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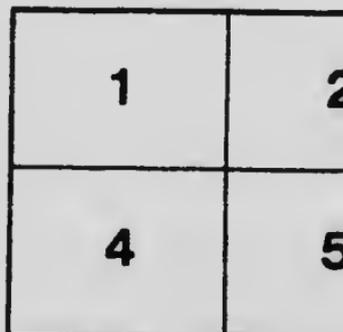
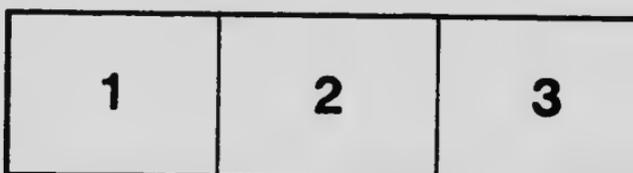
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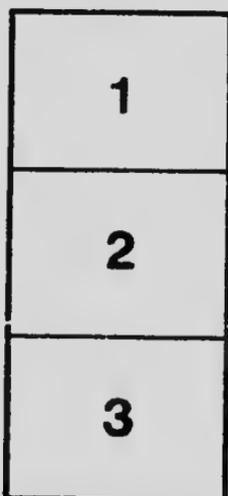
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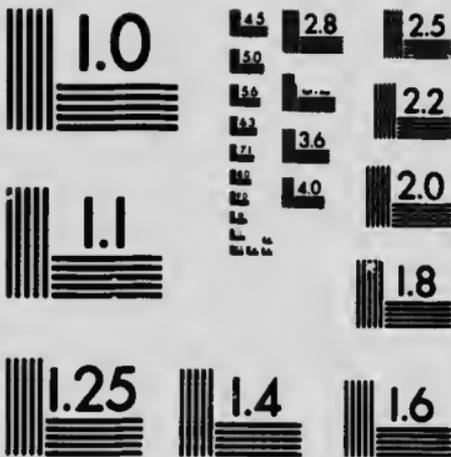
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How and When will the World End ?

UNITED CHURCH
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BY
REV. JAMES L. GORDON, D.D.
Pastor Central Congregational Church
Winnipeg, Manitoba

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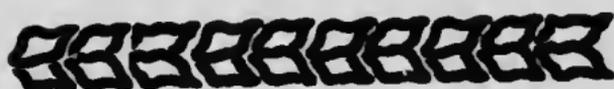
CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR



The following will be the subject of the address by Mrs. H. R. Hadcock, Ph.B., at the Christian Endeavor meeting, Monday, April 20th, at 8.00 p.m.

LEO TOLSTOI

The Grand Old Man of Russia



"How and When will the World End."

Text—Matt 24:3.

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?

Strange as it may seem, humanity has always been possessed with the idea that soon or later the world must come to an end. There has never been an age, so far as literature records the story of human experience, which has not produced a prophet who predicted "the end of all things."

Two opposing notions have perpetually struggled for supremacy in the imagination of mankind. First, the theory of a coming golden age; second, the thought of an impending universal disaster which would crush the earth and destroy the race.

Every great thought has two extreme possibilities. There is a nadir and zenith to every human cogitation. We cannot look down without thinking of that which is above nor can we look up without a shivering thought of that which is below. The heart of the race has always fluctuated between dread fear and glad hope.

To our narrow and childish way of thinking the idea of a personal God seems to necessitate the theory of a personal devil. Paradise must be complimented with perdition. Health must be known by being placed in contrast with disease. Life must give birth to an overshadowing fear of death. The rich man is more miserable than the poor man, for the reason that the poor man has nothing to lose, while the rich man may be deceived, defrauded, robbed, cheated and commercially befooled and hoodwinked.

He is a wise philosopher who can discern between the ocean of clear thought, deep, wide, profound and unchangeable and the wild tempestuous atmosphere of our emotions generated by the conflicting circumstances of the cloud and sunshine, wind and wave.

Hope is the saving factor in human thought. Without hope there would be no plan, program or prophecy. We live by hope. Hope rules the day. Hope illuminates the night. Hope is normal: fear is abnormal. Let us enthroned the faith that there is a sense in which it is ever and always true that "whatever is, is right," and that

whatever may happen will be in harmony with the final consummation of the divine thought.

That the world will "come to an end," some time, we have no doubt whatever. The fashion of this world passeth away. Matter is transient. Only spirit endures. That which has had a beginning must have an end. There will come a time "when time shall be no more." Moons wear out. Suns burn out. Stars flash out. Constellations disappear. All material forms must, in the end, be spiritualized and disappear.

