

THE LAST DAYS — THE NEED OF A REFORMATION

1. For what is the word of God written? 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Rom. 15:4.

2. According to the prophets, in what time of the world's history are we living?

Ans.— There are more than twelve lines of prophecy in the word of God which indicate that we are living in the last days, and that the coming of our Lord draweth nigh. Of these we may mention those found in the second, seventh, eighth, ninth, and eleventh chapters of Daniel, the seven churches, the seven seals, the seven trumpets, the two witnesses, the dragon of chapter 22, the beasts of chapters 13 and 17 of the book of Revelation, as well as the prophetic discourses of our Lord. These prophecies also show by definite prophetic data that "the time of the end," during which the prophetic periods were fulfilled, began in 1798.

3. What special signs show that we are living in the last days?

Ans.— Increase of knowledge (Dan. 12 : 4, 9, m), spiritual declension (Matt. 24:11,12; 2 Tim. 3:1-5), increase of riches (James 5:1-7), Mormonism and Spiritualism (Matt. 24: 23-26), rejection of God's law (Isa. 30:8, 9, margin), scoffers at Christ's second coming (2 Peter 3:1-4), signs in the sun, moon, and stars (Matt. 24:29, 30; Rev. 6:12-14), great war preparations (Joel 3:9-14), peace and safety cry by false

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prophets (Isa. 2:3-6; 1Thess. 5: 2, 3), and the great threefold message we are studying in these lessons (Rev. 14:6-14). All these things may now be seen fulfilled or fulfilling; and, therefore, "when ye shall see all these things, know that it [Christ's coming] is near, even at the doors."

4. To what important event do the prophecies of God's word point?

Ans.— The judgment. See Dan. 8: 14; Rev. 10:7; 14:7. (See chapter 6 "Christ Our Advocate.")

5. What is the character of this judgment work?

Ans.—The beginning of every judgment work is the examination or investigation of cases brought before the judge. While the Lord knows the cases of all men without any period of time for examination, in His wisdom, and for the good of those who serve Him, He has given a time for this purpose. Eccl. 3: 17. That a judgment precedes Christ's coming, and the first resurrection is shown by the fact that those only are raised from the dead who are accounted worthy of immortality. (Luke 20:35; 1 Cor. 15:52); the dead are not raised, and then changed, but they come up immortal, showing that their cases have already been decided. This judgment may, therefore, be called the investigative judgment.

6. Where will this judgment begin? 1 Peter 4:17.

7. What does our Lord say of the condition of the church in the last days? Matt. 24:11, 12.

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8. What testimony is borne by the apostle Paul? 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

9. What is the cause of this abounding iniquity? Verse 1.

10. What are the evidences of carnality and selfishness? 1 Cor. 3:3. See Note 1.

11. What is the effect of carnality? James 3:14-16.

12. By what term does the Lord express the condition of the natural heart? Jer. 17:9. Revised Version, "Desperately sick."

13. What would be the condition of a church controlled by such persons? Isa. 1:5, 6.

14. By what term does Inspiration characterize this division and confusion in the religious world? See Rev. 14:8 and Note 2.

15. How does the condition of the religious world at the present time agree with the word of prophecy?

Ans.—The professed Christian church is divided into numerous denominations. Not only this, but many members of each of these denominations are divided as to what the word of God teaches, or else are divided among themselves over such great and important Bible doctrines as the Inspiration of the Bible, the Atonement, the Prophecies, the Second Coming of Christ, etc. There is no

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term which could more fittingly describe the condition of the professed church of Christ in this century than Babylon – confusion.

16. What was a prominent characteristic of the apostolic church? Acts 4:32, first part.

17. What is the Lord's desire respecting His people in all ages? John 17:11, 20; 1 Cor. 1:10.

18. What would be the effect of such unity? John 17:21.

19. How alone can it be brought about? Verse 23; Rom. 5:5.

20. How willing is God to give us this spirit of union and power and love? Luke 11: 9-13.

21. That God may bring His people to this unity and prepare them for the judgment, what message has He sent them? Rev. 14:6, 7.

NOTES

1. "CARNAL" means "fleshly;" he who is carnal is ruled by the lusts of his own flesh. But this is selfishness. Where selfishness is there must necessarily be division; for each one will be for himself. There may be seeming union at times, but it is the union of fear or policy, and not the union

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of the principles of love. Division leads to confusion and every evil work.

2. "BABYLON" is from Babel, meaning confusion. See Gen. 10:10, margin, and 11:9, margin. The Lord does not by this term denote the moral attitude of the professed church, but their condition of division and confusion.