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Next Weeks Lesson: "Inherit the Kingdom Prepared for You" ([Matthew 25](#))

Today's Lesson: "What is the Sign of Thy Coming?" [Joseph Smith Matthew](#) ([Matt 24](#))

To the righteous who have waited for him and kept his laws, the Second Coming will be a day devoutly to be desired, a day of peace and redemption, a day when injustice will cease and wickedness be banished, a day when the vineyard will be cleansed of corruption and its rightful Ruler reign in the midst of his saints.

1. [Matthew 24](#) contains the Savior's prophecies about the destruction of Jerusalem and about his Second Coming.



Over time, the verses in this chapter have been changed and rearranged, making it sometimes difficult to understand which event a particular verse describes. Fortunately, as part of his inspired translation of the Bible, Joseph Smith clarified the two prophecies and restored additional information. His inspired translation of [Matthew 24](#) is found in [Joseph Smith—Matthew](#) in the [Pearl of Great Price](#).

2. Jesus foretells the impending destruction of Jerusalem. ([Joseph Smith-Matthew 1:1–20](#))

A few days before Jesus was crucified, some of his disciples accompanied him to the Mount of Olives. They

asked him two questions which troubled them.

- A. Question #1. ([Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:4](#)) What was their question?
 - B. The answer that Jesus gave is found in [Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:5–20](#).
 - C. Question #2. ([Joseph Smith-Matthew 1:21-55](#) is the answer to question #2.
3. To understand the Second Coming of Jesus Christ we must first study the events that will be taking place on the earth when he returns.
 4. The Signs of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ: ([Joseph Smith-Matthew](#))
 - A. Sign #1 ([verse 6](#)) False Christ's.
 - B. Sign #2 ([verse 7](#)) Faithful shall be killed.
 - C. Sign #3 ([verse 7](#)) Faithful to be "hated by all nations."

D. Sign #4	(verse 8)	Many shall be offended.
E. Sign #5	(verse 8)	Betray one another.
F. Sign #6	(verse 8)	Hate one another.
G. Sign #7	(verse 9)	False prophets.
H. Sign #8	(verse 10)	Love shall wax cold.
I. Sign #9	(verse 12)	Abomination of desolation.
J. Sign #10	(verse 13)	Judea flee into the mountains.
K. Sign # 11	(verse 18)	Tribulation on the Jews.
L. Sign #12	(verse 20)	Days to be shortened.
M. Sign #13	(verse 23)	Wars and rumors of wars.
N. Sign #14	(verse 29)	Famines.
O. Sign #15	(verse 29)	Pestilence.
P. Sign #16	(verse 29)	Earthquakes.
Q. Sign #17	(verse 31)	Gospel preached in all the world.
R. Sign #18	(verse 33)	Sun shall be darkened.
S. Sign #19	(verse 33)	Moon give no light.
T. Sign #20	(verse 33)	Stars shall fall from heaven.
U. Sign #21	(verse 33)	Powers of heaven shall be shaken.



5. The Second Coming of Christ from Mormon Doctrine, by Bruce R. McConkie

No event has transpired on earth, since the very day of creation itself, which is destined to have such a transcendent and recognizable affect on man, the earth, and all created things as the imminent return of the Son of Man will have.

The scriptures detail the events to attend two different appearances of the Lord among men. One appearance came in the meridian of time when he descended below all things, ministered unto his fellow men, and worked out the infinite and eternal atonement. The other is promised for the last days when, having ascended above all things, he will return in glory, to reign in the midst of his saints.

Finally, in the presence of his disciples, "while they beheld,

he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this

same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." ([Acts 1:9-11](#))

This Second Coming — a return of the same personal Being who first ministered in humility, meekness, and lowliness ([D. & C. 130:1-2](#)) — will be in power and great glory with the hosts of heaven attending. At that day "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." ([Isa. 40:4](#)) He will come, "not in the form of a woman, neither of a man traveling on the earth" ([D. & C. 49:22](#)), but in his might, power, and dominion to take vengeance on the ungodly and reward the righteous.

But before that day, certain promised signs and wonders are to take place, an understanding of which will give those who wait for him an assurance as to the approximate time of his return.