Our theme presents two questions of practical value and of intense interest. First, How will the world come to an end? Second, When will the world come to an end? Science has an answer for the first and Scripture has an answer for the second. Science and Scripture—two splendid volumes! And as between the settled and assured results of science on the one hand, and a sane and reasonable interpretation of the great underlying and fundamental truths of Scripture on the other hand, there can be no conflict, confusion or lack of agreement. Science writes the story from the mountain base to the mountain peak. Scripture begins with the spiritual and ends with the natural.

There are seven ways in which the world may come to an end—and when we speak of the "world" we have two things in mind, namely, the planet itself and (apart from the planet) the race of human beings which exists upon it. The destruction of the planet would involve the destruction of the people who reside upon it. But the passing away of the race, for any cause, normal or abnormal, would practically be "the end of the world," even though the planet still continued to swing and whirl through space. In seeking an answer we contemplate both possibilities. The world will "come to an end" in one of seven different ways.

First. The world may come to an end through a planetary accident. An astronomical "railroad accident," and smash up would end two worlds at once. That such disasters have occurred in the past we have no doubt whatever. The universe as we find it and have it is evidently the result of an evolutionary process which included, in the early stages, every form of planetary disaster, catastrophe, accident and upheaval. What has happened in the past may happen again in the future. Save only that the law of probability would seem to indicate that "the accident period" for planet, sun and constellation, so far as one striking the other is concerned, has passed.

Whatever accident may occur to the planet which we call "The Earth" will probably come from within and not from without. The material universe moving upon the wheels of involution and revolution has probably ground down to the smallest possible proportions all possible chance of disorder and disarrangement. The material universe is evidently tending toward permanency and stability. The longer the heavens endure, the stronger is the probability that they will continue to endure. All created things indicate a quality of "fixedness." And while every bit of matter is moving and going somewhere, it seems to follow a law which indicates intelligence and design.

Second. The world may come to an end by losing its anchorage and slipping away from the Sun. The Earth occupies a unique position in its relationship to the Sun. If the Earth were nearer the Sun we would all be "colored people." If the Earth were farther away from the Sun there would be no people on the planet, colored or otherwise. The Earth occupies exactly the right position in nearness to and distance from the Sun to produce and sustain a race of human beings. One brief and swift lunge outward from the burning orb of day and we would all be in "cold storage" where no life could exist. Let such an accident happen and all created beings, germ, microbe, animal and man, would be wrapped up in the cold night of the darkest polar expedition which ever shot its snow drifts across the weird spaces of an artistic imagination. The world may come to an end through extreme cold and frost.

Third. The world might come to an end through an application of intense heat, caused by the Earth girdling too near the Sun. Even the development of sun-spots on the surface of the Sun results in such tremendous heat waves as to seriously embarrass the commerce of the world and the general activities of the race. And the Sun is after us all the while: its burning lips lick up the floating vapors of the sea and its hot hand never relinquishes, night and day, as with a secret power known only to the One who has created the law of gravitation, it seeks to lift up our helpless little planet into the fierce atmosphere of its own burning bosom and fiery breath. In fact such a catastrophe is hinted at in Scripture. For we read in II Peter III 10: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

Fourth. The world, if it ever does

end from causes which are wholly physical, will probably be destroyed by a tremendous interior convulsion such as an earthquake or a volcanic eruption. We know that the earth is on fire. There is not an hour of the day or night when the thrill and throb of an earthquake is not registered in the halls of science. There are three kinds of planetary worlds—the Sun is a world on fire and in conflagration, the Moon is a world in which all the fires have died out, the Earth is a world in which the fires are "banked for the night" and if not furnished with fresh fuel will probably die out. But there is no denying the possibility of the Earth's destruction through a terrible earthquake. We are sitting upon a volcano whose power may be made manifest at any time. The world may come to an end through unlooked for and unexpected interior convulsion.

Fifth. There is a remote possibility of the world coming to an end through man's exhaustion of the Earth's supply of fuel and food. We are building cities and destroying forests. We are robbing the Earth of its oil and the air of its electricity. We are changing the natural conditions which surround us without any definite scientific knowledge of what the result may be. We may dig out so much radi- as to seriously embarrass the working machinery of the material realm in which we live. This we regard as a possibility which is exceedingly remote. But there is a bare chance that man through applied thought and inventive skill may cut off the limb of the tree between the outer foliage on which he sits and the inner trunk which guarantees to the race all the supplies necessary to life and health. Who knows?

