

All Scripture quotations are from the Authorized King James Version of the Bible unless otherwise indicated.

March 21, 2010

**SIGNS
of The Times
Mini-Book
Part 1**

Printed for:

HANDS FOR JESUS
P.O. BOX 18655
MILWAUKEE, WI 53218-0655

For more information, visit our Web sites at:

www.handsforjesus.cc
www.handsforjesus.org

2010 by Merle E. Koepke
All Rights Reserved

Introduction

In Matthew 24:3, Mark 13:4, and Luke 21:7 it tells us that Jesus' disciples said to Jesus, **“Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?”** (Matt. 24:3). How close are we today, to the coming of the LORD?

Let us look at what happened over the years, and discern what the future holds? In Genesis, Chapter two, the LORD God created mankind, and placed them in the garden of Eden. There was no sin or death in the world, and man was free of the works of the devil. Adam had communion with the LORD God, and heard His voice. God and man had fellowship one with another before sin entered into the world.

In Genesis, Chapter three, sin and death entered into the whole human race. Man began to go his own way, not listening to the LORD God. The LORD still loved man and promised to save him from all the works of the devil. In Genesis 3:15 the LORD God said, **“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”** The LORD God showed forth His love, by promising to take away the sin of the world. God promised to restore perfect fellowship through His Son, Jesus Christ. Yet, man continued to go his own way, and did not turn to God, who loved him.

In Genesis 4:26 it tells us, **“And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the LORD.”** This was about 235 years after Adam and Eve gave place for the devil and sin entered into the human race. Then about 452 years later, Enoch began to walk with the LORD. Yet, there is no mention of others walking with God at that time. Then we are told that about 862 years later, Noah was told that unless man returned to following the Holy Spirit, a flood would come and destroy all flesh (Gen.6:3-5).

When Noah was 600 years old, the flood came and all flesh was destroyed (except for those chosen by the LORD to be saved). Among mankind, only Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives were saved. There were also a certain number of each of the living creatures that were saved in the Ark with Noah and his family.

The time from Adam and Eve until the flood was about 1650 years. Why did the flood come? Because those who were at one time led by the Holy Spirit were no longer listening to God. In Genesis 6:3 it says, **“And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.”** In those days, man was **“flesh.”** Man was created **“flesh”** in the beginning (Gen. 2:7). Man was not **“spirit,”** in the beginning as many are teaching today.

Just a side note; for those who are interested in knowing the end from the beginning. When Jesus returns, men will be more interested in themselves than they are in God. Men will take their eyes off of what God wants to do and go about doing what they want to do. Men will love the world and the things of this world more than they love God.

After the flood, God started over with Noah and his family. Within a short time Ham (one of Noah's three sons), had four son's (Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan). Cush, had Nimrod. Nimrod, was accredited for the beginning of Babal (Gen. 10:9,10). It was in Babel where they built a tower to reach into heaven. There the LORD confounded the language of man to disperse them throughout the world.

About 292 years after the flood, Abraham (Abram) was born in Ur of the Chaldees (near

where the Tigris and Euphrates rivers meet to flow into the Persian Gulf). While in Ur of the Chaldees, the LORD spoke to Abraham (Abram), to leave his family and go to a place where He would show him. When Abraham was 75 years old, he left his family in Haran, taking his wife Sarah (Sarai) and Lot, his nephew with him and came into Canaan (Gen. 12:1-5).

Abraham obeyed the LORD and did what the LORD had told him. (Even though Abraham did things the LORD did not tell him to do, he did obey the LORD in the things the LORD did tell him to do). Abraham was called **“the friend of God”** (James 2:23). The LORD made a covenant with Abraham, which is still (for the main part) the same covenant we have today (called The New Covenant).

From Abraham to Moses, the descendants of Abraham went into bondage to Pharaoh of Egypt. After about four-hundred years, the LORD called Moses to lead His people out of bondage in Egypt. After many great signs and wonders by the LORD, the children of Israel still refused to obey the LORD and go in and take the land of Canaan, which the LORD had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to give to the descendants of Jacob (Israel).

Because of their disobedience to obey the LORD, those over twenty years old died in the wilderness. During those years in the wilderness the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, called the Law of Moses. After forty years in the wilderness, the LORD chose Joshua to lead the children of Israel into the promised land.

After the death of Joshua, the children of Israel disobeyed the LORD many times, and He sent them judges to deliver them. After the judges, the LORD chose Samuel (a prophet), to guide them. Yet, the people were not satisfied with a prophet, and they demanded a king be over them (1 Sam. 8). The LORD gave them a king (King Saul). King Saul disobeyed the LORD and the LORD gave them King David. After David the LORD gave them Solomon as king. Solomon disobeyed the LORD and the tribes of Israel were divided into two kingdoms, called Israel and Judah.

