

Prophecy Sermon #8

MCBC Hutchinson, KS August 8, 2004
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Turn to Matthew 24

We have just a few more weeks in our Summer of Prophecy Series.

Lord willing, we will finish Matthew 24 today and then spend a few weeks in Matthew 25. Then we will cover the Millennial Kingdom and the Great White Throne Judgment and that will conclude our summer of Prophecy series.

Last week – Matthew 24:35

I'm going to preach a series on the Preservation of the Bible. How we know that we hold in our hands the very Word of God.

Then in late September or early October, we will roll into the O.T. and study the two books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

We are continuing in our series entitled "The Son of Man Is Coming, Part 3."

Today, we are in a very, very interesting passage of Scripture

Matt. 24:36

Let us stand for the reading of God's Holy Word.

Matthew 24:36-51

Let us pray

You may be seated

Vs. 36

What are we talking about? The coming of Jesus (VS 37)

He will come after the Tribulation – vs. 29 – many preach that this is the Rapture – I Thess. 4. Why would we be raptured at the end of the tribulation period and brought right back to earth for the Millennial Kingdom? The Rapture will be quick – in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye. All believers are gone to the sky – unbelievers are left to live on.

Again let me remind you that the Church is not in view in the Olivet Discourse. The Lord is answering the questions asked Him by His disciples who are thinking in terms of the establishing of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Let me quickly show you we are not dealing with the second coming, not the Rapture.

The Second Coming/Advent

1. The audience of the book of Matthew are the Jews
2. Second Coming – judgment – vs. 28-vs. 39 – Do you want to get taken away or left?
3. Will the eyes of everyone see this? Yes – vs. 30
4. The order of events
 - Abomination of Desolation
 - The Great Tribulation
 - The end of the Tribulation
 - And then the Millennial Kingdom
5. Signs – vs. 29

Order of events: Abomination of Desolation, end of Tribulation, Jesus returns to set up the Millennial Kingdom – five signs

This is not the Rapture – this is the second coming of Jesus to the earth – first coming was as the Babe in the manger

Now Jesus says concerning the whole passage that His words are to be taken with deadly seriousness. They are infallible and perfect words. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the words of Jesus Christ shall never pass away.

Vs. 36

The precise moment of the Lord's return cannot be calculated by anyone. Every prediction and prediction of end-time dates – red flag should go up

The limits of the Tribulation period are known to God. It will have a definite starting time and a definite ending time. But the people living then will only know in generalities the limits of the time.

Believers in the Tribulation, who will be looking forward to the coming of the Lord of glory, should be alert. They will know generally, from the signs of the end, when He will return, but they will not know the exact time.

People alive on earth during the Tribulation period will be able, from the Scriptures, to tell the drift of events; but they will not be able to calculate the exact day or hour of Christ's return.

Having seen these things, they should know that the return of Jesus Christ is near, even at the door. That door could be flung open by Christ at any moment.

No one can pinpoint the day and hour that these things will be fulfilled. As the day approaches, undoubtedly some will try to determine even the hour, but know this for sure, no person will know the time beforehand. No scheme of setting dates is possible by men. Only the Father knows the time.

The one clearest matter in all Christ's teaching about His Second Coming is that no one can know when it will occur. This matter is so important that it is reiterated again and again in Matthew – vs. 42, 44, 50; 25:13. It is part of the perversity of the carnal human nature that we seek to learn what God has chosen to keep secret.

In Acts 1:6 and 7 we learn that, after the resurrection of Christ, the apostles asked Him, “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” He answered, “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.” Here we are clearly told that it is plainly not intended for anyone to know the timing of the future.

The books of Daniel and Revelation both make clear that the full Tribulation will last seven years . . . Then, “immediately after the tribulation of those days,” Jesus said, “the Son of Man [will come] on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory”

Now God has given Himself time to do this – turn to Daniel 12

Daniel and Revelation also speak of an expanded period of 1,290 days (Dan. 12:10-13),

The exact **day and hour** will not be known by any human beings, not even Tribulation believers, in advance.

Neither will the supernatural world know the precise time, not **even the angels of heaven**.

Matthew 24:

Vs. 37

The Lord uses the illustration of Noah who lived in days of gross immorality. The Lord describes the time of Noah as days when every thought and imagination of man’s heart was evil continually.