It is true that no man knoweth the day nor the hour of his return — "no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" ([Matt. 24:36](#)), as he himself expressed it — but those who treasure up his word will not be deceived as to the time of that glorious day, nor as to the events to precede and to attend it. ([Jos. Smith 1:37](#)) The righteous will be able to read the signs of the times. To those in darkness he will come suddenly, unexpectedly, "as a thief in the night," but to "the children of light" who "are not of the night, nor of darkness," as Paul expressed it, that day will not overtake them "as a thief." They will recognize the signs as certainly as a woman in travail foreknows the approximate time of her child's birth. ([1 Thess. 5:1-6](#)) Now let us list some of the signs and wonders destined to precede and accompany the Second Coming. Among them are the following:

1. **UNIVERSAL APOSTASY** — Between the original day of our Lord's ministry among men and his glorious Second Coming, there was to be a universal falling away from the faith once delivered to the saints. Darkness was to cover the earth and gross darkness the minds of the people, until the earth would be "defiled under the inhabitants thereof." Men were to transgress the laws, change the ordinances, break the everlasting covenant. It would be "as with the people, so with the priest." ([Isa. 24](#)) There were to be false christs, false prophets, and false doctrines, deceiving, if it were possible, even the very elect. ([Matt. 24](#)) "Let no man deceive you by any means," Paul cautioned the Thessalonian Saints who apparently believed that the Second Coming was even then at the door, "for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." ([2 Thess. 2:1-4](#))
2. **AN ERA OF RESTORATION** — From the beginning prophets have foretold events scheduled to attend the restoration of all things in the last days. Peter, for instance, explained that this age of restoration — an age yet future from his day — would commence prior to the Second Advent of our Lord. Speaking of "the times of refreshing" — that is, the day of the Second Coming, the day when the earth is to be renewed (as part of the restoration of all things) and receive again its paradisiacal glory — he said that the Lord, at that day, would "send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." ([Acts 3:19-21](#)) This era of restoration is the same as the era or period known as the dispensation of the fulness of times in which the Lord has promised to "gather together

in one all things in Christ." ([Eph. 1:10](#))

3. **RESTORATION OF THE GOSPEL** — As part of the restoration of all things, the fulness of the gospel with all its saving powers and graces was to be returned to earth shortly before the great and dreadful day of the Lord. John saw in vision the bringing back of this gospel by angelic ministrations and its proclamation among all peoples. This was to take place just before the hour of God's judgment is come, just before the hour of the return of the Son of Man. ([Rev. 14:6-7](#))

4. **GOSPEL WITNESS TO BE HERALDED TO WORLD** — Not only was the one true gospel to be restored in the last days, but that very gospel — not some perverted fragment of it to be found in the false churches of the world — was to be preached in all the world. "This Gospel of the Kingdom," our Lord said of the restored gospel, "shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come, or the destruction of the wicked." ([Jos. Smith 1:31](#); [Matt. 24:14](#))

If Joseph Smith had not been a prophet, how would he have dared proclaim, at that day of the yet small beginning of this latter-day work, that the very truths of salvation restored through his instrumentality would be heralded to all the world as a witness unto all people that the coming of our Lord was near?

5. **COMING FORTH OF BOOK OF MORMON** — Also as part of the promised restoration of all things, the Book of Mormon was destined to come forth as a sign that the winding up scene is near. Isaiah links together the apostasy, restoration, and coming forth of the Book of Mormon ([Isa. 29](#)); Ezekiel prophesies similarly relative to the Book of Mormon, the latter-day gathering of Israel, and the erection of a holy sanctuary or temple in Jerusalem. ([Ezek. 37](#)) Moroni tells of its coming forth under latter-day conditions that are part of the signs of the times, part of the signs to occur precedent to the coming of our Lord ([Morm. 8](#)); and the resurrected Lord himself taught the Nephites that the coming forth of this mighty record to their descendants would be one of the great signs of the fulfilling of the covenants in the last days. ([3 Ne. 21](#))

