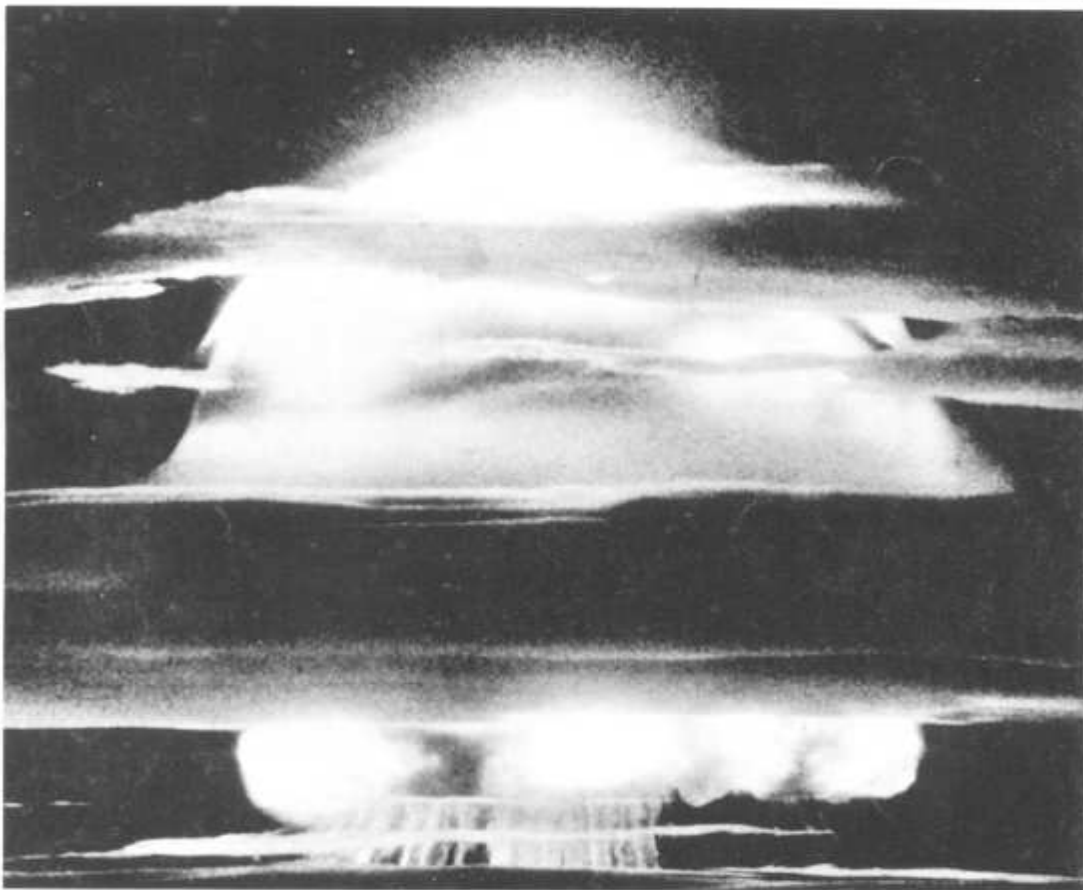




# Ambassador College

## CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

*An International Course of Biblical Understanding*



The Fate of Mankind?

LESSON 2

### **About Our Cover ...**

This spectacular photo of a hydrogen bomb explosion was taken at 12,000 feet, approximately 50 miles from the detonation site. The huge mushroom cloud rose 40,000 feet. Though only a test, this awesome sight is a grim reminder of man's capacity to wipe out all life on earth! Scientists and statesmen are frightened by the facts. They know where the arms race is leading. And they know the only

solution to world problems and the threat of annihilation lies in the concept of WORLD GOVERNMENT. But the way to it they don't know. This lesson reveals the WAY!

*U.S. Air Force Photo*

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## **What OUR STUDENTS SAY**

"I have been so well-pleased with the Ambassador College Correspondence Course, I must let it be known. It was far beyond my imagination that such a course existed at all. In fact, before I started studying this course by mail I was under the impression that no one could learn the Bible by mail. I was wrong. I really am well-pleased with the knowledge I've gained from the study of this most wonderful college course."

-R. T., Belva, West Virginia

"What amazes me is that you ask the questions and tell us which scriptures to read and then the Bible itself explains it. I've heard you say many times on your

radio broadcasts, "Let the Bible interpret itself." It really can and does, if people would only give it a chance. Thank you so much for letting me be a part of this wonderful course."

-Mrs. P. L., Youngstown, Ohio

"The Correspondence Course is the most interesting and fascinating study that I have ever seen. I must confess however that I have not had much time to study up to now. But after getting deeper into it, I find that it's hard to put it down after a short time. I find myself still looking into it for hours. It is the best thing that ever happened to me."

- Student, New York City

"Words cannot tell how much I enjoy this course. It makes the Bible so plain and understandable. For people who do not willfully close their eyes, it makes the prophecies come alive by showing us how today's world-shattering news is simply prophecy being fulfilled."

-R. L., Dallas, Texas

"I must admit that at first I thought you were trying to change the Bible around and make it mean what you wanted it to. But, after doing the first lesson and reading The PLAIN TRUTH, and listening to world events, I see that you are absolutely right."

- Student, Butler, Missouri

*\* Anyone not already on the mailing list is invited to write for a FREE subscription to The PLAIN TRUTH magazine.*

# **WORLD PEACE - OR WORLD IN *PIECES*?**

*The search for world peace continues while arsenals of lethal weapons grow larger. Experts predict the earth will soon become an incinerated relic - UNLESS world conditions are dramatically REVERSED. Exactly what does the future hold for mankind? This lesson reveals the ANSWERS in the prophecies of your Bible!*

WORLD leaders and scientists are frankly *frightened* by the prospects of the future!

They warn that man now possesses the means of committing COSMOCIDE - *suicide* of the whole human race - and even talk in terms of "over-kill." They realize something totally unforeseen must soon occur to *stop* the present trend of world events - or man *will* finally DESTROY himself!

### **What Statesmen Warn**

In 1961 the late President John F. Kennedy warned a hushed United Nations Assembly:

"Mankind must put an end to war - *or war will put an end to mankind.*

"Today," he said, "every inhabitant of this planet must contemplate the day when this planet may no longer be habitable .... The mere existence of modern weapons - 10 MILLION TIMES more powerful than any that the world has ever seen, and only *minutes away* from any target on earth - is a source of horror....

