

SIGNS OF THE LORD'S COMING

BIBLE TEXT : **Nahum 2:3, 4; II Timothy 3:1-5; II Peter 3:3, 4; James 5:7, 8; Matthew 24:3-28.**

LESSON 362 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matthew 24:27).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Nahum 2:3-4

³ The shield of his mighty men is made red, the valiant men *are* in scarlet: the chariots *shall be* with flaming torches in the day of his preparation, and the fir trees shall be terribly shaken.

⁴ The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings.

2 Timothy 3:1-5

¹ This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

² For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

³ Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

⁴ Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

⁵ Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

2 Peter 3:3-4

³ Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

⁴ 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.

James 5:7-8

⁷ Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth,

BIBLE REFERENCES:

NOTES:

Upon Mount Olivet

It was on the very same Mount of Olives, or Olivet, from which Jesus was to ascend into heaven that He sat one day with His disciples. "Tell us," they said to Jesus, ". . . what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Then Jesus told of the wars, famines, and earthquakes that would come upon the earth just before His return. He told also of the false prophets, or preachers that would deceive the people, and of the terrible sin and trouble that would be in the world. "This gospel of the kingdom," He said, "shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

Then came the day when Jesus was with the disciples once more on the Mount of Olives, when suddenly a cloud received Him into heaven. "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven," said the two men who stood by them in white apparel (Acts 1:11).

Believers and Unbelievers

Although almost 2000 years have passed since that wonderful day, yet there have always been those who have watched, waited, and longed for Jesus' return. Today the true Christian is not saying, "Tell us, what shall be the sign of thy coming?" but he is looking into God's Holy Word for the signs, and then as he looks around he readily sees that the signs have been fulfilled. What does all this mean? That Jesus could come at any moment!

Let us not be among the scoffers who say: "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation" (II Peter 3:4). The promise is in God's Word, and we believe we shall live to see Jesus come.

Just because a thing has not happen does not mean that it cannot happen. Before the Flood, when Noah built the ark, the people did not believe that there would be a flood. They scoffed at Noah in those days just as they do at preachers of righteousness today. But suddenly, "the flood came, and took them all away" (Matthew 24:39).

"So shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matthew 24:39). Suddenly! To those who are not expecting Him. "As a snare to those who are not ready! (Luke 21:35). "As a thief to the one who is not guarding! (I Thessalonians 5:2). "As the lightning," which startles one! (Matthew 24:27). "At midnight," when all is dark! (Matthew 25:6).

There are a great many "signs" that teach us that the coming of Jesus is just ahead. Men of God who lived upon the earth before the days of Christ told of things that should come to pass in these last days. The signs, which Jesus spoke to His disciples - - wars, earthquakes, trouble -- have already come. Many boys and girls of the junior age today can remember saying good-by to a brother or a father who went to war. We have all heard of earthquakes, which have done great damage in our time, and of the suffering and trouble many people of the earth are enduring

and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

⁸ Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

Matthew 24:3-28

³ And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

⁴ And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

⁵ For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

⁶ And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

⁷ For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

⁸ All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

⁹ Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

¹⁰ And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

¹¹ And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

¹² And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

¹³ But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

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.

Travellers

Did you ever notice when travelling to a city that as you come near the place there are many signs to let you know you are almost there? Some signs tell of certain hotels or restaurants in that city; other signs give the distance to the city; still other signs give the length of time it takes to reach the place.

Today we are travelling. Every one is on the way to Eternity, and the highway of life is well marked. The Christian traveller, of course, has a map, a chart, a compass; and he carefully studies his map, the Bible. Then as he goes along the road of life he sees road signs. He glances at his map. Surely enough, he finds the place is marked on his map, and there by the road is the sign. He travels on; soon another sign is sighted in the distance; and when he is close enough to read it, he discovers that it also tells him something which he reads in the Bible.

Let us, in our imagination, go for a drive down the highway along the Atlantic coast. Just ahead is a huge logging truck and a trailer loaded with giant logs en route a sawmill. As a flash, the verse of Scripture comes to our mind that in the day of His preparation, the fir trees shall be terribly shaken" (Nahum 2:3). We drive on, and suddenly just ahead we see a great many cars stopping on the highway, and as we stop we see that two cars have collided. Again, we recall that our "chart" says that "chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways." This must be the day of His preparation, we conclude.

We learnt that the drivers of the cars had been drinking strong drink, another "sign" that this is the time just before Jesus' return to earth. We hear the blasphemy of the pleasure-mad occupants of the automobiles, also a sign of the last days (**2 Timothy 3:1-5** ¹ This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. ² For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, ⁴ Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; ⁵ Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away).

Other Signs

Shall we look around and see what other "signs" we may discover? We read in II Timothy 3:2, that "in the last days" boys and girls shall be disobedient to parents. Did you ever stop to think that when you are disobedient you are actually doing just what the Bible said many children would be doing just before Jesus comes? Well, then, it is most important that such children get saved at once, and ask their parents to forgive their disobedience, and make full preparation for the Lord's coming. Are you unthankful to God for His protection over your life? Are you unthankful to your parents and friends for their kindness to you and for the many good things you have in this life? If you are, you are among the many who are fulfilling another "sign" that the last days are here.

A great many people never bow their heads to say grace at the table and thank God for the food He has sent them. "This know also, that in the last days . . . men shall be . . . unthankful" (II Timothy 3:2). Even some Christians take too many things for granted, and forget that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights" (James 1:17).

Are you a Christian boy or girl attending public school? Perhaps you often find the unsaved children mistreating you and scoffing at you because you do not attend the theatres, dances,

¹⁵ When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

¹⁶ Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

¹⁷ Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

¹⁸ Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

¹⁹ And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

²⁰ But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

²¹ For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

²² And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

²³ Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here *is* Christ, or there; believe *it* not.

²⁴ For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

²⁵ Behold, I have told you before.

²⁶ Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers; believe *it* not.

²⁷ For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

²⁸ For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

ball games, and other worldly amusements with them. You do not wear the extreme styles that sinners wear, and you do not bedeck yourself with jewellery and make-up. You may be shunned because you dare to be different and modest in appearance. This is another "sign," for God's Word says that in the last days people shall be "despisers of those that are good." But there is coming a day when the Lord shall laugh at the calamity of the wicked, who do not repent of their sin.

This journey may soon be over; and just as the traveller sees the many signs that show him the city is near, so the Christian sees the many, many signs that tell him the City of God is just ahead.

The All-Important

If you are not ready for the soon coming of Jesus, do not put off getting ready a moment longer. Seek the Lord with all your heart; find the joy that comes from Him alone. Then you are on the road to Heaven. When you are saved, you must seek for and receive sanctification and the mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire.

"Signs" of the soon coming of Jesus are increasing daily – the end of the road must be just ahead! It may be later than you think. Are you ready?

QUESTIONS

1. What question did the disciples ask Jesus on Mount Olivet?
2. What answer did Jesus give?
3. Name an Old Testament writer who also told of the signs of the last days.
4. What did he foretell?
5. How do we know that these things have come to pass?
6. What is necessary for us to do in order to be ready to meet Jesus when He comes?
7. Why is it so important to get ready, and keep ready?
8. What are the scoffers saying?
9. What will happen to those who are left behind?
10. What will be the reward of those who are ready?