6. **RESTORATION OF KINGDOM TO ISRAEL** — In part, at least, the gathering of latter-day Israel is pre-millennial. With the restoration of the gospel (the Church itself as organized on April 6, 1830, being the ecclesiastical kingdom of God on earth) the scattered remnants of Israel have begun to come to a knowledge of their true Shepherd and to return to his fold. The ancient promise was that when this gathered remnant would establish "the house of the God of Jacob" in the last days in the tops of the mountains, with the righteous of all nations flowing unto it, then Christ would come, the millennial era commence, and all nations beat their swords into plowshares. ([Isa. 2:1-4](#))

That will be the day when complete answer will be found to the query, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" ([Acts 1:2-8](#)), for the return of the Messiah will bring the political kingdom of God on earth; then the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever. ([Rev. 11:15](#)) The restoration of the keys of the gathering of Israel by Moses to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on April 3, 1836, causes us to know that the fulfillment of all the covenants made to ancient Israel is soon to come to pass. ([D. & C. 110:11](#))

7. **COMING OF ELIJAH** — When Elijah came to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on April 3, 1836, in fulfillment of the ancient promise ([Mal. 4:5-6](#)), that ancient prophet concluded his bestowal of the keys of the sealing power with this assurance: "By this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors." ([D. & C. 110:13-16](#)) If that day was near in 1836, how much more so is it today?
8. **MESSENGER BEFORE LORD'S FACE** — "Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me," the Lord declared through Malachi relative to his glorious Second Coming, "even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts." Thereafter: "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple." ([Mal. 3](#)) Both Joseph Smith through whom the everlasting covenant was restored (and John the Baptist who ministered unto him) and the gospel covenant itself have been sent in fulfillment of this promise. ([D. & C. 45:9](#))
9. **SIGNS OF THE TIMES TO BE FULFILLED** — Many revelations summarize the signs and world conditions, the wars, perils, and commotions of the last days. Preceding our Lord's return, the prophetic word tells of plagues, pestilence, famine, and disease such as the world has never before seen; of scourges, tribulation, calamities, and disasters without parallel; of strife, wars, rumors of wars, blood, carnage, and desolation which overshadow anything of past ages; of the elements being in commotion with resultant floods, storms, fires, whirlwinds, earthquakes — all of a proportion and intensity unknown to men of former days; of evil, iniquity, wickedness, turmoil, rapine, murder, crime, and commotion among men almost beyond comprehension. ([Matt. 24](#); [Luke 21](#); [D. & C. 29](#); [43](#); [45](#); [86](#); [87](#); [88:86-98](#); [133](#); [Jos. Smith 1](#); [Mal. 3](#); [4](#))
10. **GREAT SIGNS IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH** — "He that feareth me shall be looking forth for the great day of the Lord to come, even for the signs of the coming of the Son of Man. And they shall see signs and wonders, for they shall be shown forth in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath. And they shall behold blood, and fire, and vapors of smoke. And before the day of the Lord shall come, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon be turned into blood, and the stars fall from heaven." ([D. & C. 45:39-42](#); [29:14](#); [Joel 2:30-31](#); [Matt. 24:29](#))
11. **THE GENERATION OF OUR LORD'S RETURN** — True it is that the day and hour of our Lord's coming are and will remain unknown, such being an incentive to all to watch and be ready at all times. But true it also is that those who watch for that great and dread day are expected to read the signs of the times so as to know the approximate time of his coming. President Wilford Woodruff taught that we do know the generation when he will come. (Discourses of Wilford Woodruff, p. 253)
12. **LORD'S SUDDEN COMING TO HIS TEMPLE** — Malachi recorded the promise, speaking of latter-day events, that "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple." ([Mal. 3:1](#)) Certainly the Almighty is not limited in the number of appearances and returns to earth needed to fulfil the scriptures, usher in the final dispensation, and consummate his great latter-day work.

This sudden latter-day appearance in the temple does not have reference to his appearance at the great and dreadful day, for that coming will be when he sets his foot upon the Mount of Olivet in the midst of the final great war. The temple appearance was fulfilled, in part at least, by his return to the Kirtland Temple on April 3, 1836; and it may

well be that he will come again, suddenly, to others of his temples, more particularly that which will be erected in Jackson County, Missouri.

