



*"Mark is a well-qualified prophecy expert
to examine the popular blood moons prophecy."*

DR. TIM LAHAYE
bestselling coauthor of the Left Behind series

BLOOD

BIBLE PROPHECY, ISRAEL, AND

MOONS

THE FOUR BLOOD MOONS

RISING



MARK HITCHCOCK

BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF THE END



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The history of the world is about to change forever, and God is sending us messages on His high-definition billboard by speaking to us in the heavens—using the Four Blood Moons; the question is . . . are we listening? . . .

The next Tetrad will end in September 2015, which will include the Year of Shemittah. Will a crisis happen as before? What earthshaking event will it be? This we know: things are about to change forever! . . .

The Shemittah year and Feast of Tabernacles begin at sunset September 25, 2014. These occurrences are not coincidental! This is the hand of God orchestrating the signs in the heavens. The final Four Blood Moons are signaling that something big is coming . . . something that will change the world forever.

—JOHN HAGEE, *FOUR BLOOD MOONS: SOMETHING IS ABOUT TO CHANGE* [\[1\]](#)

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PREFACE

I FIRST HEARD about the relationship between blood moons, the feasts of Israel, and the end times in the early fall of 2008 at a prophecy conference. During his presentation, one of the other speakers presented the view that a coming “blood moon” (lunar eclipse) that fell in close proximity to the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles signaled the soon coming of the Lord. Careful not to be labeled a date setter, the presenter constantly hedged his bets, yet he all but said this was a harbinger of the end or that the even more significant blood moon occurrence in 2014–2015 would signal the end.

Then, in October 2013, I had the privilege to speak at the largest annual prophecy conference in the United States, and questions about the relationship between the four blood moons in 2014–2015 came up several times in the question-and-answer session and while talking to individuals.

About the same time, John Hagee’s book *Four Blood Moons* was released, becoming an instant bestseller. By the time this book is published, Mark Biltz will have released his book *Blood Moons: Decoding the Imminent Heavenly Signs*. In 2007 Pastor Biltz first discovered the correlation between when blood moons fell on Jewish feast days and key historical world events involving the Jewish people. He claimed to have found the divine link or intersection between biblical prophecy, historical events, and heavenly signs.

Being a student of Bible prophecy, I was of course interested, so I watched several videos of Mark Biltz’s teaching about the blood moons prophecy and the Jewish feasts and read *Four Blood Moons* to learn what the furor was all about. I agree with many things in John Hagee’s *Four Blood Moons* about God’s future plan for national Israel, the Rapture, the Second Coming, and our need to be ready at any time for the Lord’s return. I also deeply appreciate his commitment to the Jewish people and passion to bless them, in keeping with Genesis 12:1-3. Yet when it comes to his analysis of the four blood moons and their relationship to Scripture, history, and the end times, I disagree with his interpretation of some Scriptures and the conclusions he draws from the historical data. My view is that much of what people are saying today about blood moons is based on speculation and a misinterpretation of Scripture.

Blood Moons Rising will examine in the light of Scripture the view that many well-known prophecy teachers are presenting. In this book I will disagree with fellow believers, but my disagreement is not intended to be personal. I appreciate others who give their lives to ministry for Christ and His body, and I don’t claim to have it all figured out when it comes to end-times prophecy. When I disagree, I hope to do so in an irenic spirit.

My goal is to present what I believe Scripture says about the end times, examine the historical evidence for the blood moons prophecy, and leave you to make your own decision. I used to be an attorney, so I want to make my case, present the evidence, and let you render your own verdict.

My prayer is that the Lord will use this book to help bring greater clarity about what lies ahead as we await the coming of the Lord, and stir within each heart a readiness for that day.




THE FINAL FOUR?



What a time to take the news of the day in one hand and the Bible in the other and watch the unfolding of the great drama of the ages come together. This is an exciting and thrilling time to be alive. . . . It is not just Christians that sense something is about to happen. The world knows that things cannot go on as they are. History has reached an impasse. This world is on a collision course. Something is about to give. With increasing frequency, commentators from secular media speak of Armageddon.