Like the people of Noah’s day, the generation of the Tribulation will be warned and warned and warned again.

Noah preached for 120 years and no repentance except for his own family.

Vs. 38-39

People then were enjoying the normal pursuits of life, with no awareness of imminent judgment.

What kept the people from listening to Noah's message and obeying? The common interests of life—eating, drinking, marrying, giving in marriage. They lost the *best* by living for the *good*. It is a dangerous thing to get so absorbed in the pursuits of life that we forget Jesus is coming.

The people that lived during the days of Noah ate and drank and lived like God did not exist at all.

What Jesus is saying is simply that in the days of Noah the flood came so suddenly and unexpectedly that people went on with the normal routine of life until the day that Noah entered into the ark – and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away.

The attitude that prevailed during **the days of Noah . . . before the flood** will also characterize most people living during the end time just before Christ returns. They will not be expecting His coming and will not care about it. Despite the perilous signs and wonders, they will simply be unconcerned about the things of the Lord, especially the prospect of His imminent return to judge them.

The verb “taken” in verses 39-41 means “taken away in judgment.” – vs. 40-41. *Do not apply these verses to the Rapture of the church* when believers are caught up in the air to meet the Lord. This is after the Tribulation, a division will take place: Some people will perish in judgment (be taken away), while others will remain to enter into the kingdom. The use of “took them all away” in verse 39 makes this clear.

The point of these verses is that the waters of the flood came suddenly and that those who were not prepared drowned.

In the days of Noah the flood came and caught them unprepared. This is exactly how it will be when the Son of man returns.

The parallel is to the flood where those who are taken away were removed in judgment. Those that were left in Noah's day were the ones who escaped judgment. Those remaining when Christ comes will enter the Kingdom.

During the Tribulation it is a rough time for the world. Many people doubtless will try to explain the extraordinary end-time phenomena. Like their counterparts today, they will look everywhere for answers, except to the Word of God.

Mankind is willfully blind to God's truth, no matter how compelling that truth may be. And when God's truth exposes their wickedness, they make every effort to oppose and condemn it.

As people run amok in sin and every form of debauchery and ungodliness—remember, Antichrist, Satan's man, is still on the throne—they will become more and more impervious to God's truth and resentful of His standards of righteousness. They will be so vile, wretched, and preoccupied with sex, drugs, alcohol, materialism, and pleasure seeking that they will believe every explanation for the end-time signs except the one given in Scripture. Rather than turning to God in repentance, they will curse Him (Rev. 9:21).

While Noah built the ark, he also preached (2 Pet. 2:5), but the people were just as unconcerned about his preaching as about the ark he was building, . . . They laughed when he spoke of the coming flood. . . . They therefore went about their daily routines; it was business as usual.

During the Tribulation there will be multitudes won to Christ (Rev. 7:9-14), including the 144,000 Jewish witnesses who will preach His gospel, (Rev. 7:3; Rev. 14), and there will be marvelous revival in the nation of Israel (Rom. 11:26). But that time will be dominated not by belief but by unbelief, not by holiness but by wickedness, not by

godliness but by ungodliness. It will be epitomized by secularism and false religion, even as most of the world is today, but to an immeasurably worse degree.

Here we find the idea of a sudden separation . . . coworkers – they are not saved by heirs close to a believer – salvation is a personal matter, then and now.

When the Son of Man finally appears in His second-coming judgment . . . **one will be taken** to judgment and the other **will be left** to enter the kingdom.

Vs. 41

Those who are taken are taken into the judgments and condemned, and those who are left successfully pass the judgments and are left for blessing in the kingdom.

This alone should encourage serious soul-searching. For one thing, it demolishes any fond hope of universalism, the idea that in the end everyone will be saved since God could never send anyone to hell.

When Jesus says that “one will be taken and the other left, He means that not all will be saved. Many will be lost.

Vs. 42-43

Jesus used Noah to warn that men will not know *the day*, and He used the picture of the burglar to warn that they will not know *the hour*.

The rest of the Olivet Discourse is given to parables to illustrate the attitude of people to His coming and what will happen when He does come. If the owner of the house in these verses had been careful and prepared, he could have prevented loss and damage.