Sixth. The world may come to an end through the general decline and deterioration of the race. There is a possibility of the race dying of sheer old age. It has been remarked, again and again, that the evolution of the race has followed the stages which are manifested in the growth of an individual. Infancy, childhood, youth, maturity and old age mark the evolutionary steps in the flowering and fruitage of a normal life. Why should not the analogy find a realization in the history of the race? Individuals die, nations die, civilizations die, and die from old age. Why should not the race die from sheer old age? Every invention which leads to the luxury and convenience of our civilization tends toward a weakening of the muscle and a relaxation of the brain-fibre. The more we know the less we live. May not a superfine civilization produce a dying race? A manhood without muscle and a womanhood without children would open the door for the final exit of humanity.

Seventh. The world might come to an end through the spiritualization of the race. Profound thought tends toward the spiritualization of the physical man. There is a possibility of the whole race being translated as was Enoch, Elijah and Jesus. The most transforming power in the universe is thought and man possesses that power. To be "caught up together with the Lord in the air" may be a scientific fact yet to be demonstrated. We have yet to enter the Spiritual Age. To test and know the powers of the spiritual realm. The brightest ending which can be predicted for the world is in the possibility of the entronement of spiritual forces to such an extent and degree as will open the door for the transformation and translation of the entire human family; whose sudden and complete exit would leave our dear old planet as a worn out and useless thing, rolling through the fields of space. This would be a happy ending to all things temporal. And we simply add that if an individual can be translated, there is no reason why the entire race should not be. Death is not the only door through which we may escape from this world.

• • •

We now turn our attention to the second question, which perhaps is the more interesting question: "When will the world end?" Our most positive way of answering this question is in the negative form. The world will not come to an end until certain great Scriptural prophecies have been fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not until the prophecies of the Bible and the words of Jesus have been fulfilled. I shall therefore mention these prophecies, one by one, and predict that this old world will go rolling on until God has had time to "make good" on every clear and distinct prophetic utterance of Scripture.

The world will not come to an end until man's dream of a golden age has been fulfilled. That prophecy is wrought into the very fabric of the human mind. It is the very essence of hope and the climax of all anticipation. Every human dream is a prophecy of a glorious fulfillment. All things which we have ever desired or dreamed of are coming to pass. We once dreamed of lightning transportation, and it is here. We once dreamed of flying through the air, and the conquest of the atmospheric regions is well-nigh complete. We have dreamed of a world without pain or sickness or disease or death, and we have been encouraged in our dreaming because of certain oft-repeated scriptural predictions. "And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." These words are not descriptive of heaven, but of earth. Mark the words: "I, John, saw the Holy City, New Jeru-

salem, coming down from God out of heaven." John had a vision of a three-fold character—a city, a citizen, and a civilization. Prophecies which cannot be fulfilled on earth have little interest for mortals who are time-bound and held in by the limitations of matter and space. All Scripture is alive with the thought of a coming golden age, and the world will not come to an end until that ideal has been realized.

The world will not come to an end until knowledge has become universal. "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." The "knowledge of the Lord" is not so-called religious knowledge, but the knowledge of the universal operations of the divine mind in nature and man. We shall have a democracy of knowledge and education before the world is ready for its final chapter. Every spelling book, text book, school house, school teacher, academy, college, university, and newspaper is a fulfilment and a fulfiller of prophecy.

The world will not come to an end until man has learned his last lesson. The world is God's school house and it will not be closed up or torn down until the last scholar has graduated. We are here to make a beginning. Endings belong to God. God is waiting for man to learn his lesson. Froude said to Carlyle: "Remember that God reigns," but Carlyle impatiently replied: "Yes, God reigns, but He sits in the heavens and does nothing." But Carlyle's criticism was unfair. There is nothing for God to do. God waits for man. God believes in man. God trusts in man. God honors man—by waiting for him.

There has never been a great step taken in human progress that man did not take that step. When God would save the world He sent, not an angel, but the Son of Man. For every great achievement God waits until He finds the right man. "I have found David," the record reads, and with the finding of David there came the dawning of a new civilization. God waits for man. Winnipeg will be cleaned up when the Christian people wake up, and not before. God will not save Manitoba. Manitoba must save itself. We are here to learn our lesson, and to do our work, and "school will keep" until the work is done and the last lesson learned. God can wait. Nothing will "end" until the divine text book has been mastered.

The world will not end until every species of human pain has ceased. "There shall be no more pain." The vital thing is not to heal disease, but to learn the lesson of health and vitality. Man is responsible for every disease which flesh is heir to. What we need is knowledge, not medicine.

The best kind of treatment is self-treatment. The secret of life is hid in the body. The secret of vitality is located somewhere in the brain. Christ discovered all His miracle-working power by a scientific study of His body and brain. We shall some day have a school of doctors who will be able to heal themselves and therefore prove themselves experts in curing the ills of the race.