"Together," said President Kennedy grimly, "we shall save our planet - *or together we shall perish in its flames*" (emphasis ours throughout lesson).

What President Kennedy told the United Nations in 1961 was not the ranting of a wild-eyed fanatic, but is the *day-to-day reality* of the world in which we live. Today, the estimated number of stockpiled nuclear bombs is already enough to wipe out the world's population *many times over!*

Former U. N. Secretary General U Thant warned in 1969: "I do not wish to seem over-dramatic, but I can only conclude from information that is available to me as Secretary General that the members of the United Nations have *perhaps 10 years left* in which to subordinate their ancient quarrels and launch a global partnership to curb the arms race, to improve the human environment, to defuse the population explosion and to supply the required momentum to world development efforts."

Many other world-renowned statesmen and scientists, too numerous

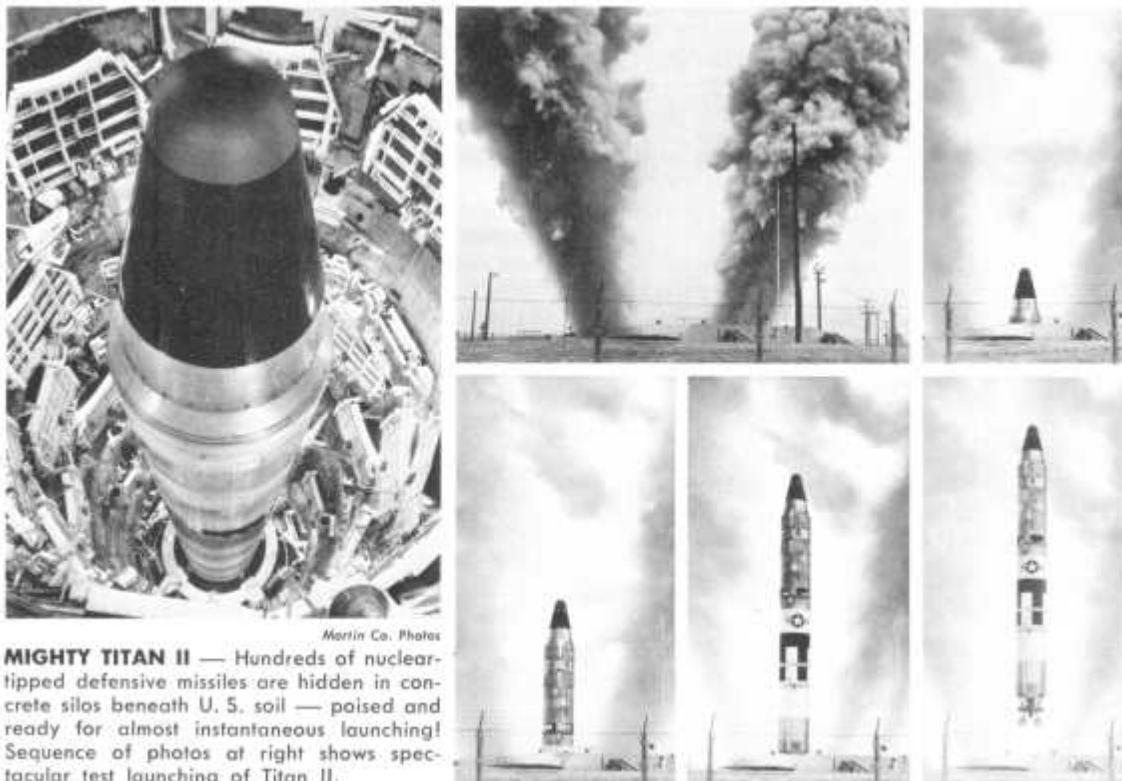
to quote in this lesson, speak fearfully of the END OF THE WORLD - *the END of human civilization!*

### **But the Arms Race Continues**

In spite of these terrifying, imagination-defying facts, the arms race continues to escalate toward nuclear insanity!

Take a look at "MIRV," which stands for "Multiple Independently Targeted Reentry Vehicle." Instead of one missile carrying one warhead, Russian and American scientists have now developed missiles capable of carrying *many* warheads. One such MIRV can do the same job as could 10-14 missiles previously. With MIRV, by 1975, the U.S. will be able to destroy the Soviet Union more than *41 times over!* Russian MIRVS, by the same year, will be capable of obliterating the U. S. 25 times over! (*Los Angeles Times*, Jan. 13, 1970.)

Staggering, but a fact nevertheless!



The arms race may also be spreading to outer space. Recent reports

show that the Soviets may have developed a "killer satellite" capable of blowing up other orbiting spacecraft. But what's to prevent the design of satellites capable of carrying hydrogen-bomb warheads and dropping them on preselected targets? Politicians and military experts generally agree that whoever gains military control of space will be able to *rule the world!*

What will come next?

Many other bizarre, frightening weapons are in various stages of development. These include the pure fusion weapon (a "clean" H-bomb), the neutron bomb, and the laser bomb. Scientists say that each of these weapons theoretically has enough destructive potential to annihilate all life on the earth!

It sounds incredible, but it's true! And the record of history proves that every weapon man has ever developed was eventually used!

### **Chemical and Biological Warfare**

Nuclear warfare is only one of many ways that could bring the total destruction of mankind in the very near future. Though the subject has been given little publicity, some nations are now producing new super-weapons which may be even deadlier than nuclear bombs! Fifteen nations, including the U.S. and U.S.S.R., already have a *chemical and biological warfare potential*.

Tens of thousands of gallons of deadly nerve gas - odorless, tasteless and virtually invisible - have already been manufactured and stored. *One drop, breathed or applied to the skin, can kill instantly!*



Keystone Press Agency Photo

**MICROBIOLOGICAL RESEARCH** - For safety reasons this technician works through special gloves at a culture vessel containing experimental strains of deadly bacteria. This Microbiological Research Establishment at Porton Down, England, is one of many throughout the world which could easily produce biological weapons.

Speaking about biological warfare, Dr. Barry Commoner, director of Washington University's center for the biology of natural systems, warned that chemical and biological agents make nuclear weapons *"look like a child's toy."* Weapons of a chemical or biological nature are far less expensive to produce than complicated nuclear weapons. Any country with a good-sized brewery could manufacture germs about as easily as beer!

But a huge question mark hangs over the advisability of using biological weapons on an enemy nation. Even the best-informed scientists are afraid the after-effects of an all-out biological war might backfire! Epidemics could spread around the world.

Only one thing is certain. No one can predict what actually would happen, because such biological weapons have never been (nor can they ever be) adequately tested until they are actually used on the battlefield!

