24:18. So I spoke unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded—He continued his addresses and writings to the Lord's people: his wife became to him as one dead: and he continued uninterruptedly in the work of the ministry.

24:19. And the people said unto me, Wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us, that thou dost so?—Why was Pastor Russell caused by his Father to endure the fiery trials and ecclesiastical falsehoods in connection with this incident of his life?

THE CHURCHES TO CEASE TO BE

24:20, 21. Then I answered them, The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Speak unto the house of Israel. Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will profane My Sanctuary, the excellency of your strength, the desire of your eyes, and that which your soul pitieth; and your sons and your daughters whom ye have left shall fall by the sword. 

24:22. And ye shall do as I have done: ye shall not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men. —So universal and dreadful will be the troubles that the dead will literally lie buried and unwept. There can be no mourning for the dead in a period when the living are overwhelmed by troubles worse than death.

24:23. And your eyes shall be upon your heads: and your shoes upon your feet: ye shall not mourn nor weep: but ye shall pine away for your iniquities, and mourn one toward another. —The mourning will be an inner sorrow of a people stupefied by terrible experiences, who pine away and without outward expression sink together into the fellowship of helpless grief.

24:24. Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign: according to all that he hath done shall ye do: and when this cometh, ye shall know that I am the Lord God—Thus the silent sorrow at Pastor Russell's heart was to be a sign to Christendom. The sorrowful experiences of Pastor Russell in this connection shall later on be those of all Christendom: and when this cometh they shall know that Jehovah God is supreme, and back of all the judgments of the trouble time.

THE BOILING CALDRON

24:25, 26. Also, thou son of man, shalt it not be in the day when I take from them their strength, the joy of their glory, the desire of their eyes, and that whereupon they set their minds, their sons and their daughters. That which escapeth in that day shall come unto thee, to cause thee to hear it with thine ears—Also in the year 1918, when God destroys the churches wholesale and the church members by millions, it shall be that any that escape shall come to the works of Pastor Russell to learn the meaning of the downfall of "Christianity."

24:27. In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him which is escaped, and thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb: and thou shalt be a sign unto them; and they shall know that I am the Lord.—Pastor Russell's voice has been stilled to death; and his voice is, comparatively speaking, dumb to what it will be. In the time of revolution and anarchy he shall speak, and be no more dumb to those that escape the destruction of that day. Pastor Russell shall "be a sign unto them," shall tell them the truth about the Divine appointment of the trouble, as they consult his books, scattered to the number of ten million throughout Christendom. His words shall be a sign of hope unto them, enabling them to see the bright side of the cloud and to look forward with anticipation to the glorious Kingdom of God to be established. Then "they shall know the Lord."

"Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul, As the swift seasons roll! 
Leave thy low vaulted past! 
Let each new temple, nobler than the last, 
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast, 
Till thou at length art free. 
Leaving thine outrage shell by life's unresting sea."