



The Link

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A quarterly non-denominational publication to the body of Christ

"Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. (NIV) Rev 22:12



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EDITORIAL TEAM

Editor

'Segun Ajayi

Associate Editors

Ranti Ogunkunle

Rufus Oladosu

Kunbi Ajayi

Odunayo Ogundipe

Guest Columnist

Olumakinde Alawode

THE LINK is a non-denominational teaching magazine published quarterly and sent or delivered free to your homes, churches, ministries, schools, establishment and (or) any believer that requests a copy. **THE LINK** carries no subscription or news-stand price. **IT MUST NOT BE SOLD.**

This publication is being financed as the Lord provides through a group of brethren.

We would like to know how this publication has been of blessings to you, please write or call us.

You can also send in your gift(s) in cash or kind to improve the quality of this publication. (Cheques/Money orders should be made payable to 'Segun Ajayi).

The Link Ministries

C/o. P.O. Box 1058,

Ota.

Ogun State. Nigeria

E-mail: thelink@email.com

Phone: 0802 3534241, 0804 2147850

Partners of The Link Ministries

'Segun Ajayi

Odunayo Ogundipe

'Kunbi Ajayi

Rufus Oladosu

'Ranti Ogunkunle

'Sesan Idowu

Kehinde Adewoyin

'Dare Odeyemi

'Kemi Oluwadara

Zach Oluwadara

EDITORIAL

Beloved, we present to you another edition of 'The Link' magazine. This edition will sound the alarm repeatedly that Jesus is coming SOON.

It is obvious that we are all busy buying and selling, building and planting, marrying and giving in marriage but we care less that our Lord may come suddenly, like a thief in the night.

Brethren, in as much as we are occupied doing several things and facing the challenges of the present day; we need to be conscious that He will come very soon. We are of the day. The day should not come on us unawares. We need to be alert and wise waiting for the Bridegroom. Let us be found waiting, watching and ready for Him, considering the way we live and the manner of man we ought to be.

The signs of His coming are all here. We seem to be preoccupied with looking for signs and wonders, but Jesus is right at the corner.

We will bring you various contemporary issues to reflect on and consider. Please judge yourself and take action, getting ready for the Lord.

If He comes the next moment, are you ready to meet Him? You have nothing to lose by getting yourself ready.

Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: Luke 12:37(KJV)

Be occupied but watch out and be prepared.

To the brethren that wrote us, sent e-mail and phoned to encourage us with their comments we say, THANK YOU. We cherish every comment you made.

May the Lord continue to give us opportunity to reach you.

Praise God for His grace to be available to serve you through this ministry.

Yours in His Service,

'Segun Ajayi

LETTERS FROM BRETHERN

Love to you, and greetings in Jesus precious name. I was glad to see that wonderful magazine of such a great ministry committed to your hands.

I found myself more interested especially now that I am also into interdenominational outreach ministry. By His grace, I came back from Ghana a couple of weeks ago.

I'll like to receive copies regularly and at the same time stand to be a part of that great work in my own small way.

By His grace, I'll contact you soon both with my seed, and where to send the magazine (Our Lagos address). But I want you to know that I commend that unusual courage.

God bless you

**Pastor Faith A
Lagos.**

I did not receive the latest edition of the link Magazine, so I want to know how I can get one because the last edition richly blessed me. I want to know if I can be contributing in writing in the magazine.

**Bro.Oluwatosin O
Lagos.**

I have never stopped giving thanks to God for making us source of joy to the body of Christ. There is no doubt that the call of God upon your life to be a blessing to His body or church is real and clear.

I hereby write on behalf of St. Luke's Cathedral church to thank you and all the resource persons on the LINK MAGAZINE. This latest edition came in at a time we were having our leader's Retreat captioned UNDERSTANDING SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP with the following sub-topics handled by various speakers: -

1. The Spiritual Life Of The Leader
2. The Leadership By Example
3. The Role Of Leaders And Elders In Building A Vibrant Congregation
4. The Spiritual Leader As A Steward

Looking at this topic and that on the LINK, one cannot but thank the Lord for His Holy Spirit's

leading upon the church; especially using you to bless the church.

The LINK Ministries is a blessing to the Cathedral church of St. Luke, Jos.

Keep the Tempo higher.

Muyiwa A.

Jos.

Wishing you, compliment of the season and God's blessings. Your teachings have been a source of inspiration to me personally and I will love to be your distributor at PFN Ife North Chapter. I hope to read from you soon.

Pastor Joshua A.

Ipetumodu, Osun State.

I thank God in Jesus Name for raising you all up as vessels for His use at this end-time.

I acknowledge and appreciate the wonderful help of the Holy Spirit in your ministry. Glory be to Him for all the wisdom.

I appreciate from my heart, the Jehovah Jireh for His provisions for the past editions. He will continue to provide in Jesus Name (Amen).

All the messages in the past editions are powerful and Spirit-filled. "Contending earnestly for the Faith" is so sharp, "How Do I Really Feel About Myself" is inspiring. In fact, all the columns and messages really ministered to me.

The magazine is a blessing to me and I know to several people who have read it. You are doing a good work for the Lord.

Obafemi A

Abeokuta

Editor's Comment

Thanks for your letters and notes.

We encourage you to use the feedback form at the middle of each copy of the magazine to make your comments and we will be glad to read from you.

You can also send e-mail to us using thelink@email.com

Alternatively, call **08023534241**

Facts, Truths & Realities of the End-Time

Olumakinde Alawode

In Eccl 3:1 the Bible says, *"To everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under the heaven"*

This means all things whether physical or spiritual have their peculiar season, peculiar time and attesting signs. This is the basis of meteorological studies, we can forecast the weather, when we know the specific season we are in and when we study the signs. Hence we perfectly and correctly differentiate the morning from the evening, the rainy season from the dry season, the summer from the winter.

Likewise spiritual seasons can be understood when we can discern the signs of such a time. The season of the birth of Jesus Christ over 2000 years ago was attested with many clear signs.

- Luke 1:35-45 - Angels Gabriel appeared to Mary.
- Luke 1 35-45 - A virgin conceived.
- Luke 1:11-24 - Elizabeth the once called barren conceived at old age.
- Luke 2:8-15 - Angels appeared to shepherds.
- Mt 2:1-6 - A strange star appeared in the heavenlies traced by some wise men from the east.

Likewise the Second Coming of Christ shall be with signs; Yes, clear signs.

In I Thessalonians 5:2 the Bible says *"For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night"*

Many wrongly conclude that therefore that there will be no earlier indication when the Lord comes knocking as no thief warns before entering a place.

But the same Bible says in I Thessalonians 5:4 *"But ye brethren are not in darkness that the day should overtake you as a thief;* which means it is possible to be aware of the season of His arrival if you are:

1. In the light of salvation.
2. If you can discern the signs.
3. In constant communion with the light of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible says in Amos 3:7 *"Surely the Lord God does nothing unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets"*.

Also in Proverbs 25:2 the Bible says, *"It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out the matter"* Praise God, Hallelujah! I pray for you that from this day in every area of your life you will no more be put in darkness in Jesus name. Amen.

What I am saying, dear friends, is that we can know and in fact we should know the season of our Lord's coming.

Jesus rebuked the Pharisees in Matthew 16: 1-3 for their ability to accurately forecast the physical weather but inability to discern the signs of the times.

"The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven.

He replied, "When evening comes, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red, and in the morning, 'Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times." (Matthew 16:1-3)(NIV)

Please don't be a modern day Pharisee. Jesus is coming soon!

Jesus Christ says in Matthew 24:36, 42, 44, 50 that no one not even the angels know the day and the hour of His coming, but only the Father. Therefore anyone that tries to predict the day and hour of Christ's coming and the end of the world is a heretic.

Many have tried this in the past and failed. They include:

- St Augustine predicted AD 50
- Johannes Stocffer predicted February 20 1524
- William Whiston predicted Oct 13 1736
- Rev Ether Smith predicted 1866
- William Miller predicted 4 dates: April 7th 1843, March 21st 1844, Oct. 22nd 1844, Sept. 1975
- Robert Reedt predicted Oct 10th 1932
- Rev Charles Long predicted 5:33pm Sept. 21 1945
- Elio Bianco predicted 1:45pm July 14, 1960
- The Light Church of Christ predicted 1970
- Charles Gaines predicted 5:55pm April 29 1980
- A man in Korea predicted Oct. 28 1992
- Nostradamus (the great) predicted 4 dates April 25th 1666, April 25th 1886, April 25th 1943 and a future date April 25th 2038
- Marie Gabriel predicted July 16 1994
- Aleister Crowley predicted April 1997
- Order of the Solar Temple (Switzerland) predicted 8:00pm January 8th, 1998

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Rapture - The Next Greatest Event

Rufus Oladosu

“According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.

For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever”. 1Thes 4:15-17(NIV)

What is Rapture?

Rapture describes the quick series of events at the appearance of Jesus Christ in which resurrected saints and the living translated Christians are caught up together to meet with the Lord.

The word ‘rapture’, though not found in the English version of the Bible is a Latin translation of Greek word “harpazo” which is rendered as “caught up” in the above passage. The Latin word “rapere” is the root word of rapture. It is worthy to note that English language is a composite language made up of different languages such as Latin, French, German, etc. Secondly, Latin for many centuries in the western hemisphere was the acceptable language of theological discussions. Though not generally used today, several words in Latin are retained and used in theological, economic and legal discourses.

Events at Rapture

There are varieties of Greek terms used in the New Testament to describe different aspects of the rapture. These words include:

- Harpazo – to catch up or to snatch up (I Thessalonians 4:17)
- Allaso – to change, to transform or to exchange (I Corinthians 15:51-52)
- Paralambano – to take to or to receive to oneself (John 14:3)
- Episunagoge – gathering together or assembly (II Thessalonians 2:1)
- Epiphaneia – a manifestation or an appearance (Titus 2:13).

Though not every use of these words in the Bible describes rapture event, the review of these words within the context of the above passages in which

they are used gives vivid descriptions of what will transpire at the rapture. This is summarised bellow:

Rapture will begin with the physical appearing (epiphaneia) of Jesus Christ in the sky with His holy Angels. A command will be issued by Him, followed with the voice of an archangel and the trumpet of God. The dead in Christ will be raised in a new body and the living Christians will have their bodies changed (allaso) in the twinkling of an eye. The gathering or assembly of the believers (episunagoge) will be caught up (harpazo) to meet the Lord in the sky who will receive and take us (paralambano) to the Father’s House in Heaven.

