

Signs that Christ's return is near

The hope of the true believer centres around the return of Jesus Christ to set up the Kingdom of God here on earth. Jesus did not tell us exactly when this will be. One of the reasons for this is that he himself did not know.

“But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.” Mark 13:32

But Jesus has given us clues or “signs”, as the Bible calls them, so that we are able to identify the time period in which this wonderful event will take place. There are many of these “signs”. Shortly before his crucifixion, Jesus gave a prophecy concerning the future of the city of Jerusalem, its temple and the Jewish race, from then on up until the time of his second coming. Concerning the magnificence of the temple and the great stones with which it was built, Jesus said in Luke 21:6: *“the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down”*.

Jesus’ disciples then asked him *“but when shall these things be? and what signs will there be when these things shall come to pass?”* Luke 21:7.

The answer Jesus gave warned of the terrible distress that would come upon the Jewish race.

“For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles” Luke 21:23,24.

Jesus’ predictions came to pass with great accuracy. In AD70, Jerusalem with its temple was destroyed by the Romans and the Jews were expelled from their land and were scattered among the nations of the earth for almost two thousand years. The city of Jerusalem has been *“trodden down of the Gentiles”* for all of that time.

But in his prophecy, Jesus added these words which are very significant.

“...until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” Luke 21:24.

During the 20th century an amazing re-gathering of the Jews has taken place. In spite of efforts of men such as Stalin and Hitler who tried to exterminate them, the Jews are now a prosperous nation with their own State which was proclaimed in 1948. Then, in 1967, they gained possession of Jerusalem from the Arabs in the six-day war.

These events are vital “signs” and make it possible for us to know that we are living in the time period of Christ’s return.

In his prophecy, Jesus went on to give more “signs” which have particular relevance to our times.

“And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars” Luke 21:25.

These are Biblical symbols for the political and religious systems of the world which are given in detail in many places in the Bible.

Jesus also said there shall be: *“distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth”* Luke 21:26.

Global climate change, the threat of nuclear war, famine, disease of epidemic proportions, financial ruin, are among the fears troubling our world today. From “signs” such as these, Jesus may return at any time!

He then told a parable, a story with a message. *“Behold the fig tree, and all the trees: When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand”*. Luke 21:29-31. The nation of Israel is referred to in the Bible as a fig tree and here Jesus is continuing this thought – the Jewish population once cruelly cut down, has been regrowing.

Jesus urges us to be ready!