“Since no one knows at what time . . . constant vigilance is required

“Watch” is an important word in this verse. It has a little different meaning than the watching that the child of God does, waiting for the Lord to come. Watching for the coming of the Lord has a note of comfort and hope in it, but the watching that the Lord is talking about in this verse denotes fear and anxiety.

The generation living during the Tribulation is specifically told they will not know the exact time of Jesus’ appearing, but they are informed in detail as to what the signs immediately preceding it will be. . . . they will know with absolute certainty that **the thief** will be breaking into **the house** sometime very soon and that they should be prepared accordingly.

It goes without saying that Jesus was not comparing Himself in character to a thief but was comparing His coming to the stealth and unexpectedness of a thief’s coming.

Vs. 44

When we combine the exhortations found in these three pictures, we end up with: “Know that He is near! Watch therefore! Be ye also ready!”

Vs. 45-47

How are we to evaluate the service of these two men? Not much is said about the good servant . . . On the other hand, a great deal is said about the bad servant. His service is marked by three characteristics.

Vs. 48

1. Carelessness. He neglects his work because, he says, “My master is staying away a long time” . . . This reminds us of 2 Peter 3:4, “Where is the promise of His coming?” It always seems like that to unbelievers. Jesus has not returned yet, so they are careless. . . . (vv. 5-7) . . . (v. 8). What seems delayed to us is not a delay with him.

There is an old fable in which three apprentice devils were talking to Satan. The first one said, "I will tell people there is no God." Satan replied, "That will not fool many, because they know there is a God." The second devil said, "I will tell them there is no hell." Satan said, "You will never fool many that way, because they know there is a hell." The third said, "I will tell people there is no hurry." Satan said, "Go, and you will ruin millions."

Don't worry, Jesus is coming for His saints in the Rapture. The Tribulation will come. Jesus will come to this earth and set up His Kingdom – it is coming.

The second characteristic

VS. 49a

Cruelty

Third characteristic

VS. 49b

Carousing . . . the Lord . . . notes that he has begun "to eat and drink with drunkards"

This parable tells about the faithful servant and the evil servant. When the lord returns, he will give his faithful servant added privilege and responsibility if he has been faithful in carrying out his duties. The evil servant will be unmasked at the sudden return of his lord and will be punished physically and eternally.

Vs. 51

Invitation

“Suppose we should write out today this excuse, how would it sound? *‘To the King of Heaven: While sitting in Medora Community Bible Church, August 8, 2004, I received a very pressing invitation from one of your servants to be saved by trusting in Your only Son Jesus Christ. I PRAY THEE HAVE ME EXCUSED.’ . . .*”

. . . BY THE GRACE OF GOD I WILL BE PRESENT.

“. . . If you would ever see the kingdom of God, you must decide this question one way or the other. What will you do with the invitation?”

I bring it to you in the name of my Master; will you accept or reject it? Be wise today, and accept the invitation.

Make up your mind that you will not go away till the question of eternity is settled.”

Won't you pray to God right now and settle the matter

Recognize your sin and that Jesus is the Savior.

Believers, how grateful we ought to be that God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation when Jesus Christ appears. He has saved us from the wrath to come (I Thes. 1:10; 5:9-10). As the people of God, we will certainly go through tribulation (John 16:33; Acts 14:22), but not *the* Tribulation.

Result: The Second Coming makes sense.

. . . Satan is bound . . .

Rev. 20:2, “And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.”

144,000 Jews

IV. 144,000 Jews return to Jerusalem to meet Him there when He comes. Since they are under God’s invincible physical protection (Revelation 7:3; 9:4).

One hundred forty-four thousand of them will be saved to evangelize the world, 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. Those Jews will be supernaturally sealed and protected by God, and no effort by the Antichrist or his collaborators will be able to destroy them.

Jesus returns to the earth, defeats His enemies at the Battle of Armageddon, and He is received by the Jews, and establishes His kingdom on earth (Rev. 19:11ff; Zech. 12:7-13:1). And He will reign on earth for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-5).

Prophecy Sermon #8

Turn to Matthew 24

We have just a few more weeks in our Summer of Prophecy Series.

