

Are

You Ready?

By Harold Camping

Vantage Press, New York

First Edition

Are You Ready?

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Published by Vantage Press, Inc.
516 West 34th Street, New York, New York 10001

Manufactured in the United States of America
ISBN 0-533.10932-9

Library of Congress Catalog Card No.: 93-94226
098765432

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Preface

On a Monday evening in February, 1993, I returned home from hosting another of the daily Open Forum programs. I was grateful in my soul that two days earlier at a Saturday banquet, I had had the privilege of addressing a large and enthusiastic group of Family Radio supporters, solemnly warning them that September, 1994, could very well be the end of the world. With that in mind, it is incumbent upon each one of us to be sure that we are ready to meet God. Never before in the history of the world are more than five billion people individually and collectively at risk. To wait and see if Christ's return is indeed to be in the fall of 1994 is not enough. This is so because if Christ did come, and all the Biblical evidence points to this likelihood, those who "waited to see" would be caught without salvation. It would be guaranteed that they would have to face the Judgment Throne of God, be found guilty of their sins, and plunged into Hell for evermore.

And this Monday evening on the Open Forum program, I was able to continue to warn.

But then suddenly something happened that shook me into the reality of the extreme urgency of time. My wife greeted me with the information that she had just had a lengthy call from a long-time friend of ours, Pastor Bartel Huizenga. He called from a hospital in San Francisco to let us know that the next morning he would undergo an operation to have a fast-growing tumor removed from his brain. Bart Huizenga was retired but when he preached for our church a few months earlier, he had no physical disabilities. Bart Huizenga, although a year younger than I, was suddenly threatened by a physical situation that could very well take his life, and indeed did take his life a few months later.

And then on this fateful Monday evening an hour after I heard the shocking news about Bart, the phone rang. Family Radio's Vice President Scott L. Smith was on the line. He had just received the news that Family Radio's Secretary-Treasurer Mr. Richard Van Dyke had suffered a heart attack and was now in a hospital in Dallas, Texas. What was going on? "Rich," as Scott and I called him, had been at the same

banquet that I had a restful Sunday praising God for what God was doing through Family Radio. I had taken him to the airport that Monday morning, and he appeared to be in the so-called “pink of health.” Rich was very careful about diet, exercise, vitamins, etc.

And now he, too, was in a hospital, a breath away from eternity. What was happening?

And then I understood. I was being reminded that many people in the world today will not be alive in September of 1994. Each and every day almost 200,000 people die. They die for thousands of different reasons. But they die.

In fact, not one of us can know that we will be alive tomorrow. Not one of us is guaranteed another day. Therefore, the urgency to be ready to meet God is now! We must be ready now for eternity.

And so even as I write this sequel to *1994?* I solemnly declare:

Even though it strongly appears that September, 1994, is the end for the whole human race, you and I must be ready now. **You** or I could easily be one of the almost 200,000 people who will die in the next twenty-four hours or in any twenty-four hour day between now and the end of the world.

By God’s mercy He has given mankind the Gospel which tells us how important it is that we become ready to meet God.

The Bible is the Gospel, which sets forth God’s divine plan for the human race. Because man was created in the image of God, he was created accountable for his actions. God decreed that if man rebelled against God, man would have to bear the penalty for his sin, which is death. This death is primarily two-fold: First, he would come under the curse of God and be alienated from God. After man sinned, the effects of this curse were that man became completely infected with sin and could not live forever on this earth. Man became totally rebellious against God; he became a citizen of Satan’s dominion. Satan was an angel who, together with many other angels, rebelled against God at the time our first parents sinned.

The second aspect of this death is intimately associated with the curse that God put on mankind because of sin. Man became subject to the wrath of God. God’s perfect, divine law decreed that the payment for sin was death and

the ultimate consequence of this death was Hell. Mankind, each and every human being, on the last day of this earth's existence, must stand for trial. If any sin is found in him, the law of God

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calls for eternal damnation for that individual. Since each and every human being who has ever existed has sinned, that is the terrible condition of mankind. Every human being is on the path to Hell. He will stand for judgment before an angry judge, the Lord Jesus Christ, against whom mankind has rebelled. Because Christ is perfectly just and righteous, He must carry out the demands of God's perfect law by sentencing each and every sinner to eternity in Hell.

The good news is that God, in His perfect love, has provided away of escape from Hell. The way of escape is found in God Himself in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, who took on a human nature by being born of the virgin Mary. Because God became a human being, He became qualified to be a substitute or a stand-in for sinful humans.

For Christ to be our substitute, it was necessary to put on Him the sins of each and every person that He came to save. When He took upon Himself these sins, He became subject to the perfect law of God that demanded eternal damnation as the penalty for sin.