In this connection it is worthy of note that whenever and wherever the Lord appears, he will come suddenly, that is "quickly, in an hour you think not." ([D. & C. 51:20](#)) His oft repeated warning, "Behold, I come quickly" ([D. & C. 35:27](#)), means that when the appointed hour arrives, he will come with a speed and a suddenness which will leave no further time for preparation for that great day.

13. THE COMING AT ADAM-ONDI-AHMAN. — Before the great and dreadful day of the Lord; before the day when Christ is to come and reign personally on earth as King of kings and Lord of lords; before the day when he will administer the affairs of his earthly kingdom in a direct, personal manner, and not through the type of stewardships which now prevail; our Lord will come to receive back the keys and authorities whereunder his stewards have governed for him. This will take place at Adam-ondi-Ahman, which is Spring Hill, Daviess County, Missouri. ([D. & C. 116](#))

Daniel wrote of the Son of Man being brought before the Ancient of Days (who is Adam, our Father), and there our Lord would have "given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." ([Dan. 7:9-14](#))

This is the occasion of which the Prophet Joseph Smith speaks when he says that Adam "will call his children together and hold a council with them to prepare them for the coming of the Son of Man. He (Adam) is the father of the human family, and presides over the spirits of all men, and all that have had the keys must stand before him in the grand council. This may take place before some of us leave this stage of action. The Son of Man stands before him, and there is given him glory and dominion. Adam delivers up his stewardship to Christ, that which was delivered to him as holding the keys of the universe, but retains his standing as the head of the human family." (Teachings, p. 157; Way to Perfection, pp. 287-291.) After this has happened Christ will be ready to come and reign personally on earth.

14. PHYSICAL CHANGES OF EARTH AT SECOND COMING — Great changes are in store for the earth and all things on its face when our Lord comes in glory. "Not many days hence and the earth shall tremble and reel to and fro as a drunken man." ([D. & C. 88:87](#)) "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." ([Isa. 40:4-5](#); [D. & C. 49:23](#); [Ezek. 38:19-20](#))

The Lord "shall command the great deep, and it shall be driven back into the north countries, and the islands shall become one land; And the land of Jerusalem and the land of Zion shall be turned back into their own place, and the earth shall be like as it was in the days before it was divided. And the Lord, even the Savior, shall stand in the midst of his people, and shall reign over all flesh." ([D. & C. 133:23-25](#)) This will be the day when there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, when the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory when the great millennium will be ushered in. ([Isa. 65:17-25](#); [D. & C. 101:23-32](#); [Tenth Article of Faith](#))

15. ARMAGEDDON: "THE BATTLE OF THAT GREAT DAY OF GOD ALMIGHTY" ([Rev. 16:14-21](#)) — The greatest war, slaughter, carnage, bloodshed, and desolation of all the

ages will be in full swing at the very hour when Christ returns. "There shall be a time of trouble," says Daniel, "such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time." ([Dan. 12:1](#))

All the nations of the earth shall be gathered at Jerusalem, at Armageddon, in the valley of Jehoshaphat, the valley of decision. It will be "A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains." The hosts of Gog and Magog, the armies assembled to battle, shall be "a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them." ([Joel 2:2-3](#))

Jerusalem "shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished" ([Zech. 14:2](#)), and all things shall be in commotion. Then shall the Lord set his foot upon the Mount of Olives, fight the battles of his saints, take vengeance on the wicked, bring peace to the earth, and reign as "king over all the earth." ([Ezek. 38; 39; Dan. 11; 12; Joel 2; 3; Zech. 12; 13; 14; D. & C. 133](#))

16. THE GREAT AND DREADFUL DAY OF THE LORD — To the wicked the Second Coming will be a great and dreadful day, a day of sorrow and desolation, a day of burning and vengeance, a day of judgment which the wicked shall not abide. "For the presence of the Lord shall be as the melting fire that burneth, and as the fire which causeth the waters to boil. O Lord, thou shalt come down to make thy name known to thine adversaries, and all nations shall tremble at thy presence — When thou doest terrible things, things they look not for....

