

WATCH OUT FOR THE TIME OF THE END!

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We talked last week about the “Time of the End”. That is often confused with the more general term “Last Days” or “Latter Days” — but scripturally it seems to be **a VERY SPECIFIC PERIOD — of 3½ YEARS — right at the very very end.** Just before Jesus returns to the Mount of Olives.

A KEY QUESTION: WHEN MIGHT THIS TIME COME? When will that arrive?

We’ve probably all come across various “Date Setters”?! So far — they have all been spectacularly wrong!!

Is it wrong to be curious? Or ... as some say ... you cannot know the Time of The End — you’re just wasting your time trying.

They may refer you to:

Matthew 24:36

36 “**But of that day and hour no one knows**, not even the angels of heaven, **but My Father only.**

The day and hour no one knows. Only The Father knows.

Matthew 25:13

13 “**Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.**

Fairly plain. We don’t know the day or the hour.

So ... if we don’t know the day or the hour ... should we pay no attention at all? Far from it! Why would you need to **WATCH!!**

Matthew 24:36 says we don’t know the day or the hour — but — it doesn’t say that no one can know the approximate time ... or that it’s wrong to pursue such knowledge.

As we look at Matthew 24 ... **the whole passage is to give us the understanding of when! Jesus requires us to know — commands us to know!**

Matthew 24:1-3

1 Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple.

2 And Jesus said to them, “Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”

3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “**Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?**”

The disciples ask Jesus three things. **Tell us when!** Secondly — **what will the sign be of Your coming back** and thirdly — **when will the end of the age be? GIVE US SOME CLUES!**

Jesus doesn't say “No” — I won't tell you! We don't just ignore it!!

Matthew 24:4-5

4 And Jesus answered and said to them: “**Take heed that no one deceives you.**

5 **For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.** (*Jesus is talking about the end-times*)

Watch out for deception — there is and will be plenty of deception — including about “**the when**”.

Jesus then sets out a whole list of conditions ahead to help us know.

Matthew 24:6-7

6 **And you will hear of wars and rumours of wars.** See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, **but the end is not yet.**

7 **For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.**

Matthew 24:15-16

15 “**Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation,**’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, **standing in the holy place**” (whoever reads, let him understand), (*you will see that if you are watching!*)

16 “**then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.**”

**THE CLEAR SIGN THAT WE ARE RIGHT IN THE TIME OF THE END!!
TAKE ACTION!**

Once we see ... then 1,260 days ... 42 months to Jesus setting foot on the Mount of Olives? But you will certainly know pretty closely.

Clearly ... Jesus expects us to see the Abomination and understand what it signifies!!

Matthew 24:17-22

17 Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house.

18 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. (***Urgent to get out of town***)

19 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

20 And **pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.**

21 **For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.**

22 **And unless those days were shortened,** no flesh would be saved; **but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.**

Great Tribulation.

Matthew 24:29-31

29 “Immediately **after the tribulation** of those days **the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.**

30 **Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.**

31 And **He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.**

The Tribulation is coming BEFORE THE SAINTS ARE TAKEN AWAY.
NO SECRET RAPTURE!

The Heavenly Signs. The Saints gathered.

We have some very clear signs! We ought to know!

Matthew 24:32-35

32 “Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, **you know** that summer is near.

33 So you also, **when you see all these things, know that HE is near—at the doors!**

34 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. (*What “generation” — the generation that is alive when all of these things come to pass!*)

35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

When you see — know it’s imminent — it’s about to happen — at the doors — just immediately ahead of you!!

“This generation” will presumably be the one that sees the Abomination?

They will be visible. You will see what’s happening — if you are paying attention.

Matthew 24:36

36 “But **of that day and hour no one knows**, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

We don’t know the day or the hour. But ... we should know “it is near” — at the door!

Matthew 24:37-39

37 **But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.**

38 For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

39 **and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.**

Noah knew of the Flood. And warned his generation!! And Jesus tells us it will be the same for the majority when He returns.

The unconverted are eating ... drinking ... partying — because they do not know. “They did not know” ... and so were condemned. **They should have known!** They had had plenty of warning! **Noah was A PREACHER OF RIGHTEOUSNESS!** They were ignorant/unaware of the “when”. A lot of people won’t be watching when Jesus returns.

Matthew 24:40-44

40 Then *(at Jesus’ coming)* two men will be in the field: **one will be taken and the other left.**

41 Two women will be grinding at the mill: **one will be taken and the other left.**

42 **Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.**

43 But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.

44 **Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.**

WATCH !! You don’t know the hour.

