

*Things to Come
and Why They Matter*

An Introductory Study in Prophecy



Volume 7:

The Signs of the Times

Prophecy Series Sermons

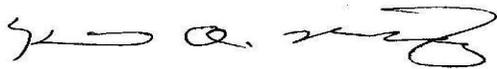
We had the privilege of having Tim Moore, staff evangelist for *Lamb & Lion Ministries*, address the seventh topic in our series, which we have titled, *The Signs of the Times*. We appreciated both his ministry and fellowship with us. However, since I did not preach this message, I felt uncomfortable trying to reproduce what he taught. Rather than risk doing so poorly, we have instead received permission to reproduce an article on the same subject by Dr. David Reagan, founder and senior evangelist of *Lamb & Lion Ministries*.

We have altered the article only in order to include some of the Bible references that were online links in the text of the article. The online article can be found at the following web address:

http://www.lamblion.com/articles/articles_signs3.php.

At the associated web site (www.lamblion.com), you will find many other edifying articles on the subject of prophecy. I would like to express my appreciation to *Lamb & Lion Ministries* for giving us permission to reproduce this article.

In His grace,



Kevin Redig, Pastor
Vistoso Community Church



Volume 7: The Signs of the Times!

Recognizing Signs of the Times by Dr. David Reagan

A year ago I felt compelled to resign my membership in a prophecy study group because the director suddenly revealed that he did not believe there were any signs pointing to the soon return of Jesus, with the possible exception of Israel. I was astonished by that statement, and I wrestled with what to do about it. I finally decided that I had no choice but to resign from the organization.

After all, I have devoted my life to proclaiming that the signs of the times point to the soon return of Jesus. How could I be a member of an organization whose director denies that any such signs exist? I concluded that my continued membership in the organization would put me in the position of being a house divided against myself. So, I resigned.



Dr. David Reagan

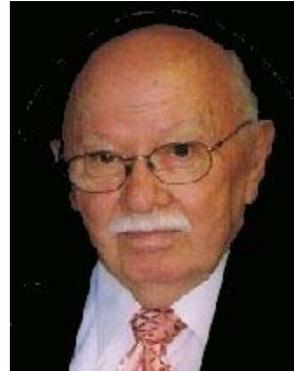
Abundant Signs

The signs of the times that point to the Lord's soon return are so plentiful and obvious that I don't know how anyone with any spiritual discernment could be blind to them. This, in fact, is an area that even amillennialists and premillennialists can and do agree on.

In 1995 I was privileged to participate in a prophecy conference in Orlando, Florida that was sponsored by Midnight Call Ministries. One of the speakers was a remarkable man of God from Abilene, Texas by the name of Elbert Peak. This is a man who has been preaching Bible prophecy for over 60 years.

His first topic at the conference was "The Signs of the Times." He began his presentation by saying: "I began preaching on the signs sixty years ago when there were very few that you could actually see. Today they are everywhere. I am no longer looking for signs; I am listening for sounds!"

I shouted, "Amen!" It is no longer necessary to search for signs. We are inundated with them. There are so many and they are so clear, that it's like the Lord has a neon sign in the sky blinking on and off, saying, "Jesus is coming soon!" As Elbert Peak put it, we should be listening for sounds — the sound of a trumpet blast and the shout of an archangel



Dr. Elbert Peak

But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

Therefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

The Meaning of Signs

What is a prophetic sign? It is basically a prophecy concerning an historical event or technological development that will characterize a future time.

Let's consider the First Advent of the Messiah as an example:

- The prophet Micah prophesied that the Messiah would be born in the town of Bethlehem.

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among The thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting." Micah 5:2

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Whose goings forth are from of old,
From everlasting.” Micah 5:2*

- Daniel said the Messiah would be "cut off" 483 years after an edict was issued to rebuild Jerusalem. Daniel also stated that this would take place before the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.

*Know therefore and understand,
That from the going forth of the command to restore and build
Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks
and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall.
Daniel 9:25*

- David stated that the Messiah's hands and feet would be pierced.