Then the ten tribes of Israel disobeyed the LORD and they fell into captivity at the time of King Hezekiah of Judah. Following King Hezekiah, the tribes of Judah disobeyed the LORD and they fell into captivity to the Babylonians at the time of King Jechonias. Following the Babylonian captivity, they were captive to the Persians, then the Greeks, then the Romans. When Jesus came (born of a woman as the Son of Man), the descendants of Abraham were under the captivity of the Romans.

From the time of Adam and Eve until Jesus, we see many of those chosen by the LORD, disobeying the LORD (going their own way). They no longer listened to the Holy Spirit, neither would they obey His voice.

During all the years from Moses until John the Baptist, the Scriptures were written. Everything the Children of Israel needed to know concerning the coming of the LORD was written in the Scriptures. Had the Chief Priests, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Scribes searched the Scriptures closely, they would have known who John the Baptist was. Had they searched the Scriptures closely, they would have known who Jesus was. Had the Church, searched the Scriptures closely, they would have known who the Holy Spirit is.

Everything concerning the Second coming of the LORD was already written in the Old Testament. Why didn't they know the time of the coming of the LORD?

Signs of The Times

Beginning with John the Baptist, John came preaching the gospel, saying “**...Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand**” (Matt. 3:3). At that time, the Jews should have known who John the Baptist was. But, many of them would not believe what John was saying. Mostly, the problem was among the Chief Priests, the Scribes, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees. Some of the common people believed. But not very many of those who were called by God to teach and lead the people believed John the Baptist.

When John had finished what He came to do, his time was up and he died. When John left this world, Jesus was already here doing what the Scriptures said He would do. Jesus came, “**...preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God...saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel**” (Mark 1:14,15).

For about three and one-half years Jesus was preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. Jesus was also showing the Jews in signs and wonders, what the kingdom of God was. In Acts 10:38 it says, “**How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.**” This was a demonstration of the Kingdom of God that was to come.

When Jesus died on the Cross of Calvary, He took all our sins, iniquities, infirmities, sicknesses, and diseases upon Himself, and defeated the Devil for us. Then Jesus arose again from the dead, and showed Himself to many who believed upon Him.

After forty days, Jesus went to be with the Father. Then the Father sent the Holy Spirit to continue what Jesus started to do, while He was still here in His physical body of flesh and bones.

In short, first John the Baptist came to do what God called him to do. Then John left and Jesus began to do what God called Him to do. Then when Jesus finished doing what He came to do, He left and sent the Holy Spirit to do what God sent Him to do. Now the Holy Spirit is here on earth, trying to do what God sent Him to do. Why is it that so many (born again Christians) are not listening to the Holy Spirit?

Simply stated, the Scripture is being fulfilled according to all that was written. It tells us in 2 Thessalonians 2:2,3, “**That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand...Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.**” The problem with these verses of Scripture is that men “who say they are called into the ministry” are not teaching what these verses are saying. They are teaching their version of what it says, not listening to the Holy Spirit, Who could teach them the truth concerning what it says in 2 Thessalonians 2:2,3. Those who teach another gospel are not teaching what the Holy Spirit inspired to be taught.

In 1 Timothy 4:1, it says, “**Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.**” The problem with this verse of Scripture is that many who say they are called into the ministry do not know the difference between the true doctrines of Christ and the doctrines of devils. The doctrines being taught in some of the Churches today are not the doctrines that are taught in the Scriptures. They sound good to the ears of many, but they are not the true gospel that the Holy Spirit inspired.

In 2 Timothy 3:1-4, it says, “**This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall**

come...**For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy...Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good...Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.**” Some, who say they are called of God into the ministry are doing what it says in 2 Timothy 3:1-4. Anyone who cannot see what is happening, their eyes must be blinded by the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4). If they had eyes to see, and ears to hear, they would know what is happening. They would know that we are in the last days before the second coming of the LORD.

The New Testament is full of warnings concerning things that lead to the Second coming of the LORD. All the signs are clearly seen. The day is approaching when the LORD will return. Therefore, Jesus asked this question in Luke 18:8, **“Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?”**

Like the days of Noah

In the days of Noah, those who were at one time led by the Holy Spirit were no longer listening to the Holy Spirit. It says in Genesis 6:3, **“And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.”** In Genesis 6:3, the word **“strive”** is the Hebrew word **“down,”** meaning, **“judge, contend, plead.”** The Holy Spirit was doing all He could to help those before the flood, but they would not listen, or follow His leading. They were following those who were **“...men of renown”** (Gen. 6:4). The word **“renown”** in Genesis 6:4, by implication, means **“honor, authority, character.”** People had more respect for those who loved the world and the things of this world than they had for those who truly loved the LORD. The world and the things of this world were more important than the LORD.

