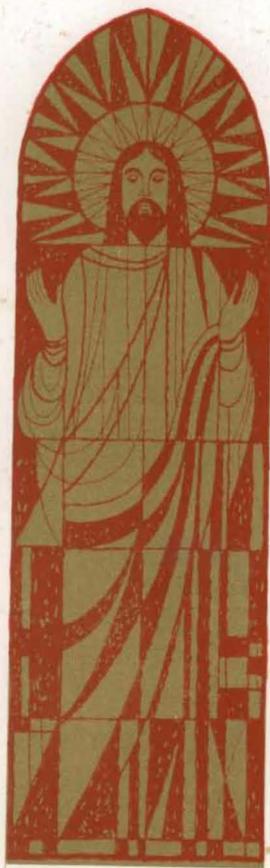


The Coming



Day of the Lord

Ray Brubaker

THE COMING DAY OF THE LORD



Phyllis Schlafley, in her book, *THE GRAVEDIGGERS*, asserts: "Only by the elimination of the United States... could the Communists achieve their goal of global conquest." (p. 96)

Thus, it may be that the Soviets are disguising any plans for our destruction. In this way they would hope to catch us off guard.

In I Thessalonians, Chapter 5, we are told, (Verse 2) "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. But ye brethren are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."

Would you notice three things concerning this coming day of the Lord. First, the surprise element--it will come "as a thief." In the second place, talk of peace will end in "sudden destruction." And then third, believers are told that that day will not come upon them as a thief, for they surely should be alerted to the lateness of the hour.

The Apostle Peter similarly reminds us, "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat..."

Did you hear it?

Here we have the element of surprise. For as no one knows when a thief may come, so no one knows when the enemy may strike.

Phyllis Schlafley goes on to say: "History shows that Communists believe in surprise attacks on their victims."

Similarly, the day of the Lord will come as a thief...with surprise and sudden swiftness.

Nikolai Artamanov, a Russian career officer, testified before the House Un-American Activities Committee, calling attention to this strategy of "surprise" being followed by the Soviet Union.

This Soviet Navy Captain declared: "Since February, 1955, Soviet strategy has been based on the doctrine of surprise attack in nuclear warfare."

Of course, we could go back further to quote Dimitry Manvilsky, one-time president of the U.N. Security Council, who declared: "War to the hilt between communism and capitalism is inevitable." Stated this Soviet spokesman: "To win we shall need the element of SURPRISE."

So the "surprise" element is important. We should have learned this at Pearl Harbor. Americans are a trusting people, so unless we are cautioned and duly warned, we will be caught again off guard.

Manvilsky went on to say: "The bourgeoisie will have to be put to sleep. So we shall begin by launching the most spectacular peace movement on record. There will be electrifying overtures and unheard of concessions. The capitalist countries, stupid and decadent, will rejoice to cooperate in their own destruction. They will leap at another chance to be friends. As soon as their guard is down, we shall smash them with our clenched fist."

Shall we not heed this warning? Remember, the Scripture says, "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."

There are several Greek words which are translated into the English word "destruction." This word used here is used only four times, I believe, in the New Testament. It would relate to the coming tribulation which Mark calls a time of great affliction. In other words, it will be characterized by pain and agony as a woman in travail.

Some may wonder why we speak of this coming day of destruction. The reason is, my friends, that we may be warned and then prepare to escape this day of wrath. As Jesus said, "Watch ye and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass and to stand before the Son of man."

The coming of Jesus for all who are truly saved is the blessed hope of Christians everywhere. For it affords escape from this day of destruction.

That's why we sound forth this warning week after week. As John the Baptist warned the people of his day, so we would warn--"Flee the wrath to come."

Noah warned the people of his day of a coming flood. We read how moved with fear, he prepared an ark to the saving of his house. O that we had godly fear that would move us to make such preparation so as to be ready when Jesus comes.

Now notice, we are told this coming day of destruction should not come as a surprise to the believer. As the Apostle writes: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."

Indeed, for the believer the future is filled with glorious anticipation and expectancy. We are not told that there would not be trials and tribulations, but we are told that when these things begin to come to pass, "then look up, lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." The believer in the Lord Jesus Christ looks not for destruction but for departure, not for wrath but rapture.

The overwhelming evidence of Scripture points to the possibility of escape from coming wrath. As the Apostle goes on to say, "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another..."

As believers in Christ we need to encourage one another and to urge readiness for our Lord's Return. "Let us watch and be sober."

God has been good to America. We have been spared the bombardment of our cities. Our land has been prosperous. But in all of this we have forgotten God.

Will America suffer the fate of destruction? There are those who declare that it cannot happen here. But it must be remembered that the same Communists who closed many of Russia's churches, liquidated thousands of its clergy, sent Christians to Siberia, and shot or murdered upwards to twenty million in China, have boasted they will one day destroy upwards to 50 million of us.

How they will do it, or when, is not the important question. Rather, the important question is--will we wake up before it's too late, remain vigilant, and watch with carefulness!

Could it be that, without warning, the Communists might spring a surprise attack upon us--**STRIKE FROM SPACE?** Could America become another Pearl Harbor?

Lest we remain complacent and take our freedom for granted, may we quote from a young Czechoslovakian whose country was taken over by the Communists. He writes: "Everybody took it for granted that because we were a freedom-loving people, we could never lose freedom." He goes on to say, "We paid no attention to repeated warnings that the Communists were infiltrating into the heart of everything that affected our destiny. The majority of us went on living in our smug little worlds, too busy with business, parties, ski trips, and the rest to realize the frightful penalty we were soon to pay for our neglect." Then he writes, in rather strong language, "One morning our bitter fate came upon us like a shot out of hell. We were helpless to do anything about it. Machine guns lined the streets. The government, the army, the schools, communications--everything had been taken over by the Communists overnight!"

And we say--it can't happen here?

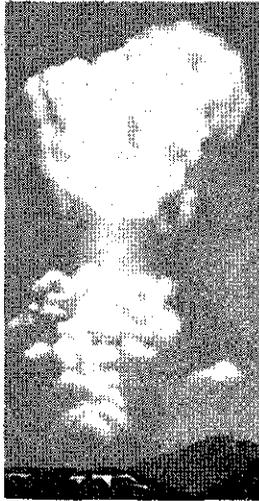
Beloved, it can happen here! Because of our sins, we face imminent judgment. There is coming a day of destruction with the only hope of escape promised to those who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now is the time to prepare for this escape--to turn from sin and careless living and trust Christ as Saviour and Lord! Then, let us watch and be sober, for the day of the Lord will surely come as a thief in the night.

Bela Kovacs, one of the Hungarian freedom-fighters who lived through the blood bath of revolution, says: "If you desire to see how beautiful Communism is, just continue leaving your Bibles unread. Leave your prayer closets unoccupied. Absent yourselves from the church and the prayer meeting, and you will see if Communism is real and beautiful, or an ugly terror that flieth by night."

Yes, we would add--if you want to miss the coming of Christ to go through the awful cruel judgments of the coming great tribulation, then forget our message of warning. Remember, our Lord is coming as a thief. Only those who are ready can share in the rewards of rapture--escape from this coming day of destruction.