### Can Man-made Plagues Be Controlled?

Scientists are faced with the grim question of whether or not a man-made plague could be controlled, once started, since full-scale testing is impossible. Dr. Commoner asserted that even natural epidemics are poorly understood, and that we can *rarely predict* how fast they will spread, or how many people will be affected.

Moreover, in biological warfare, he warned it is likely that the infectious agents will not be those which occur in natural epidemics, but special variants selected or modified in the biological warfare laboratory. In this case it would be *nearly impossible* to be confident about the actual course of an artificial epidemic, once it started. It might fizzle out, or it might spread so unexpectedly as to *engulf friend and foe alike!*

A biological warfare experiment which aptly illustrates Dr. Commoner's fears took place during World War II.



AIR, WATER POLLUTION - New York City under dense blanket of smog. At right is South Platte River northeast of Denver, Colorado - one of hundreds of polluted streams and rivers supplying U. S. citizens with "drinking" water. Environmental pollution is a growing threat to world survival!

Britain tested biological weapons as early as 1941, when there was



widespread fear that the Axis Powers might use germ warfare. In one test, Gruinard, a remote island off the northwest coast of Scotland, was sprayed with anthrax bacteria. The targets were sheep, which soon became infected and died. But the anthrax bacteria were so durable that the isle is *still* unsafe for people today! It is expected to remain that way for *at least another 100 years!*

Because of the grave doubts arising from such experiments, some observers ominously conclude that "to initiate the use of plague or anthrax diseases that can kill more than 90 percent of their victims, would be to set in motion a DOOMS-DAY MACHINE on the planet..." (Seymore M. Hersh, *New York Times Magazine*, Aug. 25, 1968).

### **Other Ways to Annihilation!**

There are yet several other global crises which could lead to the utter destruction of mankind in the not too distant future.

Human life can only be sustained by air, water and food. But today man is polluting and poisoning all three of these necessities. *Air* pollution is now recognized as a growing *international* menace - one which not only threatens the health of man, but seriously affects the continued existence of all life.

*Water* pollution is another massive threat. *Most* of our rivers and lakes are so seriously polluted that supplies of drinkable water in *many* places have reached a CRISIS STAGE! Now, increasingly, it is being found that pollution is also seeping into our underground water supplies. A recent study by the U. S. Public Health Service indicates that *millions* of people in the United States are drinking water that is unfit for human consumption!

**STATESMEN and SCIENTISTS  
WARN of IMPENDING DISASTER!**



U. Thant, former Secretary-General of the U. N.: "... the problems... will have reached such staggering proportions that they will be beyond our capacity to control."

UPI, Wide World Photos



The late Dr. Albert Einstein: "There is no defense in science against the weapons which can destroy civilization."



Dr. W. H. Pickering, Jet Propulsion Laboratory: "In half an hour the East and the West could destroy civilization."



Philip Noel-Baker, winner of Nobel Peace Prize: "We will all be dead and the earth will be an incinerated relic."

Man is infamous for having depleted and ruined the soil out of which his food must grow.

More recently, he has vastly speeded up the process by using artificial fertilizers which actually *defeat* their very purpose by locking up other soil elements, thereby robbing vegetables, grains and fruits grown in such soils of the life-sustaining minerals and vitamins necessary for good health. Modern man also uses poisonous insecticides which not only exterminate more helpful forms of life in the soil and air than harmful, but also enter the ecological web of life and threaten the extinction of higher species of life. Even man himself is potentially in danger!

Other potential dangers to life are the host of inadequately tested rodenticides, fumicides, herbicides, flavor enhancers and artificial preservatives. Scientists fear that these and other products in our society could cause irrevocable damage to succeeding generations.

Add to these urgent problems the worldwide revolution in the weather - droughts, floods and earthquakes - and epidemics of disease. And if all these fast-accelerating evils do not destroy humanity soon, the

experts say the effects of the POPULATION EXPLOSION *will!*

### The Population BOMB

Many leading scientists have warned that the greatest single crisis facing the world is the population explosion.

Among them is Stanford biologist Dr. Paul Ehrlich, author of the best-selling book *The Population Bomb*. Dr. Ehrlich said that the earth's population is fast outstripping the earth's natural resources. At the rate we are going, he warned, "Sometime between 1970 and 1985 the United States and the rest of the world will undergo vast famines - hundreds of millions of people are going to starve to death.

#### PRESIDENTS and EDUCATORS FEAR WORLD DESTRUCTION!



Late President John F. Kennedy: "Together we shall save our planet — or together we shall perish in its flames!"

Ambassador College,  
Wide World Photos



Late French President Charles de Gaulle: "... the great powers are facing their 'last moment'..."



Barry Commoner, environmental scientist: "... we run the risk of destroying this planet as a suitable place for human habitation."



Dr. Herbert F. York, University of California: "...the arms race is a steady open spiral down toward oblivion."

"That is, they will starve to death unless plague, thermonuclear war, or some other agent kills them first. Many will starve to death in spite of any crash programs we might embark on now."

Population experts reveal that if present trends continue, the earth's population will number about seven billion people by the year 2000! How will they be fed? Hungry people are restless people. Starving people seldom just sit down and quietly die. They riot, revolt, pillage

and murder in order to get food! Massive starvation could spark future FOOD WARS which could finally engulf the entire world in horrible struggles for survival!

### **Needed: "A Strong Hand From Someplace"**

An accurate appraisal of MAN'S *ONLY HOPE* for survival appeared in a leading U. S. news magazine in 1965. This appraisal indicated that among government officials the prevailing view is gaining acceptance that tensions and world problems are fast becoming too deep-seated to be solved except "*by a strong hand from someplace.*"

That strong hand is coming - but from a source most people least expect! The Prophet Isaiah reveals that source in your Bible: "Behold, the LORD GOD will come with STRONG HAND, *and his arm shall rule for him...*" (Isa. 40: 10).

Your Bible shows there is HOPE for mankind! The great God of your Bible says He is going to send Jesus Christ again - this time to SAVE us from ourselves and to establish the Government of God on earth! He will not *allow* the misguided scientific genius of man to destroy all life from this planet!

Think of it!

The *glorified Christ* - returning in all the splendor, supernatural POWER and GLORY of God Almighty - coming to *save* mankind alive - coming to STOP escalating wars, nuclear mass destruction, human pain and suffering - coming to usher in *peace*, abundant well-being, happiness and joy for all mankind!

