

Credibility of prophecies about the End Times

Our End Time journey

I am well aware that some people jump to naïve conclusions about current fulfilment of End Time prophecies and other people avoid the subject altogether. I think we need to avoid both of those extremes. This brief paper is an attempt to look at the subject carefully noting the relevance of modern developments and trends. I sense that much of what is going on in the world today is very significant and we need to note it and pray about it.

EARLY REPEATING SIGNS POINTING TOWARDS THE DESTINATION

These are like repeating signposts on a motorway reminding us of a distant journey's end. Jesus calls them "the beginning of birth-pains" (Matt 24:8) and adds "but the end is still to come" (Matt 24:6). So whereas Jesus did not say they are signs of his imminent return, it is significant that most of them are getting increasingly worse. This could be seen as an indication that we are at a late stage before his return. Certainly Jesus intended that we should take notice of them (which many Christians don't) as reminders of his coming and we ought therefore to take notice of these signs getting worse.

False christ (Mt 24:4-5)	Whilst respecting Muslims as people we must remember that they believe in Isa, a false Christ who is not divine, didn't die and so didn't rise again but will return to earth in power. Islam is growing in influence throughout the world. It is growing twice as fast as the overall population and faster than any other religion.
Wars and rumours of wars (Mt 24:7)	"The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists" have moved the time on their "Doomsday Clock" nearer to midnight than ever before saying humanity is nearer to extinction than ever. Ban Ki-moon, former UN general secretary, said "At the start of the second decade of the 21st century, our world faces a security crisis greater even than the heights of the Cold War"
Famine (Mt 24:7)	The UN World Food Program said the southern African 2020 hunger crisis "is on a scale we've not seen before and the evidence shows it's going to get worse."
Earthquakes (Mt 24:7)	Earthquakes do, of course, continue to happen.
Pestilences (Lk 21:11)	What the WHO called the "unprecedented outbreak" of Coronavirus shows the danger of worldwide pandemics in our world which has become a global village due to air travel.
"Fearful event and great signs from heaven" (Lk 21:11)	NASA constantly watches for near earth asteroids (c 1500 pa) and says "it's only a matter of time before a large asteroid strikes Earth, causing millions of deaths if not the end of the world itself."
Persecution (Mt 24:9)	Persecution of Christians is worse than it has ever been.
Turning away from the faith (Mt 24:10, 12)	Many in the western world have turned away from Christianity.
False prophets (Mt 24:11)	Many in the church are seriously turning away from the teaching of Scripture, particularly over sexuality, and proclaiming error. We also live in the era of powerful social media and fake news.
Worldwide evangelism (Mt 24:14)	In our global village of mass electronic communication the gospel can easily go round the world. It has gone to every nation but not yet to every people group.

LATER SIGNS WHEN WE ARE NEARING THE DESTINATION

Israel (Lk 21:24)	The re-establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 after nearly 1900 years is a remarkable fulfilment of prophecy. Also it is not difficult to imagine fulfilment of prophecies about an international attack on Israel.
Desolating abomination (Mt 24:15-20)	Currently, in our global village, we see the resurgence of populism around dominant, wilful, charismatic figures. Other trends such as global electronic communication and widespread surveillance could lead to the rise of a global dictator and the fulfilment of antichrist prophecies.
Great distress (Mt 24:21-22)	With scientists warning us about the effects of global warming and overpopulation – widespread famine, huge numbers of refugees, great social and political strife and war - it is not difficult to imagine fulfilment of prophecies about severe distress.
False christ (Mt 24:23-28)	(see above under "Desolating abomination")