"Indeed, be ye therefore ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

DAY OF THE LORD



On a bright, sunny day in August, 1945, the sirens sounded in the Japanese city of Hiroshima during the second World War. Out of habit the people scurried for safety. But only a lone B-29 came over, 19,000 feet up. Thinking it was just a reconnaissance plane, the Japanese rang the "all clear."

Few persons saw the tiny speck that suddenly appeared in the sky under the plane. But in a few seconds that speck exploded with a sound that figuratively was heard around the world. The first atomic bomb had been dropped killing 78,000 persons and seriously injuring thousands more.

Now the Soviet Union boasts of a super bomb which is 5,000 times more powerful than the one which leveled Hiroshima, yet so compact it can fit into a rocket. And, according to the Soviet newspaper, RED STAR, "No super-deep shelter will afford protection from an all-shattering blow from this weapon."

That there is coming a day of devastating destruction for this earth is confirmed by the Word of God. The Apostle Peter writes concerning men who scoff at the idea of the return of our blessed Lord, who say: "Where is the promise of His coming?" Peter goes on to say that as the world once overflowed with water perished, so the heavens and the earth are reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of godly men.

Peter cites the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah as examples unto those who should live ungodly. And, it certainly should cause every sincere thinking person to awaken to the truth of God's Word that sin must be punished, and that God does not overlook the immorality sweeping our land evidenced in illicit relationships, unbridled lust, and perverted passions--that unless we repent, we, too, shall perish!

The Apostle goes on to say that the Lord is longsuffering... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. My friends, were it not for the mercy of God, we would have all been consumed in His wrath long ago. But our God is of great compassion, pleading with men to turn from their idols of pleasure and sins of fornication and adultery lest they be destroyed as were the people in Lot's day and Noah's day.

Peter then goes on to describe further this coming holocaust that one day will suddenly strike this world, declaring: "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." Beloved, there's nothing permanent about this earth in which we live. Our fine buildings will one day lay in ashes, our homes and factories destroyed.

As W. Burnett Easton, Jr., asserts...according to the New Testament and according to the facts of history, there is nothing in the Christian religion which guarantees the permanence of any civilization. Rather, according to the New Testament, not only are all civilizations under the judgment of doom, but the world itself must come to an end!

Jesus most assuredly informed His disciples: "Heaven and earth shall pass away," adding: "but my words shall not pass away!" (Matt. 24:35) And, that is what Peter refers to when he speaks of the "day of the Lord," how it will come quite suddenly and unexpectedly; how that the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat!

I have in my possession an autographed copy of the book, **THE ATOMIC BOMB AND THE WORD OF GOD**, by the noted author, Dr. Wilbur Smith. And, although Dr. Smith does not believe this passage in Peter's epistle is a prediction of the atomic bomb, yet he asserts that the principle of destruction is exactly the same as that used in the atomic bomb.

Note, if you will, that Peter asserts: "The elements shall melt with fervent heat." Uranium, plutonium and hydrogen which are used in the making of nuclear weapons are elements. You can be sure that Peter, a poor, uneducated fisherman, did

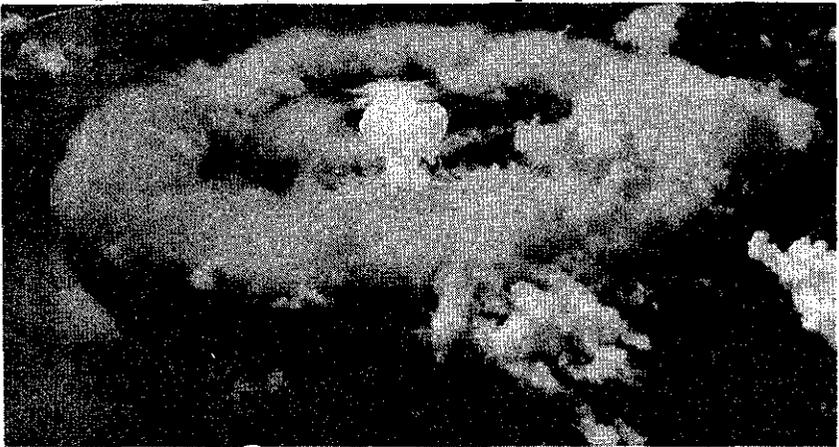
not reason this out in himself. Rather, the Spirit of God revealed to him the formula of earth's future destruction. How men can go on in unbelief, doubting the Word of God, when we have such marvelous and amazing predictions such as these, is beyond comprehension.

Again, look at what the Apostle says: "The elements shall melt with fervent heat." This word "melt" is also a very interesting word. It is the Greek word "luo" meaning to "untie or unloose." You will remember how John the Baptist said he was not worthy to unloose the shoe lachets of Jesus. Well, it is the same word.

So you see how the Holy Spirit leads Peter to write in words of scientific accuracy how that "the elements shall melt with fervent heat." That is, they shall be unloosed. For that is exactly what happens in the atomic explosion of a nuclear device...we unloose the forces of energy in a gigantic and violent outburst; we untie the greatest destructive force known to man.

Would you notice then that the result of the dissolution of the elements is fervent heat. The Greek word is more perfectly translated "scorching heat." When the first atomic bomb was tested at Alamogordo, New Mexico, a huge tower was erected using 10-inch railroad rails. When the test bomb exploded, the steel tower completely vaporized and all that was left was a gaping hole of fused, melted glass.

We are told that an explosion of a 100 megaton bomb such as the Soviets claim to have would produce an estimated fireball-temperature of 18 million degrees. No wonder it is claimed by the Russians that not even a super-deep shelter would provide protection from this weapon.



Bikini was devastated on July 1, 1946, in test of nuclear bomb.

U. S. AIR FORCE

Beloved, again may I call your attention to Luke 17:21 where our Lord declares: "But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."

From the Scriptures we have every reason to expect simultaneously the appearing of Christ for His own with that of a form of devastating destruction such as is evidenced in a nuclear explosion. Notice further the seeming futility of seeking protection in that day as Jesus goes on to say: "Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it."

And, our Lord also reveals how vain it would be to seek to preserve one's property, saying: "In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away." In a time of fire or flood or similar catastrophe, it is humanly instinctive to want to grab that which is most valuable and take it to a safe place. But Jesus says that won't be necessary.

Finally, our Lord gives us what I believe is a further picture of the rapture when He comes for His saints. He says: "I tell you, in that night there shall be two in one bed; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two (men) shall be in the field; the one shall be taken and the other left." Will you be taken or left behind to face this awful Tribulation when Jesus comes?

Friend listening today, the shadows of death-dealing destruction grow darker with startling disclosures of deadlier bombs and missiles. One news commentator declares, "For the first time since civil war days, the American family is confronted with the definite possibility that the war may come to its own front door. And this time it wouldn't be cavalry men riding into town, but mass destruction released in one eradicating explosion." And observes this reporter, "It is ironic that the United States invented the weapon which so alarms its people."

There are some who believe God would not permit any nation to unleash so devastating a weapon as a nuclear bomb. We can only refer to such Scriptures as already given, along with Psalms 110:5,6, which says: "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen (nations), he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries."

