

Audio Transcript of Sermon

August 8, 2026

Signs of the End Time – The Beginning of Sorrows

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. It seems we live in a time where a prophet, spelled P-R-O-P-H-E-T, can make a profit, spelled P-R-O-F-I-T. The Biblical image of a prophet is somebody wearing robes living on the fringe of society, where society ends and the expanse of desert begins. Back then, a prophet of God was tasked with taking a message from God and sharing it with God's intended audience. Jonah, who was swallowed by the great fish, which today is thought of as a whale, was tasked with taking God's message to the people of Nineveh about their sin. He wasn't thrilled with his assignment, and Jonah tried to get far away from Nineveh. That's when God brought that great fish to quickly deliver Jonah very near to Nineveh. When God has something in mind for us to do, and God's intent is we follow through and do it, from Jonah we can learn that it is better to do what God wants from the onset lest God introduce us to our own version of that great fish. Today, and coming back to the prophets who are focused on profits-making money, we can find some people in the world of prediction markets. If you are a good prophet in predicting what will happen, you could make money. The opposite is also true. If you are a bad prophet in predicting what will happen, you could lose money. If this sounds like gambling to you, the governments of many countries around the world would agree with you, and some of these countries would include but are not necessarily limited to Singapore, Thailand, Australia, and Argentina, where prediction markets are illegal. In the United Kingdom, a company running a prediction market platform must hold a Gambling Commission license. Leave it to the current generation to find a way to make money out of predicting what will happen in the future. At Sabbath Bible Study we have been consistent in stating the importance of following the laws of the country in which you live. We don't make recommendations for or against participating in prediction markets where it is legal to do so, but where prediction markets are illegal, we believe people living in those countries must not participate in prediction markets because following the laws of our country is one way how we Biblically honor the king, or whatever form of government our nation might have.

For those unfamiliar with prediction markets, it's possible to make a prediction on just about anything. The chance to make money comes in when others join you

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either for or opposed to your prediction, and this sets the crowds estimated probability of something happening. Those who correctly predict make money with returns based on the estimated probability and those who incorrectly predict lose everything. There have been scandals involving prediction markets from specific events happening within a sports game to the President of the United States using certain words and phrases in a speech. For instance, if in a hypothetical football or soccer match one team scores five goals in stoppage time, even though that could happen, some would think there is some link to prediction markets. These suspicious fans would think something like that while five goals in stoppage time is possible, it would be highly unlikely, suggesting to them that somebody might have made a lot of money through a prediction market, because most people would choose that five goals would not be made by one team in stoppage time. Recently, the White House teleprompter operator was placed on unpaid leave over allegedly making one hundred thousand dollars through a prediction market by betting on exact words and phrases the President would say in speeches. Those speeches are cued up word for word using teleprompters, and the teleprompter operator controls what words are shown on the screen, and with the White House, the teleprompter operator gets advance access to speeches. Manipulating the system like this is reviewed in the United States by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, and they apply whatever sanctions they feel are necessary and when appropriate refer to law enforcement.

Mankind seeks to make money off of things we think of as free. I think my grandfather would be astounded by how much people pay for coffee and water these days. When he lived more than fifty years ago, there was not premium bottled water as there is today, and coffee was a low price menu item at restaurants. I'm sure one day somebody will find a way to make money from air, and people will pay money for that as well. Moving our thought from prediction markets to Biblical prophecy, I suppose if a prophet of God had firm details about what would happen, they could go to a prediction market and bet on that and make some money, but I can't imagine that God would be pleased with that. God doesn't need to use prediction markets to grab people's attention, because throughout history God has used things like famines, pandemics, and natural disasters to grab the attention of people.