Then we will cover the Millennial Kingdom and the Great White Throne Judgment.

And before we head over to the Old Testament in Ezra and Nehemiah, I'm going to preach a series on the Preservation of the Bible.

So in late September or early October, we will roll into Ezra and Nehemiah.

We are continuing in our series entitled "The Son of Man Is Coming, Part 3."

Let us stand for the reading of God's Holy Word.

Matthew 24:36-51

Let us pray

You may be seated

The sight of Him in blazing glory will be so unbearably fearful that rebellious mankind will cry out for the mountains and rocks to fall on them to hide them "from the presence of Him who sits on the throne" . . . But instead of being driven to the Lord in reverent repentance, they will flee from Him in continued rejection, cursing and blaspheming His name.

When the Lord Jesus comes again in power, He will reckon with the remnant of Israel (Ezek. 20) to determine who shall receive the Kingdom blessing. The "enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" is the entrance into the land for the Kingdom blessing (Ezek. 20:40-42), while the fate of the unprofitable servant who was cast into outer darkness is the "they shall not enter into the land of Israel" of Ezekiel 20:37, 38.

A. Jesus closed this section of His discourse with three practical admonitions, built around three illustrations: a fig tree, Noah, and a thief in the night. Verse 36 makes it clear that no one will know the day or the hour of the Lord's coming. But they can be aware of the movements of events and not be caught by surprise.

Jesus closed this section of His discourse with three practical admonitions, built around three illustrations: a fig tree, Noah, and a thief in the night. Verse 36 makes it clear that no one will know the day or the hour of the Lord's coming. But they can be aware of the movements of events and not be caught by surprise.

Vs. 36

The precise moment of the Lord's return cannot be calculated by anyone.

144,000 Jews

Revelation 14:1, "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads."

. . . return to Jerusalem to meet Him there when He comes. Since they are under God's invincible physical protection (Revelation 7:3; 9:4; 14:1)

. . . during **those days**, two out of three Jews in Palestine will be slaughtered . . . One hundred forty-four thousand of them will be saved to evangelize the world, 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. Those Jews will be supernaturally sealed and protected by God, and no effort by the Antichrist or his collaborators will be able to destroy them.

Pentecost

Pages 297-301

. . . the 144,000 of Revelation 7 and 14 constitute a special part of the remnant of Israel, set apart by a sovereign act of God . . . special witness during the tribulation period.

. . . the 144,000 are part of the remnant of Israel, but not the entire remnant itself

The *destiny* of the remnant. Speaking of those brought to the Lord through the ministry of the 144,000 in Revelation 7:15-16, John writes, "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne

shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

They are seen “before the throne” (Rev. 14:3). Thus the destiny of this remnant is the kingdom over which Christ will rule from the “throne of David.” These promises are not heavenly, but earthly, and will be fulfilled in the millennium.

VS. 43

Revelation 16:14-16

. . . the vision of the 144,000 Israelites on Mount Zion with which this chapter began implies that their return to Jerusalem has something to do with it.

144,000 return to Jerusalem to meet Him there when He comes. Since they are under God’s invincible physical protection (Revelation 7:3; 9:4; 14:1)

. . . Satan is bound . . .

Rev. 20:2, “And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.”

Verse 41

Those who are taken are taken into the judgments and condemned, and those who are left successfully pass the judgments and are left for blessing in the kingdom.

. . . parallel passage in Luke 17:34-37

. . . allows for people to accept or reject Christ during the Tribulation, some of whom will survive that time (none of whom will be raptured, because the Rapture will already have occurred) to be judged at the Second Coming (both living Jews and Gentiles), and

those who pass those judgments successfully as redeemed people to go into the kingdom in earthly bodies to be the first generation of the millennial population and the parents of the next generation.

1. Jesus returns to the earth, defeats His enemies at the Battle of Armageddon, and He is received by the Jews, and establishes His kingdom on earth (Rev. 19:11ff; Zech. 12:7-13:1). And He will reign on earth for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-5).

. . . of the three illustrations that show the unexpectedness of the event the individuals concerned were occupied with the usual round of life without any thought of Messiah's return. The lesson to be drawn is in the words "watch" (v. 42), "be ye also ready" (v. 44) and "in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (v. 44, also 50).