### **Predicted Centuries Ago**

The sad state of our world was predicted and written in advance. Over 1900 years ago, the greatest newscaster the world has ever known *foretold* today's chaotic world conditions! He foresaw today's scientific discoveries and technological advancements. And He foresaw the outcome of it all.

He *knew* that men would produce the destructive forces that now threaten cosmocide! This famous newscaster warned: "And except that the Lord had *shortened* those days, no flesh should be saved

[alive - Moffatt Trans.] " (Mark 13:20).

This great news prophet was Jesus Christ of Nazareth - the same Jesus who is coming again to intervene at the last moment for this world. What He foretold has been written in your Bible all these centuries. No other book is as up-to-date as *your Bible!*

Jesus Christ foretold today's world conditions in vivid language. He prophesied *in advance* the wars, famines, disease epidemics and natural disasters that are now occurring increasingly before our very eyes! Jesus gave the exact *sequence of events* that would take place in our modern, pulsating space age. Scientists and world leaders - most of whom know little of Bible prophecy, and even reject the Bible - readily admit the events He prophesied are taking place *right now* - in our generation!

Many of today's commentators and news analysts have used Biblical terminology to describe current world conditions. Notice: "One of the *four horsemen of the Apocalypse* is mounted and ready to ride, in the opinion of top agricultural and diplomatic experts. It is famine.... Catastrophic famine will sweep Asia, Africa, and Latin America in eight years, and that by 15 years there will be revolutions, social turmoil, and economic upheavals as well as death. Government experts agree, but are more guarded in language" (Walter Trohan, *Chicago Tribune*, May 1, 1967).

William L. Ryan, Associated Press special correspondent who wrote a series of articles on the population explosion, said, "Frightening specters haunt ... the world today. These are the specters of widespread *famine, pestilence, violence* and ultimately WAR, less than a generation from now!"

### **Prophecy Is for TODAY!**

But some will still object, "There have always been *"prophets of doom."* People *thought* the world was coming to an end in the Middle Ages when the black death struck Europe."

These skeptics simply do not understand God's *timetable* of prophecy. The end of man's rule must, and *will*, come as God has scheduled it. Though some had ignorantly thought otherwise, the end of man's rule was *not* due in the Middle Ages.

We need to understand that every prophecy has a definite time setting - usually *not* in the prophet's own day. Most prophecies of the Bible are yet to be fulfilled, and are for *our time* - TODAY!

Jesus taught that there is a *timetable* of prophecy - that certain specific events must occur in the months and years ahead *before* He returns to rescue humanity from annihilation. Let's begin to understand these prophecies. Let's learn exactly what the world's greatest newscaster foretold for our time.

But before we begin, be sure you have your Bible in front of you. You should turn to all the scripture references given in answer to the questions we will ask - and *carefully read them*. PROVE what we say *for yourself* in your own Bible!

Thousands of our students have found that making notations in their lessons and Bibles as they study is especially helpful when they review their lessons later. Some also write or type out in full these scripture references. Now let's begin.

# LESSON 2

## Scoffers in the Last Days

Our day is the day of so-called "Christian Atheism" when even theologians scoff at the idea of God's existence and the prophesied intervention of Jesus Christ.

"Christ is no longer expected to come back," says John Robinson, Bishop of Woolwich, England, in his book *The New Reformation*. "I believe," continues Bishop Robinson, "that we must designate ours a post-Christian era, in the sense that a Christ is no longer expected. The present generation is unable to recognize Jesus as the Christ. They ask why should we see in this historical character the focus of all our hopes or the answer to all our problems?" Notice that your Bible *predicted* this time of scoffers!

**1.** What did the Apostle Peter say would signal the "last days"? II Pet.

3:3-4.

COMMENT: "Scoffers" is rendered "mockers" in the *Moffatt* translation.

**2.** Does God address a rebuke against such skepticism, especially to Israel? Ezek. 12:21-23.

COMMENT: Surprising as it may seem, this prophecy and the entire book of Ezekiel were written primarily for *our* day! When this book was written, the nation of Israel (not to be confused with the *modern* nation of Israel) had already fallen and been taken into captivity - from which she never returned - a full *120 years before*.

History reveals that the ten-tribed nation of Israel (the northern kingdom) was taken captive by the Assyrians in 721-718 B. C. However, by the time God spoke this prophecy to Ezekiel, about 600 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was attacking the southern kingdom of Judah. Ezekiel was already in a Babylonian slave camp (Ezek. 1:1), far from the regions where *Israel* had been carried by Assyria so long before. He was even farther from where some Israelites had subsequently migrated. (Mr. Armstrong's book, [The United States and Britain in Prophecy](#), explains where they went, and who ancient Israel's descendants really are today.) God gave Ezekiel a message to be delivered to Israel - a message about a *future* captivity. Yet Israel had already gone into its first and only captivity 120 long years before! Ezekiel's captors would *not allow* him to go to Israel to deliver that message. God *knew* he would not be able to go, before He gave him the prophecy. So, plainly, God did not expect the message to be delivered then and there.

But Ezekiel *wrote* the message so it would be preserved. And it is today in the hands of the people to whom it was sent - *at precisely the time when God intended them to receive it!*

**3.** Does God say that the doubters' proverb would prove worthless, and that the time would come when every vision *would* be fulfilled? Ezek. 12:23, 25. What is the prophecy the modern-day descendants of Israel do not want to believe? Verse 20.

COMMENT: The people say time has already been so long that it is obvious the vision will *never* come to pass. God's answer is that everything prophesied will happen - *as predicted!*

4. Even if people admit the *fact* that this calamity will come to pass, how do they try to rationalize it away? Verse 27. Does God answer there will be no reprieve from this sentence? Verse 28.
5. Before God sends *major* punishment upon a nation, does He always first reveal it to His servants? Amos 3:6-7.
6. Hosea 5:9 calls the end time the "day of rebuke." Do verses 8 and 9 indicate an end-time warning ministry to the nations of Israel? Compare these verses with Hosea 7:12.
7. For what age was Isaiah's prophecy primarily put in writing? Isa. 30:8. (The better rendering of "time to come" is "the latter day," as given in the margin of many Bibles.) What does God say will be the character of people in "the latter day"? Verses 9-11. Then will their punishment come *suddenly*, though obvious signs had previously been visible? Verse 13.
8. Is one of the signs of the imminence of dire calamity the world's tendency to ignore and deny the peril? I Thes. 5:3.
9. What message does Isaiah give the mockers? Isa. 28:22. Does God warn them of great destruction upon the whole earth? Same verse. Is it linked with the time of God's intervention in world affairs? Verse 21.