Jesus was talking with His disciples in the courtyard of the temple, and as they were sharing with Jesus details about the various buildings of the temple within

the courtyard, Jesus told them that everything they saw would be destroyed, that not even one stone would be left on another stone. That must have startled the disciples because they came to Him privately later when they were at the Mount of Olives and wanted to know when the temple would be destroyed, and the timing of the return of Jesus Christ, and the end of the world. Jesus warned them about spiritual deception, and wars and rumors of wars. As bad as spiritual deception and wars are, of and by themselves, these would not signal the end time. Jesus told them that famines, pandemics, and natural disasters could also be expected. While these would not necessarily be the end time, they would serve as a prelude to the end time with what Jesus called the beginning of sorrows. Matthew twenty-four verse one.

Matthew 24:1-8

- 1. And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.**
- 2. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.**
- 3. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?**
- 4. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.**
- 5. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.**
- 6. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.**
- 7. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.**
- 8. All these are the beginning of sorrows.**

We might only think of famines, pandemics, and natural disasters as naturally occurring, because natural disaster has the word natural within it. There is randomness to life where famines, pandemics, and natural disasters occur naturally, but we can see from the Bible that God can also bring these to pass. It doesn't mean that every famine, pandemic, or natural disaster is punishment from God, but it does show that God can use these as tools to bring attention to sin. When God appeared to Solomon at night after hearing Solomon's prayer, He told Solomon that when God acts to bring drought, famine, and pandemic to His

people, it is because of the sin of the people. The quickest way to alleviate the famine and pandemic under this circumstance is for the people to humble themselves and turn from their wicked ways. Second Chronicles seven verse twelve.

2 Chronicles 7:12-16

12. And the Lord appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice.

13. If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people;

14. If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

15. Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place.

16. For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there forever: and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.

God told Israel in Leviticus that if they did not do all of the commandments and broke the covenant, that they would suffer mental distress and many different types of illnesses. They would also suffer a famine because even if they had a great harvest, that food would benefit their enemies. Leviticus twenty-six verse fourteen.

Leviticus 26:14-17

14. But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments;

15. And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant:

16. I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.

17. And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.

Jeremiah writes of wars, famines, and pandemics. He shows how fruit trees would start giving bad fruit, so bad that the fruit couldn't be eaten. Today, that might

make us think of very polluted water or lands that cause the fruit to be bad. Jeremiah also wrote of military defeats, and all of this because the people did not do what God told them to do through His servants the prophets. Jeremiah twenty-nine verse seventeen.

Jeremiah 29:17-19

17. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Behold, I will send upon them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will make them like vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil.

18. And I will persecute them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them:

19. Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the Lord, which I sent unto them by my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them; but ye would not hear, saith the Lord.

In Matthew twenty-four, Jesus spoke of famines as the beginning of sorrows. Famines result from failed crops and drought conditions, and have occurred throughout human history. For instance, when Abraham and Sarah traveled to Egypt it was because of drought conditions that led to a famine. In the 1800s, it was a potato famine caused by late blight that led to mass starvation, disease, and emigration from Ireland. Bad things happen because of time and chance. When sin is involved with His people, God can bring famine to His people as a consequence for their sin. In the chapter on blessings and curses, God clearly showed Israel that drought conditions would be a curse for disobedience. In this chapter skies are described as brass and rain is described as powder and dust. Living in a desert, there are times when I look up to the sky and instead of seeing a blue sky, I see brassy colors, and there are even times when the promise of rain looks more like a dust storm. Deuteronomy twenty-eight verse twenty-three.

Deuteronomy 28:23-24

23. And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.

24. The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.

In Leviticus we read that God would break the pride of Israel's power for disobedience as its sins would be heavily punished with the sky described as iron and the land described as brass. Digging in a plot of land can be easy or hard depending on the quality of the soil. When soil is bone dry, especially in more arid areas, the soil tends to become firm like concrete, and very hard to dig through, especially when any amount of clay is involved. God also told Israel that farming efforts would be wasted because the land would not yield their fruit. Leviticus twenty-six verse eighteen.

Leviticus 26:18-20

18. And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.

19. And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass:

20. And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits.

The Book of Revelation shows a prophecy of a famine so great that a quarter of mankind died through hunger, disease, and war as food prices became expensive. Revelation six verse five.