The Subsequent Events

Rapture is not a ‘fait accompli’ – the end of God’s program, rather it is an event that will usher in a series of other events. Those events will eventually bring to fulfilment the original intent of God for the creation of man.

On earth, the rapture of the saints will be followed by the reign of terror occasioned by the Antichrist and his cohorts.

Concerning this brief period, Jesus said, “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved.” (Matt 24:21-22)

Please note that the lives and salvation of those left behind after the rapture will be precarious.

While these cataclysmic events are happening on earth, the saints that were gathered to Christ at rapture will be giving account of their lives before the judgement seat of Christ. This is where the deeds and motives of believers of all ages will be laid bare. Each one will receive deserving rewards according to the nature and degree of the fruits of his labour in the Lord. Those with deeds done in righteousness for God’s glory will receive high commendation. Others whose works are found defective will lose their rewards though their place in God’s kingdom will be preserved. (See I Corinthians 3:12-15)

“...for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” (Rom 14:10-12)

“Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.” (1 Corinthians 4:5)(NIV)

(See also I Corinthians 3:13-15).

The individual position of leadership in God's scheme of things in the coming ages will be determined by attitude to God in this present age.

The Nature of Rapture

The first aspect of the rapture is its imminence. Oxford English dictionary defines an imminent event as the one that is always “hanging overhead, constantly ready to befall or overtake one; close at hand in its incidence”.

As a result, many things may happen before the rapture, but nothing has to take place before it happens or prevent it from happening. Hence, **we should always be prepared for it.**

The concept of imminence makes it unnecessary and unwise to set a day for the rapture. Those who tried it in the past were disappointed. History tells us, for example, that because of the expectation of Christ's return in AD 1000, as Christmas AD 999 arrived, there was outpouring of love. Stores gave away food, merchants refused payments, the prisoners were released, and enemies were reconciled. But AD 1000 came and Christ did not return. Then merchants ceased giving away goods, prisoners were rearrested, and debts remembered. Life soon resumed its usual rhythm. Other predictions in recent times were equally found hollow.

However, **whatever the time of the rapture may be, we are nearer to it today than at any other moment in history. It can happen as you are reading this magazine!**

“No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.

For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.

Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.

Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.

But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into.

So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him”.

Matt 24:36-44 (NIV)

The second aspect of the rapture is that it is discriminating. It is not for all who go to Church and profess to be Christians. It is highly selective. Not even for every one who gave his life to Christ at a time, but for only those who abide in the vine till the very end. (Matthew 24:13)

“Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?'

Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" (Matt 7:21-23)(NIV)

The third aspect of the rapture is that it is redeeming. Rapture enables us to benefit fully from the redemptive work of Christ. The best elements of our redemption await the rapture for their manifestation. This is made abundantly clear in the following passages:

“Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.” (Rom 8:23)(NIV)

“When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” (Luke 21:28)(NIV)

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” (Ephesians 4:30)(NIV)

“...who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession-- to the praise of his glory.” (Ephesians 1:14)(NIV)

Those who miss the rapture short-change themselves.

Besides, the rapture delivers the Christians from partaking in the worldwide cataclysmic events of tribulation period engineered by the antichrist that

will culminate in the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 3:10).

Rapture and the Second Coming of Christ

The event of the rapture is delineated from the Second Coming of Christ to reign on earth. These two aspects of the Lord's return are different in time, nature and purpose.

At the rapture, the Lord comes for the saints (I Thessalonians 4:16), while at the second coming He comes with the saints (I Thessalonians 3:13). Subsequent to rapture, there is tribulation period on the earth, while at the second coming the millennial reign of Christ begins.

Before the rapture Satan is free, but before the second coming of Christ, he is bound for a thousand years. (Rev. 20:1-3)

While translation takes place at the rapture (I Corinthians 15:51-52), no such thing occurs at the second coming of Christ.

Finally, while the rapture is an imminent, any-moment event, the second coming of Christ is predictable; it follows the tribulation period.

The Proper Response

In the light of the imminence of the rapture, the Lord expects us to do the following:

1. Be Focused Rightly

Keep your mind on Christ and the things of heaven. Refuse to be distracted or overwhelmed with the issues that will blur your vision of heaven.

"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things."

(Col 3:1-2) (NIV)

2. Be Vigilant

Every step or turn in our way to glory has 'booby traps'. The old serpent is lurking nearby ready to strike when our defences are down. Be wary of the devices of the devil.

"What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'" (Mark 13:36-37) (NIV)

"Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." (1 Pet 5:8)(NIV)

3. Be prayerful

Strength from the Lord is communicated through communion with God.

"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." (Isaiah 40:31)

Effective praying helps to overcome personal weaknesses and neutralises Satan schemes.

"The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray". (1 Pet 4:7)(NIV)

"Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."(Luke 21:36)(NIV)

4. Be Holy

Holiness fills the heart with peace and confidence. Refuse the defilements of the world. Keep short account with God. Repent of sins promptly and ask for forgiveness. Receive God's grace to be blameless.

"Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure." (I John 3:2-3)(NIV)

5. Be Steadfast and Active in God's Service

Refuse to be discouraged by the attitudes of others to you as you faithfully serve the Lord. Be consistent. Give your best. Endure hardship as you fulfil God's will.

"Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs-- he wants to please his commanding officer." (2 Tim 2:3-4)(NIV)

"But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship,...discharge all the duties of your ministry." 2 Tim 4:5 (NIV)

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Corinthians 15:58

6. Abide in Christ till the end

Burn the bridge to the world. The Christian journey is not for the sprinter; it is for long-runner. Resolve in your heart to finish well, and give whatever it takes.

"And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming." (I John 2:28)(NIV)

BEHOLD, I COME QUICKLY

BEHOLD, I COME QUICKLY

Odunayo Ogundipe

There is a song I love so much. It is not the melody or the harmony that goes down into my spirit but the message in it. This time around, many Christians have forgotten the fact that Jesus Christ will come very soon. No wonder everybody is busy doing one thing or the other just like the days of Noah. Let us first examine what happened in the days of Noah, thereafter the song and a big question to answer.

“As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.

For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.” Matt 24:37-39(NIV)

Let us look at the song also:

Jesus is coming back again
Where will He meet you?
Unprepared or fully prepared
When our Saviour shall come

The signs of the end are visible
The Saviour shall not delay
Christians be watchful
The day is approaching

Just like the days of Noah
Eating and giving in marriage
Till the flood came
And there was no chance for them.

“Behold, I come quickly”: this connotes, listen or see I will not delay. The question now is this – **WHEN IS JESUS COMING BACK AGAIN?**

Beloved let us use the Bible as a standard in answering that question. The Bible says, “but of that day and hour knows no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only” (Matt 24:36). If you believe in the words of God, why are you saying that Jesus cannot come now, I will enjoy myself a little. You need to consider the way you live; a little sin today can make you to miss Christ at His coming. It might be late to repent a minute from now.

“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.

But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into.

So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”

(Matt 24:42-44)(NIV)

Revelation 3:11 says “Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” Chapter 22 verse 7 also says “Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keeps the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” This repetition signifies importance of this warning.

More than ever before this is the time that Christians should hold unto their salvation. An attempt for anyone to play with his or her Christian life would spell doom for such a person. We must be watchful and be prepared. Jesus may come today. **Be like the five wise virgins – though the bridegroom delayed, they were fully prepared.**

“...for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”

Rev 22:10^b-12

Ponder on the message so far. The Lord will bless you as you read on.

WHAT SHALL BE THE SIGNS OF HIS COMING?

The disciples of the Lord Jesus ask the above question as you are probably asking now:

“As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately.”Tell us,” they said, “when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”

Matt 24:3(NIV)

Jesus gave them answers in Matthew 24 verses 5 to 32 and can be summarised thus: false christs, nation rising against nations, kingdom rising against kingdoms, fake signs and wonders, famine, pestilence, earthquake, afflictions, killing of Christians, hatred of

You are precious

'Dare Odeyemi

Christians, increase of offence, false prophets, increase in iniquities, love of many waxing cold, etc. Looking at these afore-mentioned signs, point to anyone that is not happening now; this is an indication that Jesus is coming soon.

“So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.

Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.” Matt 24:33-34

Behold, I come quickly: This will surprise many people including careless Christians, Unbelieving believers or those like tares among the wheat. The Bible says, in Matt 24:40-41 *“Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.”*

Which group do you want to belong? Examine yourself, because you do not know the time our Lord will come.

“So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time?

It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns.

I tell you the truth; he will put him in charge of all his possessions.” Matt 24:44-47(NIV)

The Bible further continues by saying in Matt 24:48-51 -*“But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, ‘My master is staying away a long time (which is the saying of most Christians),’ and he then begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards. The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of.*

He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (NIV)

Behold, Jesus is coming soon. Do not allow the coming of our Lord to meet you unprepared. He that has ears let him hear what the Lord is saying. It will not pay you if your fellow brethren are taken away and you are left behind. Be prepared.

Your life is so precious. The value of your life is immeasurable and cannot be quantified. Jesus Christ came to die for you and redeemed you from sin that has clung to you like a skin blemish that no medicated soap can remove.

Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom paid a heavy bridal price for you.

Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom clothed you with His righteousness as a wedding gown (bright and flowing).

Therefore, stay clear from what can stain your wedding gown because the coming King (the Bridegroom) is coming for a bride without spot or wrinkle.

Facts, Truths & Realities of the End-Time

(Continued from Page 4)

- Richard Kieninger and the stelle group predicted May 5th 2001
- A couple of television evangelists in Ibadan, Nigeria predicted 2001.

Saints, no one can know the day and hour of His coming but we can be aware of the season, and from all scriptural signs as recorded in Matthew 24:1-end, Daniel 12:4 and Luke 17:26-30, we are entering the season of the beginning of the end; we are in the last days. This is a peculiar season in man's history; it is the most exciting season in church history. **Therefore if you are not born again it is time to do so. It is time to serve God fully and with all that you have.** The coming of the Lord is at hand, BE PREPARED!

