

Matthew 24:32–34 (NKJV)

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 it 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.**

- Jesus spoke these words standing at Jerusalem’s Temple Mount – Ground Zero for Bible prophecy

Luke 21:25–28 (NKJV)

- Apart from Jesus’ return, every part of this prophecy has taken place or is in the process of being fulfilled
- Again, we don’t want to exaggerate events or set dates
- We also don’t want to ignore the signs and miss what God is doing
- Remember the Jewish people had the prophecies concerning their Messiah and still missed Jesus
- I don’t know when Jesus is coming but I want as many people to be ready as possible

We have looked at signs in the heavens as well as prophetic fulfillment concerning Israel, as well as cultural signs that are pointing to a “falling away” from Biblical morals and truth

The signs are everywhere that point to the return of Jesus and the catching away of the Bride of Christ – Am I ready?

In **Luke 17** Jesus gives a graphic picture of the “catching away” (Rapture) of the Body of Christ

Luke 17:27–37 (NKJV)

²⁷ They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. ²⁸ Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; ²⁹ but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed *them all*.

³⁰ Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

³¹ “In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods *are* in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back.

³² Remember Lot’s wife. ³³ Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. ³⁴ I tell you, in that night there will be two *men* in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. ³⁵ Two *women* will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. ³⁶ Two *men* will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left.”

³⁷ And they answered and said to Him, “Where, Lord?” So He said to them, “Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together.”

- The Rapture will be selective
- Believers will be delivered from the wrath to come
- It doesn’t matter if your husband, wife, or parents are believers
- One will be taken and the other left

Jesus said there will be buying, selling, marrying, and giving in marriage before the rapture

- Just as it was in the times of Noah and Lot

The angels that came to rescue Lot and his family told him that they could not judge Sodom and Gomorrah until Lot and his family were rescued and safe

- On the day that Lot went out it rained fire and brimstone
- Even so it will be in the day that the Son of Man is revealed
- He couldn't be clearer that there will be a pre-wrath rapture

I am so thankful for the teachings of Jesus regarding the days of Noah and Lot

- They give us great comfort that we will not experience the wrath of God

However, we must be ready

Luke 21:34–36 (NKJV)

³⁴ “But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. ³⁵ For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth.

³⁶ Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

- Pray that you will be able to escape!

Three Parallels to the Days of Noah and Lot, and Our Present Day

- An Immoral and Violent World
- A Righteous Remnant
- A Sudden Removal of the Righteous

1 Corinthians 15:50–53 (NKJV)

⁵⁰ Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption.

⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

- The Rapture will occur in the twinkling of an eye
- To little time to repent, change your life, and make wrong things right, or give your life to Christ
- This is why we must understand end times prophecy and be ready for the return of Jesus at any moment
- This doesn't mean we have to be perfect
- The question is, do I have a personal relationship with Jesus?

With everything the Bible teaches us about the end times why would you continue to live in sin and rebellion with little care about the future?

2 Thessalonians 2:9–12 (NKJV)

⁹ The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

¹¹ And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, ¹² that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

- In **Luke 17**, Jesus told us to remember Lot's wife
- In **Genesis 19** angels visit Lot and strongly urge him to get his family out
- He still dawdled around
- They literally had to almost drag him out
- The angels told him and his family to not even look back
- Lot's wife turned around and looked, while they were fleeing, and she was turned into a pillar of salt

By using this story as a backdrop, Jesus is saying, *“I'm coming back. This is the way the world will look before I return. And when I do, I am going to take one and leave the other. So, remember Lot's wife.”*

Luke 21:34 (NKJV)

³⁴ “But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly.

He then says...

Luke 21:35 (NKJV)

³⁵ For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth.

- A snare is a trap laid for an animal
- Jesus is warning us to not fall in love with the world
- That is what Lot's wife did
- She loved her life in Sodom more than she loved God and wanted to escape
- Jesus' return will be like an animal trap for every person that loves the world more than they love Him

Luke 21:36 (NKJV)

³⁶ Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

For those who are left behind, the Antichrist is going to come with signs, wonders, power, and lies

- He will deceive everyone on earth
- People will give into his delusions
- He will be the king of delusions

A Forth Parallel Between the Days of Noah and Lot in **Luke 17**

Cataclysmic Judgement

This will be more than simply a bad day, a bad war, a rumor of war, an earthquake, or pestilence such as Covid-19

- It will be overwhelming, global destruction
- In Sodom and Gomorrah, fire and brimstone fell in the shape of hail
- It destroyed every human except Lot and his family
- The wrath of God will be worse than anything the world has ever seen
- Again, “*we are not appointed to wrath*”
– **1 Thessalonians 5:9**

Revelation 9:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind.

