LATER WHEN HE KILLED HIS PARENTS. HE WAS ANGRY AT HIS MOTHER AND PERFORMED AN OCCULT RITUAL BEFOREHAND, EXPLAINING, "THERE WAS NOTHING BUT COLD HATRED IN ME." SEAN SELLERS WAS THE YOUNGEST MAN ON OKLAHOMA'S DEATH ROW TILL HE WAS EXECUTED BY LETHAL INJECTION.

Did that story shock you? Probably not. If you've been reading your own daily newspaper, you're probably beyond being shocked at the evil in today's world - a lawless world that knows no bounds. Long ago, Jesus sat on a hillside with His disciples and predicted such a time as this. Jesus' disciples privately asked, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the world? **Matthew 24:3**. The Master foretold the destruction of Jerusalem and then clearly outlined the signs that would precede His Coming. The events that led up to the destruction of Jerusalem would also be present at the end time - but on a much larger scale before Jesus' return. It's amazing that when we compare Jesus' prediction in Matthew 24 with the predictions in the Book of Revelation, they provide an incredibly accurate picture of our time that signal an end time. Specific, clear signs would precede

the most momentous event of the ages - Christ's Second Coming. What are the signs of which He spoke? He told of signs in the world of religion, politics, nature and society. Today, these signs are played out in the stories splashed across our newspapers and TV screens. Let's examine each of these signs individually.

SIGNS IN THE WORLD OF RELIGION

Jesus foretold in **Matthew 24:5** that "Many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." Thousands, in their search for certainty, turn to cults, to false Christs and false prophets who recruit many to follow them. Jesus warned **Matthew 24:24**, "There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders." The Book of Revelation confirms that part of Satan's plan is deception: "He performs great signs so that he even makes fire come down from heaven

on earth in the sight of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs he was granted to do in the sight of the beast.” **Revelation 13:13-14**. The devil will unleash his deceptive power to take captive men’s and women’s minds. False religions have increased phenomenally. Cults recruit those who are searching. The Heaven’s Gate cult produced a farewell video and then took their own lives. *Jim Jones* of the People’s Temple led nearly 1000 to their death in the jungles of Guyana as they drank cyanide-laced Kool-Aid. *David Koresh* led his followers to a fiery death in Waco, Texas. To say nothing of Swiss cults whose members burned themselves to death, or a Japanese cult planning nerve gas attacks on Japanese subways. There are Bible-based cults, UFO cults, Satanist cults, New Age cults, Eastern cults. The Bible predicts a mighty false revival just before the Second Coming. Over two thousand newspapers in the U.S. carry astrology columns. Dial 900 phone numbers, and psychics will tell your future - for a fee. Click on Internet sites, and you can be guided through numerology, tarot cards, and dream interpretations. The devil is pulling out all the stops in these last days. But God is not caught by surprise - He warns us in His Book.

SIGNS IN THE WORLD OF POLITICS In **Matthew 24:6-7**, Jesus says, “You will hear of wars and rumours of wars... For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.” The 20th Century saw World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Arab-Israeli Wars, the war in Bosnia, the Gulf, Kosovo, southern and northern Ireland, wars all over Africa from Rwanda and Somalia to the Sudan and the Congo. One source estimates 180 million people have been killed in the last century - a total far greater than for any other century in history. Peace treaties, based on frail human promises, are signed one day and broken the next. Speaking of our time, the Apostle Paul declared in I Thessalonians 5:3, “When they say, ‘Peace and safety!’ then sudden

destruction comes upon them... And they shall not escape.” Today the nuclear threat is greater than ever. Even though the U.S. has downsized our nuclear arsenal, Russia has not. In August of 1999, CBS’s 60 Minutes II aired a program about Russia’s Secret Cities continuing to produce plutonium - the key ingredient in nuclear weapons. When terrorists and rogue governments go to Russia seeking to buy plutonium to make nuclear bombs, scientists who have not been paid by Russia’s crumbling economy are sorely tempted to sell their precious commodity. **Revelation 11:18** puts it this way: “The nations were angry and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged. And that You should destroy those who destroy the earth.”