In Genesis 6:4 it says, **“There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.”** Where it says, **“There were giants in the earth,”** this does not have anything to do with demon spirits having sex with women. That is a false teaching. The word **“giants.”** means, **“bullies and tyrants,”** like there are today.

The Scriptures tell us, **“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God”** (Rom. 8:14). The **“sons of God,”** at that time were those who were led by the Spirit of God. Therefore, those who were led by the Spirit of God, were no longer listening to the Spirit of God. They were doing their own will of the flesh, and not walking after the Spirit of God.

In the New Covenant, there are two things that Christians are told to do. They are told to **“walk by faith, and not by sight”** (2 Cor. 5:7; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38). The second thing Christians are told to do is be led by the Spirit, and **“walk after the Spirit”** (Rom. 8:4; Gal. 5:16,25).

Christians have two types of eyes and two types of ears. They have natural eyes and natural ears in their physical bodies. They also have spiritual eyes and spiritual ears, which God has given them. If Christians do not know the difference between the things of the flesh and the things of the Spirit, how can they be led by the Holy Spirit?

When Christians see the things of this world, and desire the things of this world, their

spiritual eyes and spiritual ears are not working. They have eyes, but they cannot see. They have ears, but they cannot hear. In 1 John 2:15-17 it says, **“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him...For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world...And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”**

Many say, *“We do not love the world, neither do we love the things of this world.”* Anyone who has eyes to see and ears to hear will know that they are blind and cannot see, and deaf and cannot hear. God is not a man, that He should lie. God told us how to know if someone loves the world and the things of this world? If we cannot hear from God, how are we to know what the Spirit is speaking to the Church today? If we cannot see what is happening, how can we know what God is doing today?

If you see a pig wallowing in the mud, you should know it is a pig, wallowing in the mud. Just because someone says it is not a pig wallowing in the mud, you do not need to believe what they say, contrary to what you see. If someone says they do not love something, why do they want all that they can get their hands upon? But, that is not to say, we are against them, but we should have eyes that can see and ears that can hear what the Holy Spirit is saying to the Body of Christ today.

How do we know if someone is being led by the Holy Spirit, or by some other spirit? There are many ways to know if they are truly being led by the Holy Spirit?

If someone is led by the Holy Spirit, there should be evidence of the Holy Spirit working in their lives. One of the evidences of the Holy Spirit working in a person’s life is the love of God.

God is Love (1 John 4:8), Those who are led by the Holy Spirit will walk in love. To help identify this love of God we see a description of it in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. In the New King James Version it says, **“Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up...does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil...does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth...bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”**

If this is not the attitude of those who say they are led by the Holy Spirit, then there must be something wrong? Something is missing? When something is wrong, and something is missing, it could be they are not telling the truth.

Another thing about being led by the Holy Spirit is, *“God always does what He says.”* If God says He is going to do something, God does what He says. In Deuteronomy 18:22 it says, **“When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.”** In Numbers 23:19 it says, **“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?”**

When someone, who says they are led by the Holy Spirit says, *“I’ll call you right back,”* and you wait a few days, and they still do not call you back, you should know they are not being led by the Holy Spirit. When someone says, they will do something, and they do not do it, you should know they are not being led by the Holy Spirit. God does not lie. God does what He says He will do.

When someone says, *“God said, if you will do so and so, God will do so and so,”* and you do what they said, believing what they said, and the thing they said does not happen, you should

know they were not hearing from God. **“God is not a man that He should lie...”** (Num. 23:19).

We have heard some say, *“If you will sow a lot of money into a certain ministry, God will bless you one-hundred fold.”* Some have done what they told them. Today, some of those who did that, lost almost everything they had. Some even lost their homes. If it was God, then they should have received one-hundred fold. They should not have lost their homes. Christians need to hear from God for themselves, and not be deceived by the enemy.

When someone comes to you and says, *“God told me to tell you so and so,”* you should know that was not God. You have spiritual ears to hear. You should be able to hear from God yourself. If you can hear from God yourself, why should God send someone else to talk to you?

If you cannot hear from God yourself, then you need to find out why you cannot hear from God yourself? Don’t go around looking for someone else to hear from God for you.

God is a personal God. God loves everyone personally. In Jeremiah 31:31-34 it is prophesied concerning the New Covenant. In Hebrews 8:8-12 it confirms what is prophesied in Jeremiah saying, **“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people...And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest”** (Heb. 8:10,11). It says, **“...all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.”** That includes you, if you are a Christian.

