THE QUESTION

What did early Christians say about the sun, moon and stars in the end times?

Asked by a THF member on April 19, 2026 · published November 9, 2026 · 9 numbered quotations · the 20 early Christian passages and 131 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/what-did-early-christians-say-about-the-sun-moon-and-stars-in-the-end-times

The short answer *From the text: says what the passages say*

They expected real signs in the sky before Christ returns: the sun darkened, the moon turned to blood, and stars falling. Following Jesus and the prophets, they said the heavens, which now keep God's set order, would be shaken and the seasons confused, as a warning to watch and be ready.

LIBRARY ONLY	This study was written only from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed at the back, with a link to read it.
HOW IT WAS MADE	Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.
SHARING WITH AN AI?	Every quotation here comes from The Historic Faith's library. If you paste this study into an AI, anything it adds beyond these pages comes from that AI, not from us.

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POINT 1 OF 7

Jesus foretold signs in the sky

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Tatian's Gospel harmony joins the Lord's words from the Gospels. After the great tribulation, there will be signs in the sun, moon and stars, the sun will grow dark, the moon will give no light, and the stars will fall.

1

“And there will be signs in the sun and the moon and the stars.”

later in the same passage

“And in those days, immediately after the distress of those days, the sun will become dark, and the moon will not show its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven will be shaken.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tatian,** *Diatessaron* 42 (c. 150–180 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 3, page 6 **Read it in the library ›**

POINT 2 OF 7

The prophets say the same thing

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Tertullian sets Joel and Habakkuk beside the Lord's words. He sees full agreement between Jesus and the prophets about the shaking of the earth and the heavens before the great day of the Lord.

2

“You may find in Joel that even the powers of heaven have to be shaken, as Luke 21:26 says: "And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth—blood and fire, and pillars of smoke; the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come."”

later in the same passage

“There is, then, I think, an agreement between the words of the Lord and of the prophets about the shaking of the earth, the elements, and the nations of it.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tertullian,** *Against Marcion* 38 (c. 196–220 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 7, page 6 **Read it in the library ›**

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POINT 3 OF 7

The moon will leave its usual course

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Lactantius describes the moon not only darkening for a short time but moving in unusual ways. People will no longer be able to follow the paths of the heavenly bodies or tell the seasons.

3 “The moon will at times fail, not for three hours only, but covered with continual blood, it will pass through unusual movements, so that it will not be easy for man to know the paths of the heavenly bodies or the order of the seasons.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Lactantius,** *Divine Institutes* 16 (c. 290–320 AD) **Source 16, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 4 OF 7

Stars fall and seasons are confused

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

In his shorter summary, Lactantius adds that the moon will not regain its lost light, all the stars will fall, and winter and summer will be mixed up. He reads this as a sign that God is about to come and renew the world.

4 “The moon will be stained with blood, and it will not regain the light it has lost. All the stars will fall, and the seasons will no longer keep their proper order, because winter and summer will be confused.”

later in the same passage

“And when this happens, it must be understood that the time is near when God will return to change the world.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Lactantius,** *Epitome of the Divine Institutes* 71 (c. 290–320 AD) **Source 15, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

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POINT 5 OF 7

Today the heavens keep God's order

Our note · compiled by machine learning · Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words

These signs stand out because the sky normally obeys God. Clement of Rome praises the sun, moon and stars for keeping their limits without deviation. Theophilus says God made them for signs, seasons, days and years.

5 “The sun and moon, along with the starry hosts, move in harmony according to His command, staying within their limits, without any deviation.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Rome,** *First Epistle to the Corinthians* **Source 20, page 7** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

6 “The sun, moon, and stars are His elements, made for signs, seasons, days, and years, so that they may serve and be slaves to man.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Theophilus of Antioch,** *To Autolycus* 4 (c. 169–183 AD) **Source 4, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 6 OF 7

The signs point to Christ's coming

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Tertullian quotes the Lord telling believers to look up when these things happen, because redemption is near. The Didache likewise lists signs of the truth that come before the Lord appears on the clouds.