The Perils of the End-time

'Kumbi Ajayi

I hear you say 'I think I know about this issue', I have heard and read it all. You even say, thank God I am born again. 'God will keep me to the end' you said. We thank God for your life.

You may be out there, you do not know Christ and you turn up your nose and say, "they have come again; since they have been saying it, the end has not come". Or you may belong to the group that does not care either way (Whether it is true or not you don't care). Either way it will just benefit all of us to consider what we are about discussing. No matter who you are, or which group you belong to, the content of these pages affects you.

It is necessary for us to consider some issues, reflect and examine our lives as the coming of Christ draws nearer than we imagine. Since 1948, after the rebirth of the nation of Israel, several prophecies of the Scripture have been fulfilled. Several other prophecies will soon be fulfilled in quick succession and Christ will soon appear again. We can relate to you many things that God foretold in Scriptures that had happened. Alas, some people will still not believe that we are already at the end-time.

The Peril of Lukewarmness

The Lord is definitely coming for a Church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. (Ephesians 5:27) Nevertheless, before Christ comes the devil is working on breaking our ranks and *pulling brethren away into the cold*. The faiths of many are waxing cold thinking that their Lord is no longer coming. Many go around and forget to seek the kingdom of God and its righteousness until they are completely out of God's presence. They seem to fill our congregation and they are neither for Christ nor against us; Iniquity seems to be the order of the day in their lives.

Christ said of these people... "*and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold*". (Matthew 24:12)

Alas, many are neither cold nor hot, they became lukewarm.

So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. (Revelation 3:16)

It is terrible to fall into this category of people who shall be spew out of the mouth of the Lord. It is a horrible thing to be out from the Lord or fall into the hand of the Mighty God.

Many that call themselves Christians, many Church leaders and disciples may not get to heaven because God will spew them out for being lukewarm.

Many claimed that they are okay, they are rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing. They know not that they are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked because of sin and Luke warmness:

The Lord counsel them to turn to him again... "*to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou may be rich; and white raiment, that thou may be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thy eyes with eye salve, that thou may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent*" (Rev. 3:18-19)

The Peril of itching ears

Many Church leaders preach little scripture but a lot of worldly stories; the choir sing wonderfully with wonderful instruments accompanying but put very little emphasis on repentance, obedience, and the fear of God – they revert to entertainment and teach the people what the people want to hear rather than what God expects them to teach.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. (II Timothy 4:3-4)

God's expectation and standard have not changed, He expects you to "***preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine***" (II Timothy 4:2).

As a Christian, what is your attitude when you are rebuked or reprovved by the word of God? Are you ready to repent or turn way to another 'Pastor' that is not too hard on you? Beware of developing itching ears. Do not be lured away from the truth at this end-time. Do not be lured into the world and its standards.

Only the seal of the Lord is sure, and His word is the only sure thing that can make you to stand the tests of this time.

The Lord is saying to you ...”**Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shall not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shall not know what hour I will come upon thee**” (Rev. 3:3).

The Peril of Signs

Many are seeking miracles, signs and wonders instead of seeking after God, the givers of all good things.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with who is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. James 1:17

Miracles, signs and wonders are good and they should draw us closer to God, but we often seek after them more than we seek after God. Many have forgotten that with the miracles, signs and wonders God will still expect us to seek after righteousness. So many don't want to hear anything on holiness again forgetting that they are dealing with a Holy and righteous God that cannot behold iniquity.

Follow...holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: (Hebrews 12:14)

As they move around running after many men of God and signs, some fall victim of agents of the devil also performing fake miracles.

Remember, in the land of Egypt, during the time of Moses, Pharaoh's wise men also did miracles (In Exodus 9: 9-11 ...”When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Show a miracle for me: then thou shall say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent...Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments”).

Satan has many wolves in sheep clothing waiting to deceive even the elect – Christians.

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

(II Corinthians 11:13-15)

As you seek the Lord and His righteousness, I can assure you that miracles, signs, and wonders shall follow you. As a friend says, “Angel Goodness’ and ‘Mercy’ shall follow you everywhere”!

Beware, it is not the miracles, signs and wonders that matter most, it is the fruit. *Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them (Matthew 7:20).*

Many ‘ministers’ of the gospel have gone out of God to look for various ways to deceive people. They have sold themselves to the devil in order to make signs and miracles to be in their ministries. Please repent today before it is too late. Ask God to forgive you. The enemy has been using you. After the lying miracles, signs and wonders you perform, the Lord will tell you I know you not.

If you seek God and you are labouring for Him, signs and wonders will come confirming your words and the fact that God is with you.

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?

And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. (Matthew 7: 22-23)

And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following (Mark 16:20).

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him (Acts 10:38).

Seek after God and our Lord Jesus Christ will work through you.

At this end-time the Lord has open us up to a great outpouring of His Spirit and great signs and wonders will follow ministrations of God's word. Many will come to the knowledge of truth by the signs and wonders and they shall see that our God is good and real: The giver of good things (Amen).

The Peril of Pleasure and Self

Apostle Paul prophesied in the book of II Timothy 3: verses 2 & 4 that many shall be “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God” and “lovers of their own selves”. Right now, going to picnic, watching football, watching BBA, going to attend ‘Owanbe’ parties, etc. occupy more of our time and attention more than the things of God. A lot of people will rather spend more time with several of these activities and the likes, than to attend Solemn Assemblies, Night Vigils, Retreats, Prayer Meetings and Believers’ Conferences. They will tell you that the Church can wait until another day. Many people will tell you they are too tired to come to Church: But they are not too tired to watch television for hours. God will have mercy on His Church.

Jesus is coming soon. He expects us to redeem the time; the times are evil and running out. The night will soon come when work will cease.

It is time to arise and work for God. Seek God than seek to satisfy our selves and the pleasures of life.

Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. (Ephesians 5:16)

Do you think you actually love God or you love the world and its pleasures? A lot of people don't even want to put their money into the work of the Lord: They will tell you that they do not have, when the actual fact is that they want to spend on themselves rather than spend on things of God. This is, loving self than loving God. May the Lord deliver as many in His Church that prefer to put their treasures here on earth than invest in the kingdom of God. The enemy is surely deceiving many about the wealth they have. What do you have that were not given to you by God? Remember the Rich man in Jesus' parable in Luke 12: 16 –21... *But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?*

So is he that lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God (20-21).

Also in James 5: 1-5, the Lord warned: *Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.*

Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.

Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, cries: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

The Peril of Mockers and Scoffers

In Jude 1:18-19 the scripture says: *“But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;*

How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts”. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

It is being fulfilled that some will no longer believe that Jesus Christ is coming back; they will say why is the promise of His coming not yet fulfilled? Some even said that the rapture issue is a farce that it will

never happen. Others said we could not expect to go to any heaven (that they will inherit the earth) and several heretic teachings that have gone round. They are all mockers.

The Bible called these people scoffers of the last days in II Peter 3: 3-4: *“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,*

And saying, where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation”

These scoffers and mockers are being used of the enemy to lure people from the faith, and make them to begin to live anyhow not considering the coming of Jesus Christ.

God will expect you to keep the faith at this end-time and not lose that which you have.

We are to be watchful and look steadfastly to the fact He that promised is faithful.

Be watchful, ...Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shall not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shall not know what hour I will come upon thee (Rev 3: 2-3).

The coming of the Lord is imminent. We are marking the end of an era soon. The kingdom of God is at hand *(So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. (Luke 21:31))*

We shall soon see the Son of God coming for us. He has prepared us for His coming kingdom. Remember because of us He went all the way to Calvary to prepare unto Himself a kingdom of people waiting for His return.

Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he finds you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch. (Mark 13:33-37)

What manner of man we ought to be?

'Segun Ajayi

"But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

*But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, **what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives**" (2 Pet 3:8-11) (NIV).*

As we look forward to the day of the Lord, it becomes necessary to take stock of our lives and consider the way we have lived and the way we ought to live as believers.

Considering the fact that we have been so engrossed with several activities and challenges in recent time, as Christians it is wisdom for everyone to examine himself/herself whether we are really running the race as we are expected to run it.

Are you still in Faith?

We need to begin to probe our lives; do we still believe in Jesus Christ and is our faith resting on Him alone? Remember, we were made righteous on absolute trust in His righteousness alone and what He has accomplished for us on the cross of Calvary. Alas, some of us have gone aside into other things and we tend to believe more in what we can accomplish all by ourselves. We have started to put more confidence in men, that pray for us (the man of God). We seem to have forgotten Christ. Our faith should rest on Christ not on any man and what He can accomplish. He is only an instrument in the hand of a mighty God.

Do not misunderstand, men of God can pray for us, but we should let our faith rest on Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2).

Have you left Christ and you now run after man who can be today and tomorrow may be taken away? When he is taken away what becomes of your faith, if you have not related with Christ before then.

Several so-called men of God have made themselves into tin gods in their followers' lives and they make proclamations as if they are now taking the place of God. Several followers that seem not to know the God they are serving or have little knowledge of Christ have been led astray and made a shipwrecked of their faith whenever something goes wrong with these men of God.

"Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you-- unless, of course, you fail the test?" 2 Corinthians 13:5(NIV)

The passion in the heart of Apostle Paul is that our faith should rest on Jesus Christ, he said in 2 Corinthians 4:5 *"For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake" (NIV).*

"For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not mere men? What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe-- as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow"1 Corinthians 3:4-7 (NIV).

As you are brought to Christ, let your faith rest on Him alone and keep the faith until He comes.

This brings us to a very important subject - **Faithfulness.**

Are you Faithful?

The Lord pronounced in Numbers 12:7 that Moses is faithful in His entire house. Can the Lord say that about you?

The Lord Jesus Christ is coming for a Church of the faithful believers, men and women who are true to their confession and are ready to go all out to please Him in all things.

"To the faithful you show yourself faithful, to the blameless you show yourself blameless, to the pure you show yourself pure, but to the crooked you show yourself shrewd. You save the humble, but your eyes are on the haughty to bring them low".

II Sam 22:26-28 (NIV).

It aches the heart of the Psalmist that he said in Ps 12:1 - *"Help, LORD, for the godly are no more; the faithful have vanished from among men" (NIV).*

The Lord wants absolute faithfulness from His children. This will mark out the believers from those that do not believe in Him. The kind of life that we live should show our origin and our relationship with the Lord. As we faithfully follow the Lord our lives is characterised by Holiness and godliness for God cannot change or lower His standard of Holiness because of any man.

