

# How Near is the End?

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Robert C. Newman



# How Near is the End?

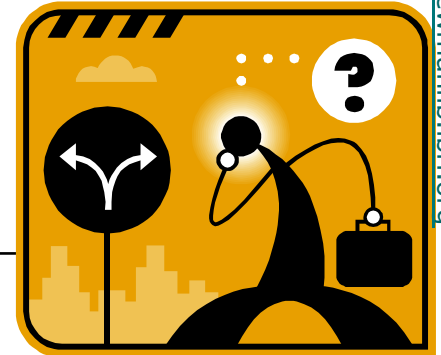
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- Isaac Asimov, *A Choice of Catastrophes*
  - Scientific musings on how the world might end
- Today's Turmoil
  - Middle East unrest, terrorism
  - AIDS and other diseases
  - Global warming, famine
- 6,000-year theory of human history
  - Adam ~4000 BC; Abraham ~2000 BC
  - Jesus ~0 BC; 2<sup>nd</sup> coming ~2000 AD
  - Some are now revising to ~2030 AD, i.e., 2000 years after Jesus' death & resurrection.

# Can We Tell?

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- Not exactly
  - Matthew 24:42-44
    - Be on the alert; don't know when
    - When you don't expect it!
  - Matthew 24:36
    - No one but Father knows day or hour
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3
    - Day of Lord comes like a thief in the night



## Not exactly

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“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man comes at an hour when you do not expect him. Matthew 24:42-44



## Not exactly

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“No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”

Matthew 24:36



# Not exactly

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“Now brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, ‘Peace and safety,’ destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.”

1 Thessalonians 5:1-3



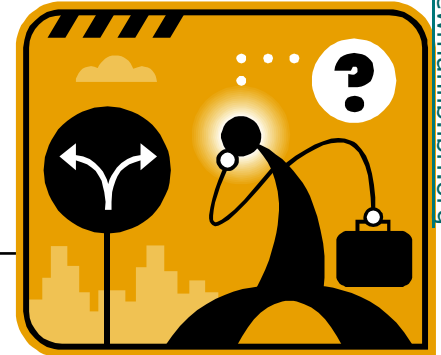
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# Can We Tell?

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- But should be able to recognize its approach
  - Matthew 24:32-35
    - Parable of the fig tree
    - Misuse to calculate the year (1988)
    - Real meaning – signs indicate approach of end
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6
    - Though it comes like a thief, shouldn't surprise the believer, since not in the dark
    - Stay awake!





# Recognize its approach

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“But you, brothers, are not in darkness, so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled.”

1 Thessalonians 5:4-6



## Recognize its approach

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“Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”

Matthew 24:32-35



# Can We Tell?

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    - Though it comes like a thief, shouldn't surprise the believer, since not in the dark
    - Stay awake!

# Signs of the End

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- Jesus' message on the Mount of Olives
  - Matthew 24
- Paul's predictions of moral collapse and the Man of Lawlessness
  - 2 Timothy 3:1-5
  - 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12
- John's vision of world government and religion
  - Revelation 13



## Jesus: False Christs & Wars

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“As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. ‘Tell us,’ they said, ‘when will this happen and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?’ Jesus answered, ‘Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come.’”

Matthew 24:3-6



# Jesus: Beginning of Birth Pains

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“Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains.”

Matthew 24:7-8



## Jesus: Persecution, etc.

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- Persecution (Matthew 24:9)
- General hatred of Christians (9)
- Betrayal (10)
- False prophets (11)
- Increased lawlessness (12)
- Love growing cold (12)
- Gospel proclaimed to all nations (14)



# Jesus: The Great Tribulation

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- Starts with the “abomination of desolation” (Matthew 24:15)
  - Compare Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11
- Get away quickly! (16-17)
- Nothing to match it in human history (18-22)
- Continued appearance of false Christs and false prophets (23-25)
- Jesus’ return will be unmistakable (26-27)





# Jesus' Second Coming

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- Immediately after this tribulation (Matthew 24:29)
- Signs in the heaven (29-30)
- Jesus' return will be visible (30)
- The nations will mourn (30)
- Jesus will send his angels to gather his people (31)



# Paul: Moral Collapse

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“There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power.”