7 “And then shall they see the Son of Man coming from the heavens with very great power. And when these things shall come to pass, you shall look up, and raise your heads; for your redemption has come near.""

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tertullian,** *Against Marcion* 38 (c. 196–220 AD) **Source 7, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

8 “Then the signs of the truth will appear. First, the sign of an outspreading in heaven. Then, the sign of the sound of the trumpet. And third, the resurrection of the dead.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Didache,** *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* 16 (c. 50–120 AD) **Source 1, page 5** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

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POINT 7 OF 7

The right response is to stay ready

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

The Didache turns these warnings into a call for daily faithfulness. Believers should keep their lamps burning and meet often, because no one knows the hour of the Lord's coming.

9 “Instead, be ready, because you do not know the hour when our Lord is coming.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Didache,** *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* 16 (c. 50–120 AD) **Source 1, page 5** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

THE LIMITS

What these passages don’t tell us

- These passages do not give a date or say how soon the signs will come.
- They do not settle whether every detail is meant literally or partly as a picture.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 20 early Christian passages and 131 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–20, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 21–83, in Bible order), then 68 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF’s updated English unless marked “1885 English” (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). “… [continues online]” marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *20 passages from 11 writers*

Didache, *c. 50–120 AD · source 1*

1 *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* 16 **Quotes 8, 9, pages 4, 5** “the sign of an outspreading in heaven… [continues online] **read ›**

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Mathetes, *c. 80–200 AD · source 2*

2 *Epistle to Diognetus* (on point 5) enclosed the sea within its bounds—whose commands all the stars faithfully follow—from whom the sun has received its daily course to observe—whom the moon obeys, commanded to… [continues online] **read ›**

Tatian, *c. 150–180 AD · source 3*

3 *Diatessaron* 42 **Quote 1, page 2** "from the beginning of the world until now, nor will be. And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would have lived. But because of the elect, whom… [continues online] **read ›**

Theophilus of Antioch, *c. 169–183 AD · sources 4–5*

4 *To Autolycus* 4 **Quote 6, page 4** "the heavens are His work, the earth is His creation, the sea is His handiwork… [continues online] **read ›**

5 *To Autolycus* 6 (1885 English; on point 5) "manifold movement of the heavenly bodies, the morning star rising and heralding the approach of the perfect luminary… [continues online] **read ›**

Tertullian, *c. 196–220 AD · sources 6–9*

6 *Against Marcion* 38 (1885 English; on point 1) "having shown what was to be the period of the destruction, even when Jerusalem should begin to be compassed with armies, Luke 21:20 He described the signs of the… [continues online] **read ›**

7 *Against Marcion* 38 **Quotes 2, 7, pages 2, 4** "sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come… [continues online] **read ›**

8 *Ad Nationes* 5 (1885 English; on point 5) "stars also, certain indications as they are of those seasons which are to be observed in the tillage of our fields… [continues online] **read ›**

9 *Against Marcion* 40 (1885 English; on point 5) "also ordained, as signs of time, suns and moons and constellations and stars… [continues online] **read ›**

Julius Africanus, *c. 232–265 AD · source 10*

10 *Extant Writings* 1 "thrown down. Thallus, in the third book of his History, calls this darkness an eclipse of the sun. In my opinion, he does so without reason. For the Hebrews celebrate… [continues online] **read ›**

Gregory Thaumaturgus, *c. 240–270 AD · source 11*

11 *Metaphrase of Ecclesiastes* 12 Moreover, it is right for you to fear God while you are still young, before you give yourself over to evil things, and before the great and terrible day of… [continues online] **read ›**

Cyprian, *c. 248–258 AD · sources 12–14*

12 *Treatises* (on point 1) "his clothes. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing children in those days. But pray that your flight may not be in winter or… [continues online] **read ›**

13 *Treatises* (1885 English) "in her declining course, the moon wanes with exhausted horns… [continues online] **read ›**

14 *Epistles* (1885 English) "things have been foretold as about to happen in the end of the world… [continues online] **read ›**