*For dogs have surrounded Me;
The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.
They pierced My hands and My feet....
Psalm 22:16*

One of these signs is geographical—the birth site of the Messiah. The second is historical. The edict it refers to was issued in 457 BC. Counting 483 years from that date brings us to 27 AD. The Temple was destroyed in 70 AD. So, the Messiah had to be "cut off" (that is, killed) sometime between 27 AD and 70 AD. The third sign is technological in nature. The method of execution at the time David wrote Psalm 22 was stoning. Crucifixion was not even invented by the Romans until 700 years later.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem. He was executed in 31 AD, during the *historical window* between 27 AD and 70 AD. And he was executed by crucifixion. The fulfillment of these signs in the life of Jesus serves to validate that He was the prophesied Messiah. There are over 300 prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures about the First Coming of the Messiah. But many are repetitious. For example, it is said more than once that the Messiah will be of the house of David. When you cull out all the repetitious prophecies, you are left with a total of 109 which were fulfilled in the life of Jesus.

Messianic Signs

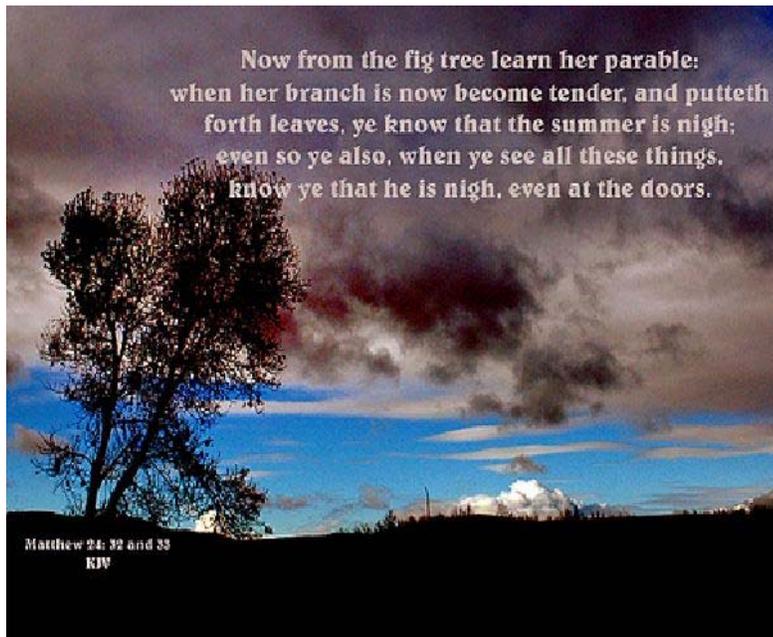
On one occasion when Jesus was teaching, the Pharisees and Sadducees came and asked Him to give them a "sign" to prove that He was the Messiah.

Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven. ² He answered and said to them, "When it is evening you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red'; ³ and in the morning, 'It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Hypocrites! ^{4a} You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times. ⁴ A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah." And He left them and departed. Matthew 16:1-4

What they wanted was a miracle. But Jesus responded by playing with the word, "sign." He asked them why they could read the weather but could not "discern the signs of the times." Jesus used the word, "sign," to refer to fulfilled prophecies in His life.

The same principle applies to the Second Coming of Jesus.

There are more than 500 prophecies in the Old Testament about the Second Coming, and one out of every twenty-five verses in the New Testament also speaks of this great event. These prophecies contain many signs that we are to watch for, signs that will indicate that the time of the Lord's return is drawing near.



Jesus Himself emphasized this point in His Olivet discourse. He presented a long list of signs that would characterize the end times, and then He said, "when you see all these things, recognize that I will be near, right at the door" Matthew 24:33.

Or consider the prophecy that when the two great witnesses of God are killed by the Antichrist in the middle of the Tribulation, the whole world "will look upon their dead bodies for three and a half days" (Revelation 11:9). How could this be possible before the development of television and satellite transmission?

Another prophecy in Revelation that has been waiting for historical developments is the one that states there will be an army of 200 million soldiers that will march across Asia toward Israel during the period of the Tribulation. At the time that prophecy was written (95 AD), there were only 200 million people on planet earth! It took 1,600 years for the population of the earth to double to 400 million. In fact, the earth's population did not reach one billion until 1850. This century has experienced a population explosion due to the advent of modern medicine (keep in mind that the first antibiotic, penicillin, was not discovered until 1928!). Today, the earth's population has just passed the six billion mark, and one Asian nation alone — namely, China — could easily send an army of 200 million, as prophesied in Revelation.



An Overview of the Signs

Let me present you with an outline overview of the signs of the times.

I. Signs of Nature

Matthew 24:7; Mark 13:8; and Luke 21:11)

1. Famine
2. Earthquakes
3. Plagues
4. Signs in the Heavens (Unusual weather, new discoveries in space, UFO's, and so forth.)