2 Timothy 3:1-5



# Paul: The Man of Lawlessness

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“...that day will not come until the rebellion occurs occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God... The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing...” 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12



# John: World Government

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“I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads... The dragon gave the beast his power and throne and great authority... The whole world was astonished and followed the beast. Men worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast, and asked, ‘Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him’”

Revelation 13:1-4



## John: World Religion

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“Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon. He exercised all the authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast... And he performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven... he deceived the inhabitants of the earth.”

Revelation 13:11-17

# Signs of the End

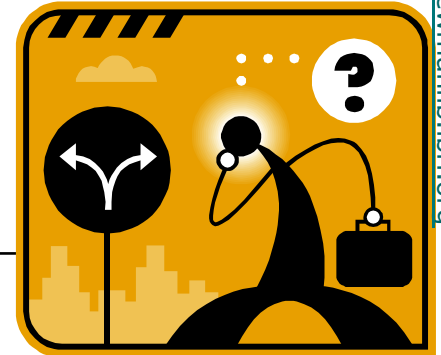
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# Where Are We Now?

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No sign of Antichrist yet, but:

- Technology

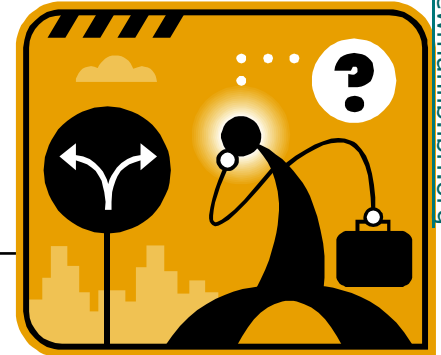
- Unprecedented in speed of communication, making one-world government more feasible, speeding up spread of Gospel

- Scientism (Evolutionism, Naturalism)

- Undermines all traditional religions
- Undermines concept of moral absolutes

# Where Are We Now?

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## ○ Ecumenism

- Desire to unite all religions, partly to avoid conflict (political correctness)
- Assisted by loss of absolutes

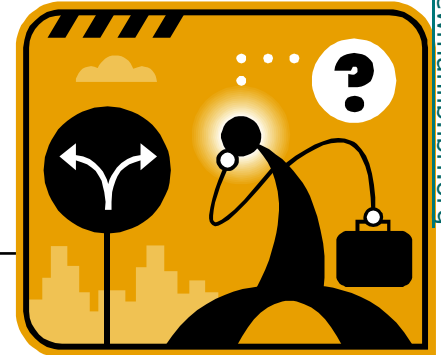
## ○ Israel

- Regathering has produced Middle East tensions, generated irreconcilable conflict
- Rise of terrorism



# Where Are We Now?

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## ○ Disasters

- Not much yet—some famines, usual earthquakes, but as population grows, both become more serious problems
- Some warranted fear of AIDS, Ebola, and other diseases
- Warfare became truly chilling in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.
- Concern about global warming is growing rapidly.



# What Should We Do About It?

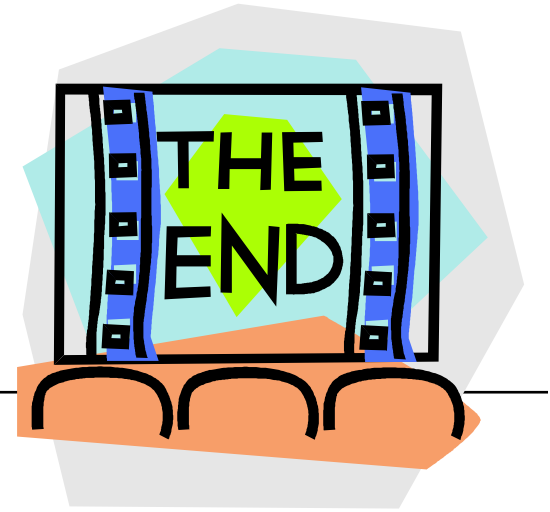
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- How near is the end?
  - Don't know, but it may be close
  - In any case, our personal end may be close!
- Repent!
  - Abandon your lifestyle ignoring God
- Trust in Jesus.
- Live like each day is important.



# The End

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Is not yet, but it is getting closer