

Signs of His Coming

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When the disciples asked for "the sign" of Christ's coming they did not get an immediate answer. They were told about a number of "signs" relating to the age just then beginning, and these signs or conditions were not so much signs of the end of the age in which they were living as of the course of the age. The specific and ultimate sign of the end of the age is not given until verses 14 and 15 of Mat. 24.

~~After stating all these signs of the course of the age he says, "The signet~~
~~is"~~ He begins His reply by saying, "Take heed that no man deceive you". After giving two signs (false Christs and wars and rumours of wars) he says "but the end is not yet". He continues with the mention of four more signs which are followed by the words: "All these are the beginning of sorrows". We may conclude that war, famine, pestilence, and earthquakes are not signs or conditions of the second coming but describe the course of the whole age. They are symptoms and characteristics of the age, but not the marks of the end of the age.

The preaching of the gospel of the kingdom (v.14) and the abomination of desolations (v.15) have been taken as two definite signs of the approaching end of the age. Inasmuch as the gospel had come into all the world in the very first century (Col. 1.6), is it possible that the Gospel of the Kingdom may have reference to the testimony of the two witnesses (Rev. 11.3-14) and the proclamation by the angel flying in the midst of heaven (Rev. 14.6-7)?

On the other hand if the emphasis in vs. 14 is to be placed upon "for a witness" rather than on "of the kingdom" it would perhaps convey the idea of rejection rather than of acceptance. Then ^{this} ~~then~~ would be a sign, not of the conversion of the nations, but of the approaching end. When the witness is complete, then shall come the end.