

## 11/03/2020 End Times Bible Study #6, Matthew 24:36–51

v. 36: This v. makes a surprise announcement. We are not amazed that no person knows the day or hour of the Lord's return. The angels not knowing doesn't confuse us. They are not in charge in heaven. They serve God. We are shocked that Jesus was certain of his return, but he didn't know the exact time. Only the father knows. This is a demonstration of what we call "The Humiliation of Jesus."

This was a conscious decision of Jesus that is described in Philippians 2:5–8. I encourage you to read those verses. As a genuine human being, the Christ did not always or fully use or manifest the divine powers and majesty that were communicated to his human nature. This began with the lowly manner of his incarnation, continued in the of his birth and life, and was complete with his death and burial. We call this his state of humiliation.

vs. 37–39: Jesus' point about Noah is that life went on as usual. There was no sign other than the preaching of Noah for the 120 years while he was building the ark, when suddenly the flood came. From this reference we note that God waited patiently for 120 years for people to repent, but there was no change. Since he waited 120 years no one could say if He had only waited a bit longer they would repent.

Then he pointed out that they were unaware until the flood came and washed them all away. He said that is the way it is going to be at the end time.

vs. 40–42: These verses are often misunderstood. Those who believe there will be a 'Rapture,' consider these verses proof, one taken, another left. You should read vs. 40 and 41 in light of v. 42. Paul is writing to the people who are eager for Jesus to return. The early Christians prayed regularly, "Even so Lord Jesus, come quickly." He is not writing to those who are unprepared to meet him.

It is the obvious that the emphasis for all is watchfulness. We are to be prepared all the time because we can't know the time of the end. We can't outsmart God just as he warned us. This section is a call for faithfulness as we live in hope. Our motivation in the service of Christ is a meaningful relation with him, not a fear of the end and, a resultant artificial approach to life.

The emphasis in this last section is on preparedness, for although we associate freely in society we have a different relation than the rest of society to the Master. There will be a division coming for "one will be taken and the other left." While this is often spoken of as the "rapture," the thrust is to insure our being ready for his coming, for Jesus said he is "coming at an hour when you do not expect him!"

vs. 43–44: We have a 1 verse parable type teaching in v. 43. Then in v. 44 Jesus applies the thief story parable to us. We will not know the day or hour when the Lord returns. If the homeowner knew when the thief was coming he would have stayed awake to protect his house. The only true protection we have is by being ready all the time.

vs. 45–47: The Christ introduces this section by asking a probing question: "Who is the faithful and wise servant?" It is the one who is carrying out his duties when the master returns. Whenever, the master returns, he will bless the faithful servant and set him over all his possessions. This is not a picture of someone earning a place in heaven. This is the example of someone thankful for the mercy of God who keeps his life focused, as much as possible for sinful mankind, living a thanksgiving life for God.

vs. 48–51: Now we find a warning about someone who does not live a thanksgiving life. His idea is I can do what I want until the master returns. What he forgets is that he does not know when the master is coming. In v. 50 Jesus makes it clear again, it will happen on a day and hour when he does not expect the master and he will be caught in his sin. Even if he had done such a good job of pretending to serve the master that he fools all or at least many on the earth, he cannot fool God. Instead of joyful eternity with the master, he will be placed with the hypocrites where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

### SIGNIFICANT POINTS IN THIS READING:

1. No one knows or is able to predict the time of Jesus return.
2. No specific signs mark out the time (vs. 37–39).
3. The only sign which says, "and then the end will come" is after the Gospel of the kingdom is preached to the whole world as a testimony to all nations (Matt. 24:14). Only God know when that time has come so don't join any Bible Study which promises you they will show you how to know when the end is at hand. If they say that, they are claiming to be gods themselves.

4. To be prepared for the end, live a thanksgiving life for God. There is no secret society you need to join. Have faith in God's mercy and grace: confess your sins, be forgiven and cleansed of all unrighteousness. Then you are ready. God's grace cannot be earned or deserved. It is always God's gift (Eph. 2:8-9).
5. The faithful and wise servant is the one doing what God has called him/her to do, knowing that when you sin, you seek forgiveness.

Close with prayer asking God to protect you from the desire to know when the end is coming. If you get caught up with those trying to figure it all out ahead of time, cease and desist immediately. Get busy living a thanksgiving life rather than trying to satisfy your curiosity. Amen. Pastor Milan