The world will not end until the age of democracy has been enthroned. "I will make a man more precious than fine gold." Man's contempt for man is the mystery and wonder of the ages. But the spirit of democracy must conquer in the end. When God makes a man He makes him a democrat. Jesus was the divine democrat. Every prophet was a man of the people — a democrat. When God creates a universe, He cradles it in laws which are democratic. The very atmosphere we breathe is democratic — for we read: "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Aristocracies are useless things unless they go down kindly after they have gone up socially. Get that?

The world will not come to an end until every corner of the globe has been evangelized. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come." Mark the sweep of the phrases of Jesus—"the whole world"—"all the nations." Jesus taught the world to think internationally. He had a great gospel; not a little "scheme of salvation" that could be put in a pin-hole. God has a national as well as an individual plan. "Before Him shall be gathered all nations." No man is saved until society is saved, and no society is either safe or saved while one individual remains lost. You are not saved unless you have become a saviour.

"Nations!"—"all nations" — God always reads the column devoted to "foreign news." He is interested in "the nations." And He will not permit this planet to go to pieces by outer accident or inner convulsion until every nation on its broad surface shall have had an opportunity to hear and answer the gospel call. The gospel must be sent to the end of the world before the world will come to an end. Let the nations hear it, for, as Matthew Arnold once said "The nations which follow in the line of Jesus shall stand and the nations which refuse to follow in the line of Jesus shall fall." Evangelize the nations!

God tried to produce an ideal nation before He produced an ideal man. This world will live long enough to produce an ideal nation.

The world will not come to an end until war has passed away. "Nations shall learn war no more." War is a game to be learned and the people are growing sick of the game. The world will last long enough for nations to outgrow their international childishness. Think of it! Nations armed to the teeth until peace costs more than war. No wonder that Woodrow Wilson hesitates to advance on Mexico. The beautiful, blooming Mexico jungle is scarcely worth an international quarrel.

The world will not come to an end until the Kingdom of God has been established on the earth. How do I know? Listen!—"For in the days of those kings, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; it shall stand for ever." Plain language that! The final triumph of right is as certain as the operations of the law of gravitation. You say, "Mr. Gordon, what's the use?" What is the use of praying, talking, working, laboring, giving and planning? Things do not improve. What's the use? But I go to the Bible and find, therein, an all sufficient answer: "Forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Some day the last saloon will be closed and the last den of debauchery exterminated. Some day the last enemy will be destroyed and the last sin assassinated. Some day the last grave will be dug and the last funeral procession will pass by and be gone forever. Some day the last sigh will be transformed into a shout of victory and the last shadow lost in the brightness of an eternal dawning.

The world will not come to an end until the plan of God has been consummated. God has a plan and all the devils that ever figured in the imagination of superstitious humanity, if alive, actual and real, would not interfere with the execution of that plan. I speak reverently, but God is the most righteously and divinely stubborn, determined self-willed (although not self-centred) personality in the universe. He hath fore-ordained whatsoever shall and should come to pass. God never gambles. God never takes any chances. Yonder blooming apple tree yielded ten thousand seeds and each one of those ten thousand seeds is a divine guarantee that the earth will grow a new apple tree. With as great care and caution has God ordained and fore-ordained the emancipation of the race. The salvation of humanity was guaranteed before ever the race was created. Creation was not an accident nor humanity a divine afterthought. Mark the words of John in his great "Revelation": "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The world will be "worth while" before God gets through with

It. He will have his way. Whatever ought to be, in the end will be.

The world will not come to an end until God has been justified in history. The blood of the martyrs demand the reconstruction of the verdicts of history. Witness Joan of Arc, standing amid the smoke and fire of a fearful execution and exclaiming: "My Jesus, My Jesus, My Voices, My Voices!" Surely God will answer that cry! Somewhere, before the world ends, you will find God's answer to that appeal, written in characters of light, upon the page of history. Robert G. Ingersoll affirmed that the martyrs were fools; that any man was a fool who would lay down his life for a principle. And infidelity has lived up to that foolish statement of Ingersoll. Infidelity has nothing to die for; no Bible to read; no hymns to sing; no prayers to repeat; no altars to dedicate; no institutions to preserve and little history to write. But the story of the Christian centuries has been written in blood and blood speaketh unto heaven. The world will last until every righteous ideal has been enthroned and every mean, miserable and unholy error has been driven from the earth. God and good will be justified in history.