Christ, the sin-bearer of those He came to save from the wrath of God, came under the sentence of Hell. This is what the atonement, the cross, and salvation are all about. In A.D. 33, Christ was found guilty of the sins of all who would ever become saved. In the space of three days and three nights, God poured out His wrath on Him. This wrath was the equivalent of the eternal damnation of each and every person whom Christ came to save.

Because Christ was God as well as man, God could so intensify the suffering of Christ as He paid the penalty of the wrath of God, that by Sunday morning, He could and did arise from the tomb, proving that He as the God-man had completely satisfied the demands of the law, which decreed eternal damnation for sinners.

This in a nutshell is what the Bible is all about. It comes to mankind with the warning that each and every one of us is a sinner and, therefore, rightly subject to the awful wrath of God. It tells us that at the end of the world, God will judge each and every human being. They will be found guilty because not one person has lived without sin. Each person will be found guilty, and he will be removed into Hell, where he will experience the wrath of God for evermore. We, of course, do not understand the severity of this penalty because we do not understand how wrong, how rebellious, and how awful sin is. But whether we understand or not, the penalty for sin is eternal damnation.

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On the other hand, there is the tremendous good news that those who trust in Jesus Christ as their Savior will not experience the wrath of God. Because Jesus has already paid for their sins when He went to the cross, they stand perfectly righteous before God. They do not have to be judged on the last day; instead, they will be with Christ forevermore in the new heavens and the new earth, which God will create at the end of time, after He has destroyed the present universe.

This book, like the book *1994?*, has as *its* primary mission the task of serving as a warning that this is the awful predicament of every human being.

But it also is a declaration that there *is* still hope. It is still the day of salvation. But that day is drawing to a close with great speed. Never in the history of the world has there been such urgency to cry to God for His mercy. May *it* be that many who read this book will yet experience the grace and mercy of eternal God.

Introduction

In September of 1992 the book *1994?* became available wherever books are sold. Based entirely upon the Bible, it is designed to strongly emphasize that the end of the world could well take place in September of 1994. In it a great amount of Biblical data is set forth to show the great likelihood that this will happen. Path after path is set forth that focuses on the year 1994 as the last year for planet earth and for the entire present universe. The big message of the book is to sound the warning that Judgment Day is almost here.

The book *1994?* was carefully written for two major purposes. The first purpose was to sound the alarm. Judgment Day is almost here. Each and every individual in the world is in serious trouble with God because of his sins. And time to find a solution to his sin by trusting in the Lord Jesus as his Savior has almost come to an end.

The second purpose was to present to the thousands of dedicated Bible students the Biblical data that has lead to the conclusion that September, 1994, in all likelihood will be the end of the world. Any student of the Bible can be in error. The Biblical principle that God has established is that any doctrine declared by one prophet is to be judged by the other prophets (I Corinthians 14:29). Every believer is a prophet, and he exercises his prophetic role at the time he witnesses to others what he believes the Bible teaches. But because he is not infallible and may have misunderstood the teaching of the Bible, other believers are to check his teaching by also carefully examining the Biblical evidence that gives rise to the doctrine being offered.

This is, therefore, a major purpose of publishing the book *1994?* Many other believers can critique what was written in order that corrections can be made if any or all of the material is in error.

The book *1994?* has been available to readers for more than a year. During this year, many have studied it very carefully. Additionally, during this year, I have continued to search for anything and everything the Bible might offer that speaks to the question of the timing of the return of Christ. In fact, this continued study has resulted in the publication of this book, *Are You Ready?*, which is a follow-up to the book *1994?*

During the past year as many students of the Bible have been carefully examining the ideas and conclusions set forth in the book *1994?*, one would think that *if* these conclusions are in error there would be an increasing sense of uneasiness in the hearts of many. There would be a feeling and a growing awareness that this whole study is somehow incorrect in that there are too many inconsistencies, too many “far-fetched” ideas, too much speculation.

The fact is, however, just the opposite has been the case. Individual after individual has written to me or talked with me offering further corroboration, further Biblical evidence that validates the conclusion of the extreme likelihood of the end of the world sometime in September of 1994.

This, too, has been my personal experience. As I carefully prepared the material set forth in this book, *Are You Ready?*, I have found increasing corroboration that the material set forth in the book *1994?* is accurate.

The reaction to the book *1994?* of those who are in the church has been very interesting. A small percentage has received it gladly. Whether they agree or not to all of the material set forth, they are delighted to contemplate the wonderful fact that Christ’s return could possibly be that near.