### **Prophecy Has NOT Failed!**

Let's understand once and for all that prophecy has *not* failed. We need to realize that every prophecy has a definite time setting, a time usually not in the prophet's own day. One full third of the Bible is prophecy - and about 90% of all that prophecy still pertains to *this* prophesied "end time"!

With this in mind, let's notice certain KEY prophecies:

1. Was Joel's prophecy for his own day, or for the distant future? Joel 1:2-3, 15. What is the "day of the Lord"? Is it the time when God intervenes in world affairs? Joel 3:1-2, 11-14. When will this great day occur - after great signs in the heavens? Verses 15-16. Is this plainly speaking of the time Christ will return? Matt. 24:29-31.

COMMENT: The "day of the Lord" is mentioned in many prophecies of



the Bible. It always refers to the time when God will intervene in world affairs - when Christ will return to this earth.

**2.** Did the prophet Isaiah also prophesy of this time? Isa. 24:17-21. What will happen "in that day"? Isa. 2:2, 11-12.

**3.** Will all prophecies regarding the "day of the Lord" be fulfilled? Rev. 10: 5-7.

**4.** Will any of the God-given prophecies FAIL to come to pass? Isa. 55:11. Will the warning message given to the people by God's servants be fulfilled? Ezek. 33:30-33. Is it a pleasant message? Verses 25-29.

COMMENT: Most people today are tired of hearing "bad news." Nevertheless, God's prophecies include BAD NEWS for all those who rebel against Him and trample on His laws! But they also include much GOOD NEWS on beyond the prophesied time of world trouble and chaos (Isa. 2:1-4; Micah 4:1-4). *Many* of the prophecies foretell a time of peace, of happiness, of restoration, of joy, of great prosperity and physical wealth for those who serve and OBEY God. We'll learn more about this GOOD NEWS in a soon-coming lesson.

### **The FIRST Thing Christ Foretold**

**1.** What was the first warning sign Jesus Christ gave His disciples when they asked Him about the time of His second coming? Matt. 24:3-4. Did He foretell that MANY deceivers would arise to deceive MANY people? Verses 5, 11, 24. Are they the ministers of the arch-deceiver himself? II Cor. 11:13-15. Is the *whole world* deceived as a result of their activities? Rev. 12:9.

**2.** But would the TRUTH of God also be proclaimed with power around the world before the second coming of Christ? Matt. 24:14.

COMMENT: God will not leave the world without a warning *witness*. Today, His servants are powerfully proclaiming His truth worldwide via the media of radio, television and the printing press. You are studying His message *right now*, as you study your Bible with this Correspondence Course.

**3.** In the meantime, would the deceivers become extremely active? II

Tim. 3:13. Would men have only a "form" - an outward show - of godliness? Verse 5. Wasn't Paul clearly speaking of these "last days" - our perilous age? Verse 1.

**4.** Did Jesus predict that some of the false teachers would even claim He has already returned? Matt. 24:23-26.

COMMENT: As we'll see in the next lesson, there will not be the slightest doubt that Christ has returned when His second coming *really does occur!*

### **When Will Christ Return?**

Perhaps you have heard preachers declare:

"The Lord may come *tonight*." But, is it true the second coming of Jesus Christ could occur at any minute? What did He Himself say? Jesus warned: "Take heed that ye be not deceived"!

**1.** What is one of the deceits the false ministers would preach? Luke 21:8. Notice the words "the time draweth near."

COMMENT: According to the original Greek in which the New Testament was written, the false message of those pretending to be the ministers of Christ is: "The time HAS COME near", or "The time is at hand" (RSV). In other words, "The Lord may come tonight."

What about it, then? Could Christ return at any moment?

Your Bible teaches that there is a definite *sequence of events* which must occur first! Study carefully ALL of Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. These chapters clearly reveal there is a *timetable* of prophecy - that certain definite events *must occur before* Christ returns!

**2.** Did Christ explain clearly that certain events would have to take place before the "end"? Luke 21:9-11.

COMMENT: Notice that the King James English of 1611 is not at all clear in verse 9. Instead of "by and by," the original Greek phrase is better translated "immediately." Parallel accounts of Matthew 24:6 and Mark 13:7 correctly answer "the end is *not yet*."

**3.** But once the terrible events Jesus enumerated in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 finally begin to occur, will they all be completed in the lifetime of one generation? Matt. 24:34; Mark 13:30; Luke 21:32.

### The "Signs of the Times"

There is a parallel to the widespread lack of understanding of God's prophetic timetable for the return of Jesus Christ. The Jews at the time of His *first* coming also lacked understanding and did not fully recognize or accept Christ as the *prophesied* Messiah.

Jesus told the religious leaders of His day that the "signs" accompanying His ministry should have been *proof* enough that He was the prophesied Christ. The Old Testament prophecies, with which they were thoroughly familiar, had predicted the *exact time* and *manner* of His appearance!

Yet they *refused* to believe Him!

**1.** What did these scoffing Pharisees and Sadducees ask Jesus to show them? Matt. 16:1. How did He answer them? Verses 2-3.

COMMENT: The religious leaders of Christ's day didn't understand the "signs of the times." Yet they had been taught the Messiah was to come, for that very message was repeated in nearly every book of the Old Testament. In verse 3, Jesus showed them they could understand - if they *really wanted to!*

**2.** What additional sign - besides the plain Old Testament prophecies they already knew - did Jesus give? Matt. 16:4. What was the "sign of the prophet Jonas"? Matt. 12:39-40.

COMMENT: Atheists and agnostics scoff at the Biblical record of "Jonah and the whale." Nevertheless, Jesus told the Pharisees that He would be in His grave for the *same length of time* Jonah was in the great fish. This was to be the special "sign" to His generation that He really was the prophesied Christ!

**3.** Did that sign come to pass? Read Matthew 27:57-66 and 28:1-6. Notice especially verse 6.

COMMENT: Two women came to see the tomb where Christ had been

laid. When they arrived, they found it empty. They were told that Christ had risen - "as he said" - after three days and three nights.

*The sign had come to pass!*

Jesus proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that He was the prophesied Messiah and Savior of mankind!

### **"Signs" of OUR Times**

**1.** As Jesus explained to His disciples the exact SEQUENCE OF EVENTS that would precede His intervention (Matt. 24:3-41), what else did He say would occur in the end time besides the coming of many false prophets? Matt. 24:6-7.

