

How to Respond to the End Times

- *The Bible has many unique and wonderful characteristics, but one of the most fascinating is its prophetic nature.*
- *Skeptics claim some of the prophetic books in the Bible such as Isaiah and Daniel were actually written hundreds of years after the books themselves state. The skeptics use the science of archeology to justify their conclusions.*
- *The modern science of archeology has verified that the many detailed predictions made in Isaiah and Daniel, as well the other prophetic books of the Bible, accurately reflect what took place even though the prophecies were recorded hundreds of years before the events.*
- *Because skeptics do not believe that the Bible is truly the Word of God, they conclude that the only way these prophetic predictions could possibly be accurate would be if they were written after the events.*
- *One of the most amazing aspects of the prophecies found in the Bible is that so many prophecies have been fulfilled—right before our eyes.*
- *The most evident and visible prophecies are the ones concerning the modern State of Israel.*
- *The Old Testament makes many clear and accurate prophetic statements that God in the end times would re-gather the Jewish people back into the land of Israel and that Israel would be reborn as a nation in their own homeland.*

Amos 9:14–15 (NKJV)

¹⁴I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; They shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; They shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them.

¹⁵I will plant them in their land, And no longer shall they be pulled up From the land I have given them,” Says the LORD your God.

- *The prophet Amos prophesied around 750 BC, “I will bring back the captives of My people Israel” and “I will plant them in their land, And no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them.”*
- *This prophecy was fulfilled in 1948.*

Ezekiel 34:13 (NKJV)

¹³And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country.

- *Around 600 BC, Ezekiel made a similar prophecy regarding the re-gathering of the Jewish people, “And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land.”*

Jeremiah 31:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰“Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, And declare it in the isles afar off, and say, ‘He who scattered Israel will gather him, And keep him as a shepherd does his flock.’

- *Around 600 BC, Jeremiah also reiterated God’s promise, “He who scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd does his flock.”*

Deuteronomy 30:3–5 (NKJV)

³that the LORD your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you.

⁴If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you.

⁵Then the LORD your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers.

- *Moses prophesied regarding Israel around 1400 BC, “that the LORD your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you” and “If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you.”*

Isaiah 66:7–8 (NKJV)

⁷“Before she was in labor, she gave birth; Before her pain came, She delivered a male child.

⁸Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, She gave birth to her children.

- *The prophet Isaiah prophesied around 700 BC, “Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once?” We witnessed the fulfillment of this prophecy on one day, namely on May 14, 1948 when Israel became a nation.*

- *Except for the Jews, every ancient ethnic group dispossessed of their land and exiled, resulted in that ethnic group becoming assimilated and losing their national and ethnic identity.*
- *The Jews were removed from their lands and scattered to the literal four corners of the earth where they suffered fierce and prolonged persecution, often to the point of near total genocide. These dispersions did not just last for months, years, or decades, but for millennia.*
- *In the history of mankind, Israel is the first and only nation, which, having been scattered and dispossessed of their land, eventually returned to their land and whose national identity was restored.*
- *Equally remarkable is the fact that it is the first time in the history of mankind that a language that had ceased to be spoken was reborn and is now spoken as the mother tongue of over five million people.*

Jeremiah 31:35–37 (NKJV)

³⁵Thus says the LORD, Who gives the sun for a light by day, The ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, Who disturbs the sea, And its waves roar (The LORD of hosts is His name):

³⁶“If those ordinances depart From before Me, says the LORD, Then the seed of Israel shall also cease From being a nation before Me forever.”

³⁷Thus says the LORD: “If heaven above can be measured, And the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel For all that they have done, says the LORD.

- *God’s faithfulness to Israel transcends their rebellion and failures. God proclaims His faithfulness to them by saying that only if the sun, moon and stars ceased to exist “Then the seed of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before Me forever.”*
- *How comforting for us as Believers who have put our faith in Christ, knowing that in the midst of our failures or struggles that God is faithful and that He promises us, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” (Hebrews 13:5)*

Zechariah 12:2–3 (NKJV)

²Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem.

³And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.