— **BILLY GRAHAM, *THE REASON FOR MY HOPE*** [\[2\]](#)



IN A PEANUTS comic strip, Snoopy is sitting on his doghouse, typing a novel. He begins his story the way he always begins his stories, with the words “It was a dark and stormy night.”

Lucy comes by and puts in her two cents. In her assertive, blunt way, she scolds him: “That’s a terrible way to begin a story. It’s so trite! ‘Once upon a time . . .’ that’s the way all the good stories begin.” Lucy lectures him more and then leaves.

The last frame of the comic shows Snoopy starting over on his story. This time he types, “Once upon a time, it was a dark and stormy night.”

Snoopy’s first line is an apt description of how many feel today. It’s a dark and stormy night. The constantly escalating tempo of life in combination with cataclysmic natural disasters, wars and rumors of wars, unrest in the Middle East, terrorism, and mushrooming financial uncertainty have given the entire world a sense of impending crisis. People today are asking questions about the future as never before—solemn, searching questions. Apocalypse is in the air. Many have a sense that the world is nearing closing time, that a day of reckoning is at hand. The words of philosopher Alfred North Whitehead are truer than ever: “It is the business of the future to be dangerous.”[\[3\]](#)

Some are taking drastic steps to get ready. Doomsday preparation is booming. Plans for surviving nuclear fallout, the shifting of the earth’s crust, complete financial meltdown, or the final apocalypse have reached new heights, or even new depths. The Vivos Survival Shelter & Resort in Atchison, Kansas, for example, is the world’s largest private underground shelter. The developers are converting an enormous underground limestone mine that covers 135 acres into square footage equal to the Empire State Building (2.25 million square feet). The luxury doomsday bunker has enough food and water to provide for five thousand people for a year.[\[4\]](#) Many others are also taking precautions, albeit on a smaller scale.

Science fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke observed, “This is the first age that’s paid much attention to the future, which is a little ironic since we might not have one.”[\[5\]](#) Recent polls reflect the growing

sentiment that something big is about to happen and that the end of the age is approaching:

- “Almost one in three Americans see Syria’s recent conflict as part of the Bible’s plan for the end times.”
- “One in four think that a U.S. military strike in Syria could lead to Armageddon.”
- “Nearly 15 percent of people worldwide believe the world will end during their lifetime.”
- “41 percent of all U.S. adults, 54 percent of Protestants, and 77 percent of evangelicals believe the world is now living in the biblical end times.”
- “Nearly 4 in 10 Americans (and 65 percent of white evangelicals) believe recent natural disasters are evidence of the End Times.”[\[6\]](#)

Hollywood reflects the mood of the mob. The apocalypse is big business. Hollywood is churning out television series and movies based on postapocalyptic scenarios. Richard Swenson notes how things have changed in recent times: “Before the nuclearization of the modern era, much of the literature of science fiction dealt with the promise of a glorious technological future. Today such optimism is seldom seen. Forty years ago, Hollywood’s futuristic movies were utopian. Now they are all apocalyptic.”[\[7\]](#) Here are a few recent examples.

- *The Book of Eli* (2010)
- *The Road* (2009)
- *Revolution* (2012)
- *Elysium* (2013)
- *Oblivion* (2013)
- *This Is the End* (2013)
- *World War Z* (2013)
- *The World’s End* (2013)
- *2012* (2009)
- *The Walking Dead* (2010)
- *Falling Skies* (2011)

In recent times attempts to forecast the end have increased with predictions such as John R. Gribbin and Stephen H. Plagemann’s *The Jupiter Effect*; Michael Drosnin’s *The Bible Code*, *The Bible Code II: The Countdown*, and *The Bible Code III: Saving the World*; the panic surrounding Y2K and the year 2000; renewed interest in the quatrains of Nostradamus; and more recently the end-of-the-world predictions surrounding December 21, 2012. Following mystic Mayan prophecies, predictions of the end of the world were all over the Internet in the years leading up to 2012. While many predicted the end of the world, some in the New Age movement heralded the dawning of a new day for mankind in December 2012—an age of Aquarius. Nothing happened, which shouldn’t surprise us. History is strewn with the bleached bones of prophecies and predictions that have failed the test of time.