For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. 1Thes 4:7

“Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God”

II Corinthians 7:1 (NIV)

“To the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints”. 1Thes 3:13

Remember, the kingdom of God is sure and it has a seal, the Lord know them that are His and is expected that anyone that is named with the Lord must stay away from iniquity.

“Nevertheless the foundation of God stands sure, having this seal, The Lord knows them that are his. And, Let every one that named the name of Christ depart from iniquity”. 2 Tim 2:19

He is coming for a Church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Search your live today and remove any blemish in it. Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound, God forbid?

Your **faith** can only get you to heaven if you **make it full by holiness and godly living.**

Be FaithFUL.

Are You Serving God?

II Tim 2:19b-21

And, Let every one that named the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purges himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

God’s intention at this end-time is to use you. To make you a sharp threshing instrument and His battle axe. But this depends on the way you are prepared to be a vessel for His use. *“See, I will make you into a threshing sledge, new and sharp, with many teeth. You will thresh the mountains and crush them, and reduce the hills to chaff. ”* Isaiah 41:15(NIV)

“Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war:” Jeremiah 51:20

“As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.” John 9:4(NIV)

Are you ready to give up yourself and serve Him?

The time is so short and there is so much to be done.

Arise and do the work of the Lord.

Do everything unto the Lord. He will grant you grace to serve Him better. As you serve Him He will commend

unto you more grace and anointing for service. Do not retire but always re-fire for the Lord.

Are You Ready To Follow Him?

“Don’t lose your vision of Jesus; keep your eyes steadfast on Him. Many precious and beloved ones have lost their way because they lost their vision of Him.”

This was the warning we got some few years ago in the song by a wonderful Choir on campus.

Today it is so easy to stray away from the path of life. It is so easy to go aside unto other things. It is so easy to be led astray by the enemy.

In fact, the devil is so busy these last days luring many from following Christ.

It is the Lord that knows every step of the way; He will guide us to safety. He is a good shepherd as He said. He will lead to pasture. No wonder the Psalmist said: *“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”* Psalm 23:1-4(NIV)

I know we are always eager to follow our shepherd here on earth, our Pastors, our Overseers and leaders in the Church. We need to continually pray for them so that they can lead us continually in the right direction. They themselves are following the leading of the Chief Overseer, the Shepherd of our souls, Jesus Christ. At this end-time I counsel you to open your eyes wide and open your heart well to know the Lord Jesus Christ personally so that no one will lead you astray.

Set your eyes on Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of your faith.

May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing His will, and may He work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Heb 13:20-21(NIV)



Repent today, tomorrow might be late. The Lord is coming soon.

Poetry

If Jesus Came

Would you have to change your clothes
before you let Him in?
Or hide away some worldly magazines,
and put the Bibles where they'd been?
Would you hide your worldly music,
and put some hymnbooks out?
Could you let Jesus walk right in,
or would you rush about?

And I wonder: If the Savior,
Spent a day or two with you,
Would you go right on doing,
The things you always do?
Would you go right on saying,
the things you always say?
Would life for you continue,
as it does from day to day?
Would you take Jesus with you,
everywhere you go?
Or would you maybe change your plans,
for just a day or so?

Would you be glad to have Him,
Meet your closest friends?
Or would you hope they'd stay away,
until His visit ends?

Would you be glad to have Him,
Stay forever on and on?
Or would you sigh with relief,
when He at last was gone?

It might be interesting to know,
the things that you would do,
If Jesus came in person, to spend some
time with you.

'Twas the Night Before Jesus Came

'Twas the night before Jesus came and all
through the house, not a creature was
praying, not one in the house.
Their Bibles were laid on the shelf without
care in hopes that Jesus would not come
there.

The children were dressing to crawl into
bed, not once ever kneeling or bowing a
head.

And Mom in her rocker with baby on her
lap was watching the Late Show while I
took a nap.

When out of the East there arose such a
clatter, I sprang to my feet to see what was
the matter.

Away to the window I flew like a flash;
Tore open the shutters and threw up the
sash!

When what to my wondering eyes should
appear angels proclaiming that Jesus was
here.

With a light like the sun sending forth a
bright ray

I knew in a moment this must be **The
Day!**

The light of His face made me cover my
head.

It was Jesus! Returning just like He had
said.

And though I possessed worldly wisdom
and wealth, I cried when I saw Him in
spite of myself.

In the Book of Life that He held in His
Hand was written the name of every saved
man.

He spoke not a word as He searched for
my name; when He said "It's not here" My
head hung in shame!

The people whose names had been written
with love He gathered to take to His Father
above.

With those who were ready He rose
without a sound while all the rest were left
standing around.

I fell to my knees, but it was too late;
I had waited too long and this sealed my
fate.

I stood and I cried as they rose out of
sight;

Oh, if only I had been ready tonight.

**In the words of these poems the meaning is clear
that the coming of Jesus is drawing near. There is
only one life to live and when comes the last call we
will find out that what the Bible says is true after
ALL!**

Consider the way you live.

The Signs Are All Here

In Titus chapter 2, verses 11-13, we find these words: “The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus.”

Are you living looking for the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus? That’s what this verse tells us we’re to do. We’re to live with an expectation, live with a yearning, live with a hope that Jesus may appear any moment. I know from experience that most Christians do not have that hope in their hearts. I know that most Christians are rather apathetic about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

I suppose one of the major reasons for that apathy is the fact that people have heard about it for so long that they have come to take it for granted. Oh yes, they believe Jesus is coming back, but they think of it as an event that will occur at some point in the distant future. The Lord’s return is not an imminent reality to them. Rather, it’s a sort of pie in the sky dream and hope. Maybe He will return a thousand years from now, or maybe two thousand years from now, but certainly not now. Others are just absolutely convinced that there is not anything that we can know about the coming of the Lord, and therefore there is no reason to even think about it — no reason to worry about it — even no reason to talk about it.

We cannot know the *date* that Jesus will return; I mean that with all my heart. I believe that the Bible makes it crystal clear we cannot know the date. In Matthew 24:36 Jesus Himself said, “of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.” **We cannot know the date.** Now, there are a lot of sincere people who are setting dates, and I do not doubt their sincerity, but they are sincerely deceived. And the closer we get to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ the more of these people there are going to be, because Satan is going to motivate people to set dates.

Satan loves date setters because they bring discredit to Bible prophecy. You know how it works. Somebody sets a date. People get their hopes focused on that date rather than on their Savior, Jesus Christ. They become obsessed with the date, and they run around all over

the place talking incessantly about the date. The press picks up on the story and focuses in on the date. Then, the date comes and passes; and the press heaps ridicule on those who believed in the date. The individuals who put their faith in that date are embarrassed, and they become embittered. They say to themselves, “I’ll tell you one thing, I’ll never do that again!” And then, when a responsible prophecy teacher comes along and says, “I don’t know the date, but I do know Jesus is coming soon,” they say, “Oh sure, I’ve heard that nonsense before,” and they refuse to listen. They turn off their ears to God’s prophetic word. And Satan loves it.

The closer we get to the coming of Jesus, the more of these date setters Satan is going to raise up. The effect will be like the person who constantly yells, “The wolf is coming, the wolf is coming, the wolf is coming!” — and he continues to yell it until — guess what? — Everyone decides to ignore him. And then the wolf comes.

Well, my friend, Jesus is coming soon. We need to be aware of that. And we need to keep in mind that no one can know the date that Jesus will return. Yet, when people ask me if we can know that date, I always respond, “Yes and No.” Again, what I mean by that answer is that No, we cannot know the date; but Yes, we can know the season of the Lord’s return.

Knowing the Season

I want to prove this to you with Scripture. I hope you have your Bible handy and that you will look with me as I turn to these various scriptures — or maybe you can make a note of them and look them up later.

Turn with me for a moment to the letters that Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, and look at 1 Thessalonians, chapter 5. I want to show you a positive proof that you can know the season of the Lord’s return.

Let’s begin reading with verse 1: “Now as to the times and seasons, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.” There it is! He’s coming like a thief in the night! Verse 3 says it will occur while people are saying, “Peace and safety!” At that time, says Paul, “destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.”

Now, the fundamental point I'm leading up to is found in verse 4. Underline it. Don't ever forget it. This is the crucial verse. This is the verse that proves you and I can know the season of the Lord's return. The verse, I Thessalonians 5:4, says "*but you brethren are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief*; for you are sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night or of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober"

Now, what is that saying? Paul is saying Jesus is coming like a thief in the night, but not for Christians. He's coming like a thief in the night for the world. He's coming like a thief in the night for pagans. He's coming like a thief in the night for those professing Christians who do not have any personal relationship with Him and who have never really been born again and who refuse to believe the Word of God and study the Word of God. But He's saying, "Let me tell you, if you've been born again, if you're truly a child of God, if you read the Word and believe the Word, there is no reason in the world why Jesus should come as a thief in the night for you." Look again at verse 4: "But you brethren are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief; for you are sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do."

What does he mean when he says, "We are sons of light and not of darkness"? I think what He's referring to is the fact that if you are truly a born again child of God, you have the Holy Spirit residing inside of you. The Holy Spirit is the one who wrote the Bible. And if you will lean on the Holy Spirit, the Spirit will illuminate your mind and illuminate your heart and open your eyes to understand the mysteries of God's Word, including the season of the Lord's return. And so it is that the Bible says point blank, Jesus is *not* coming as a "thief in the night" for those who know Him and love Him.

There's a similar passage in Hebrews chapter 10 verse 25. It says, "Do not forsake our assembling together as is the habit of some, but encourage one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near." What day? Well, the day of judgment mentioned in verse 27 — the day when the Lord will return. It is the day referred to in verse 31 where we are warned that it is a "terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Note again verse 25 where it says that we are to encourage one another "as we see the day drawing near." That means we can tell something about the season in which we're living. It means we don't have to be totally ignorant about the time when the Lord is going to return. The point again is that No,

we cannot know the date; but Yes, we can know the season.