Because of our sins, judgment is certain. One cannot help but notice the revue of films being shown in our theatres and

the books being placed in our newsstands showing how far we have degenerated as a society.

The only promise of escape from this coming judgment pictured in the Word of God is to the believer who knows Christ as Saviour and Lord, and who is found walking with God in a life of faith and obedience.

We do not know the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh. But it would seem, witnessing evidence of impending doom, that everyone today who is not living for Christ would give solemn thought to his soul and where he will spend eternity.

Some night, unannounced, for millions there may be no warning and no escape as missiles and bombs might come raining down upon our cities. It would seem from the Scriptures that only those who are ready for the coming of the Lord would escape this coming holocaust. As we read in I. Thessalonians, at the coming of our blessed Lord, we who are alive and remain shall be caught up to meet our Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord. What a blessed day that will be for those who are ready.

But our heart goes out to those lost and perishing who, unwilling to turn from their sin, continue on in their iniquitous practices to one day face the awful judgment seen coming upon the world.

Dr. Herbert Lockyer, in view of the discovery of destructive atomic weapons, asks, "Do you not think that the alarm must be sounded? Is it not time to warn this mad, blind, doomed world that the hours of grace are passing with alarming swiftness? Suddenly destruction will overtake this unbelieving and deluded world unless it is aroused and made to repent for its sins." We're not trying to scare or frighten anyone but only present the facts as they are, and to reveal there is hope to all who will place faith in Christ and walk with HIM.

So place your trust in Him and live for Him daily. "Indeed, be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

COMING DAY OF THE LORD

What's happening in outer space?

NASA Space Scientists say our Pioneer 10 Spacecraft, in traveling through unexplored territory, has encountered an unknown force. Interesting, isn't it?

The Pioneer 10 Spacecraft "is making some small unexplained orientation changes" and officials can't explain the reasons. "They could be due either to a very slight malfunction or to some kind of interplanetary phenomenon," say space experts.

Naturally, we are concerned with what goes on in the universe, for we believe God inhabits heaven.

Psalms 11:4 says: "The Lord's throne is in heaven..."

In the prayer recorded in Nehemiah 9:6, we read, "Thou even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the HEAVEN OF HEAVENS, with all their host..."

When Solomon built a house unto the Lord, he declared: "Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?" (I Kings 8:27) So there is not only heaven, there is the "heaven of heavens."

The giant meteorite that fell in Siberia in 1908, was actually a nuclear blast touched off by beings from outer space--so declares a leading Soviet scientist, Dr. Aleksei Zolotov.

This is confirmed by a top United States scientist who reports the presence of cesium-137 in the ring structures of trees at the site which definitely indicates that some kind of nuclear action had occurred.

"Cesium is a fission product," says Bob Ryan, director of radiation safety at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Now fission is the process by which an atomic bomb is exploded. Ryan points out: "Fission is the only way you can produce cesium unless you have a nuclear accelerator." Ryan goes on to explain that atomic fission was unknown in 1908, "and we didn't have accelerators in 1908, either." Fission is something related to the production of nuclear energy.

Another top U. S. expert, Dr. James Moulton in the Department of Defense, was asked whether cesium could be produced by natural forces, such as the fission that takes place constantly in the sun. He replied that it could, but not conceivably on earth.

Declared Moulton: "On earth it can be produced as a result of a nuclear explosion or a nuclear bombardment of some sort." He further observed: "I do not believe it is conceivable that it can be produced naturally on earth."

Other observations might be made concerning the tremendous explosion that rocked Siberia in the year of 1908. For instance, a noted American scientist, in relating how no crater was found at the site, declared his belief that "it could NOT have been a meteor."

Dr. Zolotov, the Russian scientist, is head of an official Soviet scientific team which is investigating the extraordinary phenomenon using the most sophisticated equipment.

He related his findings as follows: "At the very center of the explosion, a circle of trees was left standing--stripped from above of branches, but still standing--showing that the object was exploded in the air and did not touch the ground.

"But beyond this circle, trees were knocked down for 25 miles in all directions."

Dr. Zolotov also revealed: "All the evidence, scientifically recorded at the time of the blast--shock waves, magnetic upheavals, minor earthquakes, the sighting of a bright light in the sky--is similar to what is recorded in a nuclear explosion."

Zolotov went on to say that it was his belief that other blasts might be forthcoming. For example, concerning the choice of the site--where it would not cause loss of life--"shows that a highly advanced, powerful civilization simply wanted to let us know that it is aware of our existence."

Think of it!

Says this noted Russian scientist: "It is logical to expect in the future a second demonstration of the power and precision shown in the 1908 explosion."

My friends, this is exactly the picture the Bible gives us of what's ahead in the coming DAY OF THE LORD. Listen closely.

There is coming a day when the Lord shall return to rule this world, spoken of by the Prophet Isaiah. It is a time when the nations of earth shall gather together to make war with armies seen coming from heaven. But before this occurs--referred to as the DAY OF THE LORD--the evidence greatly favors an event called the rapture of the saints--those who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice what we read in Isaiah 13, verse 3, where the Lord says: "I have commanded my sanctified ones." A sanctified person is one set apart to God--one dedicated to the doing of His will. One day we expect the trumpet to sound and the command to be given, "Come, for all things are now ready." (Luke 14:17) Or, as recorded in the midnight cry, as told by Jesus, the command will be, "Go ye out to meet him!"

The words "saint," "sanctify," and "holy" all come from the same concept of a person who is a believer in the Lord

Jesus Christ. So, when God gives the command, when the trumpet sounds, when the angels give their shout, if you are ready to meet the Lord, you should rise to meet Him in the air and thus shall you ever be with Him. This is the promise of His Word.

Then upon earth there follows great tribulation such as the world has never seen nor ever shall see again.

Again, let's look at Isaiah's description of events. After the command is given to the saints, or "sanctified ones," then there is heard the noise of a multitude gathered together to do battle. Isaiah refers to "a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together." (Isa. 13:4)

On the other hand, there is pictured a great army as the Lord of hosts mustereth the host of the battle. They come from a far country, from the end of heaven....to destroy the whole land.

Did you hear it?

Here is the Lord coming out of heaven with His army. Then we read, "Howl ye, for the day of the Lord is at hand: it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty."

And we read of fiery destruction to follow: "Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt; And they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth; they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames."

Dr. Zolotov, the Russian scientist, says of the meteorite that exploded over Siberia nearly 70 years ago that "it was a calling card from a highly advanced civilization in outer space." And the indication is that these visitors may return again.

The Siberian explosion, as reported in the NATIONAL ENQUIRER, took place on June 30, 1908. It was preceded by a "flaming ball in the sky" that was seen by many. It was heard 700 miles away. It caused earthquakes and fires and created a shock wave that circled the earth twice. The astounding part of this incident is that not a single life was lost because the explosion took place in an area that was completely uninhabited.

However, concerning the coming Day of the Lord, we read: "Behold the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and HE SHALL DESTROY THE SINNERS OUT OF IT."

As God destroyed the world of Noah's day with a flood, the Scriptures declare He is going to destroy the world with fire, and the sinner will be destroyed along with the earth.