II. Signs of Society

Matthew 24:12, 37-39; and II Timothy 3:1-4

1. Lawlessness
2. Violence
3. Immorality
4. Greed
5. Selfishness
6. Hedonism
7. Rebellion
8. Despair

III. Spiritual Signs

1. Negative
 - a. False Christs and Prophets and their cultic groups (Matthew 24:5, 11, 2-4; Mark 13:6, 21-22; and Luke 21:8)
 - b. Apostasy in the professing church (II Thessalonians 2:3; and II Timothy 3:5, 4:3-4)
 - c. Widespread heresy in the church (II Timothy 4:1-4)
 - d. Movement toward a one-world religion (Revelation 17)
 - e. Persecution of true believers (Matthew 24:9-10; Mark 13:9, 11-13; and Luke 21:12-19)
 - f. Outbreak of demonic and occultic activity (I Timothy 4:1)

2. Positive

- a. Outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28-29)
- b. Revival of Davidic worship (I Chronicles 16:1-39; Psalm 150; and Amos 9:11)
- c. Worldwide evangelism (Matthew 24:14; and Mark 13:10)
- d. Understanding of Bible prophecy (Daniel 12:4; 8-9)



IV. World Political Signs

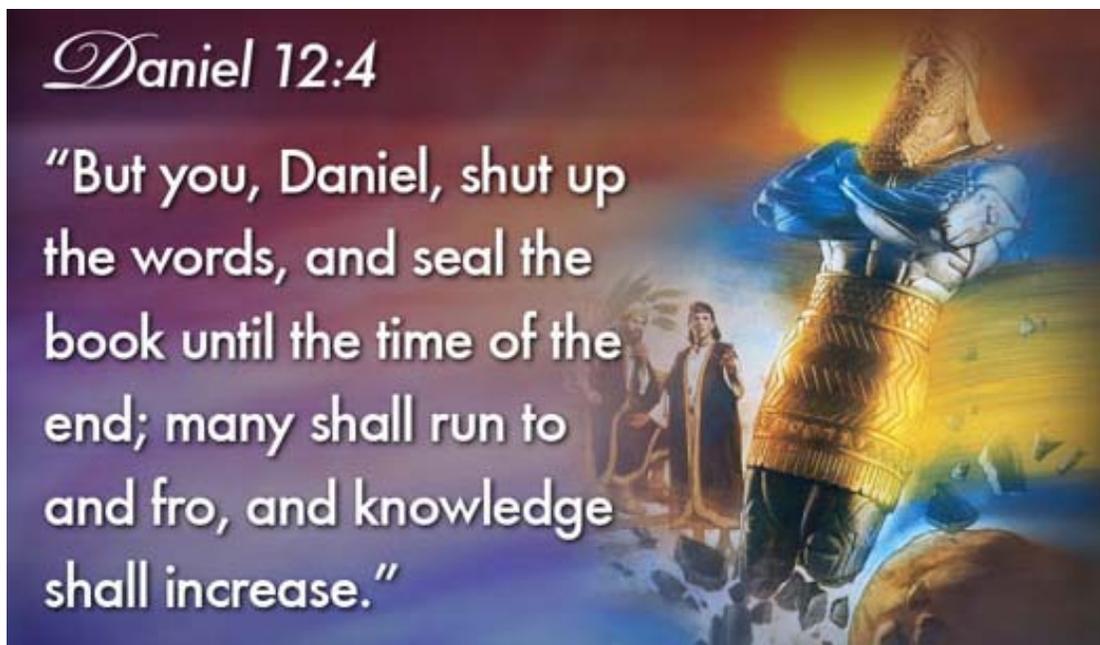
1. Re-establishment of Israel. (Ezekiel 36:22-37:2; Zechariah 12:1-6; Matthew 24:32-34; Mark 13:28-30; and Luke 21:29-31)
2. Arab hostility toward Israel (Ezekiel 35:1-36:7)
3. Russia as a menacing power to Israel (Ezekiel 38:1-39:16)
4. Asian nations capable of fielding an army of 200 million (Revelation 9:15-16 and 16:12)
5. Wars and rumors of wars (Matthew 24:6-7; Mark 13:7-8; and Luke 21:10)
6. Kingdom against kingdom—that is, civil wars and ethnic wars (Matthew 24:7; Mark 13:8; and Luke 21:10)
7. Reunification of Europe (Daniel 2:41-44, 7:8, 24-25, and 9:26)
8. Movement toward a one-world economy (Revelation 18)