On the other hand, a great many people have refused to come near the book. One of their main arguments is that we cannot know anything at all about the timing of Christ’s return. They insist that Christ’s coming is to be like a thief in the night and therefore we are not to look in the Bible for any information that might relate to the timing of Christ’s return. They use such averse as Mark 13:33: “Take heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.”

They use Acts 1:7 to convince themselves that we should not think about these things: “And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his **OWN** power.”

In fact, the Bible is very clear that we cannot know the day or the hour. When Jesus stated in Mark 13:33 that we cannot know when the time is, He added in verse 35, as further explanation:

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.

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These statements of midnight, cockcrowing, etc., have to do with the hours of the day. And indeed, we cannot know the day or the hour.

When Acts 1:7 is correctly translated from the Greek, it does not say, "It is not **for** you to know the times. . . ." Rather, more correctly it should have been translated, "It is not of you to know the times. . . ." That is, any knowledge we might receive does not come from our own thinking. It must come from God. If it is to come from God, it must come from the Bible.

God does divide the peoples of the world into two groups insofar as the knowledge of His return is concerned. On the one hand are all of the unsaved for whom Christ's coming is as a thief in the night. I Thessalonians 5:2-3 says it so succinctly:

For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

On the other hand, there are those who have trusted in Christ. Their knowledge of Christ's return is altogether a different situation. I Thessalonians 5:4-5 declares:

But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

By this statement we know that the believers are to have an entirely different knowledge concerning the details of Christ's return from that of the unbelievers. But if they are the children of light, from where are they to receive light relating to Christ's coming? Our only source is the Bible. Effectively God is commanding us to search the Bible for information concerning the day of the Lord. As we search the Bible we will receive much light. In fact, Ecclesiastes 8:5 declares:

“Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.”

More than that, in II Peter 3:12, God admonishes us by the words:

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Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

The next two verses further underscore the posture of the believers “looking”:

Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

Where *is* the believer to be looking? Not in the sky, not in the philosophies of men, not in his own feelings. He is to look in the Bible. Like the Bereans of Acts 17:10-11, we are to search the Scriptures. And as our knowledge of the day of the Lord increases, as we receive more and more light on the subject, we should not be afraid of what we learn. Rather, we should rejoice and desire more than ever to sound the warning to the world.

I am afraid that many church people would like to think that we are not to know anything at all about the timing of Christ's return. They want to be

like the heathen whose coming will be like a thief in the night. They are afraid to expose the light of the Bible on the question.

Believers should be looking for the end of the world and Christ's return. If "believers" do not want to know, there are at least three possibilities as to why they do not want to know.

- (a) They are misled by their church or by their pastor.
- (b) They are afraid to face the reality of Hell.
- (c) They love this world more than Christ.

If (b) or **(C)** is true it may be that they are not saved. If (a) is true, they might be saved but are not necessarily saved.

It is imperative that each individual immediately tests himself concerning these three options.

Test No. 1. The Bible has much to say about Judgment Day and the eternal damnation that follows. Am I ready to hear about, think

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about, and talk freely and easily about this subject? After all, if I have been saved, Hell is no threat to me any longer since Jesus has paid for my sins, and I will, therefore, never stand before the Judgment Throne of God.

But if that subject is something that frightens me so that to even think about it is unacceptable to me, there is a strong likelihood that I am still unsaved.

If your honest answer is "No!," you should seriously question if you are saved.

Test No. 2. Do I find it difficult to hear about, think about, or freely talk about the soon return of Christ and the end of the world because:

1. I want to see my children grow up?
2. I want to finish my education?
3. I first want my business to succeed?

4. I first want a long-planned vacation?
5. I want that new home I have desired for so many years?
6. There is any plan that is more important to me than the fact that if Jesus does come, I will have the most important and wonderful goal of my life realized?

If the answer to any of these questions is “Yes,” you should seriously question if you are saved.

Test No. 3. When I look honestly at myself, do I truly find an ongoing and earnest desire to do the will of God? That is, when I discover in my life a practice that is contrary to the Bible, am I miserable in my soul until I repent of that practice? Likewise, if I find I hold a Bible doctrine that cannot easily be defended by the Bible (even though it was taught to me by a beloved pastor or Bible teacher), am I willing to set that doctrine aside and seek for more wisdom from the Bible concerning the subject matter of that doctrine?

If the answer is “No!,” you should seriously question if you are saved.

Many are quite offended when it is suggested that they are to carefully examine themselves to make certain that they are saved. But isn't it wonderful that it is still the day of salvation? We can still cry to

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God for mercy. We can still repent. We can still fill our souls with the bread and water of the Bible. How merciful God is that all of this is still possible.