Again, we read (and we're still in Isaiah 13,) "And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity."

Now there are some who believe that Christians and non-Christians alike will go through the great tribulation. But since the Scriptures indicate that the purpose of the day of the Lord is to destroy the sinner and punish the wicked and all evil doers, why would born-again believers suffer such a fate?

While it is true that tribulation does befall believers in the form of wars, plagues and persecution, on the other hand, Paul declares in Romans 2:9, "Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile."

The time of great tribulation ahead will be a time of trouble for Israel. It will also be a time of tribulation for all who do evil. So, if we are saved and living for the Lord and not engaging in wicked practices, why should tribulation be for us?

At least, it is our belief that if Christians watch and pray, and are found living for the Lord, there can be escape from coming judgment that is seen outpoured upon the world. However, we point out what Jesus said. He did not promise a blanket escape from tribulation. Rather, He admonished: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." (Luke 21:36)

We rejoice in the promises of salvation and readily grant that eternal life is a gift to all who receive Christ as Saviour and Lord; yet, Christians are to pray that they may be accounted worthy to escape the tribulation.

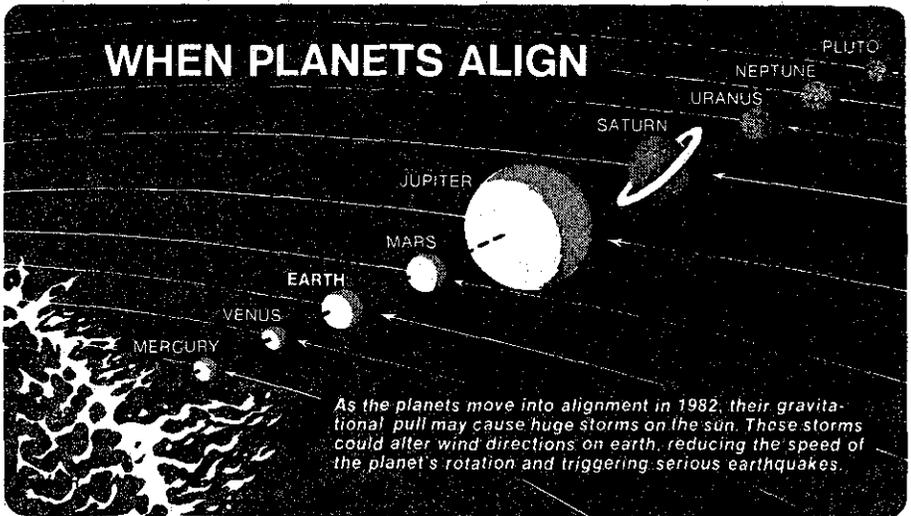
Have you trusted Christ as your Saviour and Lord? Are you today living for Him? Would you be ready were He to come today?

For remember He hath said: "Be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

PLANETS

ON

PARADE



A great deal of speculation is being made concerning the alignment of the planets set for 1982.

In a book entitled **THE JUPITER EFFECT**, several scientists warn of what might happen when the nine planets in earth's solar system appear in an alignment that occurs every 179 years.

Quoting one of our news magazines: "As the planets move into alignment in 1982, their gravitational pull may cause huge storms on the sun. These storms could alter wind directions on earth, reducing the speed of the planet's rotation and triggering serious earthquakes." (NEWSWEEK - Sept. 16, '74)

John Gribbin, a British Physical Science director, and Stephen Plagemann, a NASA researcher at Maryland's Goddard Space Center, began a study of the possible effect of the planetary alignment that is due by Christmas 1982. Their conclusions as to what we might expect are as follows:

1. First, it is noted...there'll be a great increase in magnetic activity on the sun. Huge storms, sunspots and solar flares will occur.
2. The ionosphere may be seriously affected and great changes occur in the earth's atmosphere.
3. Radio and television communications will be disrupted.
4. Weird lighting effects from northern lights will burst through the sky.
5. Wind directions will be changed.
6. Rainfall and temperature patterns will be greatly altered.
7. The two scientists warn that the earth's rotation will be affected, the length of days will be changed.
8. Solar activity lately has already increased, the number of earthquakes and slowed down the earth's rotation, but the two astronomers warn that by 1982, "There will be many earthquakes, large and small...And one region where one of the greatest fault systems lies today under a great strain, long overdue for a giant leap forward and just waiting the necessary kick, is California."

Did you hear it?

Dr. John D. Jess, radio broadcaster, points out that the predictions of these two astronomers coincide in a startling manner to what the Bible says will take place on earth during the very last days, or more particularly, the Great Tribulation period.

Our Lord describes events that will find the heavens in disarray. Confusion will reign as the sun undergoes spectacular changes.

Isaiah speaks of a time when... "the light of the sun will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven days.." (Isa. 30:26)

In the book of the Revelation we read of a time coming when men will be "scorched with great heat..." because of the brilliance of the sun. (Rev. 16:19)

Joel, in his prophecy for the endtime, spoke of cataclysmic judgments of the heavens--the sun becoming dark, the moon becoming as blood, and the stars falling from heaven.

He also mentions wonders occurring not only in the heavens but upon the earth with blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. (Joel 2:30)

That the earth will erupt violently even as the sun changes drastically is taught in the Scriptures.

Peter would remind us that as a flood destroyed the world of Noah's day, so this earth is to be destroyed by fire and eventually there will be a new heaven and a new earth.

Today we'd like to ask--What about this judgment of fire that is to destroy the earth? Will God or man bring on this endtime destruction?

This is the atomic age. That man is able to bring on such devastation that could completely destroy this planet is the theme of many books that have recently appeared in print.

Milton Burton, one of the scientists at Oak Ridge who helped produce the first atomic bomb, has warned: "If enough bombs of the right size are set off, it will light the nitrogen chain and the entire world will go up in flames. And if other planets are inhabited, they would look and cry, "Ah, a Nova. A new star."

Would man destroy this earth and all of the wonders of God's creation?

In Rev. 11:18 we're reminded of one of the reasons the Lord exercises judgment upon the world in the Endtime. Not only on account of gross wickedness, but also because of man's pollution of the atmosphere and his destruction of the earth do we read where at our Lord's Coming He will "destroy them which destroy the earth." Did you hear it?

That man is capable of destroying the earth is an established fact.

Dr. William F. Libby, Nobel Prize winning scientist, once declared, "Atomic and hydrogen bombs can create hell on earth in a way no man, not even Dante, has ever imagined."

Think of it!

Lieut. Gen. James Gavin, while in charge of research for the U.S. Army, once warned: "Several hundred million deaths would result from large-scale use of atomic weapons and hydrogen weapons." He also noted that "casualties will be largely affected by the way the wind blows."

It's interesting to note that in the description of the judgments being outpoured during the coming day of wrath that at one period God halts the four winds so that they should not blow upon the earth. (Rev. 7:1)

Could it be, we might ask, that out of love and concern God steps in to stop man's reckless use of powerful, destructive weapons seen unleashed during the tribulation period?

Our Lord does remind us of the scope of this future devastation, saying, "Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved..." (Matt. 24:22)

The question arises--Will God unleash His own destruction upon the earth in this future day of desolation described in the Word of God?