While Hollywood and false prophets consistently miss the mark concerning the future, many signs that we see around us do point toward the end-times scenario laid out in Scripture. The Jewish people

are back in their ancient homeland after a worldwide dispersion of almost two thousand years, just as Scripture predicted thousands of years ago. Peace in the Middle East is under constant negotiation, and the Middle East is center stage. Globalism and exponential advances in technology have provided the framework for the end-times global government and economy predicted in Revelation 13. Israel sits surrounded by a sea of enemies who would delight in its destruction. Russia and Iran have risen to prominence as predicted in Ezekiel 38–39, along with other Islamic nations that despise Israel. Events in our world strikingly foreshadow the biblical predictions of the end of the age. We live in the times of the signs. End-times biblical prophecies will be fulfilled right on time on God’s calendar, just as hundreds of past prophecies have been fulfilled.

MOON SHADOW


Jesus said that in the days before His return there will be stunning signs on earth (see Matthew 24:4–28) and in the heavens (see Luke 21:25). Other biblical prophets predicted celestial signs in the heavens of Christ’s second advent. Based on these prophecies, a growing number of prophecy teachers today maintain that an astronomical event in 2014–2015 is a dramatic sign in the heavens that is about to change everything—that something very big is coming that will change the world forever.

The specific astronomical sign they point to is known as a “tetrad,” which is the appearance of four blood moons (lunar eclipses) falling on two Jewish feast days or high holy days (Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles). It’s known as the blood moons prophecy. This view is spreading quickly, and people everywhere are asking questions about its significance. The central question is this: Is the blood moons prophecy different from all the apocalypse forecasts we have seen before? Is this another prophecy miscalculation, or could this celestial event be the most incredible sign of the times the world has ever witnessed?

According to NASA, four blood moons will appear on four Jewish feast days in 2014–2015. In the middle of the sequence, there will be a solar eclipse. Here are the times of their appearance.

BLOOD MOONS OF 2014–2015

04/15/2014	Passover
10/08/2014	Feast of Tabernacles
03/20/2015	Total Solar Eclipse
04/04/2015	Passover
09/28/2015	Feast of Tabernacles



These total lunar eclipses are known as blood moons because when they occur, the moon takes on a reddish hue or blood color. Many prophecy teachers, based on three past occurrences of this phenomenon and a few prophetic Scriptures that mention the moon turning to blood, believe that this tetrad of blood moons signals some impending event in Israel and America or even the end of the age. They believe this could be the *final four*.

John Hagee, the pastor of Cornerstone Church in San Antonio, has championed this view in his recent bestselling book *Four Blood Moons*. Hagee’s teaching is substantially derived from Mark Bilt

of El Shaddai Ministries, who was the first to discover the alleged blood moons prophecy. He appears in numerous videos on the Internet and has authored a book titled *Blood Moons: Decoding the Imminent Heavenly Signs*. But John Hagee, with his worldwide television audience, has popularized the view and taken it mainstream. He believes that something dramatic, even world changing, is about to happen. He writes in *Four Blood Moons*:

This is the hand of God orchestrating the signs in the heavens. The final Four Blood Moons are signaling that something big is coming . . . something that will change the world forever. But the bigger question is, are we watching and listening? . . . What they *are* telling us is that God is getting ready to change the course of human history once again. He is preparing to display the next series of signs in the heavens. What is going to happen?[8]

Some are saying the blood moons are a sign of war involving Israel in 2015. Michael Snyder notes, “According to ancient Jewish tradition, a lunar eclipse is a harbinger of bad things for Israel. If that eclipse is blood red, that is a sign that war is coming. And blood red moons that happen during Biblical festivals seem to be particularly significant.”[9]

I watched John Hagee on Trinity Broadcasting Network on November 1, 2013, when he appeared with a panel of prophecy experts to say that if America doesn’t repent, something drastic will occur in 2015. He didn’t give any specific indication of what he expects, but he alluded to an event like the World Trade Center attack on September 11, 2001, or the economic collapse of 2008. Hagee bases his prediction on the fact that every seven years in Israel was to be a Sabbatical year, or Shemittah, when Israel was to allow the land to rest and not plant crops. When Israel neglected this provision in the Law, there was judgment. God exiled the Jewish people to Babylon for 70 years for failing to observe the Sabbatical year for 490 years (see 2 Chronicles 36:20-21).

