

# HAS THIS WORLD AN END?

To every kind of evil, whatever shape or form it takes, there is a determined end. If the will of God must be done on earth as it is in heaven, then this sin-ridden world, which is under the overlordship of satan, is not a place fit for the accomplishment of that purpose. Therefore, God has promised, according to the Scriptures, to put an end to the present imperfect order of things and to set up a new perfect system to be directed or governed by Jesus Christ, the Righteous.

The question as to whether this evil world will come to an end some day is often discussed. Various views have been expressed on the subject. There are people who strongly believe that this world has an end; so too there are those who do not share such a belief. For the reason that the subject as regards the end of the world is one that arouses curiosity, certain journalists write on it in their columns from time to time and express views calculated to ridicule the whole idea. This they do merely to create sensation either to boost the sale of their newspapers and magazines, or to show off their learning. But the pity of it is that some readers make the mistake of giving credence to such sentiments without realizing that those writers are most incompetent to offer an authoritative opinion on the matter.

That this evil world will come to an end there is no doubt. This is the will of God Almighty as clearly shown in the Holy Scriptures. Whether men dislike or disbelieve it, what God will do, He will do.

What the Bible means by the end of the world is sometimes misunderstood by some people. They think of it as the termination of the existence of the earth as a planet. This is why some find it difficult to believe that the world will end. There is no indication in the Bible that this planet, the earth, will ever cease to exist. Rather it is positively stated that it will remain for ever. Thus it is written: “*One* generation passeth away, and *another* generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever.” (Ecclesiastes 1:4) Moreover, it is written: “For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I *am* the LORD; and *there is* none else.” – Isaiah 45:18

## Evil System

Chamber's Encyclopediadescribes the word world as meaning “the whole system of created things (as contradistinguished from the creator)”. The whole system has been so badly affected or corrupted through the influence of satan the devil that the evil in it is far more than the good. It was against the background of this understanding St. Paul employed that term “this present evil world”. – Galatians 1:4

Jesus Christ described the devil as “the prince of this world”. (John 12:31; 14:30) St. Paul referred to him as “the god of this world”. (2Corinthians 4:3, 4) And John the apostle wrote: “We know that we are of God's family, while the whole godless world lies in the power of the evil one.” – 1 John 5:19 N.E.B.

And so by the term 'the end of the world' is meant the passing away or termination of the whole evil system of things over which the devil is exercising power and control. But the end will be marked by a terrible trouble and battle the kind of which has never been known in human history.

The destruction of the world by flood in the days of Noah is a good illustration that can help any honest seeker-after-truth to understand what is meant by the end of the world. When after the creation the population of the world had increased. God observed that men had become very wicked and that their thoughts and inclinations were always evil. "And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." – Genesis 6:13

The end of that world – from Adam to that time – was marked by the Deluge. All the wicked people were destroyed but God saved Noah and his family of seven. –Gen. 7: 1, 7; 8:1; 2 Peter 2: 4, 5

Some people make reference to certain texts in the Bible to show that God said after the great flood of Noah's days that He would no longer destroy the world. Their understanding is wrong. God did not say so; what He said was that He would not use flood to destroy the whole world any more. God said to Noah: "And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; And with every living creature that *is* with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This *is* the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that *is* with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant, which *is* between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh." – Genesis 9:8-15

The understanding therefore, is that flood will no longer be the sole means by which God will destroy the world but He can use other methods to bring the world of sin to an end. Noah, his wife, his three sons and the three wives of his sons comprised the eight souls that survived the Flood. "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." (Genesis 9:1) It is in fulfilment of this mandate the earth has been remarkably populated as at present. But today, the world has again been filled with violence and wickedness to such an immeasurable degree that is now giving everybody cause for great concern. However, to think that evil will continue and infinitely nor that the wicked will ever remain on the earth amounts to self delusion. It is the yearning of all men of goodwill who sigh for the abominations being committed in the world that evil should be brought to an end. King David in one of his psalms prayed: "Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just; for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins." – Psalm 7:9

God had long ago given assurance of His determination to rid the earth of evil. He said He has a controversy with the inhabitants of the earth "...because *there is* no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land." In various ways men provoke Him by bloody violence and so forth. – Hosea 4:1-3

In Isaiah 26:21, it is written: "For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain."

It is sometimes hard to distinguish between good and bad in this world. Some wicked people do appear outwardly to be righteous by putting on a false garb of humility and quiet look, and by giving alms openly to the poor in order to be praised by men. However they may cover their mischievous deeds, God knows that they are hypocrites and shall make them reap the fruit of their doings. – Isaiah 3:11

Jesus Christ, in his parable of the wheat and tares, illustrated how and why the good and the bad further pointed to the end of the world when the wicked will be destroyed. In his interpretation of the parable he said among other things: "The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." – Matthew 13:38-42

### The Age

The age in which the present evil system of things will be exterminated was termed by Daniel the prophet "the time of the end". Fast and easy means of transportation, and increase of knowledge were among the signs he foretold that would indicate the time of the end. For the fact that there is increase of knowledge as manifest in the advance in science and technology there is no doubt, therefore, that this is the age.

When Jesus Christ was asked by his disciples as to what signs would show the time of the end, otherwise known as the last days, he said among other things: "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows." –Matthew 24:3-8

It is clear to all understanding students of the Bible that Christ's prophecy as regard the signs of the end has been in the course of fulfilment since the outbreak of World War I in 1914. Who will say that this age is not the one of sorrow? Though men's efforts to win peace have more than trebled since after that global war, the woes of mankind continue to increase! Yet God's word is always true.