- *The Bible also makes some very striking prophetic statements about Jerusalem saying that it will be “a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples” and “a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will*

surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.”

- *This prophecy could only be fulfilled after Jerusalem was returned to Jewish hands in 1967, after the Six Day War.*
- *This prophecy regarding Jerusalem was written by Zechariah around 500 BC, but for most of the last 2000 years Jerusalem has been a city of little significant and interest except for a few centuries during the times of the crusades. In the last 2000 years, Jerusalem was either inhabited by nomads or contained a small local population of Arabs. Even the famous walls surrounding the city were only built by the Turks in the last 400 years.*
- *Who would have imagined that the eyes of the world would be focused on Jerusalem as it has become the center of enormous conflict? The more the world tries to resolve the question of Jerusalem, the more the tensions and conflict increase. Truly Jerusalem has become a cup of intoxication and a burdensome stone that is crushing all the nations that come against **her**.*

Matthew 24:32–33 (NKJV)

³²“Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.

³³So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!

- *The fig tree is a prophetic picture of Israel and the rebirth of the modern state of Israel is “the putting forth of the branches of the fig tree” so that we know we are living in the end times and “all these things are near even at the doors!”*

Ephesians 2:10 (ISV)

¹⁰For we are his masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared long ago to be our way of life.

- *Israel is God’s timepiece.*
- *Jerusalem is God’s centerpiece.*
- *The Church is God’s masterpiece.*
- *The Bible not only prophesies regarding what has happened in the ancient past, and what is taking place in Israel now, but it also foretells events that are about to take place, not only with Israel, but in the world and how they relate to the Church.*

2 Timothy 3:1 (NKJV)

¹But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:

- *The Greek word translated as “last” is ἔσχατος eschatos from which we derive our word eschatology, the study of the end times.*
- *The Bible clearly tells us that the last days will be perilous, violent, and dangerous and that hard times will come upon the earth, or as it could be translated, “in the last days, people will suffer very much.”*
- *As one studies the Bible and what it teaches about the end times we see what appears to be a paradox.*
- *On one hand the Bible teaches that God is sovereign and He foresees all that will take place and ultimately His righteousness will prevail. Job phrased it this way: “I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You.” (Job 42:2).*
- *However, on the other hand, it appears that in the end times evil will have the upper hand. “But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.” (2 Timothy 3:13.)*
- *We are going to explore the questions, “How can we understand this apparent paradox that the Bible paints prophetically?” and “How are we to respond to the end times?”*

Matthew 24:3–14 (NKJV)

³Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

- *Jesus’ teaching about the end of the age and His return was initiated by the disciples asking Him about these times.*
- *Often, Christians fail to receive revelation and insights from God’s Word because they are looking for “the fast food menu,” when in fact it is more like the slow steady process of mining the Word through study and prayer, “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.” (Matthew 7:7).*

Daniel 10:12 (NKJV)

¹²Then he said to me, “Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.

- *From the moment we begin to seek God, He begins to respond to us and answer us, “for from the first day that you set your heart to understand” “your words were heard.”*

⁴And Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed that no one deceives you.

⁵For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.

- *The first thing that Jesus warned about the end times is, “Take heed that no one deceives you.”*
- *Therefore deception, false doctrine, and false Christs will all be prevalent in the end times.*

2 Timothy 4:3 (NKJV)

³For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;

- *Even among some evangelical churches, we are witnessing the erosion of the foundation truths of the Bible such as the preeminence of Christ as well as false doctrine regarding the sanctity of marriage, sexual purity, holiness, and consecration.*
- *The reason for this confusion and loss of sound doctrine is because people will be drawn to teachers who will cater to their own selfish and carnal desires, who tell them what they want to hear and not what they ought to hear.*
- *As Christians we must be careful not to deny the authority and truth of Scripture.*
- *Liberal churches deny the Scripture based on social sciences.*
- *Evangelical non-charismatic churches deny Scripture based on their view of history.*
- *Charismatic churches deny Scripture based on experience (supernatural or otherwise) or based on feelings.*

Matthew 24

⁶And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

⁷For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.