Hagee applies this to America and notes that the year 2001 was a Shemittah year, and 9/11 happened. Seven years later, in 2008—another Shemittah year—the economic tsunami hit America and the world, bringing the global economy to its knees. Adding seven years to 2008 brings us to 2015. Hagee asks the question:

Will America be at war? Will America’s mountain of debt come crashing down, destroying the dollar? Will global terrorists attack our nation again with a force that will make 9/11 pale by comparison?

The attacks on the Twin Towers were on September 11, 2001.

The Wall Street crash was on September 29, 2008.

The next Tetrad will end in September 2015, which will include the Year of Shemittah.

Will a crisis happen as before? What earthshaking event will it be?

This we know: things are about to change forever![10]

Hagee and others who hold to the blood moons prophecy are forecasting a national cataclysm if America fails to repent.

THE SEARCH FOR ANSWERS

Four blood moons will appear in 2014–2015 and will fall on two Jewish feasts in each year—that much we know for sure. As this phenomenon bears down on planet Earth, a growing number of people are asking serious questions and even making predictions, and I expect the predictions and anxiety to increase dramatically in 2015. But what's it all really about? What's the uproar? Is there any truth to the notion that these blood moons portend ominous events for Israel, for America, and possibly even for the world? People everywhere are asking questions. Inquiring minds want to know. Is there about to be some great change or shift as some claim? Is the apocalypse upon us? The questions we face today are very real.

- Does the Bible say anything about blood moons?
- Are the four blood moons a *harbinger* or *hype*?
- Are they *signs* or *sensationalism*?
- Will America face judgment in 2015?
- Is the world racing toward Armageddon?
- Is there hope for the future?

In the pages that follow I hope to answer these questions and more as we consider what the Bible says about Israel, blood moons, and the end of days.




SETTING THE STAGE



As students of the Bible observe proper interpretation principles, they are becoming increasingly aware of a remarkable correspondence between the obvious trend of world events and what the Bible predicted centuries ago.

—JOHN F. WALVOORD, *ARMAGEDDON, OIL, AND THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS* [\[11\]](#)



SOME SIGNS ARE easier to read than others. If you have ever traveled to a foreign country, you know that all too well. Meaning quickly gets lost in translation. Consider these translated signs in other countries:

- In a Paris elevator: “Please leave your values at the front desk.”
- In a Hong Kong supermarket: “For your convenience, we recommend courageous, efficient self-service.”
- In a Rhodes tailor shop: “Order your summers suit. Because is big rush we will execute customers in strict rotation.”
- In a Hong Kong tailor shop: “Ladies may have a fit upstairs.”
- In Kyushi, Japan, on a Detour sign: “Stop: Drive Sideways.”
- In a Copenhagen airline ticket office: “We take your bags and send them in all directions.” (Yes they do!)
- In an Acapulco hotel: “The manager has personally passed all the water served here.”[\[12\]](#)

Most of us have experienced miscommunication like this. Some signs are simple, straightforward and easy to read, while others are a bit more difficult. The same is true when it comes to signs of the times. They are often misunderstood and misapplied.

Many today present the blood moons prophecy as a significant sign of the times—an omen of coming events. For this reason, before we delve into the details related to the four blood moons and their alleged significance as signs of the end times, I want to give a very brief definition and discussion of what prophetic signs of the times are to make sure we all know what we’re talking about.