It is imperative that our self-examination be done without delay. It is almost the end of time as we know it. Hebrews 2:3: “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?”

Indeed, wonderfully, the book *1994?* also emphasizes that even though time has almost run out, it is still the day of salvation. If there were ever a time to make certain of one's salvation, it is now. Really, the big message of the book *1994?* is not the likelihood that the end of the world

could come in September of 1994. **The big message is: Are you ready to meet God? This is the pressing question that every human being should insistently face.**

After *1994?* was published, a number of questions arose that justify further discussion. One question is: Shouldn't more information be developed that shows how God uses numbers in the Bible? Historically, theologians have little to offer as to the purpose of God's usage of a great many numbers in the Bible.

A related question is: What Biblical justification do we have to see spiritual truth in God's use of numbers?

Another question that should be addressed is that of the chronology of the kings of Judah and Israel. Based on the Biblical data, shouldn't we be able to know very precisely how each of their reigns fit into the Biblical calendar?

A further question that could stand more analysis is the meshing of our calendar (the Julian or Gregorian) with the calendar of the Bible. If this is not done with great accuracy, the calendar paths from the date of creation, the flood, Abraham, etc., will be in jeopardy.

In the process of supplying answers to these questions, we have been enabled to find many more calendar paths that focus on 1994 as the year in which God in all likelihood will end the world.

Because the signs spoken of in the Bible that show we are near the end of the world continue to dramatically unfold as each day goes by, a chapter has been included to remind us of the more prominent signs. Moreover, because the single greatest focus on 1994 as the year for Christ's return is the Jubilee information in the Bible, a further discussion of that event is also included.

Are You Ready? xxiii

In seeking a title for this book, the real question that must be asked of every person in the world - *ARE YOU READY?* - continues to pound in my ears. Therefore, this book has been entitled *ARE YOU READY?* Hopefully it will be an assist to anyone who still has doubts about the reality of the world coming to an end.

Are
You
Ready?

Chapter 1.
The Signs that Show Us that

We Are There

When we study the Bible, we find certain absolute truths that are tremendously important. Among them are:

1. This world will come to an end (Matthew 24:29; II Peter 3:10).
2. The end will come at the close of the New Testament era (I Peter 4:7; I Corinthians 10:11).
3. At the end Christ will return to gather all those who have believed on Him (Mark 13:26-27; I Corinthians 15:51-52).
4. At the end every unsaved human being will be judged and condemned to spend eternity in Hell for his sins (John 5:28-29; Revelation 20:12-13).
5. At the end God will destroy this world by fire, the whole universe will melt with fervent heat, and God will then create new heavens and a new earth (II Peter 3:12-13; Revelation 21:1).
6. All those who have trusted in Christ as their personal Lord and Savior will be with Him forever in the new heavens and new earth (John 14:2-3; I Thessalonians 4:16-17).
7. There must be an end-time generation who will be living at the time that the end occurs.

The Bible is crystal clear on these issues. The only thing that we do not know is exactly when the end of the world will come.

Biblical information in the book *1994?* as well as in this volume, which is a sequel to *1994?*, indicates that we can know much about the timetable of the end of the world. This is particularly true once we have come to understand the calendar given in the Bible.

But completely apart from the calendars of the Bible that show us the likely month and year of Christ's return, the Bible speaks of many signs that indicate when that end is very near.

In Matthew 24:3 the disciples asked Jesus the question that is the ultimate question in man's mind. They asked: "Tell us, when shall

these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" They effectively were asking: Can we tell by events that are happening in the world that the end of the world is almost here?

Throughout history mankind has asked this question. Because he is created in the image of God, he senses that there will be a time when he must answer to God for the manner in which he has lived his life. Usually, when the trauma he or his nation is enduring is especially terrible, both in *its* size as well as in its duration of time, he begins to wonder *if* "doomsday," as he frequently expresses *it*, has almost come.

In fact, the Bible gives a number of signs that show mankind that the end has almost come. These signs will not help us in knowing the likely month and year when Christ will return, but they do offer corroboration to the conclusions we can arrive at by projecting the calendar of the Bible to its Biblical suggested end. In *1994?* as well as in this sequel to that book, we have found an immense amount of data that focuses on September, 1994, as the likely month and year for the end.

Returning to the signs that may be in evidence showing that we are almost at the end of time, we are directed by the Bible to at least seven signs that we should examine. Some of these have been mentioned or even detailed in the book *1994?* but they will still be listed and briefly examined in this chapter so that we may be altogether aware of them. We will discover that by these signs alone, completely apart from any understanding of the numbers found in the Bible, we can be very certain that we are very near the end of this world.