"And it shall be said: Who is this that cometh down from God in heaven with dyed garments; yea, from the regions which are not known, clothed in his glorious apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? And he shall say: I am he who spake in righteousness, mighty to save.

"And the Lord shall be red in his apparel, and his garments like him that treadeth in the wine-vat. And so great shall be the glory of his presence that the sun shall hide his face in shame, and the moon shall withhold its light, and the stars shall be hurled from their places.

"And his voice shall be heard: I have trodden the winepress alone, and have brought judgment upon all people; and none were with me; And I have trampled them in my fury, and I did tread upon them in mine anger, and their blood have I sprinkled upon my garments, and stained all my raiment; for this was the day of vengeance which was in my heart. ([D. & C. 133:41-51](#))

17. THE YEAR OF THE LORD'S REDEEMED — To the righteous who have waited for him and kept his laws, the Second Coming will be a day devoutly to be desired, a day of peace and redemption, a day when injustice will cease and wickedness be banished, a day when the vineyard will be cleansed of corruption and its rightful Ruler reign in the midst of his saints. "Yea, when thou comest down, and the mountains flow down at thy presence, thou shalt meet him who rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, who remembereth thee in thy ways. For since the beginning of the world have not men heard nor perceived by the ear, neither hath any eye seen, O God, besides thee, how great things thou hast prepared for him that waiteth for thee....

"And now the year of my redeemed is come; and they shall mention the loving kindness of their Lord, and all that he has bestowed upon them according to his

goodness, and according to his loving kindness, forever and ever." ([D. & C. 133:44-62](#))

18. PLACES OF THE LORD'S RETURN — These are many. He has already come suddenly to his temple. ([Mal. 3:1](#); [D. & C. 36:8](#); [110](#)) Soon he will meet with his stewards, who have held the keys of his kingdom, at Adam-ondi-Ahman. ([D. & C. 116](#); [Dan. 7:9-14](#)) In the midst of the greatest war of all the ages, when all nations are gathered together at Jerusalem, "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley." ([Zech. 14:3-4](#))

Following this, apparently he will make many successive appearances in all parts of the earth. "For behold, he shall stand upon the mount of Olivet, and upon the mighty ocean, even the great deep, and upon the islands of the sea, and upon the land of Zion. And he shall utter his voice out of Zion, and he shall speak from Jerusalem, and his voice shall be heard among all people." ([D. & C. 133:20-21](#))

19. VINEYARD TO BE BURNED AT HIS COMING — Malachi asked: "Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?" ([Mal. 3:2](#)) In answer he said that Christ would come in judgment and be a swift witness against sorcerers, adulterers, false swearers, and all who live after the manner of the world, all who live a telestial law. All these — the proud and the wicked — would be as stubble when "the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven." ([Mal. 3](#); [4](#))

Using the same type of language as Malachi had done, the Lord in our day announced: "Behold, now it is called today until the coming of the Son of Man, and verily it is a day of sacrifice, and a day for the tithing of my people; for he that is tithed shall not be burned at his coming. For after today cometh the burning — this is speaking after the manner of the Lord — for verily I say, tomorrow all the proud and they that do wickedly shall be as stubble; and I will burn them up, for I am the Lord of Hosts; and I will not spare any that remain in Babylon. Wherefore, if ye believe me, ye will labor while it is called today." ([D. & C. 64:23-25](#))

Every corruptible thing shall be consumed in this day of burning. The elements shall melt with fervent heat and all things shall become new, that is, the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory. ([D. & C. 101:23-31](#))

20. RESURRECTION AND JUDGMENT ATTEND SECOND COMING — At his coming, the Lord will sit in judgment on all nations, dividing the sheep from the goats, sending some to everlasting punishment and others to life eternal. ([Matt. 25:31-46](#)) At his coming, also, those who have earned the right to come forth in the resurrection of the just will rise from their graves and inherit their places in a celestial or a terrestrial kingdom. ([D. & C. 88:95-99](#))

21. WATCH AND BE READY — "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." ([Luke 21:34-36](#))