SIGN ME UP

What are prophetic signs of the times? Are they important? Should we be looking for them? How do they relate to what's coming? Simply stated, prophetic signs of the times are current events that foreshadow future events predicted in the Bible. Signs of the times are like signs on the highway: they point toward or herald what's ahead. They indicate what's coming. Signs of the times are not fulfillments of prophecy per se but are events that indicate the future fulfillment of prophecy. When it comes to understanding or discerning signs of the times, there are three basic approaches.

Approach #1: Skepticism

Many today believe it's foolish and speculative to even consider signs of the times. They argue it's a colossal waste of time and energy and an unnecessary distraction since no one knows the time of the Lord's coming. They grow weary and even cynical of talk of the end times. The apocalypse has been predicted for millennia, yet we're still here. Skeptics also correctly point out times in the past when extremists have set dates for end-times events or made other reckless predictions that never materialized. (I'll discuss this later, in chapter 9.) Skepticism seriously questions or even outright rejects any notion of signs of the end times. Many Christians today fall into this category.

Those who belong to this camp often accuse those who believe in signs of practicing "newspaper exegesis," which Thomas Ice and Timothy Demy explain as "human ideas, not the Bible, [being] the true source of such beliefs, such that they arise from a search of newspaper headlines rather than from exegesis (i.e., proper interpretation) of the biblical text."[\[13\]](#) Certainly, skeptics are correct that some of this occurs, but I don't believe all signs of the times should be discounted because of a few reckless teachers.

Approach #2: Sensationalism

At the other end of the spectrum, some view almost everything as a stirring sign of the times. Richard Swenson writes, "Hysteria brings fire to the eyes and acid to the stomach. Hype brings notoriety. Sensationalism brings a tabloid kind of success."[\[14\]](#) Sensationalists are like that old song: "Sign, sign, everywhere a sign." Every earthquake, natural disaster, crime wave, war, new advance in technology, or rumble in the Middle East is touted as an earth-shattering sign that Jesus is coming soon. For sensationalists, signs are everywhere and almost everything. In some circles, wild speculation is far too common and most often is not based on sound principles of biblical interpretation.[\[15\]](#)

While there are several problems with a sensational approach to signs of the times, one practical problem is that when almost everything becomes a sign, then nothing is a sign. If everything is a sign, then the entire notion of signs becomes meaningless. Extreme, unfounded prophetic speculation often discredits the Bible, gives biblical prophecy a black eye, and should be denounced by all responsible, thoughtful believers.

Approach #3: Stage-Setting

The mediating view that I adopt is often called *stage-setting*. This view maintains that the events of the end times cannot occur in a vacuum. There has to be some buildup, setting of the stage, or paving the way before end-times events unfold. We look at future events predicted in the Bible, and when

current events dramatically correspond to or strikingly point toward the biblical template, these stage-setting events serve as discernible signs of the times. We don't read the Bible in light of the headlines but we *do* read headlines in light of Bible prophecy.

Using this guideline, we can track general trends in preparation for the end times.

In the time before the first coming of Christ, God arranged the world for His Advent. The world was prepared religiously, linguistically, and politically for the birth of Jesus. Galatians 4:4 says, "When the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law." Dr. John Walvoord says, "Just as history was prepared for Christ's first coming, in a similar way history is preparing for the events leading up to His Second Coming. . . . If this is the case, it leads to the inevitable conclusion that the Rapture may be excitingly near."[\[16\]](#)

Another way to understand signs of the times is that we can observe the end-times scenario in Scripture and reverse engineer it to the events that must precede that scene and pave the way for its arrival. Thomas Ice and Timothy Demy say,

The Bible provides detailed prophecy about the seven-year tribulation. In fact, Revelation 4–19 gives a detailed, sequential outline of the major players and events. Using Revelation as a framework, a Bible student is able to harmonize the hundreds of other biblical passages that speak of the seven-year tribulation into a clear model of the next time period for planet earth. With such a template to guide us, we can see that already God is preparing or setting the stage of the world in which the great drama of the tribulation will unfold.[\[17\]](#)

Ice also says, "Just as many people set their clothes out the night before they wear them the following day, so in the same sense is God preparing the world for the certain fulfillment of prophecy in a future time."[\[18\]](#)