Israel has become a Nation

The first sign that we will consider is that Israel has again become a nation.

In Matthew 24:32-33, we read:

Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:
So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.

In the Bible, God frequently typifies individuals or nations by certain kinds of trees. Believers are typified by the palm tree or the olive tree. Other trees, such as the cedar tree or the sycamore tree, can be a metaphorical reference to nations of the world.

When we study the matter of the fig tree, we learn that it refers to a nation or a person under the curse of God. Jesus is called a fig tree in John 1:48 because He had become a curse for us. In that context Nathaniel, who was a picture of believers, was under the fig tree in the sense that Jesus, who had taken upon Himself Nathanael's sins, ruled over Nathaniel as Christ rules over all believers.

The only other entity to which the fig tree can refer is the nation of Israel.

The only other entity to which the fig tree can refer is the nation of Israel. They are typified in the Bible by a fig tree because even though for 2100 years they had been God's special people, they, too, came under the curse of God so that *it* as a nation could never turn to Christ as Messiah. This curse was dramatized by Jesus when He cursed the physical fig tree in the account found in Mark 11:12-21.

But Matthew 24:32 indicates that when the fig tree would put forth leaves it would be a sign that the return of Christ was very near.

Amazingly, after almost 2000 years, the fig tree appears alive and well. In 1948, Israel again became a nation among the nations of the world. The fig tree is in leaf. However, the Bible predicted there would be no fruit and as a direct fulfillment of that prophecy we see no evidence of any desire on their part as a nation to acknowledge Jesus as their Messiah. To be in fruit must relate to a nation that has come to trust in the God of the Bible and His

salvation program.

But the fig tree is in leaf and, therefore, we know the time has come very close for the return of Christ. He is near, even at the doors.

4 *Are You Ready?*

False Prophets Have Arisen

Sign number two is that false prophets featuring signs and wonders have arisen.

In Matthew 24, Jesus repeatedly makes reference to false Christs arising as a sign that the end of the world is near. In Matthew 24:24, He declares:

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.

We discussed this sign at length in the book *1994?*, but let *it* suffice us to say that never before has there been such a worldwide interest in *signs* and wonders, that is, in miracles, as there is in the present day. The dramatic rise in interest and involvement with the matter of miracles is clearly given as a sign that the end of the world is almost here.

*The dramatic rise in interest and involvement with
the matter of miracles is clearly given as a sign that
the end of the world is almost here.*

The Falling Away

Sign number three is the falling away of the church.

In II Thessalonians 2:3, we read of two events that must take place before Christ returns. The first is that there will be a falling away of the church. This event, too, has been discussed at length in the book *1994?* Perhaps we can summarize the apostasy or falling away that is so pervasive in the churches of our day by noting the general indictment that most churches are no longer

under the authority of the Bible. True, a great many churches still speak of the “inerrant” or “infallible Word of God,” and many still declare that the Bible is their authority.

But when we examine these churches inaction, we find that the Bible is no longer their authority. Their authority for the salvation plan they teach or the practice they hold is not the Bible. Instead, their authority is what the pastors have learned in seminary or the church

Chapter 1. The Signs that Show Us that We Are There 5

fathers have declared to be true. A great many churches have their “Confessions” or their “Systematic Theology” as the statement of final authority.

This does not mean that a church should not have a “Confession” or follow the Systematic Theology that has been taught in seminary. Indeed, every church has a statement of doctrinal principles which it believes to be Biblical. Therefore, it tries to follow these principles. But when it refuses to change or modify these principles when they can be shown to be in error, then it is obvious that the “Confession” or the Systematic Theology is the ultimate authority rather than the Bible.

A most distressing phenomenon is that virtually never do we hear of congregations and denominations looking in the mirror and asking: “Where have we gone wrong?” On the contrary, as we repeatedly see the shift toward women deacons and pastors, more interest in miracles, less and less preaching on hell and damnation, etc., etc., we can know that more frequently any reevaluation that is going on in churches is moving them away from the Bible rather than toward its authority.

This falling away is particularly awful because it comes at a time when so many people are literate and have access to a Bible. It comes at a time when so many study helps, such as concordances, are easily available. It comes at a time when so many excellent means of communication are available. All of these should mean a tremendous increase in Bible understanding all over the world.

Amazingly, just the opposite is happening. Instead of an increase in Bible knowledge, in most churches there is a falling away from truth. The Bible increasingly is no longer the final authority. It has become supplanted by the church and the ideas of men as the ultimate authority. Thus, it is no wonder that few today have a healthy fear of God. The Gospel that is preached to a high

degree has degenerated into a religion that is pleasing to the ears of men.