Lactantius, *c. 290–320 AD · sources 15–18*

15 *Epitome of the Divine Institutes* 71 (1885 English) **Quote 4, page 3** "moon will be stained with blood, nor will it repair the losses of its light taken away… [continues online] **read ›**

16 *Divine Institutes* 16 **Quote 3, page 3** "of men with the greatest terrors: the trails of comets, the darkness of the sun, the color of the moon, and the falling course of the stars. However, these things… [continues online] **read ›**

17 *Divine Institutes* 4 (on point 5) "things out of nothing. And when they see that these things, in obedience to divine laws, by an unending necessity serve the uses and interests of men, they still regard… [continues online] **read ›**

18 *Epitome of the Divine Institutes* 72 (1885 English) "that time the stars shall be more brilliant, and the brightness of the sun shall be increased, and the moon shall not be subject to decrease… [continues online] **read ›**

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Anonymous · *source 19*

19 *Treatise Against the Heretic Novatian* 1 (on point 1) “the kings of the earth, and all the great men, and the tribunes, and the rich men, and the strong men, and every slave, and every free man, hid themselves… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Rome · *source 20*

20 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (1885 English) **Quote 5, page 4** “sun and moon, with the companies of the stars, roll on in harmony according to His command, within their prescribed limits, and without any deviation… [continues online] **read ›**

THE BIBLE *63 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

21 **Genesis 1:14** Then God said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to give light on the earth, to divide between the day and the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons, for days and for years. **read ›**

22 **Deuteronomy 4:19** and lest, looking up to heaven and seeing the sun, the moon, and the stars, and all the array of heaven, you go astray and worship them and serve them, the things that the Lord your God has allotted to all the nations under heaven. **read ›**

23 **Judges 5:20** From heaven the stars drew up for battle; from their courses they drew up against Sisera. **read ›**

24 **Psalms 8:3** For I will look at the heavens, the works of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have founded. (Septuagint Psalm 8:4 (Psalm 8:3 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

25 **Psalms 136:9** the moon and the stars to rule the night, for his mercy is forever. (Septuagint Psalm 135:9 (Psalm 136:9 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

26 **Psalms 148:3** Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you stars and light. **read ›**

27 **Isaiah 13:10** For the stars of heaven and Orion and all the array of heaven will not give their light; and it will be dark when the sun rises, and the moon will not give her light. **read ›**

28 **Isaiah 17:5** And it will be as when someone gathers the standing grain and reaps the seed of the ears; and it will be as when someone gathers ears of grain in a solid ravine. **read ›**

29 **Jeremiah 8:4** For thus says the Lord: Does not he who falls rise again? Or does not he who turns away turn back? **read ›**

30 **Ezekiel 3:9** and it shall be continually stronger than rock. Do not be afraid of them, nor be dismayed at their faces, for it is a provoking house.” **read ›**

31 **Joel 2:10** Before them the earth will be thrown into confusion and the heaven shaken; the sun and the moon will be darkened, and the stars will withdraw their light. **read ›**

32 **Joel 2:31** The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and manifest day of the Lord comes. (Septuagint Joel 3:4 (Joel 2:31 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

33 **Joel 3:15** The sun and the moon will be darkened, and the stars will withdraw their light. (Septuagint Joel 4:15 (Joel 3:15 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

34 **Habakkuk 2:10** You have devised shame for your house; you have made an end of many peoples, and your soul has sinned. **read ›**

35 **Habakkuk 3:3** God will come from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran, shaded and thick with trees. Pause. His excellence has covered the heavens, and the earth is full of his praise. **read ›**

36 **Habakkuk 3:4** And his brightness will be like light; horns are in his hands, and he has established the mighty love of his strength. **read ›**

37 **Malachi 3:11** And I will set apart food for you, and I will by no means destroy the fruit of your land, and your vine in the field will never fail, says the Lord Almighty. **read ›**

38 **Wisdom of Solomon 7:19** the cycles of years and the positions of the stars; **read ›**

39 **Wisdom of Sirach 43:6** And the moon too, in all things, keeps its season, a marking of times and a sign of the age. **read ›**