- *We are living in a time where wars, unrest, and natural disasters are becoming more prevalent. With the advent of technology, conflicts are no longer regional, but are global.*

- *With man-made conflicts, disasters, and natural disasters such as famines, pestilence, and earthquakes all increasing, we can easily be overwhelmed and disheartened unless Jesus words resonate deep within us, “See that you are not troubled.”*
- *Jesus continued saying, “See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.” (Matthew 24:6).*
- *The first thing we must do is guard our hearts from being overwhelmed with worry or fear because of all the instability that is taking place around us in the world. Although it may not have reached Canada yet, it is right on our doorstep.*

Psalm 46:1–3 (NKJV)

¹God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.

²Therefore we will not fear, Even though the earth be removed, And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

³Though its waters roar and be troubled, Though the mountains shake with its swelling. Selah

- *We must learn not just to run to God as our refuge and strength, but also to learn to abide in Him.*
- *He is our very present help in trouble and we must learn that truth in the very depth of our being.*
- *When the reality of God’s presence is so real to us then “we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.”*
- *The fear of the Lord is the delight of knowing and recognizing the reality of His abiding presence.*
- *When we have the fear of the Lord we will fear nothing else, but when we lack the fear God we will fear everything else.*

Matthew 24

⁸All these are the beginning of sorrows.

- *“All these are the beginning of sorrows” – This informs us that things in this world will get worse and worse.*
- *Why would God allow all these catastrophic events in the end times?*
- *Why would God allow ungodly men to rule and produce so much suffering and unrighteous conflicts?*

- *God's plans are always redemptive and righteous!*

Romans 2:4 (NKJV)

⁴Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

- *God's goodness always directs people toward the path of repentance and salvation whether it is by experiencing His mercy or experiencing the consequences of their sinful choices.*
- *God's righteous judgment is against those who plot evil and rebel against Him.*
- *God's mercy toward unbelievers is seen as He allows the wicked to reign so the people can experience and understand the ultimate outcome of sin.*
- *His righteous judgment in the end times against the wicked is seen as He allows them to seemingly prosper in their evil ways and as He allows their hearts to remain hardened.*

Psalm 73 (NKJV)

¹Truly God is good to Israel, To such as are pure in heart.

²But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped.

³For I was envious of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

⁴For there are no pangs in their death, But their strength is firm.

⁵They are not in trouble as other men, Nor are they plagued like other men.

⁶Therefore pride serves as their necklace; Violence covers them like a garment.

⁷Their eyes bulge with abundance; They have more than heart could wish.

⁸They scoff and speak wickedly concerning oppression; They speak loftily.

⁹They set their mouth against the heavens, And their tongue walks through the earth.

¹⁰Therefore his people return here, And waters of a full cup are drained by them.

¹¹And they say, "How does God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High?"

¹²Behold, these are the ungodly, Who are always at ease; They increase in riches.

¹³Surely I have cleansed my heart in vain, And washed my hands in innocence.

¹⁴For all day long I have been plagued, And chastened every morning.

¹⁵If I had said, "I will speak thus," Behold, I would have been untrue to the generation of Your children.

¹⁶When I thought how to understand this, It was too painful for me—

¹⁷Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end.

¹⁸Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction.

¹⁹Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors.

²⁰As a dream when one awakes, So, Lord, when You awake, You shall despise their image.

21 Thus my heart was grieved, And I was vexed in my mind.

22 I was so foolish and ignorant; I was like a beast before You.

23 Nevertheless I am continually with You; You hold me by my right hand.

24 You will guide me with Your counsel, And afterward receive me to glory.

25 Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You.

26 My flesh and my heart fail; But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

27 For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish; You have destroyed all those who desert You for harlotry.