Identifying the Season

Now, there are two reasons why we can know the season of the Lord's return. Two reasons; the first is God wants us to know the season of His Son's return. Let me say it again, **God want us to know the season of His Son's return.** Now, you are probably thinking, "Dave how do you know that?" Well, let me put it to you another way. Listen to this carefully. Did you know that God would violate His character if He sent Jesus Christ back by surprise? And since God cannot violate His character, because He is a God of perfect integrity, then God must warn us about the return of Jesus.

Now, stop and think for a moment. Why would it violate God's character to send Jesus back by surprise? The reason is that the Bible reveals that never once in all the history of mankind has God ever poured out His wrath without warning. That is the nature of the loving kindness, grace and mercy of God. Yes, God is a God of justice and righteousness and holiness. But He is also a God of tender, loving, mercy and kindness, and because He is, He always warns before He pours out His wrath.

Why does He do that? Because in 2 Peter 3 verse 9 it says, "God does not wish that any should perish but that all should be brought to repentance." The God who is the creator of this universe is not some Cosmic Sadist who is hiding in the clouds, peeking down at us, waiting for an opportunity to zap the greatest number of sinful people on planet earth with the Second Coming of Jesus. **He wants us to accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior. He wants us to accept His gift of love to the world. He is longsuffering and patient. Again, He does not wish that any should perish but that all should be brought to repentance.**

God has never poured out His wrath — never — without warning in advance. Take Noah for example. God told Noah to go forth and preach to the people that they were living in the season of the pouring out of the Lord's wrath. Noah preached that message for 120 years. He told people repeatedly, "You are living in the season of the pouring out of God's wrath." The people responded by laughing at him, scoffing at him, and ridiculing him. Some laughed until they could not tread water anymore! Likewise, the Lord told Abraham to go into the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and warn them of impending destruction. Abraham warned, but the people of Sodom and Gomorrah didn't believe, and they perished in the destruction of the cities.

Watching for the Signs

Let me summarize what I've said thus far. You are either under grace or under wrath. Jesus is coming in wrath. God never pours out His wrath without warning. God is obligated by His character to warn. Therefore, God is obligated to let us know the season of the Lord's return.

Now, how can we know it? God wants us to know it, but how does He reveal it? He reveals it through signs — through signs that we are to watch for. The same principle applied to the First Coming of Jesus.

If you'll turn over the Matthew Chapter 16 you will see this principle. In Matthew 16 verse 1, we find Jesus teaching when the Sadducees and Pharisees suddenly confront him. They demanded that He show them a sign from heaven. What they wanted was a miracle. But Jesus played with the word, "sign." Listen to what He says. He gets very sarcastic. He says, "Ah, I tell you, you guys, you beat all I ever saw. When it's evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather for the sky is red.' Then, in the morning you look up and notice the sky is red and threatening, and you say, 'It will storm today.' Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times?"

Do you get the point Jesus was making? Here are the religious leaders of Israel demanding a "sign" to prove that Jesus is the Messiah. They want Him to perform a miracle. He says, "I don't understand you guys. You can look at the sky and tell what the weather is going to be, and you can't look at me and discern the signs of the times? What miracle do you need? What sign do you need besides what I'm doing?"

What's Jesus referring to? He's referring to the fact that the Hebrew Scriptures, which these men had been studying all their lives, contain over 300 hundred prophecies about the First Coming of the Messiah. Many of those prophecies are repetitious. If you boil them all down you'll come out with about 109 separate and distinct prophecies about the First Coming of Jesus. These prophecies foretold everything about His life — where He would be born, how He would be born, that He would go into Egypt, He would live in Galilee, He would heal people and love people. All aspects of His ministry were prophesied. Take His lineage for example. It was prophesied that He would be descended from Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and David. The last days and hours of His life were prophesied in incredible detail. The prophets said He would be betrayed, by a friend, for 30 pieces of silver, that He would be lifted up, and that He would be pierced in

the side and in His hands and feet. Every aspect of His life and death was prophesied.

Now, Jesus is fulfilling all those prophecies before the very eyes of the Scribes and Pharisees. Yet, they are demanding a "sign"! So Jesus replies, "How blind can you be? I'm fulfilling the signs of the times."

Now folks, here's the point: There are 300 hundred prophecies about the First Coming of Jesus in the Old Testament, but there are 500 — five hundred! — in the Old Testament about His Second Coming! And in the New Testament, one out of every 25 verses has to do with the Second Coming of Jesus. In other words, there are many, many, many more prophecies about the Second Coming of Jesus than His First coming; probably twice as many. Why so many? Because Jesus is returning in wrath. The first time He came, He came as a compassionate Savior with tears in His eyes. But when He returns, He is returning as a conquering warrior with eyes like white-hot flames because He is returning to judge and make war against the enemies of God. And so, since God does not wish that any should perish, He has given us sign to watch for.

I've spent the last 25 years studying those signs. And I tell you, folks, there are so many they overwhelm you — literally overwhelm you. What I've done is try to put them together into categories — into groupings. That's the best way I know of to get a handle on them. I want to tell you something my friends; the fact that Jesus is coming soon just overwhelms you. You begin to have spiritual eyes, and you start seeing the signs of the times that point to the soon return of Jesus. Everywhere you look it's as if God has neon lights in the sky flashing on and off saying, "Jesus is coming soon! Jesus is coming soon! Jesus is coming soon!"

The Signs of Nature

What are the signs? Let me give you the categories. First are the signs of nature. And let me just tell you right now — right up front — that the signs of nature are the least respected signs in all the various categories of signs. When you mention signs of nature, people say, "What do you mean by that?" You say, "What I'm talking about is earthquakes, and volcanoes, and famines, and pestilence, and mysterious things in the heavens," and they start laughing. They start laughing! Usually for one or two reasons, they either first of all say, "Well those things have always been with us. There have always been famines, always earthquakes and tornadoes — so what else is new? Come on, David, get serious." Or, they just laugh at you because they think you're a stupid idiot to believe that God would speak through a sign of nature. They put you on the level of some

ignorant and superstitious native who thinks that because his volcano goes off his god is mad at him.

Well, folks, I've got news for you. The signs of nature are for real — they are for real! The Bible teaches from beginning to end that God always speaks through nature. God put a special star in the heavens when Jesus was born. On the day that He was crucified, there was a special three hours of darkness and an earthquake. And the Word says that when Jesus returns, there's going to be the greatest earthquake in all of history — that every valley will be lifted up, every mountain will be lowered, the whole earth will be flattened like plain, every island will be moved, and the city of Jerusalem will be lifted up to be the highest point on the face of the earth.

God speaks through signs of nature. You go back to the Old Testament prophets and you will find prophet after prophet speaking of the signs of nature. Joel's whole book is about a locust invasion. What's the message? Joel is saying, "Hey, our land has just been stripped bare by locusts. We don't have anything to eat. We don't have anything to feed our cattle. We don't have anything to offer to the Lord." Then, he says, "I've got news for you. You're sitting around wringing your hands, lamenting over your 'bad luck,' and asking, 'Why did this have to happen to us?' Well, your plight doesn't have anything to do with luck. God sent the locusts. He sent them to call you to repentance, and if you don't repent, God is going to send an army that will completely destroy you." Do you think they believed him? No. They laughed and scoffed and ridiculed and threw stones at him. They didn't believe Joel, and God sent the army.

The prophet Amos also emphasized the signs of nature in his preaching. He said to the people, "Hey, have you noticed every time you go out and plant your crops, that the root rot gets them? And when you go back and replant them, a flood destroys them? And when you replant again, a hailstorm gets them? And when you go back and replant them, the blight comes? And when you replant again, the locusts arrive?" He said, "I've got news for you: God sent those calamities, because God is calling you to repentance!" We live in one of the most rationalistic societies on the face of this earth. We worship at the altar of rationalism. The average American no more believes in the supernatural than he believes in the man in the moon. This is true also of the average Christian. We are so rationalistic we believe if you can't see it, if you can't touch it, if you can't smell it, if you can't taste it, if you can't weigh it — then it doesn't exist. But the Bible teaches there is a whole realm of reality that is normally beyond the perception of the senses. I'm speaking of the realm of the angelic, the realm of

the demonic, and the realm of spiritual warfare. And an aspect of it is the way God speaks through signs of nature. He always has, and He always will.

When people sneer at these signs and say, "Well, you know, there have always been signs like these," they ignore what Jesus said in Matthew 24. Listen to what He says as he describes these signs. In Matthew 24:8 Jesus said the signs of nature would be like "birth pangs." Now, I've never had birth pangs, and so I went to my wife one time when I first started studying Bible prophecy and I said, "What in the world does the Lord mean by that?" She said, "Oh, you dummy, any mother knows what that means. She then explained that the closer a pregnant woman gets to the delivery of her baby, the birth pangs increase in two ways. They increase in frequency and intensity. And folks, that is exactly what Jesus meant here. The closer we get to His coming, the more earthquakes there will be and the more intense; the more volcanic eruptions, the more intense; the more plagues, the more intense; the more famine, the more intense.

Does that sound like the evening news? That's exactly what's been happening in this century. Get a World Almanac, look up the statistics in it, and you will see that ever since this century began, we have been experiencing an increasing frequency and intensity in all our natural calamities. The statistics are overwhelming. It's as if God is shaking all of nature and shaking it harder, and harder, and harder, the closer we get to the coming of Jesus. He is saying to the world, "Listen to me, Jesus is coming soon!"

My friends, the signs of nature are for real, and we had better pay attention to them. They are proclaiming that Jesus is coming soon.

The Signs of Society

The second category of signs pertains to the nature of society. Again, in Matthew 24, Jesus said in verse 37 that "the coming of the Son of Man will be just like in the days of Noah." He then begins to describe the days of Noah. What the Lord is saying here is, "I'm going to come back in a time when the earth is in as bad a shape as it was in the days of Noah." What He means here is that world society will go full circle and return to being as evil as it was in the days of Noah.

Go back to Genesis 6 and read what it says. You will be astonished to learn it doesn't give much detail about the days of Noah. But what it says is very bad. It says first of all that "men minds were focused upon evil," and because of that, there were two major manifestations — immorality and violence.