The world will not end until Jesus Christ has been crowned King of Kings and Lord of Lords. That must happen. Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. The day will come when the kings, czars and emperors of all kingdoms, dominions and empires will crown Him. The day will come when the presidents of all republics will ascribe glory unto His name. The day will come when the representatives of all tribes, nations, and sovereignties will bow in His presence. When the Archbishop of Canterbury preached before Queen Victoria on the subject of The Second Coming of Christ, the good queen called the archbishop into her presence and thanking him for his discourse, exclaimed: "I wish that Christ would return to the earth during my reign." And when the venerable man of God inquired why she expressed such a fervent wish, the noble sovereign replied: "Oh, I should like, so much, to lay my crown at His feet." May God grant to the dynasty of Victoria a thousand years of history as bright and glorious as her own.

The vital thing is to begin and not to end. We are at the beginning of things—the beginning of theology, the beginning of geology, the beginning of astronomy, the beginning of biology, the beginning of botany. We have not yet written one complete line of ancient history. The real truth is, we have not yet learned how to write. All

things are new. This is the first chapter, not the last. This is not the twilight, but the dawning of the morning. The stars are still singing their day break song.

Out of the shadows of the night
The world rolls into light;
It is daybreak everywhere.



THE BULLETIN

"Lee Tolstoi," one of the most interesting and outstanding figures in modern times, will be the subject of an address by Mrs. H. R. Hadcock, at the Young People's meeting on Monday evening at 8 o'clock. I hope a large number of the friends who do not, as a rule, attend this Monday night meeting, will take this as a personal invitation to listen to an exceptional speaker on a great and interesting character.

The Easter services were high water mark for Central. Six hundred and seventy-five took communion at the close of the morning service; 85 came into the fellowship of the church. Out of this number 64 were on confession of faith and 21 by letter from other churches from near and far, consisting of nine Presbyterians, five Church of Scotland, one United Free Church of Scotland, four Congregationalists and two Methodists. Out of the 64 who came in on confession of faith, 41 were graduates from the Sunday school. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

Our Sunday school is a great institution. We would be delighted to have some of you older folk pay us a visit just any time. In fact, our Adult Bible class would be an excellent place for you to spend an hour on Sunday afternoon.

"The Aristocracy of Girlhood" sounds like a topic of unusual interest, especially when one finds that it is Mrs. E. W. Hamilton who is going to deal with it on Sunday afternoon at the Young Women's class. Get there as near 3:15 as you can so as to secure a seat. This is an opportunity which no young woman can afford to miss. We are indebted to this class for the refreshments tastily served on Wednesday evening and which gave the service such a happy and helpful finish. We were able to meet quite a number of people we should otherwise have missed. We thank the young ladies heartily.

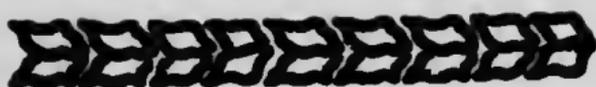
Redwood Avenue Mission school meets every Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock. It will pay you to visit this bright spot of activity.

The Ladies' Aid will hold a sewing meeting in the ladies parlor on Wednesday afternoon at 3 o'clock. Any of the ladies of the church and congregation will be warmly welcomed.

Remember the social service conducted by the Associate Pastor in the church parlors on Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock.

Let me suggest a short Bible study. Prov. iii. 9, II Cor. 9, 6, I Cor. 16, 2. Our phone number is Church Office, Garry 1044. We would be glad to explain further.

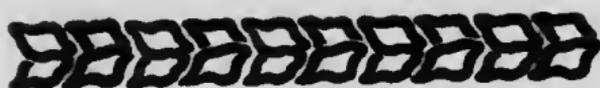
ERNEST F. WEEKS,
Associate Pastor.



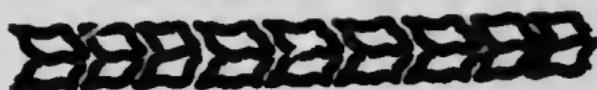
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The Publication Committee wish to express their thanks to those who responded so promptly to their request for new subscribers to Dr. Gordon's published sermons. From Feb. 1 to March 8 we received 154 additional subscriptions. In order that the work may be self-sustaining we need 500 more subscriptions at \$1 each. We wish also to call your attention to Dr. Gordon's new book, "All's Love Yet All's Law," copies of which will be available in a few days. The price will be \$1.25 with postage 10c extra. The book will be sent and sermons mailed for one year for \$2.35. Dr. Gordon has kindly arranged that all profits from books ordered in this way will go to the Publishing Fund.

Address all communications to Miss K. D. Young, secretary, Central Congregational Church, Hargrave and Qu'Appelle streets, or to W. E. Skinner, secretary Publishing Committee, 204 Sterling Bank Bldg., Winnipeg.



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