That God is capable of bringing about such vast destruction is evidenced in an observation by Dr. William G. Pollard, an Oak Ridge scientist, who once described the sun and every star in the Milky Way as being a natural hydrogen bomb in the process of fission. Observes Pollard: "It is a sobering thought that God made more hydrogen bombs than anything else!"

Thus we see a time coming when "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." (II Pet. 3:10)

Peter was a poor fisherman. What did he know about elements? Uranium, which is used in the making of atomic bombs, is an element.

In the case of a 100 Megaton Bomb we are told the resulting fireball will produce a temperature of about 18 million degrees Fahrenheit. You can't begin to imagine such fervent heat as would be produced by modern rockets with the explosive force many times more powerful than ones we exploded over Japan.

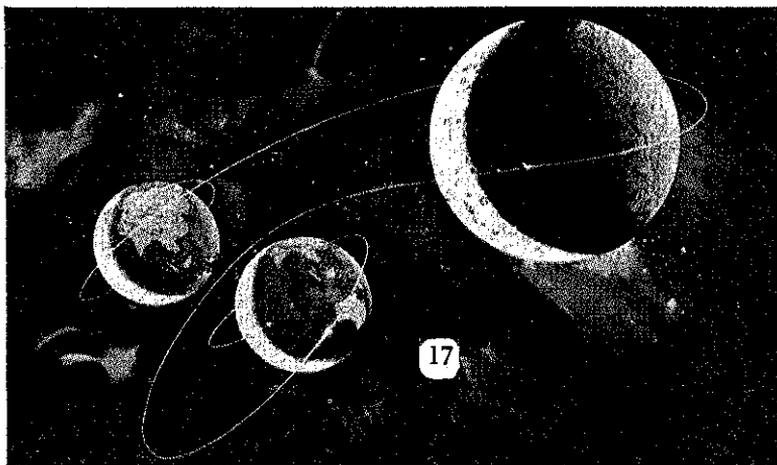
Peter goes on to say: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be..."

Hear it! The word DISSOLVED is the Greek word LUO meaning to 'unloose' or 'untie.' How characteristic of atomic fission as the chain reaction produces a nuclear explosion. Billions of neutrons suddenly hitting other neutrons at tremendous velocities of 18,000 miles a second suddenly shatter the atom, and additional billions of neutrons are born in a chain reaction that could destroy the earth.

In fact, Isaiah describes the day when the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard. (Isa. 24:18-20)

What greater convincing proof is there from the Scriptures than that man may eventually and ultimately bring nuclear destruction upon this earth.

One of our congressmen once warned: "A concussion of H-bombs is sufficient to blow the earth off its axis."



Too long we have heard men, including well-meaning clergymen, say that we will not destroy ourselves. But there are too many Scriptures which indicate otherwise.

Scientists tell us we are headed for an atomic war. In their annual bulletin they feature an atomic clock showing us only minutes away from midnight! Why don't we heed their warning and prepare for the day that is just ahead! We face a holocaust that will destroy millions and leave other millions helpless cripples. The only possible escape we see is for true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some preach that there is no escape from the coming great awful tribulation ahead. But Jesus encouraged us to pray that we might escape all the things seen coming to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. (Luke 21:36)

It doesn't seem that our Lord would offer the promise of escape unless there was the possibility of escape from this coming holocaust.

Notice again, Jesus said: "The same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all, even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."

What a tremendous verse tying the Lord's Return for His own with fiery destruction rained down upon the earth. And as Lot escaped just moments before fire fell upon Sodom, so it is possible the saints seen looking for the Saviour will escape the fiery destruction ahead.

Some think of the coming of the Lord as occurring on a beautiful moonlit night when all is serene and quiet. But the Scriptures portray His coming as the 'lightning.' And again we read: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in FLAMING FIRE taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Nothing serene about that event. In FLAMING FIRE Christ will appear. Those who know not God will suffer along with those who obey not the Gospel.

Do you know God? We read in John 17:3, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent!"

And we also ask: Are you obeying the Gospel? You reply, "I believe the Gospel! I believe that Jesus died for my sins and that I'm ready to meet Him!"

But are you walking in obedience to His will? Are you obeying the Gospel? As Christ died for sin, have you died to sin?

In this day of easy believism with its loose, shallow profession, we need to be shaken loose from our lethargy and challenged to holy living. The hour is late and Christ's coming hastens.

Notice, the Apostle Peter, after referring to the destruction of the heavens, with the elements melting, and the earth being burned up, writes: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness."

In other words, in view of what's ahead, in view of these judgments seen coming, we should be living holy lives. Our behaviour should be affected.

In fact, the Apostle goes on to warn: "Be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless."

Does this characterize our lives? Are you living all-out for Jesus Christ?

Then Peter warns: "Beloved,...beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

When all around there are those who yield to temptation, and even some who call themselves Christians who may be turning to drugs and illicit sex, or following the pattern of the world with its materialism--Peter warns: "BEWARE...lest you fall into the error of the wicked."

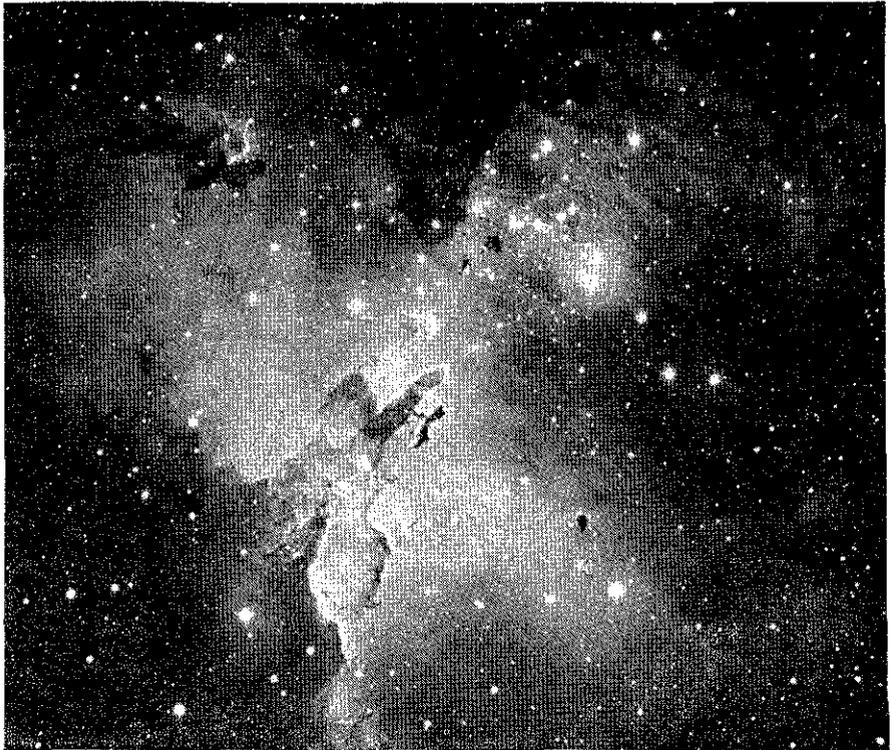
May God help us in this hour to surrender all to Jesus Christ. It will be worth it to hear Him say, "WELL DONE," at His coming, rather than face His wrath!

