

Signs of the Times

TEXT: Matthew 16:1-3; 24:3-28,32-34; II Timothy 3:1-5

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Luke 12:40; 17:22-30

KEY VERSE: But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end.

— Daniel 12:4

Jesus endeavored to have those about Him “discern the signs of the times.” He explained to them that by looking at the changes in the sky they could forecast what the next day’s weather might be. We have the promise of the Lord’s return, but we cannot name the exact date this event may occur. Its nearness may be known by the happenings (signs) of our time.

1. In Matthew 16:1-3, the people asked for a sign from Heaven, tempting Christ. However, He directed their attention to the signs of the times. What signs of the times mentioned in our text should we be watching for today?

2. In Matthew 24:3, Jesus’ disciples asked Him three questions. In answering them He said, “Take heed that no man deceive you.” Look up the following Scriptures and write down ways one might be deceived:

Matthew 24:5

Luke 21:34

Romans 16:18

Ephesians 4:14

II Thessalonians 2:10,11

Titus 1:10

II John 7

3. In Matthew 24:6,7, wars, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes are mentioned as signs of Jesus' coming. Have any of these things happened before? What then is different about their happening in our day?

4. Verse 11 brings out the fact that in the last days false prophets shall arise and many shall be deceived by them. How is this happening today?

5. Verse 12 implies that there is a danger even for those who love God. What is that danger? What are some ways Christians can strengthen their defenses against Satan in order to guard against this danger?

6. Read verse 14, then write your reasons why you feel this is a positive indicator of the return of Christ.

7. Jesus often spoke in parables. In verses 32 and 33 of our text, He speaks of the blossoming of the fig tree and concludes with the statement, "It is near, even at the doors." What did He mean by this statement? Refer to Matthew 24:3.

8. In the text in II Timothy, we read that the last days will be marked by perilous or dangerous times. How do the signs given in this text differ from the ones given in Matthew?