Revelation 6:5-8

5. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

6. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

7. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

8. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

The prophet Amos describes famine as cleanness of teeth. Today we associate clean teeth with good oral hygiene, but cleanness of teeth in Biblical times meant

famine. Amos was not describing toothbrushes, dental floss, and toothpaste. He described the people as wanting bread showing the people were hungry. Famine and hunger were not enough for the people to return to God. Beyond famine and hunger, drought was described with rain only falling sporadically, causing a search for drinking water, and even that escalation wouldn't bring the people to return to God. Crops were consumed by fungus and pests, and that development would do nothing to move the people to return to God. Amos four verse six.

Amos 4:6-9

6. And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

7. And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered.

8. So two or three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

9. I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, the palmerworm devoured them: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

The people will reject God so much that beyond that famine of food, God would send a famine of hearing the word of God in the land. No matter how hard the people would try to hear the word of God, they would find nothing to satisfy them. Amos eight verse eleven.

Amos 8:11-14

11. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord:

12. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.

13. In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst.

14. They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy god, O Dan, liveth; and, The manner of Beer-sheba liveth; even they shall fall, and never rise up again.

Famines sometimes lead to widespread disease, and Jesus also mentioned pandemics in Matthew twenty-four. After Israel had crossed the Red Sea and found a place to rest, God promised them that if they diligently listened to Him and did what was right, paying careful attention to the commandments and statutes, that God would not bring the diseases of the Egyptians on Israel. Exodus fifteen verse twenty-two.

Exodus 15:22-27

22. So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water.

23. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah.

24. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?

25. And he cried unto the Lord; and the Lord shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them,

26. And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.

27. And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters.

Disease was mentioned as a punishment for disobedience in Leviticus, along with several other punishments. God promised plague after plague according to their sins. He told them that wild predatory animals would take the lives of their children and farm animals to the point people would be afraid to be in the open. Finally, along with diseases, armed conflict and captivity was promised. Leviticus twenty-six verse twenty-one.

Leviticus 26:21-25

21. And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins.

22. I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your highways shall be desolate.

23. And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me;

24. Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.

25. And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.

Going back to the chapter on blessings and curses, as a consequence for disobedience, God promised different types of diseases would afflict the people. One of those diseases was translated from the Hebrew as consumption, and medically consumption is the historical name for tuberculosis. The Hebrew word translated as consumption means emaciation, so think of any disease that causes a body to waste away to almost nothing. That is the type of disease that comes as a result for disobedience. Diseases causing chills and fevers are also mentioned along with medical issues resulting from armed conflict, and these would never be resolved in the person's lifetime. Deuteronomy twenty-eight verse twenty.

Deuteronomy 28:20-22

20. The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me.

21. The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it.

22. The Lord shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish.

Even though after the Red Sea crossing, God promised to spare Israel from the diseases of Egypt, that was contingent on Israel doing what God expected of them. By the time of Amos Israel had rejected God and as a result, Israel started to have the same types of diseases as Egypt. In addition to these diseases, God allowed younger men to die in combat, and had their horses taken from them. Even when faced with horrific living conditions, the people refused to return to God. When they faced suffering like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, the people were so set against God, they refused to make the connection between

their actions and what was happening to them. Israel forgot they were the people of God, God who created mountains, a process we believe caused through earthquakes and movement of tectonic plates, and the same God who created wind, which brings changes to weather and when the winds are excessive can even bring destruction. Amos four verse ten.

Amos 4:10-13

10. I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses; and I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

11. I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

12. Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.