V. The parable showing the certainty of His coming is followed by exhortations to watchfulness because of the uncertainty of the time. . . The reference to the days of Noe (vs.37-39) does not emphasize the licentiousness of the people of Noah's day, but rather the unpreparedness for the event that brought judgment.

V. Boice

Pages 507-513

Verses 36-51. In the last section of the chapter, Jesus stresses the suddenness of his return by a historical reference and several images. His coming will be like the flood in the days of Noah, or like a thief that enters a house at an unexpected time, or a master who suddenly returns home. . . . servants must be ready since "the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of" (v. 50).

The whole fulfillment of the Olivet discourse, therefore, is future.

Bible Knowledge Commentary

Pages 78-81

The precise moment of the Lord's return cannot be calculated by anyone.

People then were enjoying the normal pursuits of life, with no awareness of imminent judgment.

The individuals "left" are believers who will be privileged to be on the earth to populate the kingdom of Jesus Christ in physical bodies.

The limits of the Tribulation period are known to God . . . will have a definite starting time and a definite ending time. But the people living then will only know in generalities the limits of the time.

Believers in the Tribulation, who will be looking forward to the coming of the Lord of glory, should be alert. They will know generally, from the signs of the end, when He will return, but they will not know the exact time.

When Christ returns in glory, further separations will occur

The judgment of the Gentiles (sheep and goats) will occur when the Lord returns (25:31-46). Also at His glorious return, Israel will be judged as a nation (Ezek. 20:33-44; Zech. 13:1).

Wiersbe

Pages 178-179

What kept the people from listening to Noah's message and obeying? The common interests of life—eating, drinking, marrying, giving in marriage. They lost the *best* by living for the *good*. It is a dangerous thing to get so absorbed in the pursuits of life that we forget Jesus is coming.

The verb "taken" in verses 39-41 means "taken away in judgment." *Do not apply these verses to the Rapture of the church* when believers are caught up in the air to meet the Lord. During the Tribulation, a division will take place: Some people will perish in

judgment (be taken away), while others will remain to enter into the kingdom. The use of “took them all away” in verse 39 makes this clear.

Jesus used Noah to warn that men will not know *the day*, and He used the picture of the burglar to warn that they will not know *the hour*.

People alive on earth during the Tribulation period will be able, from the Scriptures, to tell the drift of events; but they will not be able to calculate the exact day or hour of Christ’s return.

When we combine the exhortations found in these three pictures, we end up with: “Know that He is near! Watch therefore! Be ye also ready!”

Boice

Pages 516-521

Having seen these things, they should know that the return of Jesus Christ is near, even at the door. That door could be flung open by Christ at any moment.

This was an example of God’s judgment of wickedness

The point of these verses is that the waters of the flood came suddenly and that those who were not prepared drowned.

Here we find the idea of a sudden separation . . . coworkers

This alone should encourage serious soul-searching. For one thing, it demolishes any fond hope of universalism, the idea that in the end everyone will be saved since God could never send anyone to hell.

When Jesus says that “one will be taken and the other left,” he means that not all will be saved. Many will be lost.

“Since no one knows at what time . . . constant vigilance is required

The picture of the flood reminds us that many persons will be lost. The picture of the two men . . . and the two women . . . points to a radical separation and reminds us that we are not saved by knowing or being close to a believer. The picture of the thief reminds us that our souls are valuable and that it is simple prudence for us to be ready.

How are we to evaluate the service of these two men? Not much is said about the good servant . . . On the other hand, a great deal is said about the bad servant. His service is marked by three . . .

1. *Carelessness*. He neglects his work because, he says, “My master is staying away a long time” . . . This reminds us of 2 Peter 3:4, . . . “They will say, ‘Where is this “coming” he promised?’ . . . It always seems like that to unbelievers. Jesus has not returned yet, so they are careless. . . . (vv. 5-7) . . . (v. 8). What seems delayed to us is not a delay with him.
2. *Cruelty*.
3. *Carousing*. . . . the Lord . . . notes that he has begun “to eat and drink with drunkards”

There is an old fable in which three apprentice devils were talking to Satan. The first one said, “I will tell people there is no God.” Satan replied, “That will not fool many, because they know there is a God.” The second devil said, “I will tell them there is no hell.” Satan said, “You will never fool many that way, because they know there is a hell.” The third said, “I will tell people there is no hurry.” Satan said, “Go, and you will ruin millions.”