Another key to understanding and confirming stage-setting as an approach to signs of the times is the current convergence of so many signs in a short period of time. Skeptics often point out that there have always been events touted as signs of the times. So what's different today? Are we just repeating the overreaction and shortsightedness of previous generations who thought they saw signs of the Lord's coming in their time? I don't think so. The convergence and acceleration of so many events is what leads me to believe that the end-times stage is being set today. Since the rebirth of Israel in 1948 and even more in the last twenty years, things in our world seem to be on fast-forward. With 24-7 worldwide news coverage and global means of communication, events in our world have immediate, almost exponential impact. So many events are converging in such a brief window that I cannot ignore them and pass off the convergence as coincidence. Richard Swenson highlights the "generational shift" our world is experiencing, which I believe is driving the setting of the world stage:

The fundamentals have changed. Life pace and change are escalating wildly. Without our permission, history has picked up speed, turbo-charged by progress. Add in the powerful cofactors of technology and information, mix it with abundant economic "gunpowder," and you have cooked up a nice cocktail of exponential explosiveness. The locomotive guiding history jumped the tracks, and instead of traveling down the local-stop commuter spur, it

switched to supersonic status. Instead of chugging, it now explodes out of the station, breaking the sound barrier before it even leaves the gate.[\[19\]](#)

Dr. John Walvoord echoes such a belief concerning current stage-setting in preparation for prophetic fulfillment: “More prophecies have either been fulfilled or prepared for fulfillment in our day than in all the previous centuries since the first of our era. . . . The preparation for the final drama is being carried on before our eyes.”[\[20\]](#)

One final point I want to emphasize as strongly as I can is that stage-setting is *not* date setting. I believe that no one knows the time of any end-times event, not the decade, the year, the month, or the day. No one knows how long it will take for God to get things ready, but the convergence and acceleration of signs should stir a sense of urgency in our lives.

JESUS AND SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Jesus Himself spoke of signs of the times. In Matthew 16:2-3 Jesus answers the request of the Pharisees and Sadducees for a sign from heaven: “When it is evening, you say, ‘It will be fair weather for the sky is red.’ And in the morning, ‘There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.’ Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times?” Jesus was speaking in these verses of the signs of His first coming as Israel’s Messiah. Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies about the coming of the Messiah and chided the people in His day for failing to discern the signs of the times.

Later, Jesus shifts from the focus on His first coming and gives a long list of specific signs of His second coming (see Matthew 24:4-29). Luke 21:25 records the words of Jesus Himself saying that cosmic signs will portend His return to earth. Clearly, Jesus believed in signs of the times—signs for His first coming and signs of His return.

Hebrews 10:24-25 also seems to support the notion of signs of the times: “Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” The “day drawing near” in the context of the book of Hebrews is the day of the Lord’s coming. If we cannot see the day drawing near, then this verse makes no sense. Signs of the times point toward the coming of Christ. Of course, no one knows how long the buildup or stage-setting will last until our Lord returns. It could be days, months, or years—maybe even many years.

One important distinction to keep in mind is that signs of the times relate to the second coming of Christ, not the Rapture. We will talk more about these two events in the next chapter, but I believe the Rapture is the next event on God’s prophetic calendar. It can happen at any moment. The second coming of Christ to earth will occur at the end of the seven-year Tribulation and will be signaled by numerous signs, as Jesus said in Matthew 24. If we can already see the signs of the Second Coming, but the Rapture (which precedes it) hasn’t happened yet, then the Rapture could be very soon. One way to understand how signs relate to the Lord’s coming is to think of Christmas and Thanksgiving. Signs of Christmas are everywhere in the fall, sometimes beginning as soon as September or early October. You can’t miss the signs for Christmas. The Second Coming is like Christmas. Thanksgiving is another matter. There really aren’t any clear signs of Thanksgiving. The Rapture is like

Thanksgiving—it's a signless event. Yet if you can see the signs of Christmas, and Thanksgiving hasn't arrived, you can be sure that Thanksgiving is near. In the same way, if we can already see the buildup for the Second Coming today, then we can know the Rapture could be very soon. It could be today. Christ can come to rapture us to heaven at any time.