If you want to know what Noah's society was like in detail you have to turn to the New Testament. Turn to Romans chapter 1, and start reading there with verse

18. The rest of the chapter tells in detail how horrible Noah's society really was. What Paul does here, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is describe what kind of society God pours His wrath out against; and when he describes it, it has to be Noah's society because Noah's society is the classic example in all of history of the pouring out of God's wrath. It was a society in which verse 18 says men "suppressed the truth in unrighteousness," even as we're doing so here in the United States by refusing to allow our children in the public schools to be taught the true origin of the universe and the true origin of the human species. It goes on to talk about how it was a society in which they worshiped the creature rather than the Creator. They worshiped nature. They were Humanists. They worshiped man rather than God. We are the same way today. We are a humanist society. We are worshiping Mother Earth rather than Father God who created the earth.

The passage goes on to talk about how the people were futile in their speculations and imaginations — how they professed to be wise but were, in reality, fools. My friends, we are just like that. We worship at the altar of education. Whatever the problem is, we think it can be solved by education. If it's AIDS, just teach the kids how to have safe sex, when what they need is moral sex. In verse 24 it says that the society disintegrated to the point that God just stepped back and let evil multiply. The first evidence of that was a sexual revolution, which occurred in the Sixties. And then, when they did not repent, God stepped back further, lowered the hedge, allowed sin to multiply, and the second manifestation — mentioned in verse 26 — was a plague of homosexuality. It was at that point that the society fell apart at the seams.

My friends, if you will turn over to 2 Timothy chapters 3, you will find a parallel passage. In Romans 1, Paul speaks as a historian. In 2 Timothy 3 he speaks as a prophet, and he uses almost exactly the same language to confirm what Jesus has already told us — namely, that the society of the end times is going to be like it was in the days of Noah. Look at 2 Timothy 3 verse 1: "Realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come." We're in those days' folks. Paul continues: "Men will be lovers of self." That's humanism. They will be "lovers of money." That's materialism. And they will be "lovers of pleasure" — verse 4. That's hedonism.

Those three go hand in hand. If humanism is your religion, money will always be your god, and your life style will always be hedonism. When you have humanism, you will have materialism, and that will produce hedonism. There is a fourth element in this equation, and that is the payoff, because God cannot

be mocked. The payoff is what philosophers called nihilism — which is just a sixty-four dollar fancy word for despair. Look at the despair that is mentioned in this passage in 2 Timothy 3: "men will be boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God." That's the society of the end times.

Do I need to say anything to convince you we're there? Not only has our society reached this despicable condition, but also the whole world has.

And so it is that society is back to the way it was in Noah's time. The signs of society point to the soon return of Jesus. We live in an age where people have forgotten how to blush. We live in an age where people call evil, good and good evil.

The Spiritual Signs

That brings us to the third category of signs. The third category of signs is the spiritual ones.

Regarding the spiritual signs let me begin by emphasizing that there are a great variety of them. There are negative ones and positive ones, and let me warn you, the negative ones are extremely negative. For example, in Matthew 24 Jesus three times — three times — emphasizes that one of the signs of the end times will be false Christs, false prophets and their cultic groups. It's the first sign He mentions in verse 5. He says, "Many will come in my name saying, 'I am the Christ' and will mislead many." In verse 11 He mentions it again when He cautions that "many false prophets will arise and will mislead many." In verse 24 He warns again about "false Christs and false prophets" who will show "great signs and wonders."

And so it is that we are living in the age of the epidemic of the cults. It began in the mid-19th century. Folks, the fundamental, bottom line, and characteristic of all cults is that they preach a false Jesus. In this century we've had an explosion of cults. Consider all the cults that teach that Jesus is a "medium of the sixth sphere of the astral-projection," whatever that means. On and on it goes, with some cult leaders, claiming to be the Messiah. The cults are all around us, and they are signs that Jesus is coming soon.

The second negative spiritual sign is Satanism. The Bible tells us that in the end times there is going to be a tremendous outbreak of Satanism. In I Timothy chapter 4 verse 1, Paul writes, "the Spirit explicitly says that in the latter times some will fall away from

the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons.”

Folks, Satan has gone public. He wants to take as many people to Hell with him as he possibly can. I first became aware of this trend back in the Sixties when the movie, “Rosemary’s Baby,” was released. It was about a woman abducted by a witch coven and impregnated by Satan. It was a horrible movie. But that was just the beginning. Its success fueled copycats like *Exorcist I & II* and *Omen I & II*. The trend has intensified in recent years to the point that our movies and television programs today are obsessed with Satanism.

The success of these films simply reflects the fact that people have become obsessed with the occult. Several people are caught up in astrology and numerology. Just look at the check out stands at your major super markets and you will see the horoscope books and the tabloids that traffic in the occult. The number one best selling publications in America are the filthy tabloids, like *The Star* and *The National Enquirer*, which are saturated from beginning to end with ESP, numerology, astrology, and other forms of New Age mumbo-jumbo — all of which is Satanism.

The third negative spiritual sign is apostasy. This is a sign that is mentioned repeatedly in the Scriptures. Paul refers to it in 2 Thessalonians 2 verse 3 where he says that the Antichrist will not be revealed until the “great apostasy” takes place. Jesus refers to it in Matthew 24 when He says, “men’s love will grow cold.” Paul refers to it again in 2 Timothy 3 verse 5 where he says that in the end times the reason society is going to be so terrible is because men will “hold to the form of religion” — the form — “but they will deny its power.”

The number one rated Christian (quote, unquote) “Christian” television program in America today is a program that does not preach the Gospel. It preaches instead the power of positive thinking and tells you that you can pull yourself up by your own bootstraps. And many of the other so-called Christian television programs are caught up in all kinds of prosperity teaching, saying if you will accept Jesus, He will make you a millionaire — all of which comes from the pit of Hell. Again, Paul refers to the apostasy of the professing church in 2 Timothy chapter 4, beginning with verse 1. He says that we are to preach the Word in the end times because he says “the time will come when people will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside into myths.”; All kinds of myths, heresies and gross apostasy.

In the Church at large today, you can find Christian spokesmen denying all the fundamental truths of the Bible — denying the words of Jesus, denying the virgin birth, denying the Resurrection, denying the Second Coming. Most of our seminaries spend their time disparaging the Bible, arguing that it is Man’s search for God rather than God’s revelation to man. Our mainline Protestant denominations seem intent on spiritualizing everything in the Bible. You can even find apostasy at the conservative end of the spectrum among fundamentalist groups that argue that the Holy Spirit retired in the first century. At the opposite extreme are those who emphasize the Holy Spirit to the point of overshadowing the Savior, Jesus. And then there are the fads, the winds of doctrine — things like the discipling movement, the prosperity doctrine, and the laughing craze. There is no area of Christianity that is immune to the apostasy that is sweeping through the Church today — and it’s all a sign of the soon return of Jesus.

I told you the negative signs are very negative, but oh, thank God for the positive ones! The positive spiritual signs are magnificent. One of them is found in Matthew 24 where Jesus says, “the Gospel will be preached to the whole world and then the end will come.” Folks, in this century, through the use of modern technology, we have preached the Gospel to the whole world. Through the use of satellite television; through the use of computers translating the Bible into many, many different languages; through the use of radio and short wave radio; through the use of motion pictures and television — on and on it goes.

Another positive spiritual sign is the understanding of Bible prophecy. I don’t know if you’ve ever noticed this, but a lot of times when God would give prophecy to Old Testament prophets, particularly prophecies about the end times, they would react by saying, “Lord, I don’t understand this prophecy.” The Lord would usually respond by saying, “Cool it, it’s not for you to understand. It will be understood when the time comes for it to be fulfilled.” Take, for example, Daniel 12. In this chapter you’ll find Daniel complaining twice to the Lord that he does not understand the end time prophecies given to him. The Lord tells him to forget about it because, as the Lord puts it, “these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time.” So, the fresh understanding of end time prophecy that has come in recent years through books like *The Late Great Planet Earth* is a sign of the times. A lot of the understanding has come through the development of world events. For example, end time prophecy focuses on the nation of Israel. Well, before 1948 it was difficult to understand those prophecies

since Israel did not exist and had little prospect of ever existing again. Or consider the prophecy in Revelation 9 that an army of 200 million will march across Asia to Israel in the end times. When that prophecy was written, there were not even 200 million people on planet earth. Today, one nation, China, could send such an army.

Developments in modern technology have also helped us to better understand Bible prophecy. You see, the Bible has many prophecies that depend for their fulfillment upon modern inventions such as computers, lasers, robotics and nuclear power. For example, the Bible says that in the end times during the first 3½ years of the Tribulation, there will be two great witnesses of God in Jerusalem who will preach the Gospel and perform mighty miracles. In Revelation 11 it says the Antichrist will kill both of these men, and their bodies will lie in the streets of Jerusalem for three days. It further says that the whole world will look upon those bodies and will witness their sudden resurrection and rapture to Heaven.

Now, how can the whole world look upon two bodies lying on the streets of Jerusalem? Before 1957 nobody could figure that out. Now, it's very simple. We don't even stop to think about it. All you have to do is just point a T.V. camera at them, zap the signal up to a satellite, and the whole world is able to watch. It's amazing how so much of end time prophecy is being understood for the first time.

In 1970 Hal Lindsey's book, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, became the number one best selling book in the world and remained the best seller for ten consecutive years, as certified by *The New York Times*. Why? Because he was able to explain in simple terms Bible prophecies that have been a mystery to people for ages. Was that because he was given some sort of special illumination? Well, yes, I'm sure the Holy Spirit illuminated his heart, his mind, and his eyes and helped him to understand. But a lot of his insights were just based upon the development of technology and the development of world events. These enabled him to explain things that were never explainable before.

So, the positive spiritual signs are the preaching of the Gospel all over the world and the understanding of Bible prophecy. There's a third one — and oh, what a glorious one it is! I wish I could spend the rest of our time just talking about this wonderful sign. It is the pouring out of God's Holy Spirit. You see, the Bible prophecies that in the end times there is going to be a second pouring out of God's Holy Spirit. Read Joel chapter 2. It talks about the "early rain" and the "latter rain." The early rain was at Pentecost. That's why Peter quoted Joel 2 in his Pentecost sermon. But folks,

if you go back to Joel chapter 2 and read the passage carefully, you will see that Pentecost was a *partial* fulfillment of the prophecy because it talks about a second rain — a second pouring out of the Holy Spirit.

