

Signs of the Times

Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away; for, behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land; the fig tree puts forth and ripens her green figs and the vines are in blossom and give forth their fragrance; **The time of the singing has come!** (S.S 2:10-13)

When the disciples asked YAHSHUA what would be the signs of His coming, He gave them these signs: wars and rumors of wars, famine, earthquakes, apostasy, persecutions, love grown cold, due to “the multiplied lawlessness and iniquity”. He said, Now learn a lesson from the fig tree; as soon as its branch becomes tender and it puts forth its leaves, you recognize and know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things happening, you may recognize and know that He is near, at the door (Mark 13:28-29). The signs of the end have been with us for a while; it is getting intense with every year, calling our attention to be prepared and vigilant, not to miss the calling. The fig tree here does not represent the nation of Israel, but an example indicating a sign, as we read in the Songs of Solomon showing the pass of the winter into spring time. He also used the example of a man going on a journey; when he puts his servants in charge, each with his particular task, and he gives orders to the doorkeeper to be constantly alert and on the watch (Mark 13:34).

Ignoring or disbelieving the signs of the end that YAHSHUA gave, will keep one in darkness and unprepared for his second event. Ignorance is blindness; unbelief is rebellion. Spiritual blindness brings condemnation. YAHSHUA loved us so much, wanting us to be found prepared, He gave us all the warnings to be aware of and how to be prepared. The sign of apostasy will be so bad that YAHSHUA asked, Will the Son of Man find faith when He comes? It is a sign no one can miss, even if he tried. When YAHSHUA went to heaven, He left the disciples with responsibilities to fulfill until He comes back. This is applied to us also through the gifts He gave each of us to invest into His kingdom. In the parables YAHSHUA told in Matthew twenty-five through twenty-six, He gave a pattern how we are to be prepared for His coming. In the parable of the ten virgins, although many think this is not related to the church, I do and see in this parable the pattern of individual preparedness by being filled with the oil – the Holy Spirit. Paul gave us guidelines how to live a life purposely as we wait for YAHSHUA to come for us: Look carefully then how you walk! Live purposefully and worthily and accurately, not as the unwise and witless, but as wise, making the very most of the time (girding the loins) because the days are evil; therefore do not be vague and thoughtless and foolish, but understanding and firmly grasping what the will of the Lord is, and do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; **but ever be filled and stimulated with the will of the [Holy] Spirit**, speak out to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, offering praise with voices and making melody with all your heart to the Lord, at all times and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord YAHSHUA the Messiah to God the Father, be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ, wives be subject to your own husbands as [a service] to the Lord ... husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word **that He might present the church to Himself in glorious splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such things** (Ephesians 5:15-27).

Being filled with the Holy Spirit (oil) and not with wine, which represents the pleasures of the world, is the way to be prepared for our Lord and Savior. Paul warned us to live purposefully, worthily and accurately, not as unwise, but as wise, like the five virgins of the parable the Lord YAHSHUA told the disciples. Spiritual foolishness is a sign of the emptiness of oil and darkness in our spiritual life. Where there is no oil, there is darkness in knowledge and understanding of YAHWEH and His commands and lack of the presence of His Holy Spirit.

In the parable of Matthew twenty-five, verses one through thirty, YAHSHUA emphasizes the importance of faithfulness, obedience in service. He has gone on a long journey and has entrusted us with his property- the Gospel. To those who will be faithful with the investments entrusted to them, He will say, Well done, you upright servant! You have been faithful and trustworthy over a little; I will put you in charge of much. Enter into and share the joy which your master enjoys; but to the unfaithful servant He will say, Throw the good-for-nothing servant into the outer darkness; there will be weeping and grinding of teeth. Understanding the signs of time and its evil days, should be a reason to work harder to fulfill all that will bring forth the kingdom of God.

Consider these points from "Scriptural Support for Christ's Return" by Chuck Swindoll.

- These facts from biblical prophecy about Christ's return may surprise you:
One out of every 30 verses in the Bible mentions the subject of Christ's return or the end of time.
- Of the 216 chapters in the New Testament, there are well over 300 references to the return of Christ.
- 23 of the 27 New Testament books mention Christ's return.
- In the Old Testament, such well-known and reliable men of God as Job, Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, as well as most of the Minor Prophets mention Christ's return in their writings.
- Christ often spoke specifically about His own return to earth.
- Throughout the centuries, Christ's disciples and followers have adamantly believed, written, and taught that Christ would someday return to earth.

The Bible teaches it. The Lord Jesus stood upon its truths. The apostles declared it and wrote about it. The creeds include it and affirm it.

Quite obviously, His return has not been considered an insignificant issue through the centuries. But the strange thing is that many Christians in this generation either ignore it or are somehow confused by it.

Taken from "Scriptural Support for Christ's Return" (used by permission).

The signs of the times point to us YAHSHUA'S fulfillment of His promise to us of many years ago. It is not a time for fear and panic, but a time for rejoicing and be in expectation for the consummation of our salvation. It speaks to us of the veracity of the Word of God, Who through the mouth and hands of His servants revealed the future things that will be happening.

It is a marvelous thing to ponder about all that is happening in the world, bringing the end of times closer and closer to us, as we walk in fulfillment of the prophecies of thousands of years ago. As Peter said, Let's be eager to be found by Him without spot or blemish and at peace, growing in grace and in knowledge of our Lord YAHSHUA (II Peter 3); and as Jude said, build yourselves up your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit; guard and keep yourselves in the love of God; expect and patiently wait for the mercy of our Lord YAHSHUA the Messiah; and save others, snatching [them] out of [the] fire; on others take pity with fear, loathing even the garment spotted by the flesh and polluted by their sensuality (Jude 20-23).

THINK ABOUT IT!