

# July 2003: The Last Days: The Warning Signs (Part 2 of 3)

by Aaron Greenway

Floods and mud slides tear up the California coast. Tornadoes rip through Missouri. An earthquake rocks Mexico City. Another bus is blown up in Jerusalem thwarting peace efforts. More reports are given over the break up of the ozone. Terrorists high jack airplanes and use them as missiles to topple the Twin Towers. Sodomy laws revoked in Texas by Supreme Court. If we didn't know better, we might think our society was coming apart at the seams.

Just recently a Hollywood film came out, entitled "Bruce Almighty." Todd Brady, minister at Union University in Jackson, Tennessee, said that the movie "not only reduces God to a whimsical plaything for humanity, but does so with the sole purpose of mere amusement...In the movie, Bruce Nolen (played by Jim Carrey) is granted God's powers after griping about life's circumstances and after accusing God (Morgan Freeman) of 'not doing his job'. The movie is a silly tale of how he handles such supernatural abilities, flippantly raising women's skirts, parting the waters of tomato soup, causing monkeys to materialize from people's rear ends, and the list goes on ad nauseam." That's current day Hollywood!

What is the reason for all of this? How has our world gotten so far from God? There are two reasons for this: The first one is because we live in a sinful world. We live in a decaying society whose nature is to rebel against its Creator. We cannot imagine the stench of sin that God has put up with for so long. Bruce

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Almighty is not getting laughs out of heaven, I can assure you. It is a mockery to God. It is a slap in the face. But this is what God has said about us all along, “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). No one is righteous! All have turned away! All are sinners! If we made careers (like Jim Carrey) out of slapping God in the face, we would be millionaires, because we are good at it.

But the second reason why our world is crumbling is because of immanent return of Jesus Christ. The closer we get to His coming, the worse things will become. We are not just living in a fallen world; we are living in a world that God will one day destroy by fire. In fact, during the tribulation days, Scripture says, “And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened” (Matthew 24:22). This means that the moment that God raptures His church, the Holy Spirit will give more room to the Enemy to do as he wishes.

So what are the signs of His coming? We cannot mention all of them, but the Bible mentions that 1) there will be deceivers claiming to be Christ, 2) there will be wars and rumors of wars, 3) there will be pestilence, hunger and earthquakes in different places, 4) there will be those who turn against Christ, 5) the love of many will grow cold, 6) there will be those that follow heresies, 7) there will be those that follow delusions and the truth will be mocked, 8) men will be lovers of themselves, vain, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, wicked, without natural affection, slanderers, cruel, haters of the good, traitors, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God (Matthew 24:5-14; 2 Peter 2:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-4).

But while all these things are of concern, things that cause fear, we have the assurance of a coming King. We have the assurance of the Christ who will restore all things. If we have been saved by His blood, we have nothing to fear. Judgment is for the wicked, for those who are not covered in His righteousness. As we watch all these things happening, God has given us a mission. That mission is to warn of coming judgment, that those around us would be right with God. That comes through a personal relationship with His Son, Jesus.

The time grows closer. The signs are becoming clearer and clearer. This should prompt us to be

sober and vigilant. It should encourage us to grow closer to our God and to allow God to use us to reach others. The warning signs should not give us fear, but assurance that God is in control and that He will come back for us. The Apostle Paul made it very clear when he said, “For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words” (I Thessalonians 4:16-18). So let us be encouraged!