

## Are We Coming to the End of the World? Part II

Text: Matthew 24:3

Just for review:

### 1. DECEPTION

Matthew 24:4, 5, 11 "...false prophets..."

Revelation 6:1, 2 (The White Horse)

### 2. HOSTILITIES

Matthew 24:6, 7a "...wars and rumors of war..."

Revelation 6:3, 4 (The Red Horse)

### 3. HUNGER

Matthew 24:7b, "...famines..."

Revelation 6:5, 6 (The Black Horse)

### 4. "PANDEMIC-MONIUM"

Matthew 24:7b, "...pestilences..."

Revelation 6:7, 8 (The Pale Horse)

### 5. GEOGRAPHICAL AND ASTRONOMICAL TURMOIL

Matthew 24:7c; Revelation 6:12-14

Now we are picking up where we left off last week:

### 6. UNMITIGATED INIQUITY AND MARTYRDOM

Matthew 24:9-13, 37

II Timothy 3:1-8

In our life, we must realize that Jesus made a promise to us that is not exactly one that we like to claim. John 15:20: "Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also."

The apostles were beaten for preaching the Gospel. They were commanded not to speak of the name of Jesus. I admire their response recorded in Acts 5:41: "And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." Not only did the apostles refuse to stop, they stepped up their witness with zeal. Acts 5:42: "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."

The world hates Jesus. The more unconverted people increase in numbers and enter into leadership positions in society, the more dangerous it becomes for believers. As we approach the return Jesus, this environment will become dominant. Matthew 24:12: "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Matthew 24:37 informs us, "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." We read a description of the days of Noah before the flood in Genesis 6:5:

“And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” Referring to the analogy of the Braxton Hicks contractions from last week, we are experiencing the contractions in the wickedness as in the days of Noah displayed every night on the news.

In II Timothy 3:1-8 we are seeing the prophecy of the last days as relevant as though it was written in the day that we are living in right now. Let's break it down:

- A. Overwhelmed with egotism and self-centeredness.
- B. Blasphemers. Around 12:30 a.m. on August 1, the so-called peaceful protesters began to burn Bibles. The very Word of God was set on fire! Here we see the children of the Devil, like their father are emboldened by the anarchy to take it a step further. The question may now be, not what else are they going to burn, but whom else will they attempt to burn (Romans 1:20-22).
- C. Ungrateful and unholy disobedience to the first line of authority in a person's life: their parents!
- D. The escalation of sexual perversion and deviation (Romans 1:26, 27).
- E. Truth on the scaffold, wrong on the throne (paraphrased from James Russell Lowe).
- F. Pursuit of pleasure with absolutely no restraints (Romans 1:32, 33).
- G. Apostasy to the max.

## 7. SATURATION OF THE GOSPEL

Matthew 24:14

A wonderful prophecy will be fulfilled just before the Lord returns in glory, i.e., the Gospel of our Lord and Savior will be preached through the entire world. Revelation 7 and 14 tells us of the 144,000 Jewish witnesses that become firebrands for the truth in the Messiah. They even have help in the midst of their martyrdom from an angel from Heaven. Revelation 14:5, 6: “And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God. And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.”

## 8. THE FINAL HOLOCAUST AND PROTECTION OF ISRAEL

Matthew 24:15-26; 32-34

As Israel grows in strength, the surrounding nations get more hostile. Ultimately, however, the promise of Israel's victory, i.e., the Battle of Armageddon, is prophesied in Zechariah 12:9: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.” Joel 3:1-16.

## 9. THE RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST IN GLORY

Matthew 24:27-31

Revelation 19:11-16

## CONCLUSION:

- A. The Immanency of Christ's Return Demands Preparedness.

Matthew 24:36-44

We need to ready at any time. Even though this is speaking of the return of our Lord in glory, the same principle is at stake. Matt. 24:42, 44: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

B. Let Us Be Faithful.

Matthew 24:45-51; Matthew 24:36

1. Be Transformed, Not Conformed to the Culture Around Us.

Romans 12:1,2. II Corinthians 3:18

2. Let Us Remain Friends With Israel.

Genesis 12:3: "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

Genesis 21:12; Romans 9:7; Hebrews 11:18: "...in Isaac shall thy seed be called."

Genesis 28:13: "And, behold, the LORD stood above it [the ladder that ascended to Heaven] and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed."

God will fulfill His promise to Abraham through Isaac and through Jacob (Israel). God will take care of those who take care of Israel. Blessings await those who befriend Israel, because the nations that are friends with Israel are partnering with God and His plans (Matthew 25:31-40).

3. Be Faithful in Prayer.

Romans 12:12 tells us to continue "...instant in prayer." The word "instant" comes to us from the Greek word *proskartereo*, which means to be diligent, attend assiduously, to persevere.

4. Be Diligent in Our Witness.

John 4:35: "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

Psalms 107:2: "Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."

5. If You Are Not Saved; Get Saved Now!

II Corinthians 6:2c: "...now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

Proverbs 27:1: "Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

Matthew 24:8: "All these *are* the beginning of sorrows." This phrase is referring to the birth pangs that increase with more intensity until finally the birth. These prophecies are specifically referring to the coming of Christ in glory. Using the Christmas and Thanksgiving illustration, Thanksgiving sneaks up on us, because all the advertisements are focused on Christmas. Therefore, the closer we are to Christmas, we're even much closer to Thanksgiving. Therefore, the closer we are to these last days, we are even closer to the rapture of the Church.

"...Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20b).

-Pastor Pope-