SIGNS IN THE WORLD OF NATURE In **Matthew 24:7**, Jesus said, “There shall be famines, and pestilences [strange diseases], and earthquakes in diverse places.” Do we see famines today? Experts know that for many, chronic hunger is an ever-present part of life and that 10,000 people a day, or more than 3.5 million people per year, die of starvation. Do we see pestilences today - strange diseases running rampant? Some diseases are becoming resistant to antibiotics. And new diseases appear for which science has no cure - AIDS, Mad Cow disease, the Ebola virus. Do we see earthquakes today? Seismograph stations record 12,000 to 14,000 earthquakes per year - about 35 per day.

SIGNS IN THE WORLD OF SOCIETY No signs are more obvious than those in the social world. Jesus plainly predicted in **Matthew 24:37**: “As the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark.”

SIGNS IN THE WORLD OF KNOWLEDGE **Daniel 12:4** speaks of “the time of the end”

when “knowledge shall be increased” - knowledge about Daniel’s prophecies and knowledge in general would increase. As you turn on your computer, remember: ours is an age truly exploding with knowledge.

Looking to our daily newspapers for hope, we find only despair. Looking to the Bible in despair, we find hope. Fulfilled prophecies are all around us - Jesus is coming soon!

Matthew 24:3	Jesus disciples asked for a sign of His Coming and the end of the world.
Matt. 24:4-5, 11, 24	There will be many false religious teachers: false christs and false prophets who will deceive and mislead many.
Rev 13:13-14	Satan and his agents will perform signs and wonders to deceive people.
Rev 16:14	Spirits of devils will perform signs and miracles to mislead many.
2 Tim 4:3-4	The time will come when people won’t endure sound doctrine but will seek out teachers who will tell them what their itching ears want to hear.
Matt 24:6-7	There will be wars and rumours or wars; nation will rise against nation.
Luke 21:25	There will be distress of nations, with perplexity.
Luke 21: 26	Men’s hearts will be failing them, from fear of those things happening.
1 Thess. 5:2-3	Peace talks, based on man’s frail promises, will avail nothing.
Rev 11:18	When the nations are angry, Christ will ultimately destroy those who would destroy the earth.
Matt 24:7	There’ll be natural disasters - famines, pestilences, earthquakes - all over.
Matt 24:12	There will be rising crime and violence, iniquity.
2 Tim 3:1-4	There will be perilous times with moral decadence of every kind.
Matt 24:37-39	There will be times of wickedness and violence, as in the days of Noah.
Gen. 6:1-2, 5, 12-13	In Noah’s day, wickedness, evil, corruption, and violence were rampant everywhere.
James 5:1-5,8	There will be economic difficulties, with labor and management troubles.
Daniel 12:4	Near “the time of the end... knowledge shall increase.”
Luke 21:34	But many will be too weighed down with the cares of this life.
Matt 24:48-51	The evil servant shall say, “My Lord delays His Coming.”
2 Peter 3:8-10	God chooses to save all - but He honors our freedom of choice.
Rev 14:6	The everlasting gospel will be preached in every nation and tongue.
Matt 24:14	This gospel will be preached in all the world; then the end will come.
Matt 24:42-44	God’s counsel is - “Be ready.”

Quick Quiz

Our heavenly Father has so much He longs to teach us! Think of each seminar session as one in a series of steps leading upward a series of “lessons from heaven.” May we learn our lessons well, so we in turn can teach others. God’s Word, the Bible - our Textbook for this seminar - offers **Lessons For Living!**

Lesson 3 - Can We Know When The World End?

1. One religious sign of the End is that Jesus says, “There shall arise false _____, and false _____, and shall show signs and wonders.” **To check your answer, see Matthew 24:24**

2. **True or False** The most destructive, world-wide conflicts in human history occurred in the 20th Century, fulfilling the political sign Jesus predicted in “wars and rumours of war.” **To check your answer, see Matthew 24:6-7**

3. To all earlier generations, it must have sounded incredible and incomprehensible that Christ should come to “destroy them that _____ the _____,” for never before in all ages has man had that awesome capacity! **To check your answer, see Revelation 11:18**

4. **True or False** Pictures of starving children around the world haunt us in today’s media, like a visual echo of Jesus’ prophecy of “famines... in diverse places.”

5. Our **crime-ridden** cities, filled with violence, testify that Jesus’ social sign of the End is fulfilled, when He said that just before His Coming society will be “as it was in the days of _____, when “the earth was full of _____.” **To check your answer, see Matthew 24:37 and Genesis 6:11&13**

6. A sign in nature’s world is Jesus’ warning of _____,” or Strange diseases, some of which man himself causes, such as deaths from smoking. **To check your answer, see Matthew 24:7**