This stubborn continuation on a path going away from truth and moving toward further apostasy that is so common in churches and denominations in our day is predicted in the Bible and is further evidence that we must be well into the final tribulation period

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Significantly, this stubborn continuation on a path going away from truth and moving toward further apostasy that is so common in churches and denominations in our day is predicted in the Bible and is further evidence that we must be well into the final tribulation period. In II Thessalonians 2:11, God declares that He will send them (the church) strong delusion that they should believe a lie. We read:

And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.

In Jeremiah 6:2 God describes Zion the church as a delicate woman who has fallen. In this Book, the church is typified by ancient Israel which came under the judgment of God because of their continued sins. This judgment was physical as God brought Babylon against Judah to destroy it. But it is a picture of the church of our day as God brings Satan against it to destroy it spiritually.

The Book of Lamentations is a lament or a funeral dirge in which the church weeps over its destruction by God as its destroyer. In Lamentations 1:13 we read:

From above hath he sent fire into my bones, and it prevaieth against them: he hath spread a net for my feet, he hath turned me back: he hath made me desolate and faint all the day.

The “he” is definitely God. The “me” is the church. This verse is teaching that God has put a net or snare on the church so that it turns away from truth even as II Thessalonians 2:11 teaches that God will send a strong delusion. Thus, it is not at all surprising that churches are not turning to truth. They are snared by God to remain in their apostasy and even to turn back to greater apostasy.

A church that does not operate with the Bible as the ultimate and final authority will increasingly develop doctrines and practices contrary to the Bible. This result is guaranteed to follow because no matter how intelligent men may be, their ideas are both sin-tainted and completely limited compared with the infinite perfect truth presented by God in the Bible. Moreover, the practice of denying the ultimate authority of the Bible guarantees the removal of the blessing of God on that church. The result can only be rapid increasing apostasy even as we are seeing it happen in so many churches in our day.

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The practice of denying the ultimate authority of the Bible guarantees the removal of the blessing of God on that church.

The Antichrist

Sign number four is that the man of sin is revealed.

A fourth sign in evidence that we are very near the end of time is that the man of sin, the Antichrist, has been revealed.

Throughout the New Testament era, it was fairly generally taught that the man of sin spoken of in II Thessalonians 2 would be some great political or religious (or a combination of both) world leader. Thus, in his day, Kaiser Wilhelm was spoken of as the Antichrist. Earlier than that one of the popes of the Roman Catholic Church was regarded as the Antichrist. During the Second World War, Hitler and Mussolini shared the spotlight as being the Antichrist.

But in every instant these conclusions proved false because the world continued on its way. However, in our day, we have come to **know** without question who the Antichrist is. Through His Word, **God** the Holy Spirit has revealed that Satan *is* the Antichrist. As I John 4:3 teaches, the Antichrist was already in the world before the Bible was completed and he is to come.

There we read:

And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that *it* should come, and even now already is *it* in the world.

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Only Satan can meet the qualifications of this verse. He was already in existence almost 2000 years ago when this statement was written. And he is to come near the end of the world. Therefore, the Antichrist must be Satan himself.

This makes abundant sense. The Bible constantly speaks of two kingdoms: that of Christ and that of Satan. Christ is the head of the true kingdom of God. His followers are called Christians and prophets. Satan as the pseudo-Christ or Antichrist heads up the other kingdom. In the Bible his followers are called antichrists or false prophets. Because Satan is the master deceiver, he masquerades as Christ so that the spiritually unwary are snared into following him when they are convinced in their own minds that they are following Christ.

In II Thessalonians 2:3-4, we read how Satan rules in congregations and churches.

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that *is* called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he *is* God.

The temple *is* the body of believers. They are found in churches and congregations all over the world. But these churches have become false

churches because they are no longer faithful to the Bible. So Satan has taken control as the man of sin.

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Satan is called a man because in Isaiah 14, he is typified by the king of Babylon.

because in Isaiah 14, he is typified by the king of Babylon. Verse 4 declares:

That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!

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And then as the passage continues to talk about the king of Babylon, verses 12-14 state:

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

Theologians correctly have concluded that these verses refer to Satan, who headed up the angels who rebelled against God at the beginning.

But then in verses 15-16, the Bible speaks of Satan as a man:

Isaiah 14:15-16: Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms.

Satan is spoken of as a man because he is typified by a man, the king

of Babylon. God uses the king of Babylon as a picture of Satan because the kingdom of Satan is called Babylon. This is seen clearly in Revelation 17 and Revelation 18. Revelation 18:2 is an example:

And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

Since Satan is typified by the king of Babylon because he rules over the spiritual Babylon, and since he is called “a man” in Isaiah 14, therefore, God picks up this idea by calling him the “man of sin” in II Thessalonians 2.

