

James T. Jeremiah
Converging Signs
Circa 1975

Transcript

James T. Jeremiah:

The personal, visible second coming of Christ to the world is a biblical fact that cannot be ignored nor honestly given a place of little importance. This great truth is dealt with some 1,845 times in the Bible, 318 of these being in the New Testament. The return of the Lord is emphasized in 17 Old Testament books and seven out of every 10 chapters in the New Testament refer to this prophetic event.

James T. Jeremiah:

The prophets predicted that he would return the second time. Zachariah wrote, "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof." Zachariah 14:4. Christ himself announced he would return. He said, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again." John 14:3. Angelic messengers appearing at his ascension said, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you've seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:11.

James T. Jeremiah:

The apostles declared Christ would come the second time. Paul wrote, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout." 1 Thessalonians 4:16. Almost the last words of the New Testament are "Surely, I come quickly." Revelation 22:20. There are two truths about the Second Coming that at first seem to be contradictory. First, he indicates there are signs of his coming. And second, we are not to set dates for his coming.

James T. Jeremiah:

The disciples asked, "What shall be the sign of thy coming?" Matthew 24:3. He then went on to give them a list of things that would happen prior to his return. Then he rebuked the Pharisees because they could not "discern the sign of the times" Matthew 16:3. It is apparent certain things must come to pass prior to the Lord's return, but we are warned against trying to name the time when he shall come. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my father only." Matthew 24:36. Thus, we are to discern the signs of the times but never attempt to set a date for his return.

James T. Jeremiah:

In each one of the following messages dealing with the signs of the times or the converging trends of our day, let us be very sure to understand that there are no prophecies to be fulfilled before Christ can appear to take his own unto himself. He can come and may come at any time. All of the signs point not to the rapture of the church but to his literal coming to the Earth, the reign as we see portrayed in Revelation 19. At the same time, it should be said that never in all of history has there been so many signs that seemingly converge at one particular time. This would indicate that the coming of Christ is very near. And since the signs refer to his coming to reign on Earth, the rapture of the saints is nearer than we may think since it will take place at least seven years prior to the time when his feet touched the Mount of Olives.

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"Watch therefore or you know not what hour your Lord doth come but know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watched the thief would come, he would have watched and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore, be also ready for in such an hour as you think not, the son of man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord have made ruler over his household to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, "My Lord delayth his coming." The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looked at not for him and in an hour, when he is not aware of it." Matthew Chapter 24.

James T. Jeremiah:

You will probably read your newspaper today, but I suggest that you also read your Bible. You will discover that the newspaper and the Bible both testify that Jesus is coming soon. Christian, look up for your redemption draws near. The late H.G. Wells, who always wrote in glowing terms of the future of the human race, found it necessary because of existing conditions to write in his last book of yule, contrary to the philosophy of his lifetime. H.G. Wells wrote, "This world is at the end of its tether. The end of everything we call life is close at hand and cannot be evaded. There is no way out or around or through the impasse. It is the end. We may be spinning more and more swiftly into the vortex of extinction. Our world is like a convoy lost in darkness on an unknown rocky coast with quarreling pirates in the chart room and savages clamoring up the sides of the ships to plunder and do evil as the whim may take them. The door closes upon us forever." This is not a message of hope penned by Mr. Wells.

James T. Jeremiah:

Jesus predicted that there would be international unrest in the world, in the end time. "And he shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. For nations shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom," Matthew 24:6-7. No person or organization will have the power to permanently terminate the unrest predicted by Christ in this scripture. Luke refers to this same time by saying, "There will be upon the Earth distress of nations with perplexity. Men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the Earth," Luke 21:25-26. In October 1961, Newsweek magazine suggested the possibility of great destruction in one of our cities. It read, "If ground zero is downtown Manhattan, a 50 megaton bomb would dig a crater one mile wide and 300 feet deep, kill everyone, sheltered or unsheltered, within a distance of three and a half miles." That possibility alone should make men's hearts fail them for fear, especially if they do not have Christ in them, the hope of glory.