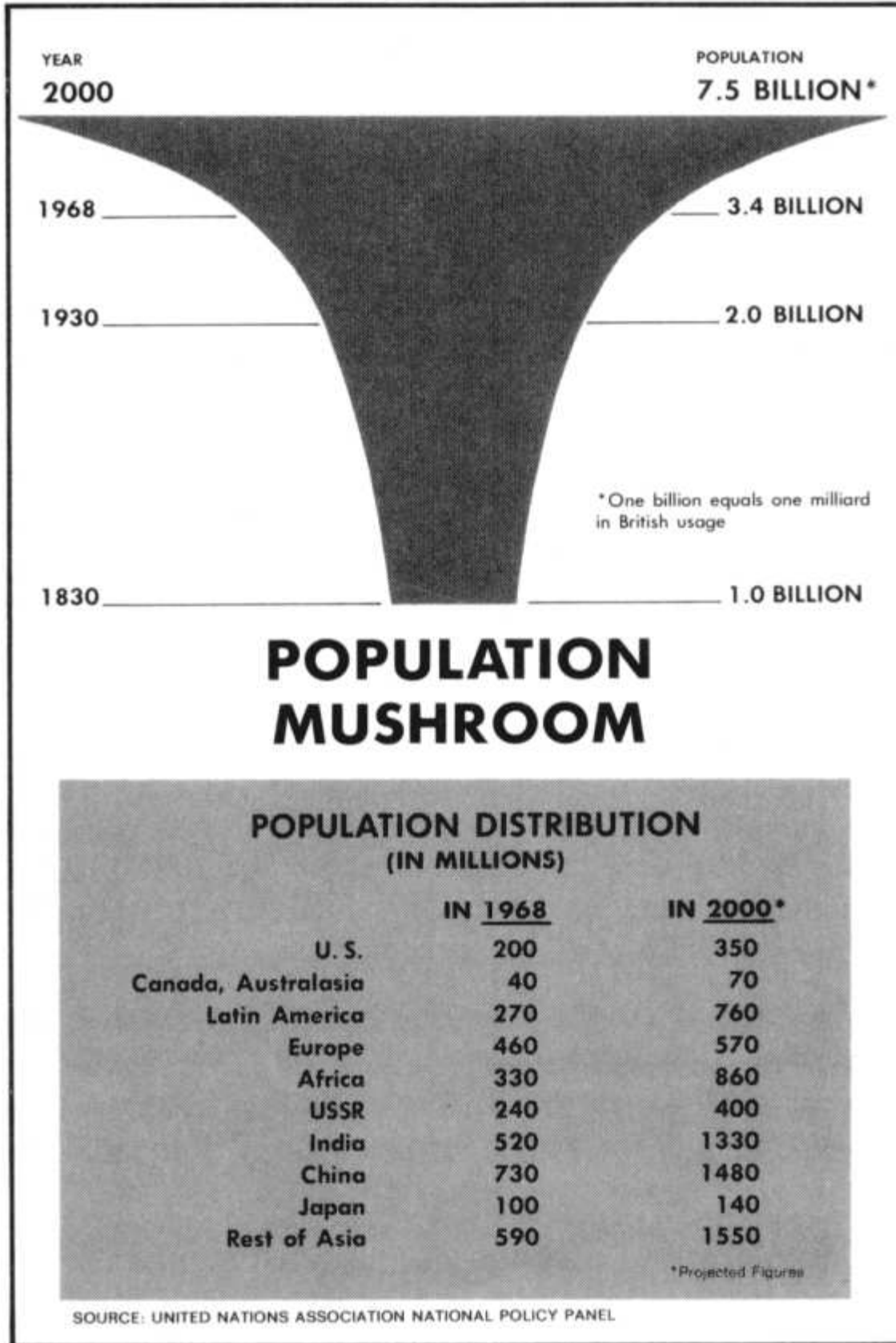
COMMENT: World War I commenced in 1914. Ever since, nation has continued to rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. Just since World War II alone, there have been over 70 armed conflicts around the world! We are now merely in a lull between rounds two and three of *World War!*

**2.** Is *famine* one of the major signs indicating that Christ's intervention in world affairs is *very near*? Matt. 24:7.

COMMENT: The first decade or so after World War II, food production kept up with population in the underdeveloped countries. But the tables turned in 1958, a crucial year. From that time till this, the stork outraced and passed the plow. More and more had less and less to eat.

Since 1958 the crisis has generally grown worse. The first shocking blow came in 1965-1966 with severe drought and threatening famine in India.

Disaster was barely staved off in 1966. What will happen the next year the world faces drought and famine? Remember: every year world population grows another 70 million. Every three years the equivalent of another United States is added to the world's population! Many areas of the world face a severe crisis as population passes food production.



In Central and South America, some of the most miserable and depressing poverty can be seen. Yet, in several of these nations the population is expected to double within 25 years! This was once thought to be impossible.

The facts of lagging world food production, combined with the reality of the population explosion, add up to one thing: a crisis of awesome proportions is exploding on the world's doorstep! The *several million* dying each year *now* from starvation could soon be multiplied a hundred times. Hundreds of millions of human beings now drawing breath could perish in world-girdling famines! It is not at all a pleasant thought to contemplate. As one writer put it, "We shall see them doing so on our television sets." But worse, even our affluent nations are *not* immune to this dire threat!



Bob Taylor Photo  
A bumper U. S. wheat crop once produced temporary storage problems. All the U. S. wheat acreage now in soil bank will not be sufficient to feed the rest of the world when severe famine stalks the earth!

### **Killer Diseases - Global Pandemics**

**1.** What else was prophesied to occur after famine? Matt. 24:7. Isn't

pestilence partly the natural result of food shortage?

COMMENT: The way is already prepared for a revival of pestilence. More and more crowding means more waste and refuse, more garbage, more pollution of the water, air and land. And *more disease!*

Huge concentrations of population are ready - made tinder boxes of potential disease epidemics. Under crowded conditions, an epidemic can spread from person to person like wildfire. All the great pestilences of the past were just such contagious diseases.

It is not inconceivable that a flu epidemic similar to the one in 1918 could strike. Despite medical science, disease germs, bacteria and viruses have built up an amazing *resistance* to the "wonder drugs" of a few years ago. Through mutation and adaptation, their resistance to man's drugs and vaccines is becoming even greater. It is very possible that a super-flu or other deadly pestilence could sweep the world, killing millions!

