

Warrington
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A.M. 62

"Christ Is Coming"

Bailey
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am

Scripture Lesson:- Matthew 24:- 1 - 14.

Text:- Matthew 24:- 14. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come."

Introduction:- In the summer of 1954, in Evanston, Illinois, leaders from more than one hundred church organizations, from all parts of the world met for a general assembly and their announced theme was "Christ, the Hope of the World." It was significant that these churchmen, representing more than one hundred million people, discussed frankly and openly the possibilities and probabilities of Christ's return. What did mean? It meant that a doctrine, which was written off fifty years ago as irrelevant, inconsistent and impossible, had become the great hope of the twentieth century.

~~This merely indicates that there has been a change change in our theological concept and a reshifting of our premise.~~

Up until 1914, we dreamed of an early millennium. Just when we thought the race had reached the age of maturity, the world was plunged into a series of wars. Our dream world came crumbling down around us. Death, crime, depression, strife and lawlessness came in all their wild fury, lessening our

hope and increasing our fears.

Then came the atomic bomb, the hydrogen bomb, and the possibility of the cobalt bomb. Suddenly it dawned upon thinking people that these weapons with their high destructive possibilities in the hands of atheistic leaders could mean the actual end of life on this planet. We are now in a period of disillusionment, like a tearful little boy who in the process of growing up, finds that Santa Claus is not all he thought he was.

The Bible is a book of accurate, unerring prophecy. It forecasts events before they happen and writes history before it occurs. For example, the Bible accurately predicted Christ's first coming in every detail. Hundreds of years before He was born, the Bible revealed that He would be of the tribe of Judah, that He would be born in Bethlehem, that He would be born of a Virgin, that He would flee into Egypt, that He would heal the sick, that His own people would reject Him, that he would be betrayed by a friend and sold for thirty pieces of silver, that he would be crucified with sinners, that His side would be pierced, that He would be raised from the dead and that He would ascend into heaven. Hundreds of years before He was born, all of these things were foretold about Him.

The Bible also prophesies that Jesus will come to earth a second time. He came the first time as a man of sorrows; He will come the second time as the Mighty God. He came the first time as the Lamb

of God; He will come the second time as the
ion of the tribe of Judah. He came the first time
as the Prince of Peace; He will come the second time
as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He came the first
time as the Author of salvation; He will come the
second time as the Finisher of our faith. He
came the first time to atone for our sins; He will
come the second time to judge sinners.

Not only does the Bible teach clearly a world wide
judgment that will climax with the return of Christ
but many world leaders are consciously aware that
we are on the brink of a world catastrophe and impend-
judgment. Winston Churchill said, "We have come to
the end of our tether,". The historian, Arnold Town-
bee said to a world that had lost its way, "Cling
and hope!" H. G. Wells said, "The ship of civilization
is sinking now."

Was Jesus silent on this subject. Did he give any
hope for a bright tomorrow? What he said is worth
much more than the opinions of men and the arguments
of the philosophers.

I.
First, He said, "Many shall come in my name saying,
"I am Christ; and shall deceive many." There is a
great interest in "religion" today. As a people, we
have discovered that materialism cannot satisfy the
soul, and we are beginning to think in terms of
eternity. But a surface religion will not suf-
fice in the eyes of God. "Ye must be born again", is
still the divine ultimatum. An intellectual assent to
the fact of God and the importance of religion is
not enough. We must know that we have passed from
death unto life. We must surrender our wills com-

pletely and unreservedly to the will of God. "Many shall come in that day," said Jesus, and they are coming by the millions today. Church membership is higher than at any time in the history of the world. Religious books sales have broken all records. It is becoming popular to be religious, it is almost a fad today. However, we must guard with carefully against serving God with our lips when our hearts are far from Him. The acid test of our Christianity will be, "Old things are passed away and all things are become new."

Secondly, Christ mentions in connections with his second coming, "You shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that ye be not troubled for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet."

Modern war is the most highly developed of all the sciences. We have perfected weapons but failed to perfect the men who use them. Men have lived who would use any means whatever to conquer the world. Why would we assume that no such man is now living? Are the Soviets less barbarous than Hitler? Will they have the integrity not to use the atomic bomb to conquer the world they so much covet.

Since Christ spoke these words, "And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars," two thousand years ago, there has been less than three hundred years of peace. Jesus Christ was saying in effect, "War is the part of a degenerate economy and because men refuse to go my way, there will not be real peace among the nations until I come back and set things right."

III.

The third thing that our Lord said about coming back to the world was, "And many shall be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another." We have never lived in an hour when people are so much on edge, easily hurt and offended. Homes are crumbling under the devastating force of quarrels, bickering and strife. Divorce courts are overcrowded. Politicians are fighting over trifles and bringing disgrace to the dignity of American statesmanship. Friends betray friends. Even on the day of Thanksgiving we can read of brutal murders which were committed on that day. Jesus Christ said that these shocking things were signs of His return to the earth.

IV.

Again He said, "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Has iniquity ever abounded more than it does today? A young lady, with old-fashioned ideals about home and marriage, said, "The young married couples of our community think nothing but drinking and carousing and immoral practices, and none of them go to church or give a thought to God. What can I do?"

Drunkenness has institutionalized 100,000 women and a million men, knocking them out of the race of life. Juvenile delinquency increases each year, as our homes continue to be ravaged by drink and marital disorder. Our prisons are crowded. Our courts are filled. Law enforcement officers are throwing up their hands, admitting that they can

not cope with the flood of sin and vice on ev-
-hand. The signs mentioned here by the Lord
Jesus Christ were all negative and they are de-
pressing, but they are signs pointing to His seco
coming.

The next sign Christ mentions is positive.

- "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preach-
ed in all the world for a witness unto all na-
tions; and then shall the end come!" Up to 1500

A.D. the Bible had been printed in only fourteen
languages. By 1800, it had been printed in seven-
one languages. By 1930 it was printed in over
900 languages. By 1948, it had been printed in
more than 1100 languages and dialects and over
eleven million copies of the Scriptures are is-
sued each year.

Add to this the stepped-up missionary pro-
grams of the world's churches. Most churches
- have now an intensive program of evangelism and
more effort is made than ever before to preach
the gospel to all the world. More money was given
last year to missions than in any previous year.

"And when this gospel shall be preached in all
the world, then shall the end come!"

Conclusion:- There are many other signs of Christ
coming in the Bible. We know this, Christ is com-
ing again. We do not know the time, the hour,
the day, the month, not the year. But the Bible
says that Christ is coming back to this earth.

Yes, Christ is the hope of the world. There
is no possibility that the nations of the world
will solve the basic problems of human nature

until Christ comes again. Christ is the hope of the church. Are you looking for the coming again of Jesus Christ? The Bible declares, "Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of man shall come".

We do not know the exact time when Jesus Christ will come again; yet you may be among the thousands who at this moment are not ready. Have you ever received Christ? Has your heart been cleansed from sin? Are you ready to meet God?

But ^{the} inquiry on your lips is, "What shall I do to make ready? The answer is plain. Repent of your sin, and turn to Jesus Christ by faith. He will come in. He will transform you. He will make you a new person and you can be ready for the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ.

If the cry should come, "Behold He cometh; go ye out to meet Him", would you go up with Him or would you cry for the rocks and the mountains to hide you.