James T. Jeremiah:

In spite of the prediction of scripture and the evidence all around us, we go on whistling in the dark as though nothing tragic can ever happen to this world. This attitude has prevailed prior to each of our two world wars. We are witnessing a revival of the same outlook on life now. One of the main groups believing that no world war could be possible prior to the outbreak of World War I was the liberal theologians. They believe then, and still believe, in the inherent goodness of man. This coupled with the evolutionary idea of inevitable progress would eliminate any idea of a conflict as that presented or represented by World War I and World War II. Why did the wars come? Because of the terrible sinfulness of the human heart, because of man's inherent cruelty and ambition, pride and greed. War is the product of the sinfulness of man. During the last half century, the intensity of wars was increased. According to the 1974 World Almanac, there were 26,441 more battle deaths in World War Two than in all the wars proceeding in American history.

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I have lived a few more years than a half a century, and I cannot remember any time in my life when this world has been without some warfare or international struggle. It has been estimated by Geoffrey Kemp of the Arms Controlled Project of MIT that about one quarter of the sovereign states on planet Earth were engaged in interstates or interstate conflict involving the use of regular armed forces as the 1970s began. The word of God indicates that in the last days, wars will increase and predicts that one great world war will come to pass finally ending all wars.

James T. Jeremiah:

The following scripture has great meaning in this light, "Proclaim me this among the Gentiles, among the nations, prepare war. Wake up the mighty men that all the men of the war draw near, let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears that the weak say I am strong. Come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. For there will I sit to judge all the nations roundabout. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision," Joel 3:9-14. The increase in international unrest and military struggle all point assuredly to the second coming of Jesus Christ. Every Christian, who because of this new nature wants peace, rejoices in the prospect of a warless world brought about by the personal appearance of the King of Kings, the Lord Jesus Christ.

James T. Jeremiah:

The story is told of a man who rushed into a suburban railroad station one morning and almost breathlessly asked the ticket agent, "When does the 8:01 train leave?" At 8:01 was the answer. Well, the man replied, "It's 7:59 by my watch, 7:57 by the town clock, and 8:04 by the station clock. Which one am I to go by?" "You can go by any clock you wish," said the agent, "But you can't go by the 8:01 train for it has already left." God's time is moving forward hour by hour, minute by minute. There are multitudes who seem to think that they can live by any schedule they choose and that, in their own time, they can turn to God. But his time is the right time. One of these days, it will be too late.

James T. Jeremiah:

The word of God indicates that there will be many catastrophes in the end times. Jesus said one of the signs preceding his return to the Earth would be "famines and pestilences and earthquakes in diverse places," Matthew 24:7. Present day events would seem to indicate that is much later than most people think. It is one thing to miss a train that will come by the next morning at the same time, and another to misread or ignore God's time clock that never runs this way again.

James T. Jeremiah:

Because of limited time, we shall discuss only one of the natural catastrophes facing our generation. Christ predicts great famine. The Philadelphia Inquirer of June 16, 1974 has this report on the prospects of famine, the UN Food and Agricultural Organization director, A.H. Boerma said, "More than ever since the Second World War, the world will be dependent on this year's production for its basic food supplies. Bearing in mind, the fact that a continuation of recent trends would mean that reserves stocks of wheat will be gradually approaching the vanishing point." We find ourselves for the second year in succession facing the threat of a worldwide food shortage.

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No one really knows the figures, but FAO officials estimate at least a 100,000 persons have starved since last summer in the west African Sahelian belt nations. Another 100,000 are estimated to have died in Ethiopia. But again, there is no way of checking for lack of reliable population records. You say this is famine in Africa but this condition will never take place in America, but listen to this. One of the paradoxes of our bountiful nation is shown in the report of the Citizen's Crusade Against Poverty. It said that 10,764,000 Americans are suffering from hunger and 20 million are inadequately fed. A team of physicians visiting Mississippi the spring of 1968 reported, "We saw homes with children who are lucky to eat one meal a day and that one inadequate so far as vitamins, minerals or proteins are concerned. We saw children fed communally, that is by neighbors who give scraps of food to children whose own parents have nothing to give."