McGee

Pages 104-107

No one can pinpoint the day and hour that these things will be fulfilled. As the day approaches, undoubtedly some will try to determine even the hour, but know this for sure, no person will know the time beforehand. No scheme of setting dates is possible by men. Only the Father knows the time.

The Lord uses the illustration of Noah who lived in days of gross immorality. The Lord describes the time of Noah as days when every thought and imagination of man's heart was evil continually.

The people that lived during the days of Noah ate and drank and lived like God did not exist at all.

See McGee, page 105*

In the days of Noah the people were eating, drinking, and giving in marriage when the flood came and caught them unprepared. This is exactly how it will be when the Son of man returns.

Matthew 24:40, 41

The parallel is to the flood where those who are taken away were removed in judgment. Those that were left in Noah's day were the ones who escaped judgment. Those remaining when Christ comes will enter the Kingdom.

Matthew 24:42

"Watch" is an important word in this verse. It has a little different meaning than the watching that the child of God does, waiting for the Lord to come. Watching for the coming of the Lord has a note of comfort and hope in it, but the watching that the Lord is talking about in this verse denotes fear and anxiety.

A month or two later you go to the hospital and you pass a room and see this man and his wife sitting by the bedside of a little child. The child has a burning fever and the doctor has told them that the crisis will come about midnight. They are watching. My friend, that is a different type of watching than watching for a deer, or waiting for a wife on the corner. This is watching with anxiety. It is the kind of watch that is mentioned in verse 42.

The attitude of watching is different from the attitude of the Church in waiting. Watching denotes anxiety, uneasiness, danger, and escape. Waiting denotes patience, service, desire, and preparation. A bride waits for the coming day of marriage. A man watches . . .

Matthew 24:43-45

The rest of the Olivet Discourse is given to parables to illustrate the attitude of people to His coming and what will happen when He does come. If the owner of the house in these verses had been careful and prepared, he could have prevented loss and damage.

Matthew 24:46-51

This parable tells about the faithful servant and the evil servant. When the lord returns, he will give his faithful servant added privilege and responsibility if he has been faithful in carrying out his duties. The evil servant will be unmasked at the sudden return of his lord and will be punished physically and eternally.

Again let me remind you that the Church is not in view in the Olivet Discourse. The Lord is answering the questions asked Him by His disciples who are thinking in terms of the establishing of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Invitation

From *The Shorter Life of D. L. Moody*

Pages 117-118

“Suppose we should write out tonight this excuse, how would it sound? *‘To the King of Heaven: While sitting in Convention Hall, Kansas City, Mo., November 16, 1899, I received a very pressing invitation from one of your servants to be present at the marriage supper of your only begotten Son. I PRAY THEE HAVE ME EXCUSED.’ . . .*”

“Just let me write out another answer. *‘To the King of Heaven: While sitting in Convention Hall, Kansas City, Mo., November 16, 1899, I received a pressing invitation from one of your messengers to be present at the marriage supper of your only begotten Son. I hasten to reply. BY THE GRACE OF GOD I WILL BE PRESENT.*”

“. . . If you would ever see the kingdom of God, you must decide this question one way or the other. What will you do with the invitation? I bring it to you in the name of my Master; will you accept or reject it? Be wise today, and accept the invitation. Make up your mind that you will not go away till the question of eternity is settled.”

Wiersbe, page 179

How grateful we ought to be that God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation when Jesus Christ appears. He has saved us from the wrath to come (I Thes. 1:10; 5:9-10). As the people of God, we will certainly go through tribulation (John 16:33; Acts 14:22), but not *the* Tribulation.

Rice

Pages 390-392

Now Jesus says concerning the whole passage that His words are to be taken with deadly seriousness. They are infallible and perfect words. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the words of Jesus Christ shall never pass away.

The one clearest matter in all Christ's teaching about His Second Coming is that no one can know when it will occur. This matter is so important that it is reiterated again and again in Matthew. See in this chapter verses 34, 42, and 44. See Matthew 25:13; Mark 13:32, 33, and 35 to 37. It is part of the perversity of the carnal human nature that we seek to learn what God has chosen to keep secret.

