

Signs of the Second Coming

Chapter 43

Jesus Christ Will Return to the Earth

- What are some of the signs of the Second Coming?

The Savior told Joseph Smith, “I will reveal myself from heaven with power and great glory . . . and dwell in righteousness with men on earth a thousand years, and the wicked shall not stand” (D&C 29:11; see also chapters 44 and 45 in this book). Jesus has told us that certain signs and events will warn us when the time of His Second Coming is near.

For thousands of years, followers of Jesus Christ have looked forward to the Second Coming as a time of peace and joy. But before the Savior comes, the people of the earth will experience great trials and calamities. Our Heavenly Father wants us to be prepared for these troubles. He also expects us to be spiritually ready when the Savior comes in His glory. Therefore, He has given us signs, which are events that will tell us when the Savior’s Second Coming is near. Throughout the ages God has revealed these signs to His prophets. He has said that all faithful followers of Christ will know what the signs are and will be watching for them (see D&C 45:39). If we are obedient and faithful, we will study the scriptures and know of the signs.

Some of the signs foretelling the Second Coming of Jesus Christ have already been or are now being fulfilled. Others will be fulfilled in the future.

For teachers: Consider assigning each class member or family member one or two of the signs described in this chapter (in large classes, some signs may be assigned to more than one person). As part of the lesson, give them time on their own to study the information about those signs and think about evidence they have seen that the signs are being fulfilled today. Then have them share their insights with each other.



Wickedness, War, and Turmoil

Many of the signs are terrifying and dreadful. The prophets have warned that the earth will experience great turmoil, wickedness, war, and suffering. The prophet Daniel said that the time before the Second Coming would be a time of trouble such as the earth has never known (see Daniel 12:1). The Lord said, “The love of men shall wax cold, and iniquity shall abound” (D&C 45:27). “And all things shall be in commotion; and . . . fear shall come upon all people” (D&C 88:91). We can expect earthquakes, disease, famines, great storms, lightnings, and thunder (see Matthew 24:7; D&C 88:90). Hailstorms will destroy the crops of the earth (see D&C 29:16).

Jesus told His disciples that war would fill the earth: “Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars. . . . For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom” (Matthew 24:6–7). The Prophet Joseph Smith said: “Be not discouraged when we tell you of perilous times, for they must shortly come, for the sword, famine, and pestilence are approaching. There shall be great destructions upon the face of this land, for ye need not suppose that one jot or tittle of the prophecies of all the holy prophets shall fail, and there are many that remain to be fulfilled yet” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 252).

Many of these signs are being fulfilled. Wickedness is everywhere. Nations are constantly at war. Earthquakes and other calamities are occurring. Many people now suffer from devastating storms, drought, hunger, and diseases. We can be certain that these calamities will become more severe before the Lord comes.

However, not all the events preceding the Second Coming are dreadful. Many of them bring joy to the world.

The Restoration of the Gospel

The Lord said, “Light shall break forth among them that sit in darkness, and it shall be the fulness of my gospel” (D&C 45:28). Prophets of old foretold the Restoration of the gospel. The Apostle John saw that the gospel would be restored by an angel (see Revelation 14:6–7). In fulfillment of this prophecy, the angel

Moroni and other heavenly visitors brought the gospel of Jesus Christ to Joseph Smith.

The Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon

The Lord told the Nephites of another sign: the Book of Mormon would come to their descendants (see 3 Nephi 21). In Old Testament times the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel foresaw the coming of the Book of Mormon (see Isaiah 29:4–18; Ezekiel 37:16–20). These prophecies are now being fulfilled. The Book of Mormon has been brought forth and is being taken to all the world.

The Gospel Preached to All the World

Another sign of the last days is that the “gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations” (Matthew 24:14; see also Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:31). All people will hear the fulness of the gospel in their own language (see D&C 90:11). Ever since the Restoration of the Church, missionaries have preached the gospel. The missionary effort has increased until now tens of thousands of missionaries preach in many countries of the world in many languages. Before the Second Coming and during the Millennium, the Lord will provide ways to bring the truth to all nations.

The Coming of Elijah

The prophet Malachi prophesied that before the Savior’s Second Coming, the prophet Elijah would be sent to the earth. Elijah would restore the sealing powers so families could be sealed together. He would also inspire people to be concerned about their ancestors and descendants. (See Malachi 4:5–6; D&C 2.) The prophet Elijah came to Joseph Smith in April 1836. Since that time, interest in genealogy and family history has grown. We are also able to perform sealing ordinances in the temples for the living and the dead.

Lehi’s Descendants Will Become a Great People

The Lord said that when His coming was near, the Lamanites would become a righteous and respected people. He said, “Before the great day of the Lord shall come, . . . the Lamanites shall blossom

as the rose” (D&C 49:24). Great numbers of Lehi’s descendants are now receiving the blessings of the gospel.

Building of the New Jerusalem

Near the time of the coming of Jesus Christ, the faithful Saints will build a righteous city, a city of God, called the New Jerusalem. Jesus Christ Himself will rule there. (See 3 Nephi 21:23–25; Moses 7:62–64; Articles of Faith 1:10.) The Lord said the city will be built in the state of Missouri in the United States (see D&C 84:2–3).

These are only a few of the signs that the Lord has given us. The scriptures describe many more.

- What evidence do you see that the signs are being fulfilled?

Knowing the Signs of the Times Can Help Us

- How can we remain calm and at peace even when some of the signs are terrifying and dreadful?

Speaking of His Second Coming, the Lord said, “The hour and the day no man knoweth, neither the angels in heaven” (D&C 49:7). He taught this with the parable of the fig tree. He said that when we see a fig tree putting forth leaves, we can tell that summer will soon come. Likewise, when we see the signs described in the scriptures, we can know that His coming is near. (See Matthew 24:32–33.)

The Lord gives these signs to help us. We can put our lives in order and prepare ourselves and our families for those things yet to come.

We have been warned of calamities and told to prepare for them, but we can also look forward to the coming of the Savior and be glad. The Lord said, “Be not troubled, for, when all these things [the signs] shall come to pass, ye may know that the promises which have been made unto you shall be fulfilled” (D&C 45:35). He said those who are righteous when He comes will not be destroyed “but shall abide the day. And the earth shall be given unto them for an inheritance; . . . and their children shall grow up without sin. . . . For the Lord shall be in their midst, and his glory shall be upon them, and he will be their king and their lawgiver” (D&C 45:57–59).

Additional Scriptures

- 1 Corinthians 15:22–28 (the end cometh; death is done away)
- Matthew 16:1–4 (discern signs of the times)
- Matthew 24; D&C 29:14–23; 45:17–57; 88:87–94; Joseph Smith—Matthew 1 (signs of the Second Coming)
- 1 Thessalonians 5:1–6 (watch for the signs and prepare)
- D&C 38:30 (prepare so we might not fear)
- D&C 68:11 (we can know the signs)