The passage says this second outpouring of the Spirit will occur *after* the reestablishment of the nation of Israel in the end times. We have been witnessing and experiencing that end time pouring out of the Spirit ever since 1948 when the Jews were re-established in the land of Israel. The Holy Spirit is being poured out today in an unprecedented way since the First Century. Because Satan is attacking individual Christians and churches as never before, we need a special anointing of the power of the Holy Spirit to stand against Satan. So, God's Holy Spirit is being poured out. And that is a sign of the soon coming of Jesus.

The Signs of Technology

In Daniel chapter 12 the Bible says there's going to be an explosion of knowledge and an increase in the rapidity of transportation in the end times. These two things have happened in this century. Both knowledge and transportation have increased exponentially in this century. By the time an encyclopedia is published today, it is already out of date. Three-fourths of all the scientists who have ever lived are alive right now. More than half of all medicines have been developed since the end of World War II. We entered this century still relying on the horse as our basic mode of transportation. Today, we have autos, bullet trains, planes, and rocket ships.

The Bible says that in the end times when the Antichrist sets up his world kingdom, he's going to keep tabs on everybody. Everyone will have to have the mark of the beast in order to buy and sell. How can that be accomplished apart from lasers and computers? The Bible says the false prophet will make an image of the Antichrist, and people will worship the image because it will appear to be alive. How can that be apart from robotics? Modern technology and the inventions it has produced is a sign of the soon return of Jesus Christ.

The Signs of World Politics

Let me just read you a statement that Jesus made in Luke 21. Beginning with verse 25, Jesus says, "there will be signs in the sun, moon and stars, and upon the earth dismay among the nations . . . Men will faint from fear over the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken." To me, that's a description of the splitting of the atom — the development of nuclear

power. Look at it again. It says “the powers of the heavens will be shaken,” and “men will faint from fear.” That’s what’s been going on ever since the first atomic bomb was detonated — people building bomb shelters; people storing up food; people concerned about the possibility of a nuclear exchange; books being published that show that if America or Russia were ever to push the nuclear button, hundreds of millions would die instantly and those left alive would envy the dead.

People think today, “Well, you know, it’s not dangerous any more. The Soviet Union has collapsed, and Communism is dead.” Let me tell you, the danger is even greater today. The danger is greater because the Russian people are in one of the most chaotic societies in the world. It’s a society that is totally unstable. It’s a society that can collapse any moment. It’s a society where democracy has no chance whatsoever because the traditions and values do not exist which are necessary for democracy. It’s a nation that is going to be taken over any moment by the military under the leadership of some right wing Fascist leader or some left wing Communist leader. The only kind of government the Russian people have ever known throughout their history is dictatorship. Before the Communists, it was the Czars. The Russian nation is so unstable they could break into civil war at any moment, and the nation still has 30,000 nuclear warheads aimed at us! The world is tottering on the brink of nuclear disaster.

Nuclear weapons are not the only sign on the world political scene. We also have the sign of the *pattern* of world politics. Yes, the Bible prophesies that in the end times there will be a certain pattern of world politics. In Matthew 24 it says there will be “wars and rumors of wars,” and we’ve had that constantly for 50 years, ever since the end of World War II. Did you know we’ve had an average of 40 wars going on all over the world at any given time since the end of World War II? Not only nation against nation, but also “kingdom against kingdom,” which is a reference to civil wars like the ones raging today in places like Yugoslavia, Ireland, and Cambodia.

Another part of the end time world political pattern is the uniting of Europe into a European confederation. This is prophesied in Daniel 2 and 7. And as I mentioned before, the Bible speaks of an Eastern power sending an army of 200 million to the Middle East. One nation today, China, could easily do that. The Bible also speaks of a nation to the “uttermost parts of the north” — namely, Russia — and it says that nation will come down against Israel. Russia today is one of the most anti-Semitic nations on earth, and it is closely allied with the Arab enemies of Israel.

Finally, the Bible speaks of Israel existing in the end times.

Never before have all these parts of the end time world political puzzle come together. Never! Now, they’ve coalesced for the first time. This pattern of world politics is a sure sign that we are living in the season of the Lord’s return.

The Signs of Israel

The sixth and final category of signs is the most important one all, more important than all the rest put together. I’m speaking, of course, of the signs of Israel. These signs are more important than all the rest because Israel is God’s prophetic time clock. What are the signs of Israel? There are seven. Seven signs of Israel, seven prophecies being fulfilled before our very eyes that certify that you and I are living in the most exciting time in the history of mankind since the First Coming of Jesus.

The first of these signs is the re-gathering of the Jewish people from the four corners of the earth. This process began in 1900 and has continued to this day. There were only 40,000 Jews in Israel in 1900; there were 500,000 at the end of World War II; today there are over 5 million, and they are continuing to come in unprecedented numbers from all over the world, particularly Russia.

In Jeremiah 16 it says that when history is finished, the Jews will look back upon their history and they will consider what is going on right now — the re-gathering of the Jews from the four corners of the earth — to be a greater miracle than their deliverance from Egyptian captivity. That’s an amazing statement. As a result of this re-gathering, the state of Israel was reestablished on May 14, 1948, clearly fulfilling the prophecies in Isaiah 66, Ezekiel 37, and Zechariah 12 that the nation of Israel will be existing in the end times.

Jesus emphasized this point in his teachings about the end times. In Matthew 24 He said for us to “watch the fig tree.” The fig tree is a common biblical symbol of Israel. Jesus said “when the fig tree re-blossoms,” the generation that sees that happen will be the generation that will see all the end time events come to pass. The state of Israel came back into existence — it “re-blossomed” — on May 14, 1948, and I believe with all my heart that someone who was alive in 1948 is going to see the return of the Lord. It may be somebody who was two years old in 1948, and they may be 80 years old when the Lord returns — I don’t know — but I believe someone who was alive then will live to see the return of the Lord.

The first sign of Israel is the re-gathering of the Jewish people. The second is the re-establishment of their state. The third is the reclamation of the land. Isaiah 35 and many other passages speak of the fact that when the Jews return to the land, it will be reclaimed — the land will come alive. Mark Twain visited Israel in the mid-1860's and wrote in his book, *Innocents Abroad*, about what a barren wasteland it was. The trees had been cut down. The land had been raped for 2,000 years by foreign conquerors that had no respect for it, no concern for it, no love for it. When the Jews began to go back in the early 1900's, the Arabs laughed at them for buying the land. Who, but a crazy Jew, would want malaria-infested swampland? Today, the Arabs want the land back because God has touched it, and God has made it a beautiful land once again, just as He promised. Today, Israel is the breadbasket of the Middle East. The Israelis have planted over 400 million trees all over the land, and rainfall has increased over 450 percent. It's a land of milk and honey once again. God has kept His promise, and it's a sign that Jesus is coming soon.

The fourth sign of Israel is the revival of the language. When the Jews were spread all over the world they stop speaking Hebrew and started speaking Yiddish (a mixture of Hebrew and German) and Ladino (a mixture of Hebrew and Spanish). But God said in Zephaniah 3:9 that in the end times He was going to re-establish their language of Hebrew, and He has done it in this century through a man named Eliezer Ben Yehuda. This man was a single-minded fanatic who spent his life trying to revive the Hebrew language, a language that hadn't been spoken in almost 2,000 years. He had to invent thousands of new words based upon ancient Hebrew root words. It seemed an impossible task, but he accomplished it, and today, biblical Hebrew is the official language of Israel. That means the people don't need a translation to read ancient biblical scrolls or the Dead Sea Scrolls. God said He would do it, and He did it. It's one of the greatest miracles of modern history, and it's proof positive Jesus is coming soon.

Let's review — we have the re-gathering of the Jews, the re-establishment of the state, the reclamation of the land, and the revival of the language.

The fifth Jewish sign is the resurgence of the military. In Zechariah chapter 12 the Lord says that in the end times, when He puts the Jews back in the land, they will be militarily superior to all their neighboring nations. Zechariah says they will be like “a fire pot among pieces of wood,” consuming all the

surrounding nations. Amazingly, Israel's military is considered to be the third or fourth most powerful one in the world, even though Israel is one of the smallest countries on the face of the earth. And it's probably number one in its effective use of military power. The Israelis have fought war after war — the wars of '48, '56, '67, '73, '81, and '91— and they have devoured their foes each time. What a miracle for a nation smaller than New Jersey and with a population less than the city of Philadelphia!

The sixth Jewish sign is the refocusing of world politics on the nation of Israel. In Zechariah 12 it says in the end times all the nations of the world will come together against Jerusalem, and Jerusalem will be like a heavy stone hanging around their necks. The focus of world politics shifted to Israel in 1973 when the Arabs pulled the Arab Oil boycott on the West during the Yom Kippur War. That boycotts brought USA to her knees. USA went to the Arabs with their hat in their hands asking what they would have to do to get oil. They said two things: “Number one, pay four times more for it than you've never paid before; and number two, line up with us in our obsession to annihilate the state of Israel.” Overnight all of Western Europe flip-flopped and turned against Israel. America was the only nation that stood by them, and continued to do so until October of 1990 when, in their desperate attempt to pull together an Arab coalition for the Persian Gulf War, turned against Israel and began to sponsor resolutions of condemnation in the United Nations. Soon after, America started forcing them to trade land for peace.

The final of the seven signs of Israel is the reoccupation of the city of Jerusalem. I consider this to be the most important sign of all because it came from the lips of Jesus Himself. You will find it in Luke 21 verse 24. He said, “The Jews will fall by the edge of the sword and will be led captive among all the nations.” That happened in 70 A.D. when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. He then added, “Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”

Well, my friend, that's exactly what happened; Jerusalem fell to the Gentiles when the Romans destroyed it. The Romans were followed by the Byzantines, the Byzantines were followed by the Arabs, the Arabs were followed by the Crusaders, the Crusaders by the Mamlukes, the Mamlukes by the Turks for 400 years, the Turks were followed by the British, the British by the Jordanians, and then, on June 7, 1967 — praise God from whom all blessings

flow — the Jews reoccupied the city of Jerusalem for the first time 1,897 years.

And when those Jewish soldiers went to the Wailing Wall and fell upon their faces and began to weep before that wall, Rabbi Shlomo Goren, the chief Rabbi of the Israeli Army, came up to the wall and blew a shofar. Then, he lifted his hand and said, “I proclaim to you the beginning of the Messianic Age.” You see, the Orthodox Jews know that the Messiah is coming soon. That’s one of the paradoxes of our time.