In Acts 1:6 and 7 we learn that, after the resurrection of Christ, the apostles asked Him, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" He answered, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." Here we are clearly told that it is plainly not intended for Christians to know the future.

It is a mistake to use this passage as if it gave some signs or marks to distinguish the closing days of the age. Not so. What Jesus is saying is simply that in the days of Noah the flood came so suddenly and unexpectedly that people went on with the normal routine of life, "eating, drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark. And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away." There is nothing wrong in eating and drinking, in marrying and giving in marriage. . . . It could not be foreseen, "So shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

McArthur

Pages 70-78

The signs He had just been describing will be conclusive proof that His arrival is very near. Once they have begun, the *general* time period of His return will be known But even during those sign-days the precise **day and hour** of Jesus' appearing will not be known, a truth He reiterates several times in this Olivet discourse (see 24:42, 44, 50; 25:13).

. . . the books of Daniel and Revelation both make clear that the full Tribulation will last seven years . . . Then, “immediately after the tribulation of those days,” Jesus said, “the Son of Man [will come] on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory”

Daniel and Revelation also speak of an expanded period of 1,290 days (Dan. 12:11), 30 days more than the basic 1,260 of the Great Tribulation. Daniel also mentions a 1,335-day period (Dan. 12:12), adding another 45 days to make a total addition of 75. . . . additional days is that they will cover the time when the Messiah descends to the Mount of Olives, creates the great valley in which the nations of the world will be judged, and executes that judgment

. . . the exact **day and hour** will not be known by any human beings, not even Tribulation believers, in advance.

Neither will the supernatural world know the precise time, not **even the angels of heaven**.

Still more amazingly, not even **the Son** knew at the time He spoke these words or at any other time during His incarnation.

. . . the attitude that prevailed during **the days of Noah . . . before the flood** will also characterize most people living during the end time just before Christ returns. They will not be expecting His coming and will not care about it. Despite the perilous signs and wonders, they will simply be unconcerned about the things of the Lord, especially the prospect of His imminent return to judge them.

Many people doubtless will try to explain the extraordinary end-time phenomena . . . Like their counterparts today, they will look everywhere for answers except to the Word of God.

. . . mankind is willfully blind to God's truth, no matter how compelling that truth may be. And when God's truth exposes their wickedness, they make every effort to oppose and condemn it.

As people run amok in sin and every form of debauchery and ungodliness, they will become more and more impervious to God's truth and resentful of His standards of righteousness. They will be so vile, wretched, and preoccupied with sex, drugs, alcohol, materialism, and pleasure seeking that they will believe every explanation for the end-time signs except the one given in Scripture. Rather than turning to God in repentance, they will curse Him (Rev. 9:21).

While Noah built the ark, he also preached (2 Pet. 2:5), but the people were just as unconcerned about his preaching as about the ark he was building, . . . They laughed when he spoke of the coming flood. . . . They therefore went about their daily routines of . . . It was business as usual

During the Tribulation there will be multitudes won to Christ (Rev. 7:9-14), including the 144,000 Jewish witnesses who will preach His gospel, (Rev. 7:1-8), and there will be marvelous revival in the nation of Israel (Rom. 11:26). But that time will be dominated not by belief but by unbelief, not by holiness but by wickedness, not by godliness but by ungodliness. It will be epitomized by secularism and false religion, even as most of the world is today, but to an immeasurably worse degree.

Like the people of Noah's day, the generation of the Tribulation will be warned and warned and warned again.

When the Son of Man finally appears in His second-coming judgment . . . **one will be taken** to judgment and the other **will be left** to enter the kingdom.

The generation living during the Tribulation is specifically told they will not know the exact time of Jesus' appearing, but they are informed in detail as to what the signs immediately preceding it will be. . . . they will know with absolute certainty that **the thief**

will be breaking into **the house** sometime very soon and that they should be prepared accordingly.

It goes without saying that Jesus was not comparing Himself in character to a thief but was comparing His coming to the stealth and unexpectedness of a thief's coming.

Faithfulness

24:45-51

Read McArthur 78-82