

THE DREADFUL SIDE OF THE GREAT AND DREADFUL DAY OF THE LORD: PART I

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT? A DUAL SCENARIO

D&C 110:14-15. Therefore, the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands; and by this ye may know that *the great and dreadful day* of the Lord is near.

Two “voices” in the scriptures.

- a. A voice of warning: **D&C 1:4; 63:37; 112:5.**
 - b. A voice of promise: **Mosiah 2:41; D&C 19:23; D&C 59:21.**
 - c. Why the two voices?
 - i. *Warning someone of imminent danger is an act of love and of responsibility*
 - ii. *Advanced warnings of danger enables our agency and empowers us to act.*
 - iii. *The more specific the warning, the higher the likelihood that it will motivate us to act.*
 - iv. *The combination of a warning voice and a promises voice becomes a very powerful, if not the most powerful, force to move us to action.*
- **2 Timothy 3:1.** This know also, that *in the last days perilous times shall come.*
 - **Howard W. Hunter.** All dispensations have had their perilous times, but our day will include genuine peril (*Teachings*, 200).
 - **Gordon B. Hinckley.** Wonderful as this time is, it is fraught with peril. Evil is all about us. . . We live in a season when fierce men do terrible and despicable things. I do not know what the future holds. I do not wish to sound negative, but I wish to remind you of the warnings of scripture and the teachings of the prophets. . . The time will come when the earth will be cleansed and there will be indescribable distress (*Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 5, 72-74).
 - **Charles W. Penrose (1859).** The world will increase in confusion, doubt, and horrible strife. As the upright in heart, the meek of the earth, withdraw from their midst, so will the spirit of God also be withdrawn from them. The darkness upon their minds in relation to eternal things will become blacker, *nations will engage in frightful and bloody warfare*, the crimes which are now becoming so frequent will be of continual occurrence, the *ties that bind together families and kindred will be disregarded* and violated, the *passions of human nature will be put to the vilest uses*, . . . *storms, earthquakes, and appalling disasters by sea and land* will cause terror and dismay among the people; *new diseases* will silently eat their ghastly way through the ranks of the wicked; the earth, *soaked with gore* and defiled with the filthiness of her inhabitants, will begin to *withhold her fruits* in their season; *the waves of the sea will heave themselves beyond their bounds*, and all things will be in commotion; and in the midst of all these calamities, *the masterminds among nations* will be taken away, and fear will take hold of the hearts of all men (*Millennial Star*, 21:582).

SEVEN MAJOR “DREADFULS” OF THE LAST DAYS

1. **WICKEDNESS AND EVIL SHALL ABOUND.**

- **2 Timothy 3:8; Mormon 8:31; D&C 1:35; 45:27; Moses 7:28.**
- **Quentin L. Cook.** We live in very interesting times. Here are some selected statistics from recent studies: Worldwide there has been a 35 percent increase in terrorist attacks in the past year. Forty-one percent of all births in the United States are to unmarried women, compared to 18 percent 35 years ago. Adult Americans claiming no religious affiliation increased from 16 percent in 2007 to 23 percent in 2014. Nearly seven in 10 Americans ... say doctors should be legally allowed to assist terminally ill patients in committing suicide. There are now more than 43 million refugees worldwide displaced from their homes because of conflict or persecution. Or how about these very recent concerning headlines: California college will now ask students to pick from 6 [different] genders” in their application for admission.” And this one: “Another day, another mass shooting in America (“A Compensatory Spiritual Power for Righteousness,” BYU Ed Week Devotion, August 18, 2015, 2-3).
- **Boyd K. Packer.** These are days of great spiritual danger for this people. The world is spiraling downward at an ever-quickenning pace. I am sorry to tell you that it will not get better. I know of nothing in the history of the Church or in the history of the world to compare with our present circumstances. Nothing happened in Sodom and Gomorrah which exceeds the wickedness and depravity which surrounds us now. Satan uses every intrigue to disrupt the family. The sacred relationship between man and woman, husband and wife, through which mortal bodies are conceived and life is passed from one generation to the next generation, is being showered with filth. Profanity, vulgarity, blasphemy, and pornography are broadcast into the homes and minds of the innocent. Unspeakable wickedness, perversion, and abuse—not even exempting little children—once hidden in dark places, now seeks protection from courts and judges. . . .The sins of Sodom and Gomorrah were localized. They are now spread across the world, wherever the Church is. . . .We are now exactly where the prophets warned we would be (Boyd K. Packer, “On the Shoulders of Giants,” BYU J. Reuben Clark Law Society Devotional, 28 February 2004, 7-8).

2. *NATURAL DISASTERS SHALL INCREASE.* (Six categories)

- Six categories: Signs in the heavens, Fire, Earthquakes, Weather related disasters, Pillars of smoke and vapors of darkness; Seas heaving themselves beyond bounds.
- **1 Nephi 19:11; 2 Nephi 6:15; D&C 29:14-16; 43:25; 45:33, 40-41; 88:90-91.**
- **Dallin H. Oaks.** For example, the list of major earthquakes in *The World Almanac and Book of Facts, 2004* shows twice as many earthquakes in the decades of the 1980s and 1990s as in the two preceding decades (pp. 189–90). It also shows further sharp increases in the first several years of this century. The list of notable floods and tidal waves and the list of hurricanes, typhoons, and blizzards worldwide show similar increases in recent years (pp. 188–89). Increases by comparison with 50 years ago can be dismissed as changes in reporting criteria, but the accelerating pattern of natural disasters in the last few decades is ominous (*Ensign*, May, 2004).

3. *WARS AND RUMORS OF WAR*

- **D&C 1:35; 45:26; 87:1-6.**
- Battle of Armageddon: **Revelation 9:1-10; 11:16; 16:16; Joel 2:1-11; 3:1-2; Ezekiel 38:1-7, 14, 19-22; Ezekiel 39:2, 9-16, 22; Zechariah 14:1-3.**
- **Bruce R. McConkie.** Armageddon is the final great battle in a war that covers the earth and involves all nations. We suppose it will be the first and only time, until the armies of Gog and Magog clash for a second time after the Millennium, when no nation in any land will be neutral. This coming conflict will be universal, and out of it will come the final day of destruction and burning. It will exceed in horror, intensity, and scope all prior wars. It is only in the last days that there are enough people on earth to field armies of the required size, and only now do we have the weapons to slay millions at a single blast. . . .How horrible is the day. The destruction of the Jaredites and of the Nephites is as nothing in comparison. The dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the Lord only knows where else, is only the beginning of sorrows, as it were. This coming war shall involve all nations, and the dead shall not be numbered. . . .How many will be slain, and who shall count the number of dead bodies? When we come to the revealed description of the battle itself, we shall see that the slain will be a third of the inhabitants of the earth itself, however many billions of people that may turn out to be (*Millennial Messiah*, 449-51, 53).

4. *NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST*

- **Isaiah 34:9-10; Joel 2:3; Mormon 8:29.**
- **Bruce R. McConkie.** It may be, for instance, that nothing except the power of faith and the authority of the priesthood can save individuals and congregations from the atomic holocausts that surely shall be (*CR*, April 1979).

NOTE: The last three of the seven “dreadfuls” will be on Part II of this handout and discussed in the next class on November 18th, 7:30 p.m.