Remember also that modern man already lives in an environment of poisons. He inhales poisonous, polluted air, drinks contaminated, filthy water, and eats pesticide-laden foods. The inevitable result is that the heart, lungs and the entire body in general are *weakened*, thus lowering resistance to disease which nearly always strikes the weakest *first!*

Jesus Christ told the truth bluntly, plainly, without equivocation. He said that our world today would begin to experience vast disease epidemics!

Medical experts are growing increasingly alarmed when they study the world situation. They see growing signs of such epidemics. Plagues of cholera have already struck east Europe, Asia and Africa. Even bubonic plague - the "Black Death" of the Middle Ages - is making a comeback today!

Dr. Paul Ehrlich, studying the population explosion in the world today, drew a picture of what could very easily occur in the future. In one of his seemingly prophetic scenarios he foretold the dire possibility of vast disease pandemics taking multiple millions of lives as a new, drug-resistant strain of some major disease broke out and quickly spread around the world! Such a possibility frightens medical

authorities because it is NOT mere "science-fiction." With the advent of huge jetliners and the tremendous intercontinental air and ship traffic of our age, such diseases could be spread around the world very quickly!

Jesus' words, spoken over 1900 years ago, were certainly prophetic. The next few years will reveal precisely how much so!

### **Earthquakes!**

**1.** What else will happen with increasing severity? Matt. 24:7. When earthquake activity reaches a peak, will men at last begin to recognize that GOD is intervening? Isa. 2:19-21.

**2.** Are the signs Jesus foretold only the *beginning* of sorrows? Matt. 24:8. If this prophesied time of world trouble were allowed to continue, would there be anyone left alive? Verses 21-22.

COMMENT: Famine, disease, pestilence, earthquakes and other disruptions of nature are taking an increasing toll of human life today. And as we have seen, world leaders everywhere are afraid that man's destructive capability *will annihilate all life on earth!*

### **The "Four Horsemen"**

**1.** Doesn't Revelation 6 picture the *same* conditions Jesus described in Matthew 24, but in *symbolic* terms? Rev. 6:2-8.

COMMENT: These four horses and horsemen represent the four major world conditions Jesus said would exist at the end of this age - all increasing in severity and overlapping in their effects on the entire world!

The white horse represents the increasing number of false ministers preaching a *false* Christ and *false ways* to "salvation." The red horse pictures the increasing tempo of the *ravages of wars*. The black horse - *increasing famine*. And the pale horse - *rampaging diseases*.

**2.** What tremendous toll of life will be taken by these "four horsemen of the Apocalypse"? Rev. 6:8.





Wide World, UPI Photos

**POPULATION, DROUGHT, FAMINE** — This crowd of people and the hungry girl at right are symbolic of the underfed millions of the world. The population explosion, coupled with drought and resultant famine, are serious threats to man's survival.



COMMENT: Just imagine, if you can, ONE FOURTH of mankind dying during a period described as *only* the BEGINNING of sorrows!! But let's not forget that man is bringing this horrible suffering and death *upon himself!* Jesus knew that man, left to his own devices, would so afflict himself and would ultimately destroy all life - unless something totally unforeseen occurred to stop it. That is why He has promised to intervene in world affairs. Jesus Christ is coming soon to rescue us - from ourselves - because man has just about reached the *end* of his rope!

### **The "Abomination of Desolation"**

- 1.** What was another sign Jesus gave to indicate when "the end" was near? Matt. 24:14-16.
- 2.** Did Jesus identify the "abomination of desolation" as that one which was spoken of by the Prophet Daniel? Verse 15.
- 3.** Was Daniel told of a desolating abomination that would exist in the end time? Dan. 9:27.

COMMENT: Notice that this abomination is something which is to be located where sacrifices were being made.

**4.** Where else does Daniel mention the "abomination of desolation"? Dan. 11:31.

COMMENT: This verse was fulfilled - once - in ancient history. Most Bible scholars concede that most of the eleventh chapter of Daniel was fulfilled in history by the struggles of the Seleucidae of Syria and the Ptolemies of Egypt - called the kings of the North and the South by Daniel.

Verse 31 was once fulfilled when Jerusalem was conquered and the Temple of God was desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, in 168 B.C. (See Rawlinson's *A Manual of Ancient History*.)

**5.** But Jesus said the "abomination" was still future, didn't He? Matt. 24: 15; Mark 13:14.



JERUSALEM - Headquarters of three major conflicting religions, Jerusalem is the focal point of many major prophecies.

COMMENT: Then at least a part of Daniel 11 must also be DUAL! And no wonder, for we find the chapter concludes with the "time of the end" (verse 40) - leading up to the resurrection of the saints (chapter 12:2). (In the original text, there is no chapter break between Daniel

11 and 12.)

But what is the "abomination of desolation" prophesied for the "time of the end"?

Putting Bible prophecy and historical fulfillment together, we can get an idea of what this abomination of desolation will be. Historically, the abomination of desolation was the *image of Jupiter Olympus* - a Greek and Roman *god* - which Antiochus, with the help of his army, placed in the temple in Jerusalem (Rawlinson, page 255).

The modern "abomination of desolation," therefore, will also be some kind of *false* "god" in Jerusalem!

### **Sudden Destruction!**

**1.** What else will be present when the "abomination of desolation" is in Jerusalem? Luke 21:20. Is this the time when ALL prophecies the skeptics think have failed will be fulfilled? Verse 22.

COMMENT: Here, again, is DUALITY in prophecy. The presence of Roman armies in Jerusalem in 70 A.D. was only a *type* of what will happen in the near future. The Roman legions which conquered Jerusalem then were only a type of MODERN legions which will soon again surge through the Middle East.

A.D. 70 was not "*the END*"! The "day of the Lord" did not arrive *then*!

**2.** Will there be great warfare at that same time in the Middle East? Luke 21:23-24. Will the city of Jerusalem be captured by the Gentiles? Verse 24; Zech. 14:1-2.

**3.** Will half of Jerusalem's population be carried away and the whole city looted? Verse 2. Will this time be especially hard on women? Same verse. Isn't this why Jesus warned "WOE" to pregnant and nursing women? Matt. 24:16-19. It will be very difficult for them to escape!

**4.** Is this the very time Jesus Christ *must* intervene lest the weapons of modern warfare completely wipe out all life on earth? Matt. 24:22.

COMMENT: Never before in man's history has he been able to destroy

all life on this planet. These prophecies can only refer to today and the immediate future!

### **World's Population Decimated**

**1.** Does the Bible prophesy a great future war? Rev. 9:14-18. How many will die in this terrible conflict? Verse 15, 18.