Which will it be - WRATH or RAPTURE!

Remember, you can be ready for Christ's Return if you want to be!

Right now, repent of sin to receive the Saviour. Then surrender your life to Him in loving obedience to His will and be ready when He comes.

For He hath said, "Be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."



HALE OBSERVATORIES

THE COMING DAY OF THE LORD

On a previous broadcast we related the account set forth by two scientists, Astronomers John Gribben and Stephen Plagemann, which they have published calling attention to the alignment of nine planets set for 1982. The results, we are told, could be catastrophic because of the combination of tidal forces of the planets on the sun triggering a disruption of the weather patterns, and bringing about earthquakes, large and small, in susceptible regions of the globe.

Reading reports like this makes us think of the predictions concerning the Kohoutek comet. What scientists once described as the "comet of the century" with a spectacular bright tail stretching one-sixth of the way across the sky, turned out to be a fuzzy object scarcely visible to the eye.

Here again is evidence that science is not always right, so the forecast of nine planets in alignment is similarly unpredictable in their results.

NEWSWEEK, in commenting on the alignment of the planets, declares: "Mankind may be able to control nuclear warfare, but it can only try to cope with natural catastrophe..." It continues: "In 1982, all of the nine planets of the solar system will be aligned on the same side of the sun like a rank of heavenly guardsmen on parade."

Some say: "Did not our Lord speak of signs in the heavens?" Perhaps these planets are standing at attention to welcome the saints when they come marching home--is the observation of another.

Well, there is an interesting Scripture that I would like to have you consider today. It's found in Psalms 48:2,3, & 4. Listen to it: "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge. For lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together. They saw it, and so they marvelled; they were troubled, and hastened away."

Did you hear it?

Here we are told that amidst the starry host there is a city where God dwells. On a previous space flight Soviet spacemen ridiculed the belief that there is a God, for they said they didn't see Him anywhere out there.

However, the Bible speaks of the dwelling place of God as being in the sides of the north, which is the city of the great King. It is referred to as MT. ZION.

An article I hold in my hand states: "One of the most inspiring and thrilling of recent disclosures of astronomers is that there is a great empty space in the north in the nebula of the constellation of Orion."

Photographs have been taken so that we have been able to peer into the depths of interstellar space and glimpse something of the vastness of infinity itself.

Professor Learkin at Mt. Lowe Observatory is said to have observed: "These photographs reveal the opening and interior of a cavern so stupendous that our entire solar system would be lost therein." He says: "I have watched it since the days of youth in many telescopes of many powers, but never dreamed that the central region is the mouth of a colossal cave. Pen of writer and brush of artist alike are lifeless and inert in any attempt to describe this interior. For the depth of the Orion nebula appear like torn and twisted objects and river masses of shining glass, irregular pillars, columns of stalactites in glittering splendor and stalagmites from the mighty floor. The appearance is like that of light shining and glowing behind the clear walls of ivory and pearl studded with millions of diamonds (as) shining stars."

The writer of this article then observes: "There must be some reason why all this grandeur is lavished on this one spot in the heavens. The colors are a hue peculiar to the Orion and studded around the opening so that they appear as a pavement of starry sand.

Well, it is in this area--in the sides of the north--that you have this corridor that goes directly to the city of our God, referred to as Mt. Zion. The Psalmist joins with these astronomers who declare it is "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth." And, although as yet the city has not been discovered, it will one day be actually seen. There's coming a day when we read that the kings "passed by together. They saw it, and so they marvelled; they were troubled, and hastened away."

One of the future results of our space program may be the discovery of the city of God, perhaps the same city which John saw coming down from God out of heaven--a city decked in the finest building materials that heaven could afford--made of pure gold, like unto clear glass. The walls were of jasper. The foundations were garnished with all manner of precious stones such as sapphire, emerald, jacinth, amethyst, topaz, and the gates were of pearl.

Talk about excitement. It will be a grand and glorious day when our Lord returns and we are caught up to be in this city--the city of God, the city of the great King.

Now listen carefully to what Joel the prophet tells us is going to happen in the last days as it relates to Mt. Zion.

First, he refers to the outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh. There is a new awareness of the presence of the Spirit of God in our day. You will find those in nearly all groups talking of the power of the Holy Spirit and the love of the Spirit and that which glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ.

Although some of what we are seeing is no doubt counterfeit, it must be admitted that there is also the genuine and the real. There has to be in fulfilment of Joel's prophecy. And there must be this work of the Holy Spirit to perfect the saints in readiness for our Lord's Coming. For the five wise virgins had the oil in vessels with their lamps, testifying to the fact that not only did they profess salvation but they had the Spirit of God symbolized by "oil."

Secondly, Joel relates there would come wonders in the heavens and in the earth.

What tremendous signs and wonders we are witnessing with man taking trips to the moon and probing outer space.

On earth we have seen exploding nuclear devices detonated as we have harnessed the power of the atom primarily for destruction.

Writes Joel: "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come."

Did you hear it?

It's not a pleasant picture what's ahead, is it? Devastation and destruction unheard of is seen coming in an event described as the DAY OF THE LORD.

Finally, Joel writes under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in MOUNT ZION and in JERUSALEM shall be deliverance."

Mention is made of Mt. Zion as a source of deliverance. You'll recall a moment ago we quoted the Psalmist's description of heaven, where God dwells, the city of the great King, referred to as MT. ZION.

Thus, we would like to believe this is the city where the saints will be caught up to in the rapture--when Christ comes for His own.

My friends, if we only realized that God's wonderful plan of salvation takes into consideration our deliverance from this coming day of wrath seen befalling the world. And our prayer should be that of Isaiah, who cries: "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down..." And he goes on to say: "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him." (Isa. 64:1 & 4)

Words cannot describe what's ahead for the Christian who is looking for the coming of our Blessed Lord. That's why we should be diligent in our service, faithful in our witness, and filled with love for our Saviour.

For there is deliverance in Mt. Zion.

Notice, there is also deliverance in Jerusalem. Turn to the book of Zechariah which describes the day when Jerusalem will be a source of contention for the whole earth.

In Zech. 12:8 we read: "In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem."

The United States is advocating Israel giving up its captured territory. Our Secretary of State says Israel must take a chance and trust us. Eventually it will be proven that Israel will have no backing except God Himself Who comes to the rescue. We read, "The Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem."

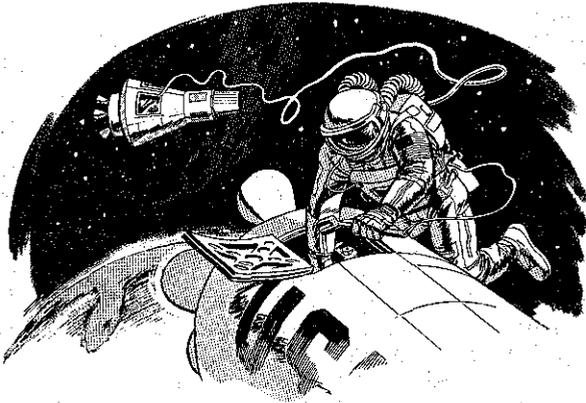
In Zechariah 14 we read: "Behold the day of the Lord cometh...For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle."