THREE MAIN VIEWS OF SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Skepticism: There are no signs of the times.

Sensationalism: Almost everything is a sign.

Stage-Setting: Some major developments in our world today are discernible signs of the end times.

The setting of the world stage for future, end-times events can be illustrated by picturing a theater where preparations are made for a production.^[21] Suppose a seasoned drama critic enters a theater one evening not knowing which of Shakespeare's masterpieces is to be presented. Before the curtain goes up, he is taken behind the scenes. Onstage is a castle with fortifications looking out over a wooded countryside. At once he knows that he will not see *Othello*, which is set in Venice, or *Julius Caesar*, which begins with a street scene in Rome. He knows he will not see *Macbeth* because although there is a castle scene in *Macbeth*, the play opens not with the castle but with witches gathered around their cauldron. Finally, our drama critic notices two soldiers with shields bearing the arms of the king of Denmark. He sees two other actors dressed as a king and a queen. There is an actor who is supposed to be a ghost. No one has to tell the critic what he will see. Based on his knowledge of Shakespeare and the clues he has seen, he knows it will be *Hamlet*.

In the same way today, God's people sit in the theater of world events awaiting the curtain call of God's apocalyptic drama. We don't know when the play will begin, but like the drama critic, we know much more about it than most. Many stare at the future as at a huge curtain. For them the future is veiled because they have no idea of the plan of God. And they can't see behind the curtain where action is being set. For believers, however, we see behind the scenes. While it is true that we don't know the moment when the play will begin, we do know the play itself—the main characters and events—and can sense it beginning as we see the actors starting to take their places on the great world stage.^[22]

In 1974, John Walvoord, in his bestselling book *Armageddon, Oil, and the Middle East Crisis*, wrote these classic words that are more relevant today than when he wrote them:

Our present world is well prepared for the beginning of the prophetic drama that will lead to Armageddon. Since the stage is being set for this dramatic climax of the age, it must mean that Christ's coming for His own is very near. If there ever was an hour when men should consider their personal relationship to Jesus Christ, it is today. God is saying to this generation: "Prepare for the coming of the Lord."^[23]

That's the key message for our day.




THE END-TIMES SCRIPT



If you want to know what happened yesterday, read the newspaper; if you want to know what happened today, listen to the evening news; if you want to know what will happen tomorrow, read the Bible.

— ANONYMOUS



I LIKE THE story of the man who approaches a beach and sees a woman in the water with a huge shark fin bearing down on her. Panicked, he yells, “Shark! Shark!” But the people sitting on the beach in chairs don’t move. Nobody does anything. Thinking they can’t hear him, he sprints toward the beach, keeps hollering, and wildly waves his arms. As he gets closer to the beach, he sees a man sitting in a chair with the word *DIRECTOR* on the back. He’d come upon the scene of a movie shoot. What had looked to him like danger and chaos was all under the control of a director.

It’s often the same for us. We look at this world and see mounting chaos and confusion and are tempted to panic. As someone has observed, “There are three days a week that we have no control over—yesterday, today, and tomorrow.” But we have to remember it’s all under the control of a Divine Director. He wrote the script, He’s calling the shots, and He’s directing every detail so that it will all play out as He has planned. Nothing happening in our world takes God by surprise. There’s never any panic in heaven. The Trinity never has to meet in emergency session. God has it all under control.

My favorite word in biblical prophecy is a name for God in the book of Revelation—the Almighty. The English word *Almighty* is a translation of the Greek word *Pantokrator*, which literally means to have everything in your hands or to have your hands on everything. God Almighty is the One who has His sovereign hands on everything, including the future of this universe and your future. He’s directing everything in accordance with His eternal purposes.

PREVIEW OF COMING ATTRACTIONS

To make sure we have our bearings before we get into the specifics of the blood moons prophecy, I want to take you on a flyover—a view from thirty thousand feet—of the future prophetic landscape presented in Scripture, a big-picture panorama of the end-times drama that God has written and is

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