James T. Jeremiah:

In an Associated Press article dated September 6, 1968, Dr. John D. McElroy, a biologist from John Hopkins University cited evolution, the population explosion, and precedents from nature today in predicting worldwide famines and millions of dead from starvation by 1985. He said, "Some feel that the battle to feed the world population is now lost and that it is a foregone conclusion that by 1985, we will have worldwide famines in which hundreds of millions of people will starve to death." I must admit that I see no major crash program presently existing, which would lead me to disagree with this conclusion.

James T. Jeremiah:

According to a report in the May 27, 1974 issue of U.S. News and World Report, there was enough grain available to feed the world's population for 66 days. But in mid-1974, only enough grain to feed the world 27 days. The article in the U.S. News and World Report is entitled, "In the End, Even U.S. May Not be Able to Feed the World." Bible believing Christians should not be surprised when the daily news reports are telling us of the increase of famine. These famines will come to pass as Christ predicted. Worldwide family planning, better agricultural methods, and an increase of acreage for food production will not change the trend or solve the problem.

James T. Jeremiah:

I am told that on the inside of the Capitol dome in Washington, there is inscribed the lines, "One God, one law, one element, one supreme event toward which the whole creation moves". Without question, thousands of people, including senators and congressmen, have been ignorant of it or are indifferent to what it says and means. Most politicians are concerned about making the government operate now and are indifferent to the future and supreme event toward which the whole creation moves.

James T. Jeremiah:

This reminds us of the indifference to the Second Coming of Christ as we see it among Christians today. The New Testament refers more to the Second Coming than almost any other subject. In spite of the clear teaching on what some of us believe to be the one supreme event toward which the whole creation moves, there is an unbelievable indifference to these predictions. What is even more astounding is that this indifference itself is an indication that his coming is not far away. This spiritual indifference is one of the signs of the times.

James T. Jeremiah:

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"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days, scoffers walking after their own lust and saying, "Where's the promise of his coming?" For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continuously were from the beginning of the creation," I Peter 3:3-4. These scoffers who walk after their lust are morally blind teachers or religionists whose intellectual arrogance turns them away from a possible supernatural intervention in the future. Therefore, they say the Second Coming of Christ can never happen. It hasn't happened yet, so it can't happen in the future. They are willfully ignorant.

James T. Jeremiah:

This same spirit of indifference was prevailed in the days of Noah and Lot proceeding the times of predicted judgment then. "And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage until the day that Noah entered into the Ark and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise, also it was in the days of Lot, they bought, they sold, they planned it, they build it. Of 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," Luke 17:26-30.

James T. Jeremiah:

It should be noticed here that Jesus did not refer to the days of violence in Noah's world nor the immoral society of Lot's Sodom. He mentions spiritual indifference on the part of people who were doing legitimate things with God left out of their plans. How many people and too often professing Christian people marry, eat, do business, plant their fields and build their homes without taking God into account or talking to him about it or thanking him for his provision? Paul describes us indifferent in the end time by saying, "Men shall be lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God," II Timothy 3:1-4. An unquenchable love for pleasure occupies the lives of more people and some of them professing Christians than does it a desire to love and serve God.

James T. Jeremiah:

Hollywood parties, weekend sports excursions, the major athletic contest have a higher priority rating than does God and his word. This is all because of the prevailing spiritual indifference of our time, a sign that the Lord's return is not far away. The reason why sports has a higher place on many a priority lists than that of the Savior is the formal but powerless church of our day. Paul mentioned this as a sign of the difficult times when he wrote, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." How can Jesus be more important than pleasure when he is not given the preeminence by so-called religious people? When one has not experienced the power of Christ in his life, fishing for fish will be more thrilling than fishing for men.

James T. Jeremiah:

Study of the Seven Churches of Revelation will show that the seventh and last one has a spirit of indifference to be observed in the last days. Jesus said, "I know thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot. So then because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. I'll sayest I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing. Thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked," Revelation 3:15-17. If you are indifferent to spiritual matters, then you are not only witnessing a sign, you are a sign we are living in the last days, turn to God for spiritual revival.