Preparing for the Lord’s Return

Think about it. The first time Jesus came, the Gentiles recognized Him; the Jews did not. This time, the Jews are the ones who know the Messiah is about to come. That’s because they know the Old Testament Scriptures, and from them, they know that the Messiah will come when the Jews are back in the land and back in their city. The Orthodox Jews are waiting for the Messiah, expecting Him any moment. They’re yearning for Him.

The Church is setting on the sidelines yawning instead of yearning. That’s right; the Jews are yearning while the Church is yawning. The Church does not even seem to be aware of the significance of the miracle of the re-gathering of the Jews. Nor does it seem aware of the significance of the re-establishment of Israel or the incredible significance of the reoccupation of the city of Jerusalem.

My friends, Jesus is coming soon, and the bottom line question is this: *are you ready?* All the signs of the times point to it — the signs of nature, the signs of society, the signs of a spiritual nature, the technological signs, the world political signs, and the signs of Israel. God is in the heavens shouting, “My Son is coming soon, my Son is coming soon!” He does not wish that any should perish but all should be brought to repentance. Are you ready? Are you? Have you accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior? My friend let me tell you something, the Bible says “*every knee shall bow and every tongue confesses that Jesus is Lord.*” That means *everyone!* The question is *when.* If you do it in this life, it means life eternal with God; if you do it after the resurrection, at the great white throne judgment portrayed in Revelation chapter 20, it means eternity in the lake of fire. It means Hell.

God is serious about sin. He’s going to deal with it, and as I have said before He deals with it in one of two ways, either grace or wrath. If you are under the blood of Jesus Christ, if you have received Him as your Lord and Savior, then when Jesus breaks from the heavens, He will come as your Blessed Hope, and you will go forth “leaping like a calf released from a

stall.” But if He comes and you are under wrath, He will come as your Holy Terror, and you will crawl into a hole in the ground and cry for rocks to fall upon you, so great will be the wrath of the Lamb of God. I urge you to simply bow your head in prayer, confess to God that you are a sinner, and then receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

If you have already received Jesus as your Savior, I have a message for you too, because the Second Coming of Jesus is like a two-edge sword. It has a message that slices one way for the unbeliever and slices the other way for the believer. The message for the unbeliever is “flee from the wrath that is to come by fleeing into the loving arms of Jesus right now.” The message for the believer is “receive Jesus not only as your Savior, but receive Him as your Lord.”

You see, the church today is full of people who have received Jesus as Savior but have never made Him Lord of their lives. He’s not Lord of anything — not Lord of their music, not Lord of their food, not Lord of their drink, not Lord of their recreation, not Lord of their reading material, not Lord of their T.V. or movies or anything. They’re walking with one foot in the church and one foot in the world, living a schizophrenic spiritual life.

Are you one of those? Do you need to make Jesus Lord of your life? Do you need to commit your life to holiness? That is the call of the Holy Spirit upon believers in the end times — to commit their lives to holiness. And then to yearn, yearn, yearn for the soon return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Listen to these glorious words from 2 Timothy 4 which Paul wrote from prison right at the end of his life: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; and in the future there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.” A special crown, a crown of righteousness will be given to every person who lives his life loving the appearing of the Lord. Will you receive that crown? Are you living your life yearning for the return of the Lord?

My friend, Jesus is coming soon, and I cry from the depths of my heart, “*Maranatha!*” Come quickly, Lord Jesus!

Extracted from an article by Dr. David Reagan

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HEAVEN'S GATE

IF YOU WERE STANDING AT THE GATE OF HEAVEN AND GOD ASKED YOU ...



WHAT WOULD YOU TELL HIM?



WELL, MAYBE I DIDN'T ALWAYS TRY MY BEST, BUT I WAS SINCERE!

SINCERE? WHAT IS SINCERITY WORTH?



WELL, I THINK I LIVED A PRETTY GOOD LIFE.

BUT WHAT ABOUT ALL THE WRONG THINGS YOU DID?



YOU CAN BE SINCERELY WRONG, CAN'T YOU?

WELL, YES.

SO SINCERITY REALLY ISN'T THE ISSUE. LET'S GET BACK TO THE QUESTION AT HAND.



OH, THOSE. WELL, I TRIED MY BEST, DIDN'T I?

OH REALLY?

WHAT ABOUT THE TIME ... I KNOW! I KNOW! DON'T REMIND ME.



WHY SHOULD I LET YOU IN?

WELL, I WENT TO CHURCH EVERY SUNDAY OF MY LIFE THROUGH SNOW AND SLEET AND RAIN ...

YAWN!



WHAT MUST I DO TO BE ...

WHAT'S THIS? A BIBLE?



GOOD BYE!

POOF

WAIT A MINUTE!



SAVE ME!



DOESN'T ALL THAT EFFORT COUNT FOR SOMETHING?

I'M SORRY, BUT THAT'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH.



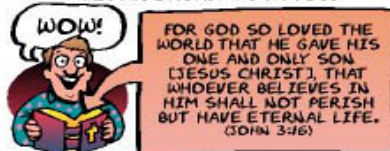
WOW! LOOK AT THIS!

WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED? ... BELIEVE IN THE LORD JESUS, AND YOU WILL BE SAVED. (ACTS 16:30,31)



WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

YOU SEE, GOD LOVES YOU AND REALLY WANTS TO HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU.



WOW!

FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONE AND ONLY SON (JESUS CHRIST), THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM SHALL NOT PERISH BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE. (JOHN 3:16)

BUT OUR PROBLEM IS ... SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD'S LOVE.



WOW!

BUT YOUR INQUIRIES HAVE SEPARATED YOU FROM YOUR GOD; YOUR SINS HAVE HIDDEN HIS FACE FROM YOU, SO THAT HE WILL NOT HEAR.

JESUS CHRIST CAME TO FREE US FROM SIN, AND TO BRING US INTO A RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THE FATHER BY GIVING UP HIS LIFE ON THE CROSS FOR OUR SINS AND RISING AGAIN.



WOW!

FOR CHRIST DIED FOR SINS ONCE FOR ALL, THE RIGHTEOUS FOR THE UNRIGHTEOUS, TO BRING YOU TO GOD. (1 PETER 3:18)

SO TO GET INTO HEAVEN, WE SIMPLY NEED TO TRUST JESUS CHRIST AS OUR PERSONAL SAVIOR, DEPENDING ON HIM ALONE FOR SALVATION.



BELIEVE IN THE LORD JESUS, AND YOU WILL BE SAVED. (ACTS 16:30)

LORD, I BELIEVE!

IF YOU HAVE TRUSTED CHRIST AFTER READING THIS, PLEASE CONTACT US AT THE ADDRESS BELOW.

THE LINK MINISTRIES,
P.O.Box 1058,
OTA.
OGUN STATE
E-mail: thelink@email.com
Tel: 08023534241
Or
Contact any Bible-believing Church close to you.

The Gateway to Heaven

Zach Oluwadara

"How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven." Gen 28:17(NIV).

Above is the expression of amazement of Jacob after he had a dream at Bethel when he was running from his brother Essau.

How wonderful it will be if we make it as believers to heaven? We would have been able to escape from the corruption that is here on earth and will enter in God's Glory and into a rest prepared by God for us.

Looking at the events of the end-time, the Rapture stands out as a significant event that all believers in all ages have looked out for. An event where believers are transformed in a moment both dead and alive to meet with Jesus Christ, the King of Kings.

According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.

For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. (I Thessalonians 4:15-17)(NIV)

When we are taking up at the rapture, we will be with Him forever. No wonder when Jesus Christ was here on earth, He said, He is going to prepare a place for us so that where he is we can be also.

"In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am". (John 14:2-3) (NIV)

However, Jesus Christ made a remark in John 14:4 "And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know".

We know where Christ is now (in Heaven) and we desire to go there, but do we know the way?

HOW DO WE GET TO HIM?

1. You must be in Christ

Jesus Christ said in John 14:6-7 *"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him".*

You need to accept Him as your Lord and Saviour and He will be able to rule you and guide you till you see Him appear again to take you to be with Him.

2. Be Holy, Be Good & Walk in the Light

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation". (1 Pet 2:11-12)

Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. (Heb 12:14)(NIV)

Only those that abstain from sin, who are not entangled with the things of the world, shall be with the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrong". Habakkuk 1:13(NIV)

The Lord cannot behold iniquity and He will discard with disdain anyone with iniquity in him or her.

Our Lord is coming for a Church without spot or wrinkle, without blemish. Are you living to please your Lord in all things?

Desist from every of evil and all-dark things. Anything that cannot be declared in the open is definitely a work of darkness. Jesus will soon appear and we want to be with Him.

We will be presented before our God without fault, and we will see His glory soon with exceeding joy.

Are prepared for this?

On the shores of heaven, sorrows, weeping, suffering, etc. will be no more. There we will be with Him forever. Are you yearning to partake?

You are closer to that time today. **MARANATHA.**

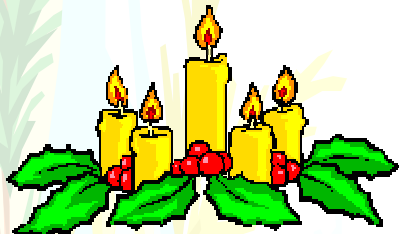
MERRY CHRISTMAS

Christmas is around the corner again. Very soon, the hustle and bustle of Yuletide will begin in full-force again. Time to buy clothes, gifts and foodstuff; a time of much movement and rowdiness reminiscent of another time a little over 2000 years ago; then, there was much movement because of the census (Luke 2:1-2). Also a time of giving gifts as the wise men from the East presented gifts to that newborn baby boy, the reason for the first Christmas (Matt 2:11-13).

As Christmas draws near, have you considered giving your life as a gift to the Lord Jesus Christ? Or are you going to just be counted as done at the first Christmas and just be part of the crowd moving up and down?

Will you also decide today to become a vehicle through which Christ will be born to the world, by making Him known to people; spreading the Good news that will make Him to be born in others' hearts?

Friends and brethren, this Christmas can only be **MERRY** if your heart is **M**ade **E**xclusively **R**eserved **R**ighteous for **Y**our Lord.



*God Bless You
at Christmas*

ACCEPT JESUS CHRIST TODAY & PREPARE FOR HIS SOON RETURN