So we see there is deliverance in Mt. Zion and in Jerusalem. The deliverance comes to those who love the Lord and await His coming. Those who by simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ have repented of sin to trust Him can expect to be delivered from this world before the coming awful day of great tribulation.

And there will be deliverance for the remnant of Israel who are rescued when the Lord comes back to this earth with His saints, ascending directly to the Mt. of Olives.

Sound exciting?

Talk about space flights. What a thrill when the Lord returns for His own and we are caught up to meet Him in the air! ARE YOU READY FOR THIS EVENT? For our Lord hath said, "Be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."



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APOLLO-SOYUZ SPACE FLIGHT

The largest audience in the world tuned in for the Apollo-Soyuz mission which will cost the United States around a quarter-billion dollars.

Was it worth it to attempt the first international hookup in space? This has been the question posed by some who are not as concerned over the money situation as they are over the issue of collaboration with an adversary.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Nobel prize-winning Soviet author now in the United States, warned that detente is merely a clever way to disaster.

Speaking before the AFL-CIO at a banquet given in his honor, he warned of any kind of cooperation with an enemy that has boasted: "We will bury you." Warned Solzhenitsyn: "The situation in the world is not just dangerous. It is not just threatening. It is catastrophic!" He went on to ask, "How can you consider yourself safe when you are a minority in the world?"

TIME magazine, while suggesting that the noted novelist speaks with the voice of an Old Testament prophet, yet went on to say that his apocalyptic vision cannot be a guide to practical policy. Quoting this publication: "Both the U.S. and the Soviet if only a little and very gradually, the danger of war that could end civilization. True, detente is risky," admits this journal. "But the U.S. is not so weak that it need be afraid of dealing with a powerful and wily adversary."

Interestingly enough, Jules Verne, French novelist of a century ago, pictured a joint Russian-American experiment in space. In 1865 his story was published in which he pictured a ten-ton aluminum missile being fired from Florida. In the missile he described three men and two dogs taking off at a speed of 25,000 miles per hour. The rocket's destiny was the moon, but in the story the astronauts aboard missed the moon and went into orbit around it. By breaker rockets eventually the men set themselves free of the moon's orbit and came safely back to earth. The story ends with the crew landing in the Pacific and being picked up unhurt.

Amazing description, isn't it?

The Bible pictures a plan by man following the flood of Noah's day to build a tower that would reach into heaven. It was an elaborate task--a joint effort--that found man wanting to make a name for himself.

We read how the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded. After examining their workmanship, the Lord said, "Now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do." In other words, they finally succeeded in discovering the secrets that would find man able to explore space with a scientific knowledge that was unprecedented.

You'll remember how the Lord confused their language and scattered the people abroad over the face of the earth. This, no doubt, largely accounts for the various languages in the world today. And it explains why there are the Chinese and the Japanese, the Eskimos and the Indians. This scattering and the confusion of languages dates back to the building of the tower of Babel.

Today man is again building towers from which giant rockets are hurled heavenward. It's not that the Lord is opposed to scientific achievement that he opposed the building of the tower of Babel. Rather, it is because of man's attempt to build without the help of the Almighty--depending upon his own self effort and recognizing his own inherent goodness.

As one of our officials has observed concerning our own space program: "We are showing that we are a people who can do anything we set our minds to do." Well, that's exactly what they said at the building of the tower of Babel. (Dr. Thos. O. Paine, Civilian Space Agency)

Our scientific explorations of space are reflected in our expenditure of nearly 25 billions of dollars with an involvement of around 400,000 Americans in the space program. For the future an expenditure twice that amount is expected as we develop a fleet of space shuttles. These crafts will place satellites in orbit, bring defective vehicles back to earth, and serve as space laboratories.

Gen. Thomas S. Powers, as Commander in Chief of our Strategic Air Command, once stated: "The time is bound to come when man will venture ever deeper into space...to battle the limitless challenge of the universe."

Likewise, Dr. John L. Barnes, who heads up a firm doing missile research, has stated: "There is no doubt in my mind" that we will conquer the reaches of outer space, "because we want to! That is the history of mankind," he noted.

In all of man's exploration of the heavens, have you ever wondered if our space scientists will get a peek at God's dwelling place? Could it be that when we send our spacecrafts on their missions to Mars or some far distant planet that they might accidentally run into another civilization? At least, that is the question that is being asked in Space circles.

Of this we are certain. God dwells in heaven. In fact, we read that He inhabits the heaven of heavens.

For instance, the Psalmist speaks of Mt. Zion which appears in the sides of the north as being the city of our God. Read Psa. 48: "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the North, the city of the great King."

Listen to this: "God is known in her palaces for a refuge. For, lo the kings were assembled, they passed by together. They saw it, and so they marvelled; they were troubled, and hastened away."

Doesn't that indicate that man will ultimately get a peek at heavenly grandeur and glory?

However, unless man is born again and indwelt by the Spirit of God, he will only be filled with fear over what he sees.

Did not our Lord indicate there would come signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars? He goes on to say, "Men's hearts failing them for fear...for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." (Luke 21:25-26)

We read of our astronauts that have spotted spacecrafts while orbiting the earth, and some of these we call UFOs have been seen on the moon. Imagine seeing a space object the size of the one John saw in the book of the Revelation.

In Rev. 21:10 John describes a city descending from God out of heaven. It was a city which lieth foursquare with the length, breadth and height all equal. This city we are told is 12,000 furlongs in length. A furlong is 582 feet. So the distance of this city shaped like a cube would be 1,322 miles high, 1,322 miles wide, and 1,322 miles deep.

Some skyscraper!

Like a satellite this city comes down and hangs suspended above the earth. John tells us: "And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory into it."

Again we read, "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they that are written in the Lamb's book of life." (Rev. 21:24, 27)

Let me ask--Is your name written in this book? Have you repented of sin to trust the Saviour and do you have eternal life?

Remember, nothing that defileth shall enter there. Those who lie and cheat and steal will be kept out. Only those redeemed by God's grace--having their names recorded in the book of life as a result of placing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ will share in the glory of this city.

Again we call your attention to the fear that will come upon men when they see the Lord coming from heaven during the coming day of wrath. We read how "the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev. 6:15-17)

Did you hear it?

May we ask--Where will we be when this happens? Will we be among those seen looking for a hiding place when the Lord is seen coming for His own? Or will we be among those who are caught up to meet Him in the air?

Is Christ's Return your blessed hope? Which will it be--wrath or rapture?

As John the Baptist warned men in his day to "flee the wrath to come!" so this is our message. How close we must be to the day of wrath that is just ahead!

As Noah found safety in an ark and was spared the flood, so you, today, can be ready for rapture, ready to meet the Lord when He comes for His own. By asking His forgiveness and making restitution whenever possible, you can be found living in hope and expectancy or His return whenever that day and hour may be.

