

I read to you from Mat. 24:44 where he stressed the importance of being ready for Him when he comes, and the fact that he may come unexpectedly, and at such a time when we don't expect Him. In that very same ch. the Lord had given a picture of a vista of years running ahead. I'd like to glance quickly at a few verses.

Mat. 24:3-9 As Jesus was sitting on the mount of olives his disciples came to him privately and said, Tell us, When will this happen? and what will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age? Jesus said, What out that no one deceives you for many will come in my name claiming I am the Christ and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars but see to it that you are not alarmed for such things must happen but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birthpangs. Many will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death and you will be hated by all nations because of me.

He said there would be wars and rumors of wars. Augustine lived in one of the most Christian lands of the world. N. Africa was the very center of Christian life. There were hundreds of churches there. A very active Christian life there but it was practically wiped out. in the next few years and today ~~xxxx~~ a missionary goes to N. Africa and he spends maybe 30 years there and if he has two converts who are ready to sayx publically they have accepted Christ, he is a remarkable missionary. That is one of the most ~~xxxx~~ difficult areas for missionary work. A great civilized Christian area has been wiped out.

In fact you look at the great Roman civilization which existed during the years ~~x~~ up to the time of ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Augustine. You look at that tremendous civilization, with its network of roads, with its control from the center making it possible for its people to travel in peace through a distance from Asia clear over to Britain. You look at that great civilization that was there, probably nine-tenths of the people able to read and write. Within 50 or 100 years there would not be one in twenty probably who could read and write. The dark ages descended upon Europe.

What is ahead now? We hear on every hand "Peace, peace." But the Bible says, They cry peace, peace when there is no peace. The Catholic of the U.S. are even now in session and they say it is practically certain by a large vote they are going to pass an action calling upon the governmnet of the U.S. to do away with altogether with nuclear arms. We don't want war; we want peace. Of course none of us want war; we want peace. If theyx could persuade the Russian government to do away with their nuclear arms they would be doing a very great service, to the world. But their action, we can be sure, will not affect the Russian Government in any way.

During these last few days, I have come to a conviction, a conviction that unless my reading of conditions of the situation is very very wrong, we Christians have very difficult times to go through.