13. For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, The Lord, The God of hosts, is his name.

Ezekiel wrote of famine, a famine impacting people and animals. Living in the desert southwest of the United States, I know when water is lacking wild animals begin to enter the city looking for water. I have a pond in my backyard, and I see smaller wildlife getting a drink from time to time, mostly birds and squirrels, and sometimes turtles and lizards. Because of where I live within my city, I tend not to see larger types of wildlife, but I pay attention to what wild animals are near me. The famine Ezekiel described is a type of famine so severe, that God would work it out that a righteous person like Noah, Daniel, and Job would survive, but only the righteous would survive. Not even their immediate family would survive this type of famine. In addition to famine, Ezekiel describes wild animals and diseases. Ezekiel fourteen verse twelve.

Ezekiel 14:12-23

12. The word of the Lord came again to me, saying,

13. Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it:

- 14. Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God.**
- 15. If I cause noisome beasts to pass through the land, and they spoil it, so that it be desolate, that no man may pass through because of the beasts:**
- 16. Though these three men were in it, as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters; they only shall be delivered, but the land shall be desolate.**
- 17. Or if I bring a sword upon that land, and say, Sword, go through the land; so that I cut off man and beast from it:**
- 18. Though these three men were in it, as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters, but they only shall be delivered themselves.**
- 19. Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast:**
- 20. Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.**
- 21. For thus saith the Lord God; How much more when I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast?**
- 22. Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters: behold, they shall come forth unto you, and ye shall see their way and their doings: and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all that I have brought upon it.**
- 23. And they shall comfort you, when ye see their ways and their doings: and ye shall know that I have not done without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord God.**

The prophet Joel describes failed crops as a reason for famine, where crop failure is caused by anything from seeds that have gone bad to crops that have withered away in the fields. Joel's famine is a famine also impacting animals with their fields destroyed by fire. As I prepare this sermon, wildfires can be found in many different places in the world. A huge fire is raging in southern France and northern Spain. Years ago, fires were bad in parts of Australia, and closer to my part of the world, mountain fires have destabilized forested areas leading to more incidents of flash flooding in the mountain streams and rivers. When there is not flooding, the rivers runs dry. The mighty Rio Grande river which separates Texas from Mexico, is not so mighty these days. Near Albuquerque, New Mexico, the

river is running dry, and a major reservoir, Elephant Butte Lake, is only slightly more than one percent of capacity. Joel one verse fifteen.

Joel 1:15-20

15. Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.

16. Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God?

17. The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered.

18. How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate.

19. O Lord, to thee will I cry: for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field.

20. The beasts of the field cry also unto thee: for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

When Jesus spoke of the beginning of sorrows, He spoke of natural disasters, specifically earthquakes. Throughout history, people have been subject to the randomness of what happens on our planet, what the Bible calls time and chance. People can and do die from tragic random things that happen, and Jesus made it clear that people who die in these types of tragedies shouldn't be looked at as being worse sinners than other people, but Jesus warned that unless a person repents, they can also die in natural disasters, and because of the randomness of life, so can a righteous person. Luke thirteen verse one.

Luke 13:1-5

1. There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

2. And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things?

3. I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

4. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

5. I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

Isaiah writes of natural disasters as a punishment from God, showing severe weather events like a severe thunderstorm. Depending upon where we live on earth, a severe thunderstorm could bring lots of rain, wind, hail, and even tornados. When weather is strong enough, weather can kill. Beyond the strong weather events, Isaiah writes of earthquakes and wildfires. Many people don't realize it, but even a city like El Paso where I live sits on a fault line, with a fault line along the eastern edge of the Franklin Mountains crossing through McKelligon Canyon to the west side of the mountains. Living in the desert, it's easy to see when foliage is dry and more susceptible to fire. If a wildfire were to move into the city, the results could be bad, because as big of a city as El Paso is, there are only five major ways out of the city, and one of those ways involves crossing an international border that sometimes has long wait times. We have all seen the images coming out of Venezuela with the back to back earthquakes with magnitudes greater than 7.0 leaving death and destruction. In 2010, Haiti was so damaged by an earthquake it brought an international relief effort. Even a country that has architectural codes to withstand earthquakes is not immune to death and destruction. A shopping mall recently collapsed during an earthquake in Japan, and when an earthquake struck the San Francisco Bay Area in 1989, freeways and bridges buckled and fires broke out in parts of the city. Let's see what Isaiah writes in Isaiah twenty-nine verse one.