For He hath said: "Be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE FUTURE OF ISRAEL AND JERUSALEM



A move by Arab countries to suspend Israel from the United Nations could bring an end to the U.N. as we know it, or make the U.N. a tool of tyranny.

At least, that is the testimony of officials and diplomats who await the vote on the floor of the General Assembly when it meets to discuss the gravest issue of our time--the future of Palestine.

An American diplomat testifies: "For the first time I can visualize the destruction of the U.N. as we know it..." Attempts to expel Israel from the United Nations could bring on a walkout by the American delegation, a cutoff of U.N. funds by the U.S. Congress, and perhaps similar fund cuts by Western European nations.

At the moment the crisis is threatening the destruction of the United Nations as an international peace-making organization. The Arabs, with their new found support in Africa and Europe, have already put tremendous pressures on Israel--limiting their right to even debate the Palestine issue in the Assembly.

So, if the Arabs again succeed in enough votes to bring about the expulsion of Israel from the United Nations, it could lead to a U.S. walkout from the august body. And, as British Ambassador Ivor Richard has testified: "If the United States were to walk out, I think it would be the end of the U.N."

The Arabs, of course, have long viewed Israel as a thorn in their side. Or, as King Saud testified when he was still alive: "Israel to the Arab world is like a cancer to the human body and the only remedy is to uproot it just like a cancer..."

This brings to mind the Scripture in Psalms where the enemies of Israel are recorded as saying: "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance." (Psa. 83:4)

This is exactly what we are seeing today.

Again we read, "For they have consulted together with one consent; they are confederate against thee." (v. 5)

How amazingly true!

Various confederate actions have been taken against the nation of Israel.

For instance, the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has taken action to limit Israeli participation in that body.

Then this year the World Health Organization took united action in condemning Israel. At the International Women's Year Conference in Mexico City a resolution was passed denouncing "Zionism."

So we are seeing exact fulfilment of the Scriptures as it relates to the nation of Israel.

Jeremiah describes so vividly the plight of Israel, saying: "All thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not; There is none to plead thy cause."

Have you noticed that many nations once friendly to Israel are today giving her the cold shoulder?

As an Israeli diplomat testified in the Parliament: "An atmosphere of isolation such as I have never experienced at any international conference..." surrounds the Israeli delegation.

So you see the plight of Israel today. Her friends are forsaking her. Even her former allies are afraid to be identified with her. As a Norwegian told an Israeli minister---"I'm sympathetic to your problems, but we Norwegians don't want atom bombs dropping on us because of you."

Israel today is being accused of fomenting trouble. By failing to give up captured territories resulting from acts of aggression against her, she is denounced time and time again by her adversaries.

In a letter signed by 3/4ths of the members of the U.S. Senate and sent to President Ford, it was asserted: "The history of the Arab-Israeli conflict demonstrates that any Israeli withdrawal must be accompanied by meaningful steps toward peace by its Arab neighbors." The letter urged a sympathetic and understanding of Israel's plight with a view of being responsive to her urgent military and economic needs.

Quite a letter from the U.S. Senate, wasn't it?

The history of Israel is recorded in a promise which God made to Abraham concerning him and his seed, saying: "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee." (Gen 12:3)

For instance, Hitler, the villain, is dead. He died in infamy, for he cursed the seed of Abraham and murdered millions in cold blood.

On the other hand, nations that have befriended Israel have been blessed as the Scripture has promised. Prosperity has come to nations that have been hospitable instead of hostile to the Jews.

A quick look at history will show the pattern of divine intervention on behalf of God's chosen people.

Pharaoh, determined to drive Israel into the Red Sea, was himself drowned in it.

Haman, erecting a gallows to hang Mordecai the Jew, was himself hanged on those same gallows.

The three Hebrew children, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, cast into a fiery furnace for their faith, were freed and those antagonists who had them thrown in were themselves cast into the burning heat and consumed.

So you see it doesn't pay to oppose those whom God has blessed.

However, some will point out that Israel today is a rather irreligious people. In a travel guide mention is made that in Jerusalem 80% of the population is atheistic. Think of it!

Where these statistics come from is uncertain, but to publish such statements is almost inconceivable when it relates to the most famous city in the world--the city of Jerusalem, often referred to as the "holy city."

A time is coming when this will all be changed. God has determined that His people will undergo a time of trouble such as they have never witnessed before. They will be friendless, forsaken and alone. But in the midst of persecution and affliction they will be purged and purified. Then their Messiah will appear. As a result, there will be a restoration of peace and righteousness in the whole earth.

Jerusalem will again be holy--the praise of the whole earth--not because of its past traditions, but because Jesus Christ will reign there.

As CHRISTIANITY TODAY magazine comments: "The fate of Old Jerusalem will remain a center of controversy and spiritual concern." Indeed, it will be debated and deliberated in the United Nations, but God has already determined the outcome of this city. For Isaiah describes the day when the Lord shall reign in Jerusalem gloriously. (Isa. 24:23)

Zechariah describes so vividly what's ahead for Jerusalem. He quotes the word of the Lord who says: "Behold, I will make Jerusalem...a burdensome stone for all people." (12:3)

Today Jerusalem is a burdensome stone. A burdensome stone is something that one wishes he did not have to carry; the longer he carries it, the heavier and more exhausting it becomes.

A century ago Dr. Charles Wright of Trinity College in Dublin wrote: "In vain should all the nations round about seek to fit the stone of Jerusalem into any of the political structures which they might seek to erect. All their efforts to raise that burdensome stone would prove injurious to themselves."

Today the United Nations is confronted with a decision - what to do with Israel - what to do about Jerusalem.

Indeed, Jerusalem is a focal point of future prophetic fulfillment.

Referring to the coming Day of the Lord, we read of a battle which will find all of the nations involved. Listen to what we read in Zech. 14. "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle..."

Did you hear it?

In a United Nations kind of action you have Jerusalem as the target of an endtime invasion.

As a result of this encounter, we read: "Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle." Think of it!

And we read: "His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem..." "And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."

Here we are told that when the Lord comes to destroy the enemies of Israel, the saints will be with Him. They will accompany Him. John the Revelator describes the saints as being an army on white horses led by Christ Himself seen upon a white horse. This is no doubt figurative speech to describe the march to earth with our Lord leading the procession of saints, first to destroy the wicked nations at Armageddon, and then to set up His royal government from the throne of David in Jerusalem.

But it is possible that before our Lord comes from heaven WITH His saints that He must come first FOR His saints.

This is the event referred to in Scripture as the "blessed hope" when Christ comes for His own and we are caught up to meet Him in the air. Doesn't it make sense that before our Lord should come with His saints at Armageddon that He should come for His saints at the Rapture?

Indeed, we believe the time is drawing nigh when Christ must come for His own. The stage is being set. The nations are united against Israel. Christ is soon to appear.

Surely these are days to be ready for whatever happens, and to get ready for this most important date when the bridegroom is seen coming for the bride. For that is the picture in Scripture as to what it will be like. It is the glorious marriage to which all are invited who are in love with Him.

Are you in love with Jesus? Have you found pardon and forgiveness by trusting His shed blood as a covering for your sins? And, are you now looking forward to His soon Return?

For remember He hath said: "Beye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."