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Curiously, we can know that the Antichrist is Satan. Yet most theologians and pastors are still looking for a great world leader of some kind who will be in-filled by Satan. However, Satan as usual comes as the master deceiver. The Bible tells us that he is the father of lies. He does not come, so to speak, with a red suit and forked tail. He comes as an angel of light. In II Corinthians 11:13-15, God describes how we are to recognize him:

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.

Because Satan is a spirit he must come through those who follow him. Yes, even they who are false teachers and preachers are also completely deceived. They are convinced that they are ministers of Christ while in fact they are ministers of Satan, who works through them as the Antichrist.

They can be known because they are bringing false gospels. And in

their blindness they fully believe they will recognize the Antichrist when he will come.

*Through the false doctrines and false gospels
that are everywhere in our day, Satan is bringing
spiritual havoc to the churches, even as the
Bible predicts.*

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Only when we read the Bible very carefully can we know that he has come as the Antichrist. And through the false doctrines and false gospels that are everywhere in our day, he is bringing spiritual havoc to the churches even as the Bible predicts. Because very frequently he is not recognized as the Antichrist, many teachers and preachers are lulled into spiritual unconsciousness thinking that we cannot be near the end of time because the Antichrist must still be revealed.

Running To and Fro

Sign number five is that many shall run to and fro.

Another sign that we are very near the end of the world is indicated by the language of Daniel 12:4:

But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

This verse clearly speaks of the end of the world and emphasizes that “many shall run to and fro.” What does this mean? Does this mean that the abundant air travel of our day, which makes possible speedy trips to almost any part of the world, is a sign that we are near the end of time?

A search of the Bible assures us that that is not what God has in mind by the phrase “run to and fro.” Instead, we find in Amos 8:11-12 the declaration:

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the

word of the LORD, and shall not find it.

These verses teach that running “to and fro” has to do with the scarcity of the true Gospel that will exist in the world at the end of time. Because increasingly the churches that should be presenting the true Gospel have fallen away, it has become extremely difficult for believers

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to find churches that bring the whole counsel of God and still practice the principle that the Bible is the ultimate authority.

It has become extremely difficult for believers to find churches that bring the whole counsel of God and still practice the principle that the Bible is the ultimate authority.

Moreover, Satan is loosed and he is blinding the spiritual eyes of so many. In addition, God Himself is sending unto them “strong delusion, that they should believe a lie” (II Thessalonians 2:11). Thus, those who are running to and fro looking for truth, in reality do not want truth. Even as they run to and fro seeking truth, they more often than not reject it even when they hear it.

Additionally, in their quest for truth, frequently they are seeking for it in places far removed from the Gospel. Such activities as the New Age movement and similar occult practices attest to this.

This sign is dramatically in evidence in our day.

Knowledge Shall Increase

A sixth sign is that knowledge shall increase.

In Daniel 12:4, we read:

But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

Knowledge shall increase as a sign that we are near the end of time. What knowledge is this? Is this the secular knowledge that has increased so spectacularly in our day? By means of faster and faster computers, scientists have been enabled to expose secrets of this universe that previously have not been known to man. An understanding of DNA, gene technology, superconductors, fiber optics, etc., etc., are a tiny sample of the extensive knowledge that scientists are amassing as they probe this world that God has created. And every day

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there are new discoveries. Indeed, it appears that God has taken all of the limitations away insofar as where man can go as he pursues this kind of knowledge. One cannot help but wonder: If the Lord would tarry even a few years, what else will man discover?

The tragedy of all this discovery, which God *is* allowing in our day, is that *it* is not causing man to glorify God. As each new discovery comes to light, mankind ought to exclaim in breathless wonder “What a wonderful Creator God is, as evidenced by such a complex and beautiful creation!” Instead, with each new discovery, mankind reacts like they are the creator of what they have discovered,

*Truly man 's rebellion against God is magnifying
with each new discovery*

Instead of praising God, they increasingly conclude that they are learning to be the masters of their fate. They convince themselves that they are

increasingly in control of their destiny. Truly man's rebellion against God is magnifying with each new discovery!

But this is not the kind of knowledge spoken of in Daniel 12:4. In the Bible's definition of knowledge, God has in mind a knowledge of God and His Word. Therefore, while it is true that this is a time when physical knowledge is on the increase, *it* is also a time when a knowledge of the Word of God is on the increase.

This does not mean that more and more people are coming to know God. The Bible definitely teaches that the opposite is true. As we approach the end, fewer and fewer people are becoming saved.