28 But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, That I may declare all Your works.

- *The psalmist in Psalm 73 is perplexed by the apparent paradox of why the wicked seem to prosper, while those seeking to serve God sometimes experience hardship, “When I thought how to understand this, It was too painful for me.”*
- *The psalmist complained that this did not seem fair, until he did something very important, “Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end.”*
- *Then the psalmist understood that the apparent prosperity of the wicked was actually a judgment from God. The wicked continued to believe the lie that their wickedness would never be punished, “Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction. Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors.”*
- *Finally, the psalmist recognized the true mercy and patience that God had toward him even when he accused God of being unjust, “I was so foolish and ignorant; I was like a beast before You. Nevertheless I am continually with You; You hold me by my right hand. You will guide me with Your counsel, And afterward receive me to glory.”*

Revelation 22:10–11 (NKJV)

10 And he said to me, “Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.

11 He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still.”

- *The events of the end times will either soften people’s hearts and bring them to repentance, or cause their hearts to becoming harder in preparation for judgment.*

- *In the warning of the end times God provides us with the spiritual strategy that will protect our hearts from being overwhelmed by the evil reports that are becoming more and more prevalent around us.*

Hebrews 11:13 (NKJV)

¹³These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

- *If we hold too tightly to this life or the things of this life we will find ourselves soon shaken and troubled in our hearts and minds, as this world becomes more and more unstable. The solution is to recognize, embrace, and confess that we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

1 Thessalonians 5:3 (NKJV)

³For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

- *Those who reject the warning signs of the end times and God's call to repentance, will be lulled into the false belief that things will be getting better, when in reality judgment and destruction are just around the corner.*

Matthew 24

⁹"Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.

- *In the end times the Church will experience increased persecution and this persecution will extend globally.*
- *But what is the purpose of God allowing such persecution to come against His Church?*

Luke 21:12–15 (NKJV)

¹²But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake.

¹³But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony.

¹⁴Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer;

¹⁵for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist.

- *In the midst of this persecution we "will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake" and "it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony."*

- *This persecution is actually God’s mercy to the persecutors, so they have an opportunity to hear the Gospel, repent, and be saved. God will “give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist,” so the clear message of God’s love and redemption can be heard by all, even those who rule unrighteously.*

Matthew 24

¹⁰And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.

¹¹Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.

¹²And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

¹³But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

- *A further purpose of God allowing this persecution is to purify His Church.*
- *As believers we will experience things that will expose and bring to the light those things in our hearts that are carnal, selfish, or simply unclean with the purpose that we will confess our sins and be forgiven and cleansed. (1 John 1:9).*
- **“Many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another” – If we pick up first or second hand offenses against others, God wants to reveal them, so they can be dealt with.**
- **“People don’t usually express their feelings as jealousy, resentment or unforgiveness; instead they look for faults in the other person to justify their ugly feelings.”**
- **“Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many” – God wants us to cultivate a love for the truths found in Scripture, so we will not allow our hearts to be deceived by false prophets or false teachers.**
- **“And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold” – God does not want us become jaded or embittered because of the unrighteousness that is in this world. We are to keep our hearts tender before Him and remain filled with that first love of our salvation.**
- **“But he who endures to the end shall be saved” – God’s purpose is always redemptive and He always protects us no matter what we face. He wants to justify us, sanctify us, and free us from the power and bondage of sin.**
- *If we will fully submit to His will we can trust God totally to protect and guide us.*

Matthew 24

¹⁴And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

- *This verse puts all the previous verses in the right perspective. With all the calamities and hardships the Bible describes we may feel overwhelmed, unless we recognize the final outcome of God's purposes, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come."*
- *The ultimate outcome is that the Gospel message will not be silenced, but in fact it will be preached to everyone before the end will come.*
- *All the persecution and end time cataclysmic events will not hinder the Gospel, in fact the Gospel message will prevail to the farthest corners of the globe, "on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:18)*
- *Some Christians react to the end times and become embittered by all the unrighteousness in the world and without realizing it their love has grown cold and they react to people with hostility.*
- *Other Christians react passively and wonder, "If this is what is going to happen, then what can I really do?"*
- *However, God has a totally different approach to life that the Bible teaches and that word is "Stand!"*

Ephesians 6:13 (NKJV)

¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

- *Stand in prayer.*
- *Stand on the Word.*
- *Stand on the righteousness of Christ.*
- *Stand in faith.*
- *Stand in hope.*
- *Stand in love.*
- *Keep looking up! Jesus is coming soon!*