
THE END
OF THE
WORLD?

There's no shortage of imaginative films and wild TV shows suggesting how our world is going to end, whether by asteroids, natural disasters, deadly pandemics, nuclear warfare, rogue AI robots, or some other catastrophe. It seems that people are fascinated with the concept of the end of the world. But is this all just entertainment, or is there a chance that these things will actually happen? Will the world really come to an end? And if so, how—and when? Does the Bible have anything to say about it?

Jesus' own disciples asked Him the question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Matthew 24:3, KJV) In His reply, He said, "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only" (Matthew 24:36). He couldn't have been clearer. The world will end, and He will return, though the timing is not for us to know.

Even so, we are not left guessing about the nearness of the end. Jesus declared that we "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. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences,

and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows" (Matthew 24:6–8). Natural and manmade disasters will escalate as Christ's return approaches, but He will not come until the gospel of the kingdom is "preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come" (Matthew 24:14). Like a blaring fire alarm, daily news stories remind us of a world falling apart. More and more people are talking about the end of humanity altogether. But in His great mercy, God delays His return because He doesn't want to lose a single one of His children. Even now, the good news of salvation is racing around this planet, preparing people for His arrival.

What to Know About the End of the World

But the question remains: If we don't know the exact timing of Christ's return, then what *should* we know? Jesus addressed this critical concern nearly 2,000 years ago. At His final farewell, soon after His resurrection from the grave, His disciples watched in amazement as He ascended into the clouds and disappeared from their sight. Two heavenly messengers

stood nearby and delivered a comforting promise to these lonely followers. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

Notice that this promise is entirely consistent with Christ's earlier statements about His return. With great force He dispelled any notions of secrecy. He warned His disciples, "If anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. . . . Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it. For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be" (Matthew 24:23–27).

Far from being a secret operation, Christ's second coming will be an event seen by everyone around the globe. "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God" (1 Thessalonians 4:16). "Behold, He is

coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him" (Revelation 1:7). All eyes will be fixed on this inescapable event—no need for social media posts or TV networks to break the news. These details of Christ's return are important because 2 Thessalonians 2:9 shows that Satan will attempt to deceive the world through a false second coming. You can read more on this topic in a book called *The Great Controversy*, available for free at greatcontroversy.pub.

Being Ready for the End of the World

What does this mean for you? After all, what good are the facts if you're not ready for the occasion? To understand what it means to be ready, you must first realize that the coming of Christ is good news! You do not need to fear the end of the world if you are on His side.

In order to be prepared for the end of the world and the return of Christ, we must first understand our true condition. The Bible teaches that the root of all sin is selfishness. Most people think that they are good, but a sincere look into God's Word reveals the opposite. Even our acts of kindness can happen from selfish motives.

What we need first is Christ's forgiveness. This pardon can be received only by asking Jesus for it in prayer. Second, we need a new heart of selfless love. A new heart and spirit are given to us by seeking God in His Word (1 Peter 1:23).

Revelation 6:14–17 describes most people running in fear and being destroyed when Christ returns the second time, because they have chosen to ignore the hard truth about their sinful condition. They will be destroyed because they love comforting, unbiblical lies that tell them they will be saved in their sin. God declares, "Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? . . . I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies. Therefore turn and live!" (Ezekiel 18:23, 32) When the world ends and the wicked are destroyed, the Lord is simply giving them what they want. In Proverbs 8:36, God says that "he who sins against me wrongs his own soul; all those who hate me love death."

Christ longs for all to be with Him in His kingdom when He returns (2 Peter 3:9). In fact, the Bible teaches that when He does come back, our friends and loved ones who died in Jesus will be raised to eternal life and reunited with us. "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven.

. . . And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Thessalonians 4:16–18).

When you hear the next disaster-filled end-of-the-world prediction, don't believe it. Massive solar flares, mega-tsunamis, a global pandemic, and disasters of various types may indeed happen, but the decisive event will be Jesus' return. He will take His people to be with Him and will ultimately destroy sin and pain. We can be safe only by trusting fully in Him. Thus, we don't need to worry about what will happen to us at the end of the world. Won't you accept Christ's forgiveness and ask for a new heart today so that you can have that assurance?

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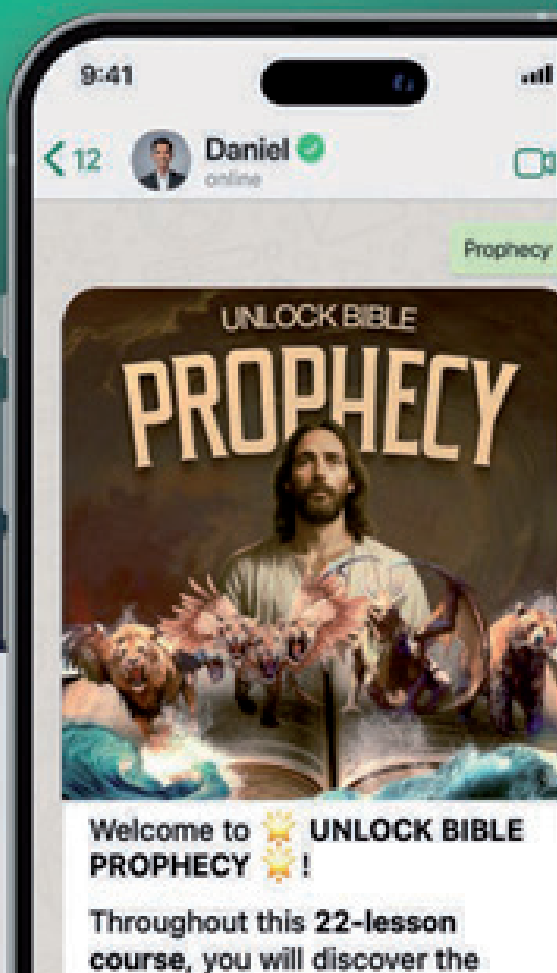

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