V. Technological Signs

1. Nuclear weapons. (Matthew 24:22; Luke 21:25-26; and Revelation 6:8, 8:7, and 16:2)
2. Television and satellite transmission (Revelation 11:3-12)
3. Robotics (Revelation 13:14-15)
4. Computer and laser technology (Revelation 13:16-18)
5. High speed transportation (Daniel 12:4)

VI. The Accelerator Sign

1. Population explosion (Revelation 9:15-16 and 16:12)
2. Increase in knowledge (Daniel 12:4)
3. Increase in violence (Matthew 24:12)
4. Increase in transportation (Daniel 12:4)
5. Rapid disintegration of society (II Timothy 3:1-4)
6. Signs in general to be like birth pangs, that is, increasing in frequency and intensity (Matthew 24:8)



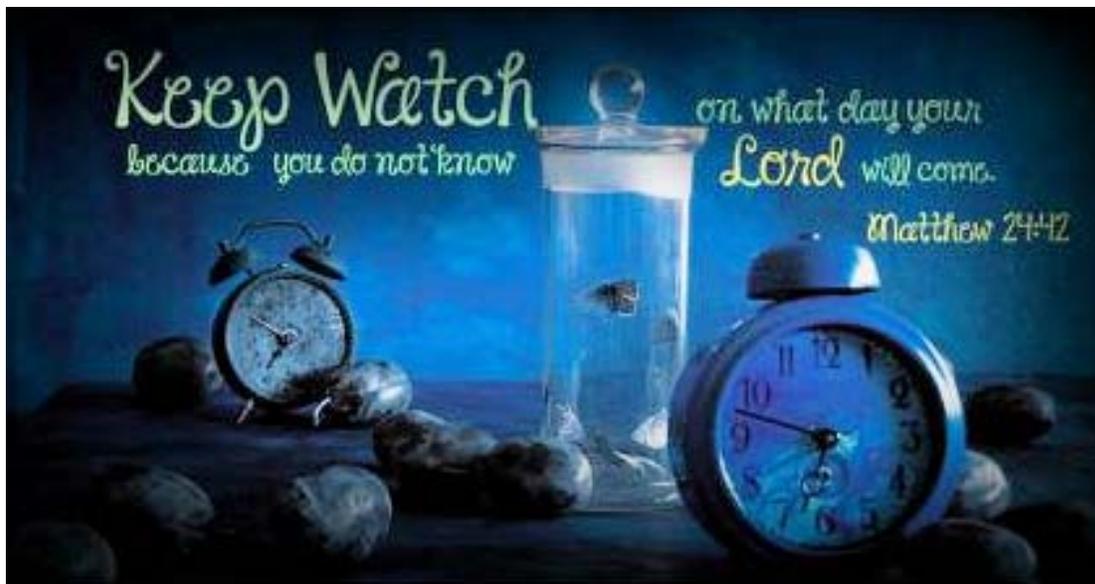
VII. Signs of Israel

1. Regathering of the people (Isaiah 11:10-12; and Ezekiel 37:1-12)
2. Re-establishment of the state (Isaiah 66:7-8; Zechariah 12:1-6; and Matthew 24:32-35)
3. Reclamation of the land (Isaiah 35:1-2, 7; and Ezekiel 36:34-35)

4. Revival of the language (Zephaniah 3:9)
5. Resurgence of the military (Zechariah 12:6)
6. Refocusing of world politics (Zechariah 12:2-3)
7. Reoccupation of Jerusalem (Zechariah 12:2-6)

God never pours out His wrath without warning because "He does not wish that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9). Jesus said that when we see all these signs come together, He will be "right at the door," ready to return (Matthew 24:33). God is warning, and Jesus is at the gates of Heaven waiting for His Father's command.

Are you ready?



Vistoso Community Church

OUR PURPOSE

The purpose of Vistoso Community Church is to bring glory to God by completing the work He has given us to do.

John 17:4

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to be used by God to help the lost receive eternal life, and those with eternal life to grow in grace and knowledge.

OUR CORE VALUES

- Christ is the only Lord and Savior. Acts 2:36
- The Bible is the inspired word of God.
II Timothy 3:16-17
- We honor God through traditional worship.
Psalm 19:14
- Our loving fellowship strengthens us.
Hebrews 10:24-25
- Seeking the lost is our commission. Matthew 28:19-20
- The principles of divine establishment are God given.
Nehemiah. 4:14



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