

Signs of the Times (16-Aug-02)



"Men who fear God face life fearlessly. Men who do not fear God end up fearing everything."
—Richard Halverson

16-Aug-02

Different *Signs* of the Times

If the mainstream media is a bellwether, the earth is about to be invaded by beings from another planet—or it already has been.

There is a curious trend of late within the news media establishment, as well as the entertainment industry, and it is one worth keeping an eye on. The popular culture is well familiar with the idea of extraterrestrial creatures landing on earth, for good or for evil. On October 30th, 1938, Orson Welles produced and starred in an exciting on-air dramatization of H.G. Wells' science fiction classic *The War of the Worlds*. In 1947 the infamous Roswell, New Mexico, "incident" occurred, and every generation since then has produced a significant number of believers. In 1952, as recently reported by *The Washington Post*, unidentified flying objects in the sky over the nation's capital stirred the imaginations of millions. The 1960s and 1970s were awash with science fiction books, movies, and comics that dramatically posed the question, "What if we are not alone in this universe?"

In more recent history, it seems the interest in aliens from space shifted slightly from the mainstream culture into the shadows and children's movies.

There was always a strong contingent of Trekkies and X-philes, but extraterrestrial believers became more of a cult movement—people typically either really loved them or really did not care. Now *X-Files* has passed from the scene, but it appears the vacuum is being filled.

The *National Enquirer*, *Weekly World Sun* and other tabloids have run stories about UFOs, extraterrestrials, and general psychic phenomena from time immemorial. However, within the last 3 months various paranormal stories have emerged again, ranging from precise, bloodless cattle mutilations in the southwestern U.S., to increased Big Foot sightings in the north, to a nocturnal fireball in Asia that has allegedly killed at least seven. What is surprising is that these stories are appearing in the *mainstream* press—the *BBC*, *Washington Post*, and many Associated Press affiliates. True, there is heightened interest this summer because of M. Night Shyamalan's *Signs*, starring Mel Gibson, but why the extra boost from the liberal media establishment?

The way these stories are reported is also thought provoking. More often than not, the story is written in at least a neutral tone—and reporting UFO sightings *neutrally* speaks volumes by itself—if not a slightly positive one. Even in the reports that cast doubt, there is a highlighting of the topics that used to be confined to tabloids. This is the media equivalent of a courtroom lawyer asking a leading question, full of insinuations: Even though the question is withdrawn, the idea is already implanted in the minds of the jury members.

There are individuals who allege that the global elite are conditioning the world—through movies, television, books, comic strips, video games, cartoons, and even newspapers—to one day rise up and unite against a common foe: invaders from space. While there is no convincing proof that our government is collaborating with aliens, the principle of their conclusion is worth examining. The [book of Revelation](#) also talks about an end-time unification of people and nations under a single government, fighting against an "invader"—[Jesus Christ](#).

The blockbuster movie *Signs* has added another twist. It is the first movie this author is aware of that contained both a sovereign [God](#), providentially involved in the lives of His creation, as well as extraterrestrials. This is a

significant stance—prior to this, anything involving aliens was based on the premise of evolution "creating" advanced beings in other galaxies. Any thought of an all-powerful Creator has been absent. But this movie blurs the lines. Suddenly, Hollywood is allowing God (and by extension all Christians), and aliens to fit within the same worldview.

In view of the renewed interest in aliens and UFOs, there are some basic facts to keep in mind:

- God has given us an instruction manual—the Bible—that is able to make us "wise for salvation through [faith](#) which is in Christ Jesus" ([II Timothy 3:15-17](#)).
- The Bible does not give any indication that God has created intelligent life elsewhere in the universe. If we needed to know about it, God would have told us!
- [Satan](#) deceives the whole world ([Revelation 12:9](#); [Ephesians 2:1-3](#)).
- As the end-time approaches, Satan's deceptions will also increase ([Matthew 24:3-5](#), 11; 24-27; [II Thessalonians 2:1-10](#); [II Timothy 3:13](#); [Revelation 13:13-14](#); [16:13-14](#)).
- [Christ will return](#) to establish His [Kingdom on earth](#) ([Isaiah 2:2-4](#); [Jeremiah 3:17](#); [Zechariah 8:3](#); [Romans 4:13](#); [Revelation 5:8-10](#); [11:15](#); [19:15-16](#); [21:2-4](#), 10-27).
- His return, which will be a spectacular event accompanied by "heavenly signs" ([Matthew 24:30](#)), will be met with stiff human—and supernatural—resistance ([Revelation 16:14](#); [17:12-14](#); [19:19](#)).
- Those who are keeping the commandments of God will be the ones targeted by Satan—and protected by God ([Revelation 12:17](#); [14:12](#); [22:14](#)).

There *will* be a cataclysmic final battle in the not-too-distant future, one in which men unite together to battle a returning King. We do not have to agonize over little green men making shapes in cornfields. We *do* have to strongly consider which side of the battle we will be on.

Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the [kingdom of heaven](#), but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done

many wonders in Your name?" And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!" ([Matthew 7:21-23](#))

- David C. Grabbe

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[Preventing Deception](#)

by Richard T. Ritenbaugh

Gullibility and simple-minded credulity emerge from time to time in the greater church of God. Like advertising — which relies heavily on deception, hiding the down-side or defects and exaggerating the efficacy or desirability of a product — religious hucksters use deceptive tactics, using the bait or temptation of self-gratification, selling non-essential, twiggy or downright heretical positions. Like highly trained U.S. Treasury agents, the elect keep themselves undeceived by knowing the real article inside-out. If one knows the real article, the counterfeit will become readily apparent. Like a lamp rolling back the darkness (Psalm 119:105), the truth, revealed by God's Word, provides the best defense or antidote against deception and error.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[Will Aliens Invade the Earth?](#)

by Staff

Satan seems to be planting into men's minds the thought that an alien force will one day invade earth. Perhaps the Devil is conditioning mankind for Christ's return?

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