COMMENT: Horrible as it sounds, the millions who died in World War II will be as nothing compared to the enormous decimation of human life just ahead! Roughly *one third* of the human race will die in this war. And remember, this death toll is in *addition* to the number of others who will die of famine and disease!

**2.** What will happen to the armies that attack Jerusalem? Zech. 14:12; Rev. 19:19-21.

**3.** In summary, what does Isaiah prophesy concerning the earth's population when Christ returns? Isa. 24:1, 3. Why? Verses 5-6. What is the number of the "few" people *still alive* compared to? Verse 13; Isa. 17:4-6.

### **"Watch You Therefore . . ."**

**1.** Will Christ's coming catch most people unawares - their minds completely occupied with their own problems, hopes, fears and pleasures - even in the midst of the most terrible times the world has ever known? Matt. 24:37-39.

**2.** Does Christ therefore warn us to take heed and carefully *watch* for the signs of His imminent return? Luke 21:34-36.

COMMENT: Jesus plainly shows us that we must *watch* world events in order to *ESCAPE* the trouble mankind is bringing upon itself - lest we be snared by it and *unprepared* for His coming.

**3.** Will the events - the "signs" - preceding Christ's intervention be difficult to discern? Or will they be as obvious (to those who are *watching*) as the changing of the seasons? Compare Luke 21:29-31 with Matt. 24:32-33.

COMMENT: Are you *watching* carefully the step-by-step fulfillment of

Biblical prophecies on the world scene? Are you taking diligent heed to Jesus? words of warning? May God help you to do so, for your life and the lives of those in your family *are* at stake!

### **Only Two Alternatives**

When we take a hard, cold, realistic look at present world conditions and trends, they DO point to a fast-approaching WORLD CRISIS of war, starvation, uncontrollable disease epidemics, and the *extinction of human life* on this planet! Man simply has no solutions to these terrifying problems! The further he goes, the more destructive become his efforts. His technology has gotten out of hand - beyond his capacity to control wisely.

World leaders, statesmen, and scientists look at this terrifying world picture and admit they are frightened! They warn us that man's *only hope* lies in the formation of a SUPER WORLD GOVERNMENT wielding all authority and power over the nations.

But the nations, hostile against one another, could never form such a government. Let's face it! Right now there are only two alternatives left before mankind. Either there does exist a *living GOD* of supreme mind and total POWER who very soon *will* step in and intervene in the affairs of this world to SAVE HUMANITY FROM ITSELF - or else the EXTINCTION of all life will inevitably occur, sooner or later, as man unleashes the awesome forces at his control upon his neighbor!

There is *no other* alternative!

### **TEST YOUR MEMORY**

*This quiz is designed to help you remember the important facts you learned in the lesson. You simply circle or underline each correct answer. After you've finished, check your choices with the correct answers listed on page 15, and then rate yourself.*

- 1.** World statesmen warn of  
**A.** impending world catastrophe through warfare. **B.** world government. **C.** shortage of armaments. **D.** underpopulation.

- 2.** Which of the following is not a threat to human survival?  
**A.** Nuclear annihilation. **B.** Overpopulation. **C.** Pestilence. **D.** Conventional weapons.
- 3.** Biological weapons  
**A.** have been proven safe to the user if handled with caution. **B.** are more expensive than nuclear weapons. **C.** could render an attacked nation uninhabitable for 100 years. **D.** are entirely predictable as to effects.
- 4.** What is man's greatest need in this time of world trouble?  
**A.** More time to control pollution. **B.** More sophisticated weapons of warfare. **C.** Effective birth-control methods now. **D.** "A strong hand from someplace."
- 5.** Jesus Christ  
**A.** could return tonight. **B.** gave a sequence of events that must occur before He returns. **C.** predicted man will annihilate human life. **D.** predicted none of today's conditions.
- 6.** God's timetable of prophecy  
**A.** is not clearly revealed in the Bible. **B.** is either ignored or declared already fulfilled by most ministers. **C.** has apparently been revised. **D.** is something we were not meant to understand.
- 7.** Awesome famines are certain to come  
**A.** because food production is being outpaced by population growth. **B.** because too many nations possess deserts. **C.** only because weather is unpredictable. **D.** only to India and certain other "poor" countries.
- 8.** Can pestilence - disease - again bring death to multiple millions in this modern world?  
**A.** Wonder drugs and better medical practices make that impossible. **B.** Not with vaccinations and serum immunization. **C.** Yes, because our polluted environment weakens man's natural resistance, while helping to create strains of super germs. **D.** Possibly, but the sick could be quickly isolated.
- 9.** The "beginning of sorrows" will actually kill  
**A.** a few hundred thousand. **B.** only the atheists. **C.** only professing Christians. **D.** at least one fourth of mankind!

**10.** Christ's second coming

**A.** can be accurately pinpointed. **B.** will catch few people by surprise. **C.** will not surprise those who watch world events and are prepared for His coming. **D.** is being proclaimed by all of professing Christianity today.

### TRUE OR FALSE

**11.** The reason so many prophecies apply to the end time is because they did not come to pass when they were meant to. **T F**

**12.** There have been over 70 armed conflicts in the world just since the end of World War II. **T F**

**13.** The "abomination of desolation" pertained to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and possibly to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., but certainly not to the "time of the end." **T F**

**14.** Half of Jerusalem's population is yet to be taken captive in war. **T F**

**15.** The twenty-fourth chapter of Isaiah shows that no human being will survive the prophesied time of world war. **T F**

### MATCHING

*Draw a line from each phrase in the left-hand column to the correctly related phrase in the right-hand column.*

**16.** Latin America

**A.** Population to double in 25 years

**B.** Already fulfilled

**17.** "Signs" of our times

**C.** Matt. 25; Luke 22

**D.** Revelation 6

**18.** Ezekiel

**E.** Matthew 24

**F.** Prophet to Israel

**19.** Earthquakes

**G.** Prophet to Judah

- 20.** "Four Horsemen"      **H.** False prophets  
   **I.** Religious persecution  
   **J.** Greatest to come

### ANSWERS TO QUIZ

- |      |       |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. A | 6. B  | 11. F | 16. A |
| 2. D | 7. A  | 12. T | 17. E |
| 3. C | 8. C  | 13. F | 18. F |
| 4. D | 9. D  | 14. T | 19. J |
| 5. B | 10. C | 15. F | 20. D |

### Rate Yourself

19-20 correct ----- excellent

16-18 correct ----- good

13-15 correct ----- fair