It is time to stop running here and there, going to and fro, looking for someone to tell you what God is saying to you. In 1 John 2:27 it says, **“But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”**

It is time to get into the Word of God and into praying in the Spirit and hear from God for yourself. God will not force anyone to do anything. Therefore, it is up to each individual to learn to hear from God for themselves. Jesus said in John 6:45, **“It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God...”** Jesus was quoting the Scriptures. Jesus cannot lie, and neither do the Scriptures lie. If you believe in Jesus, then you should also believe what Jesus said.

Everyone should be taught by God. Everyone should hear from God. Everyone should be led by the Holy Spirit. If you are not hearing from the Holy Spirit yourself, you should find out why?

In John 21:19 it tells us that Jesus said to Peter, **“Follow me.”** What was Jesus saying to Peter at that time? It was only a short time after Jesus said that to Peter that He was taken up into heaven to be at the right hand of God. What was Jesus trying to tell Peter? Those who have eyes to see and cannot see, will not understand what Jesus was saying. Those who have ears to hear and cannot hear, will not hear what the Spirit of God is saying to the Body of Christ today.

Today, the world is lying in darkness, and they cannot see the light of the Gospel that should be preached to them. The light that should be shining upon them is growing dim. Christians are becoming so interested in the world and the things of the world, that they are not reaching out to the lost and dying, who do not know Jesus.

What Jesus said would happen is happening. Jesus did not lie. He spoke the truth. He told us what it would be like before He returns in His second coming.

When Christians follow “other spirits,” where will they go? When other spirits are operating

in the Churches, what will happen to those who attend those churches? In 1 John 4:1 it says, **“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”** It does not say, just try the anitchrist spirits. It says, **“try all the spirits, to see if they are of God?”**

It is no wonder that there is a great falling away among Christians today (2 Thess. 2:3). Many Christians have stopped going to Church. They do not have any peace in themselves in the churches they were going to. They go from church to church, and never find any peace in the churches they go to.

The Holy Spirit is called **“the Spirit of Truth.”** In John 15:26, Jesus said, **“But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.”** In John 16:13, Jesus said, **“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.”**

When those who have received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit attend a church, there should be peace and joy. Churches need the Holy Spirit in operation in their services. In Romans 14:17 it says, **“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”** If they do not find peace and joy in the churches they attend, there must be something wrong. Either they are not hearing from the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Spirit is not moving in that church.

If the Holy Spirit is not moving in a church service, there must be some other spirit in operation. It could be that the same spirits that are in control of those who are not born again are operating in that church. In Ephesians 2:2, it says, **“Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.”** Christians should not stop going to church, just because the churches they went to did not have the Holy Spirit in operation. We need Churches where the Holy Spirit is moving, leading, teaching, guiding, comforting, and helping Christians.

Jesus said in Matthew 15:14, **“...if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.”** Where is the ditch that those who follow other spirits will fall into? It seems that we should get to know what the Spirit of God is saying to the Churches today.

Every day, Christians are dying, and when they die, they leave everything they have behind. I do not know of even one Christian, that when they died, they took their worldly possessions along with them. They didn't even take their clothes with them. Job said, **“...Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither...”** (Job. 1:21). In 1 Timothy 6:7 it says, **“For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.”**

Are Christians ready to meet the LORD in His second coming? Are they ready to meet the LORD when they leave this earth for the last time? If we are not ready for what is about to happen, I believe it would be wise to get ready.

What the Scriptures tell us will come to pass. It could come to pass very soon. All things are pointing to the second coming of the LORD. All signs point to the coming of the LORD. Will Christians be ready for the return of the LORD? Or, will the LORD come as a thief in the night and find Christians sleeping?

What others do, is up to them. But what about ourselves, are we ready? Are we seeing with

our spiritual eyes? Are we hearing with our spiritual ears? Do we know what the Spirit is saying to us individually? Are we being taught by God or by man? Are we being led by the Holy Spirit, or by men of renown? Are we living in the days like unto the days of Noah?

If you want to know the truth concerning the second coming of the LORD, do not go from place to place, meeting to meeting, to listen to what men have to say. Get serious with God and get into the Word of God yourself. Get into praying in the Spirit yourself. God is a personal God. God wants to have a personal relationship and fellowship with each one of His Children. God is waiting for you. Are you still waiting for God?

God has already done all that He is going to do. Now it is up to you, to do what you are going to do. You can turn to God and be led by the Spirit of God. Or, you can continue to do as you are doing. It is all up to you, whatsoever you do, is up to you. God is patient, and long suffering, waiting for your response to what He has already done for you.

This mini-book is written for those who want to know the truth. This is the first in a series of Mini-books on this subject. This series is to let Christians know, God is for them, not against them. They also need to know that God has already done all He is going to do. Now it is up to us to do what God told us to do.

For more information on this subject, and God's will for your life, go to our Web sites on the Internet. You can download as many free books as you desire. Go to our Web sites at:

www.handsforjesus.cc
www.handsforjesus.org