Isaiah 29:1-8

- 1. Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt! add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices.**
- 2. Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow: and it shall be unto me as Ariel.**
- 3. And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee.**
- 4. And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust.**
- 5. Moreover the multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away: yea, it shall be at an instant suddenly.**
- 6. Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire.**

7. And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision.

8. It shall even be as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite: so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion.

In Revelation, natural disasters are shown, including the most powerful earthquake to ever occur. To date, the most powerful earthquake to ever occur was the 1960 Valdivia earthquake in Chile, which was a magnitude 9.5 earthquake. That disaster killed an estimated 1,655 people and left over two million homeless. It also generated a massive tsunami that caused damage and additional deaths across the Pacific in Hawaii, Japan, and the Philippines. In Hilo, Hawaii, 35 foot waves killed 61 people in the middle of the night. 500 buildings were destroyed and the waves were so intense and powerful that nearly 600 acres of land were flooded. In 2004 a 9.1 magnitude earthquake caused waves higher than 100 feet and killed nearly a quarter million people across fourteen countries. Years later in Japan a similar magnitude earthquake caused a nuclear accident at Fukushima, displacing people from their homes and communities because of nuclear contamination. The earthquake in Revelation is described as being more powerful and accompanied by severe weather. The city described as Babylon is divided by this earthquake into three sections, and cities across the world suffer earthquake damage. The islands are described as fleeing away as the mountains vanish. The tsunami created by this earthquake is so huge islands are destroyed, and the earthquake changes the topography of earth including mountains. Think of the largest hail stone ever recorded. It fell in Vivian, South Dakota in 2010, measuring eight inches, or 20 centimeters, in diameter and weighing nearly two pounds, or slightly less than one kilogram. The hail that comes with this storm will make eight inches and two pounds look like child's play. Revelation sixteen verse seventeen.

Revelation 16:17-21

17. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

18. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

19. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

20. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

21. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

We live in a time when there are wars and rumors of wars. What some might call a war a nation might refer to as a military action, and yet whatever the name what happens looks and feels like war. What was thought of as the Cold War, the fight between communism and democracy, is a great example of a rumor of war. There was no visible fighting, but hidden from common view there was espionage and other forms of covert military action happening. Beyond the wars and rumors of wars with a nation fighting another nation or a kingdom fighting another kingdom, we have seen famine, pandemics, and natural disasters, and all in recent times. The signs of the end of time can be intimidating, and we can take comfort in knowing that Jesus Christ is loyal to God and will be loyal to us. In these times of uncertainty, we need to remain confident in the calling we have been given. When uncertainty causes many to fear and worry, we need to look beyond the uncertainty of today and focus on the certainty of the Kingdom of God to come. When the love of many grows cold, we endure to the end. Hebrews three verse one.

Hebrews 3:1-6

1. Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

2. Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.

3. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.

4. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.

5. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

6. But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

When others look to uncertainty and that uncertainty leads to fear, we look to the certainty of the Kingdom of God to come and the incredible hope that brings us as we endure to the end no matter what this world sees as uncertain and no matter what this world fears because we know that Jesus who was loyal to God the Father will be loyal to us in times of uncertainty. Wars and rumors of wars, and nations and kingdoms fighting each other bring uncertainty to this world as do famine, pandemics, and natural disasters. As we see these events unfold and consider where we are on the timeline of prophecy, we know we are in the end time, and we know we are at the beginning of sorrows. We may live in challenging times that causes this world to worry as uncertainty after uncertainty builds fear. When others see uncertainty and fear, we see the certainty of the Kingdom of God to come and the hope that it brings us, a hope that gives us the determination to endure to the end.

Thank you for joining us today. God-willing we'll get together next time on the Sabbath. Until then, thank you for joining us today.