

says that “he who sins against me wrongs his own soul; all those who hate me love death.”

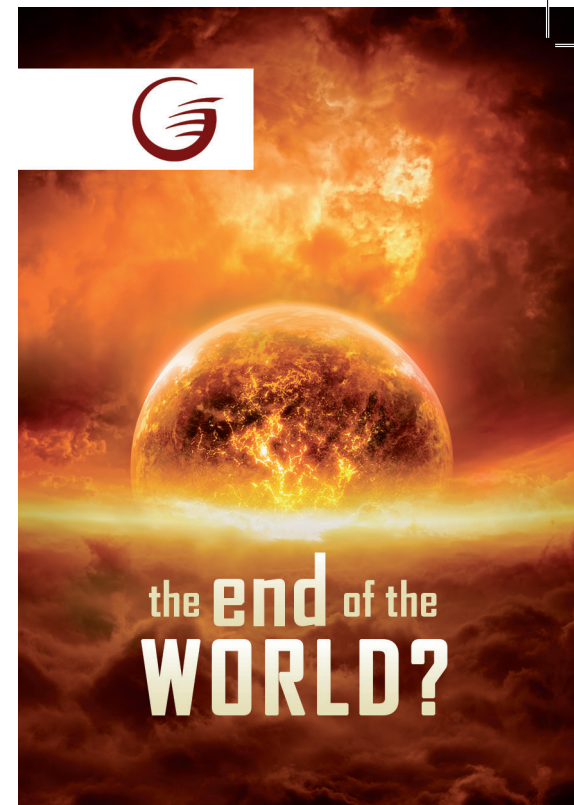
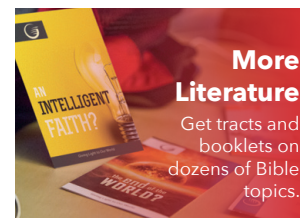
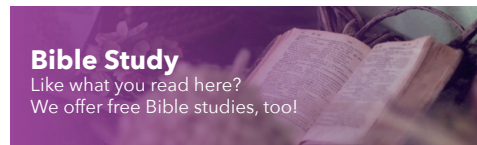
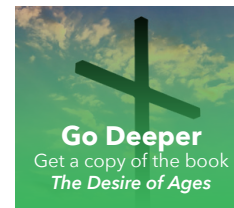
In order to be prepared for the end of the world and the return of Christ, we must first understand our true condition. The Bible teaches that the root of all sin is selfishness. Most people think that they are good, but a sincere look into God’s word reveals the opposite. Even our acts of kindness can be done through selfish motives. What we need first is Christ’s forgiveness. This pardon can be received only by asking Jesus for it in prayer. Second, we need a new heart of selfless love. A new heart and spirit are given to us by seeking God in His word (1 Peter 1:23).

Christ longs for all to be with Him in His kingdom when He returns (2 Peter 3:9). In fact, the Bible teaches that when He does come back, our friends and loved ones who died in Jesus will be raised to eternal life! “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven . . . And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thessalonians 4:16–18).

When you hear the next disaster-filled, end-of-the-world prediction—whatever is to follow

2000 and 2012—don’t believe it. Massive solar flares, mega-tsunamis, super volcanoes, disasters of various types may indeed happen, but the world will come to its final end when Jesus arrives. He will destroy sin and pain, and take His people to be with Him. We can be safe in Him—in complete surrender to Him. Then, we need not worry about what will happen to us at the end of the world.

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Giving Light to Our World

The temperature of the earth's core, bombarded by neutrinos from a massive solar flare, will increase dramatically. This will cause cataclysmic earthquakes worldwide, including the eruption of the massive Yellowstone caldera in Wyoming. These, in turn, initiate mega tsunamis which sweep across the continents. Worldwide devastation and the end of the world!—recently portrayed in a Hollywood movie.

Is any of it true? Will all of these things happen at some point? How—and when—will the world end?

Many people thought the world would end in the year 2000. In 2012, the Mayan Long Count calendar gave people a scare. What does the Bible say about the end of the world?

In speaking about the end of the world and His return to earth, Jesus boldly told His listeners, "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only" (Matthew 24:36). He couldn't have been clearer. The world will end and He will return on his own terms—and the terms of His calendar are known only to Him. Yet we are not left guessing about the nearness of the end. Jesus declared that we "will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass,

but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows" (Matthew 24:6-8). Natural and manmade disasters will escalate as Christ's return approaches, but He will not come until the gospel of the kingdom is "preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come" (Matthew 24:14). Like a blaring fire alarm, daily headlines remind us of a world falling apart. Not a few people are talking about our imminent demise. But in His great mercy God delays His return because He doesn't want to lose a single one of His children. Even now, the good news of salvation is racing around this planet, preparing people for His arrival.

#### WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT THE END OF THE WORLD

But the question remains. If we don't know the exact timing of Christ's return, then what should we know? Jesus addressed this critical concern nearly 2,000 years ago. At His final farewell, soon after the resurrection, His awestruck disciples watched as He ascended into the clouds, disappearing from sight. Nearby stood two heavenly messengers who delivered a precious promise to the forlorn followers.

"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

Notice that this promise is entirely consistent with Christ's earlier statements about his return. With great force He dispelled any notions of secrecy. He warned his disciples, "If anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. . . . Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it. For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be" (Matthew 24:23-27).

Far from being a covert operation, the Second Coming will be an inescapable event. "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God" (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

"Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him" (Revelation 1:7). All eyes will be riveted on this noisy climax—no need for tweets or CNN's breaking news. These details of Christ's

return are important because 2 Thessalonians 2:9 shows that Satan himself, a dazzling being of light, will attempt to deceive the world through a false second coming. You can read more on this topic in a book called **The Great Controversy**, available at [glowonline.org](http://glowonline.org).

#### BEING READY FOR THE END OF THE WORLD

What does this mean for you? After all, what good are the facts if you're not ready for the occasion? To understand what it means to be ready, you must first realize that the Second Coming can be good news! You do not need to fear the end of the world if you are on Christ's side. Revelation 6:14–17 describes most people running in fear and being destroyed when Christ returns the second time because they have chosen to hate the hard truth about their sinful condition. They will be destroyed because they love comforting and unbiblical lies that tell them they will be saved in their sin. God declares, "Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? . . . I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies." He adds, "Therefore turn and live!" (Ezekiel 18:23, 32). When the world ends and the wicked are destroyed, the Lord is simply giving them what they want. In Proverbs 8:36 God