But amongst those who are saved there is a great increase in the understanding of the Bible. For example, a great many of the teachings declared in the book *1994?* and in this sequel to *it* have been known to believers only the last few years. It seems very apparent that in our generation God has taken the "lid off" of a greater knowledge of the physical universe, and so, too, God has taken the "lid off" of a greater understanding of the Word of God.

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Theology's High-Water Mark

Theology (the study of God) reached *its* high-water mark during the Reformation or shortly thereafter. It was during that period of history that such notable men as Calvin and Luther lived. It was the period from which we received the confessions that have helped to stabilize the church. The Augsburg Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of Dort, the Belgic Confession, and the Westminster Confession were all written several hundred years ago, shortly after the Reformation.

Study of the writings of these men and of the confessions indicate that the church had come to a fairly accurate understanding of the basic doctrines of the Bible: The authority of the Bible; its infallible, inerrant nature; God revealed as three distinct persons even though there is only one God; the doctrines of grace which have to do with the nature of the atonement and man's

salvation; doctrines concerning creation and the end of the world, at which time the unbelievers would be judged and removed into Hell while the believers would be with Christ forevermore in the new heavens and the new earth, were quite accurately understood.

It appears that some doctrines that were held were not quite as Biblical as they could have been.

This is so even though it appears that some doctrines that were held were not quite as Biblical as they could have been. For example, it was not commonly held that believers receive their new resurrected souls at the moment of salvation; that there are no special rewards given in eternity to believers who work especially hard for Christ after they are saved; that believers will never stand before the Judgment Throne of God; or that there cannot be any saving efficacy in the signs of water baptism and communion.

Even so, God in His mercy had given the church an excellent understanding of such important doctrines as the sovereignty of God, election and predestination, eternal damnation, and the incarnation of Christ.

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But as we view history it appears that God had set some kind of limit on how much Bible knowledge would be understood during most of the history of the church. As the decades and centuries that followed the Reformation unfolded, a further and greater understanding of the Bible did not continue. Any activity relating the possibility of further Biblical understanding was normally in a direction away from the truth of the Bible. For example, the so-called premillennial idea of Christ's return gained countless adherents even though it can be readily shown to be totally contrary to the Bible.

In fact, any preacher or church that in our day holds tenaciously to the doctrines promulgated during that earlier period of the Reformation, when many of the confessions were formed, is looked upon as being especially careful in their understanding of the Bible.

This *is a* very curious situation. The Bible is God's Word to mankind and has come to us from an infinite God. Therefore, it is a book that could be insistently studied for many lifetimes without ever plumbing the depths of the spiritual riches that can be found in it. It is indeed strange, therefore, that truth that has been faithfully derived from the Bible froze at the Reformation level. Throughout these past hundreds of years, with far more literacy, far more Bibles, far better communication methods, and far more study helps, one would think that a great harvest of spiritual *fruit* would have flowed from the Bible. God, of course, is in control of this, and obviously it was not His plan that new truth should continuously flow from the Bible.

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*It is God's plan that knowledge of His Word would be on the increase **near** the end.*

But now we are very close to the end of time. It is God's plan that knowledge of His Word would be on the increase near the end. Therefore, we should not be surprised at what we are learning about the numbers God has placed in the Bible. We should not be surprised at the new insights many believers are receiving, insights that relate to the timing and the details of the end of the world.

Who would dare to say that he has uncovered bible truth of which such men as John Calvin and Martin Luther were unaware?

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t is true,
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pastors
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teachers of the Bible who have received their training in schools that have departed from the truth that the Bible is the final authority are greatly offended by the charge that the church, to an increasing degree, *is* no longer faithful to the Bible. Pastors who are very conservative in that they were trained in the doctrines developed and set forth during the Reformation and who rigorously

hold to the long-standing confessions are also offended. After all, who would dare to say that he has uncovered Bible truth of which such men as John Calvin or Martin Luther were unaware?

That, however, *is* the nature of the Bible. In our day, if one diligently and faithfully continues to search it out, always ready to be obedient to what he discovers, always making certain that what he discovers harmonizes with that which already has been shown to be trustworthy truth, he is bound to come up with additional truth.

The question then remains: Should the one who has come forth with additional truth that is harmonious with the whole Bible be looked upon as arrogant, heretical, etc.? Or should his findings be carefully examined by searching the Bible as others check out what he has found?

In any case, *it* cannot be denied that we are living in a day when Biblical knowledge is on the increase. If there were ever a time when a Bible student should seriously study the Bible, it is in our day.

Homosexuality

A seventh sign that shows in dramatic fashion that we are at the end of the world is the fact that the homosexuals have come out of the closet, that is, they openly boast of their sin.