

11. Signs of the Times

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25.03.2009 09:16 - Обновлено 12.06.2010 08:55

11. OTHER SIGNS



Another sign is the fact that when Antichrist comes he is to be the ruler of the world, and only in our times has it been a practical reality that one man can rule the entire world. All world empires up until now have been only over part of the earth, and before modern communications it was impossible for one man to rule the entire world.

Furthermore, with increased communications, with atomic bombs and more advanced weapons, the possibility of a worldwide tribulation now becomes much greater than ever before. It's obvious that the next war will be the most destructive in the history of mankind, and probably will cause, in its first few days, more damage than all the wars in history. Besides atomic weapons, there are various bacteriological weapons for spreading plagues among people, poisonous gases and all kinds of fantastic things which in an all-out war could come into play. Also, the fact that all the peoples of the world are bound up more with each other means that when some great catastrophe comes to one country—a depression, or something of the sort—then all the rest of the world will be affected. This we already saw in the 1930s when there was a Great Depression in America and it spread to the rest of Europe. In the future it's obvious that something much worse can occur. If one country begins to starve, or if the crops fail one year in Canada, Australia, America and Russia—all those four great countries which supply what—just imagine how the whole world is going to suffer.

12. A WARNING TO THOSE ATTRACTED TO GLOOM AND DOOM

All these signs of the times are very negative. They are signs that the world is collapsing, that the end of the world is at hand and that the Antichrist is about to come. It's very easy to look at all these negative signs of the times and get into such a mood that we look only for negative things. In fact, one can develop a whole personality—a negative kind of personality—based on this. Whenever some new news item comes in, one says, "Aha, yes of course, that's the way it is, and it's going to get worse." [Next...](#) The next one comes in and one says, "Yes, yes, it's obvious that's what's going to happen, and now it's going to be worse than that." Everything one looks at is seen merely as a negative fulfillment of the horrible times. It's true that we have to be aware of these things and not be unduly optimistic about contemporary events, because the news in our times is seldom good. At the same time, however, we have to keep in mind the whole purpose of our watching the signs of the times. We watch the signs of the times not just so we can see about when Antichrist is going to come. That's rather a secondary thing. We watch the signs of the times so we can know when Christ is going to come. That is a very fundamental thing we have to keep in mind so we do not get overwhelmed by gloom, depression, or stay to ourselves, storing up food for the great calamity. That's not a very wise thing. We have to be, rather, all the more Christian, that is, thinking about other people, trying to help others. If we ourselves are cold and gloomy and pessimistic, we are participating in this coldness which is a sign of the end. We have to ourselves be warm and helping each other out. That's the sign of Christianity.

If you look at history (in fact, this is another good reason for reading Church history), you see

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that throughout the whole history of mankind, throughout the Old Testament, the New Testament and all the Christian kingdoms afterwards—and if you look at the pagan world, the same story—there's a continual time of sufferings. Where Christians are involved there are trials and persecutions, and through all of these Christians have attained the kingdom of heaven.

Therefore, when the time of the persecutions come, we are supposed to rejoice. There was a good little incident related in Fr. Dimitry Dudko's little newspaper. A woman in Russia was put in a psychiatric clinic for making the sign of the Cross in the wrong place or for wearing a cross, or something like that. Fr. Dimitry and his spiritual children traveled to Moscow, went to the clinic, made an appointment and talked to the doctor, and they finally persuaded him that she shouldn't be there. Fr. Dimitry says, "They're actually afraid of us, because when you press them about it, they say they haven't really got any law by which they can keep her there." So finally they agreed to let her go, after she had been there for a week. When she was there they gave her various drugs and "inoculations," trying to break her down and get rid of her religion. When she came out she was a little shaken up. She sat down on a bench someplace outside the clinic and began to talk. "You know," she said, "when I was there and they were treating me so awful, I felt calm because I felt there was Someone there protecting me; but as soon as I got out here, all of a sudden I'm afraid. Now I'm all upset and scared that they are going to come after me again, that the secret police are looking right around the corner." It's obvious why this is so. When you're in conditions of persecution, Christ is with you because you're suffering for Him. And when you're outside, then there's the uncertainty of whether you might not get back into that condition. You begin to go back to your own human understanding. When you're there you have nothing else to rely on, so you have to have Christ. If you haven't got Christ, you have nothing. When you're outside, you begin to calculate and to trust yourself, and then you lose Christ.