In corroboration of Christ's prophecy concerning the signs of the times, reference can be made to St. Paul's description of the last days as perilous times. He stated: "You must face the fact: the final age of this world is to be a time of troubles. Men will love nothing but money and self; they will be arrogant, boastful, and abusive; with no respect for parents, no gratitude, no piety, no natural affection; they will be implacable in their hatreds, scandal-mongers, intemperate and fierce, strangers to all goodness, traitors, adventurers, swollen with self-importance. They will be men who put pleasure in the place of God, men who preserve the outward form of religion, but

are a standing denial of its reality.” – 2 Timothy 3:1-5 N.E.B.

This is also the age of Christ's second presence when he is gathering the sheep of God into His Organisation for refuge so that He may deliver them from the impending destruction. Jesus himself said that as the people in the days of Noah paid no heed to his (Noah's) warning of the doom that was to come upon them, so it will be in this age with many people. They will be so engrossed in the secular affairs of life and the pleasures of sin that they cannot take warning as to associate with the Lord's people who worship Him in TRUTH.

Said Jesus Christ: “As things were in Noah's days, so will they be when the Son of Man comes. In the days before the flood they ate and drank and married, until the day that Noah went into the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away. That is how it will be when the Son of Man comes.” (Matthew 24:37-39 N.E.B.) He added: “Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But 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 17:28-30

The facts of the fulfillment of those prophecies are so glaring in our time that even some skeptics now admit them. Yet there are the die-hard ones – the scoffers – who willfully argue against the truth and do not want to take cognizance of the transitional events of the age. Concerning them St. Peter wrote “Note this first: in the last days there will come men who scoff at religion and live self-indulgent lives, and they will say: ‘Where now is the promise of his coming? Our fathers have been laid to their rest, but still everything continues exactly as it has always been since the world began.’ In taking this view they lose sight of the fact that there were heavens and earth long ago, created by God's word out of water and with water; and by water that first world was destroyed, the water of the deluge. And the present heavens and earth, again by God's word, have been kept in store for burning; they are being reserved until the day of judgment when the godless will be destroyed.” – 2 Peter 3:3-7 N.E.B.

The apostle went on to show that it is not weakness on the part of God that He had not taken vengeance on Satan and his works and removed them from the world before now but that He was patient with men so that they may have enough time to repent so as not to be destroyed with the devil. St. Peter said “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” – 2 Peter 3:9

With regard to the destruction or end of this evil world, the apostle Peter stated: “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” – 2 Peter 3:10

The burning and heat as of fire by which the world will melt and pass away as shown in the apostle's description are the vengeance of God and His wrath which will be expressed in such a terrific and irresistible manner as He had never before done. It is a battle in which the Most High,

the Lord of hosts, will exterminate all types of evil or every vestige of the devil's works from the world. It is the war that will end all wars.

### Extraordinary Conflict

The prophet Nahum prophesied concerning this extraordinary conflict in this vein:

"What do ye imagine against the LORD? he will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time." Nahum 1:9

The magnitude of the forth-coming battle of God Almighty that will mark the close of this sinful world is beyond human imagination. Human wars, no matter how destructive the weapons they use, cannot be compared to it. It is by far worse than the flood in the days of Noah. Whereas that flood had to do with the killing of earthly or fleshly creatures without touching the devils or demons who are spirit creatures, the impending destruction is for all wicked elements both visible and invisible. Of that horrible event Zephaniah prophesied thus: "The great day of the LORD *is* near, *it is* near, and hasteth greatly, *even* the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day *is* a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness... And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD'S wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land." – Zephaniah 1:14-18

The destruction of the wicked in that day of the Lord will be total. As it is written: "And the slain of the LORD shall be at that day from *one* end of the earth even unto the *other* end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground." – Jeremiah 25:33

The day, month or year in which the battle of the Lord will begin is not revealed, and so nobody can tell. But to resort to guess-work and indulge in unnecessary arithmetical calculation of time as the so-called Jehovah's Witnesses are doing is presumptuous. Despite the fact that their forecasts of dates in the past proved them false, they have now again fixed 1975 as the end of the world and the beginning of Christ's reign for a thousand years. Jesus Christ himself said: "But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." – Matthew 24:36

Although the majority of people will be slain, there is the consolation that as Noah and his family survived the Deluge, very many people – indeed uncountable – will be saved by God and will pass through the great tribulation and battle of the great day into the next world which is the "world without end." The gospel of Christ as now being preached in the world is intended to impart the knowledge of God's purpose to mankind so that no one may plead ignorance before Him in that day of decision. It was Jesus Christ himself who commanded: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." – Matthew 24:14

It has been made abundantly clear that this evil world has an end according to the Scriptures. What men are required to do is not to get excited by thoughts of the horrors of the impending disaster but to repent of their sins in obedience to the gospel in order to work out their own salvation in the fear of God. – Philippians 2:12

### Watch and Pray

The present permissive society is the devil's creation to alienate men from Jesus Christ and to lure them into the way of destruction. In the interest of the sheep of God in these last days Jesus Christ gave this warning: "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." – Luke 21:34-36

And St. Peter, in his exhortation to godliness, said: "But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." – 1 Peter 4:7