

IS IT LATER THAN YOU THINK?

Note to the speaker:

Exhort the audience “on the basis of love,” particularly when considering the last section directed toward inactive ones (Phm 9; *be* 266 pars. 1-3)

“TELL US, WHEN WILL THESE THINGS BE?” (4 min.)

Recently, we commemorated the death of Jesus, thereby honoring him and Jehovah God

We were reminded of their overwhelming love for us even in our present sinful state (Ro 5:8; 1Jo 4:9)

Each passing year that we proclaim the death of the Lord by means of observing the Memorial brings us closer to the end of this system of things (1Co 11:26)

Jesus’ gripping prophecy found at Mark 13:1-4 has long been a subject of great interest and speculation [Read]

Jesus gave his disciples a composite sign identifying the last days of Satan’s wicked system of things [Read Mark 13:8]

This prophecy has a two-fold fulfillment—in the first century and in our day

Is Mark 13:8 being fulfilled? What do the facts show? Are we really in the last days? Is it later than you think?

COMPOSITE SIGN OF THE LAST DAYS (11 min.)

Let us examine five specific features identified by Jesus

- (1) “*Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom*” (*w08* 5/15 13-14 par. 7)

Since 1914 more than 100 million lives have been lost in wars!

- (2) “*There will be earthquakes in one place after another*” (*w11* 5/1 4)

- (3) “*There will be food shortages*” (*w11* 5/1 5)

- (4) “*There will be . . . in one place after another pestilences*” (Lu 21:11; *w11* 5/1 6)

- (5) There is “*the increasing of lawlessness*” (Mt 24:12)

Lawlessness is a blatant disregard for God’s laws and principles; increasingly, many consider such sins as adultery and homosexuality to be acceptable (Isa 5:20; *w02* 3/1 9 par. 8)

We have touched on just five features of the composite sign

What do you think? Are we really living in the last days?

Never before have these features been as prominent as they are now

The facts prove that it is much later than most people think!

RETURN NOW, AND ACTIVELY SERVE THE SHEPHERD OF OUR SOULS (15 min.)

We do not know how long Jehovah will offer reconciliation (2Co 5:18-20; *w98* 12/15 17-18 pars. 9-11)

We do know that destruction of the wicked is soon to come [Read 2 Peter 3:11, 12]

We do well to ask ourselves, ‘Do I demonstrate that I really believe that “the time left is reduced”?’ (1Co 7:29-31)

Jehovah invites people from all walks of life to take in life-giving knowledge from the Bible (Re 22:17)

Taking in such knowledge and acting in harmony with it can lead to everlasting life in Paradise on earth

Does that prospect appeal to you?

It is urgent that you act without delay

Jehovah’s Witnesses would be pleased to assist you in learning how you can bring your life into harmony with God’s will

Jehovah also wants his inactive sheep to come back into his loving everlasting arms (De 33:27; La 3:40)

If you were once an active servant of Jehovah, please take to heart the words of 1 Peter 2:25 [Read] (*jr* 130 par. 5)

That you have made the effort to be here is evidence that you have not forgotten your Shepherd and his commandments [Read Psalm 119:176]

There are a number of reasons why individuals become inactive (*w08* 11/15 13-15 pars. 5-13)

Whatever your reason, we entreat you to accept the necessary assistance so that you can again actively serve our loving Shepherd (*jr* 72-76 pars. 13-16; 152-153 pars. 22-25)

Allow God’s Word and our Christian publications to help you gain spiritual strength (Ps 119:105)

You will receive the support of Jehovah’s loving congregation (1Pe 5:2; *w08* 11/15 16 pars. 19-22)

In the past, prophets provided needed reminders to God’s people and warned them of God’s coming judgments (Am 3:7)

Today, Jehovah uses his anointed servants to remind even the righteous that it is later than most think (Eze 3:21)

These servants have proved to be immovable, like iron pillars in a fortified city (Jer 1:17-19)

The anointed have their 'hips girded up'; they allow God's Word to strengthen them to fulfill their commission

Make it your aim to show similar zeal and to support them

It is vital that we "pay more than the usual attention to the things heard by us" (Heb 2:1; Lu 21:34-36)

Those who ignored warnings of impending destruction in the past soon realized that it was later than they thought

Today, an even more urgent warning is being sounded, with overwhelming evidence that Armageddon is near

Millions turn a deaf ear, but time is running out

It is later than they think! Is it later than you realize?

Think deeply about your heavenly Father; how late do you suppose he would say it is?

We entreat you to find safety in the warm embrace of Jehovah, the Great Shepherd! (Isa 40:11)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School*, pp. 52-54, 116-119)