But **you should know it's near — at the very doors!** (Maybe the last few days or week?). **That's the whole purpose of Jesus' discourse!**

The master might well know the part of the night ... even if not the specific hour. **A faithful master is WATCHFUL.**

Incidentally ... in verses 40-41. **One is taken ... one is left. Who would you rather be?!**

Matthew 24:39

39 **and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.**

ESV ... RSV verse 39 ... “swept them all away”.

Some translations refer to the wicked in Noah's day being “taken away” verse 39. They were obviously destroyed.

This leads many to assume those “taken away” in verses 41-42 are taken to destruction. Not so. **Different Greek words!**

Those in verses 40-41 are taken to be with Jesus (Greek: Paralambano — to receive near in an intimate sense).

Those “left behind” face destruction!

We are informed here by Jesus TO BE READY!!

Matthew 25:1-13

1 “Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

2 **Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.**

3 Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them,

4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

5 But while the bridegroom was delayed, **they all slumbered and slept.**

6 “**And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’** (He's on the way — end-time)

7 Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'

9 But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'

10 And while they went to buy, **the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.** (*One taken and one left. Those who are ready will be taken with Him*)

11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, **Lord, Lord, open to us!** (*They think that they have a relationship with Jesus*)

12 But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'

13 "**Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.**

THIS IS THE LESSON OF THE PARABLE! BE READY AND WATCH!

WATCH!! You don't know the day or the hour — but **you should be aware of the nearness** — perhaps the midnight cry?

So we shouldn't be date-setting now ... **but that doesn't mean we won't know the timing nearer to the end** — at least fairly closely — "at the very doors".

Matthew 24:48-51

48 But if that evil servant says in his heart, '**My master is delaying his coming.**' (*it's never going to happen ... is it?*)

49 **and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards,**

50 **the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of,**

51 **and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites.** There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

This servant is evil — he should have known! Jesus is condemning that servant in verse 50.

Daniel 9:1-2

1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans—

2 **in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.**

Daniel has been reviewing prophecy. He wants to know when the captivity will be over . How long to go? What will happen next?

And Daniel wasn't just reviewing prophecy generally. He was interested in specific prophecies that related to his time! He knew that something was going to happen soon.

For most of us it's the prophecies that relate to our immediate future that we tend to be most interested in?

Note that **Daniel wasn't passive.** "Oh well ... the 70 years are nearly up. Let me watch what happens".

Daniel is engaged — passionate!!

Fervent prayer for prophecy to be fulfilled!

Daniel 9:3-5

3 **Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.**

4 And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, "**O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments,**

5 we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. *(Daniel hadn't sinned — but the Jews had)*

Daniel 9:16-19

16 "**O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your**

holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us.

17 Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, and for the Lord's sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate.

18 O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes and see our desolations, and the city which is called by Your name; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies.

19 O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name."

Daniel poured his heart out. **It's a good attitude to have towards prophecy.**

Not just an academic response. It's about seeing God's plan for mankind worked out ... in our case seeing the Kingdom set up in the World Tomorrow.

Daniel knew the time was near. He understood the prophecies of Jeremiah well enough. If he had not known ... what would that have said about him?

We're living in a time when many prophecies are likely to be fulfilled.

God expects us to be alert! We should not just be watchful academics.

God expects us to know the time ... know the prophecies when we get there ... and be passionately involved!

1 Thessalonians 5:1-10

1 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you.

2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

3 For **when they say**, (“*they*” — *them on the outside* — *the world!*)
“Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor
pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

4 **But you, brethren, are not in darkness**, **so that this Day should
overtake you as a thief.** (*WE BELIEVERS WON'T BE CAUGHT OUT!*)

5 **You are all sons of light and sons of the day.** **We are not of
the night nor of darkness.** (*WE ARE WATCHING — VIGILANT!*)

6 Therefore **let us not sleep**, as others do, but **let us watch and be
sober.** (*For the end of the age*)

7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk
at night.

8 But **let us who are of the day be sober**, putting on the
breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our
Lord Jesus Christ,

10 who died for us, that **whether we wake or sleep**, **we should
live together with Him.**

We won't be caught by surprise if we remain watchful! The
world won't see it coming!

**So — we may not know the day or the hour — but if we're paying
attention — we'll see it's near — at the door — AND
HOPEFULLY BE READY!**