40 **Wisdom of Sirach 43:7** From the moon is the sign of a feast, a light that wanes toward its completion. **read ›**

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41 **Wisdom of Sirach 43:9** the beauty of heaven, the glory of the stars, an ornament giving light in the highest places of the Lord. **read ›**

42 **Letter of Jeremiah 1:60** For sun and moon and stars, being bright and sent out for service, are obedient. **read ›**

43 **Letter of Jeremiah 1:67** they will certainly not show signs in the heavens among the nations, nor shine like the sun, nor give light like the moon. **read ›**

44 **4 Maccabees 17:5** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

45 **1 Enoch 18:5** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

46 **1 Enoch 33:2** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

47 **1 Enoch 41:5** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

48 **1 Enoch 41:8** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

49 **1 Enoch 60:12** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

50 **1 Enoch 72:1** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

51 **1 Enoch 72:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

52 **1 Enoch 72:9** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

53 **1 Enoch 72:14** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

54 **1 Enoch 73:1** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

55 **1 Enoch 73:8** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

56 **1 Enoch 74:5** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

57 **1 Enoch 74:10** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

58 **1 Enoch 74:12** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

59 **1 Enoch 75:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

60 **1 Enoch 75:6** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

61 **1 Enoch 75:7** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

62 **1 Enoch 78:4** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

63 **1 Enoch 78:6** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

64 **1 Enoch 78:8** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

65 **1 Enoch 78:13** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

66 **1 Enoch 80:4** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

67 **1 Enoch 80:6** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

68 **1 Enoch 80:7** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

69 **1 Enoch 82:9** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

70 **1 Enoch 82:19** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

71 **1 Enoch 86:1** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

72 **1 Enoch 86:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

73 **1 Enoch 88:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

74 **1 Enoch 102:2** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

75 **Matthew 24:29** “Immediately after the distress of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon will not give her light; the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. **read ›**

76 **Mark 13:24** But in those days, after that distress, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon will not give her light, **read ›**

77 **Mark 13:25** and the stars of heaven shall be falling, and the powers that are in the heavens shall be shaken. **read ›**

78 **Luke 21:25** There will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars, and on the earth distress among nations in perplexity, with the sea and the waves roaring; **read ›**

79 **Acts 2:20** The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and manifest day of the Lord comes. **read ›**

80 **Acts 13:10** and said, “You son of the devil, full of all deceit and all cunning, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? **read ›**

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81 **Revelation 6:13** The stars of the sky fell to the earth, like a fig tree dropping its unripe figs when it is shaken by a great wind. **read ›**

82 **Revelation 8:12** The fourth angel sounded his trumpet, and one third of the sun was struck, and one third of the moon, and one third of the stars, so that one third of them would be darkened; and the day would not shine for one third of it, and the night in the same way. **read ›**

83 **Revelation 12:1** A great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. **read ›**

ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *68 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Job 38:8 · 38:11

Psalms 19:4 · 104:9

Ecclesiastes 12:5 · 12:6 · 12:7

Daniel 11:31 · 12:1

Hosea 12:4

Matthew 15:13 · 16:19 · 21:37 · 24:10 · 24:11 · 24:13 · 24:21 · 24:30 · 24:42

Mark 7:13 · 13:28 · 16:9

Luke 9:48 · 12:35 · 19:12 · 20:35 · 21:7 · 21:8 · 21:9 · 21:12 · 21:16 · 21:19 · 21:20 · 21:26 · 21:27 · 21:29 · 21:31 · 21:33 · 21:34 · 21:37 · 21:38 · 22:31

John 1:9

Acts 2:17

Romans 1:24 · 13:1

1 Corinthians 4:4 · 6:14 · 15:23

Galatians 3:15 · 3:16 · 4:4 · 4:5 · 4:6

Ephesians 2:20 · 4:26 · 5:6

Philippians 3:11

1 Thessalonians 4:17

Hebrews 1:1 · 1:3

1 Peter 4:7 · 4:12

Revelation 6:12 · 20:5 · 20:11 · 20:15 · 21:7

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Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

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THE END OF THIS STUDY