- Three plagues will be released at the end of the tribulation
- There will be no more, buying, selling, marrying, and giving in marriage
- The world’s economies will collapse, and billions of people will die
- The earth will be a smoldering ruin

1 Thessalonians 1:9–10 (NKJV)

⁹For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *even* Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

Those who turn from idols to God and serve Him are delivered from the wrath to come

- We will not be judged with the rest of the world
- We will be rescued like Noah and Lot
- We will be marrying Jesus and preparing to rule and reign with Him
- We have nothing to fear

Genesis 6:9–13 (NKJV)

⁹This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God. ¹⁰And Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. ¹¹The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹²So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. ¹³And God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

- Corrupt – *‘evil, filthy and immoral’*
- It was not merely a bad world, it was an evil world

2 Peter 2:4–11 (NKJV)

⁴For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; ⁵and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, *one of eight people*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly; ⁶and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned *them* to destruction, making *them* an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; ⁷and delivered righteous Lot, *who was* oppressed by the **filthy** conduct of the wicked ⁸(for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented *his* righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing *their* lawless deeds)—⁹ *then* the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment, ¹⁰and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. *They are* presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries, ¹¹whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.

- Filthy – ‘*shameless, immoral, and full of wrong desires*’
- Desires for pleasure and absolutely no fear of God
- When the angels came to deliver Lot and his family, the men of the city tried to get the angels to have sex with them
- That’s pretty ungodly

If God allowed our society to continue in the direction we are heading He would have to apologize to Noah and Lot

2 Timothy 3:1–9 (NKJV)

¹ But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:
² For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴ traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! ⁶ For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, ⁷ always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁸ Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; ⁹ but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was.

- Sounds like our present day
- Here Paul lists 19 separate moral violations
- He says there will be wholesale destruction of morality in the world

When I was a kid, if I misbehaved in school, my parents didn't complain or call the ACLU they didn't threaten my teachers

- They disciplined me
- We left our doors unlocked
- We played outside, day and night and no one had any fear about it

Paul is explaining the full spectrum of sin that will be in the world in the end times

- Immorality isn't just about sexuality, though it includes that
- Immortality is a measure of character
- In the same way a cancerous cell starts out and eventually takes over your whole body
- When we fall into gross immorality it effects our whole character
- Morals are there to protect us, others, and our relationship with God

Four Categories of Immorality

Exaltation of self

- This may also be referred to as narcissism in contemporary terms
- Lovers of self, boasters, proud, haughty, headstrong
- Just look at professional athletes
- Some of that is ok and become part of the game
- When I was a kid no one did that
- I don't want to be overly critical; I know it has become socially acceptable to do some end zone celebrating
- The point is, a certain self-centeredness has invaded our culture – Facebook, YouTube, celebrity shows

We are living in a world of socially sanctioned narcissism

Its not that we love ourselves; but that we love ourselves to the exclusion of God and everyone else

Rejection of Authority

The apostle Paul says many people will reject authority in the last days

- They will be “*disobedient to parents*” and “*lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God*”
- Law enforcement personnel in the US are under assault, as they are elsewhere in the world
- These individuals guard our society for low-level wages
- They have become prime targets for both physical and legal assaults

Teachers also face a society that no longer respects their role

- We see students threaten to assault teachers and parents say it’s the teachers fault for making the student mad
- Teachers need authority to teach
- We are moving toward and increasingly lawless society in which no one fears or respects authority
- Just look at the political disrespect in this country

Remember the Antichrist will be called “the lawless one”

When you are in rebellion to authority you have the same spirit as the Antichrist

Rejection of Moral Standards

If you wait until marriage to have sex you are considered an oddity or openly mocked

- Even in Christian circles

Hebrews 13:4 (NKJV)

⁴Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

- We need more young people to commit to purity before marriage
- How many times have you heard, *“It’s my body, and you can’t tell me what to do with it.”*
- Paul warned there would be despisers of good in the last days

Vicious and Unloving

Paul said that people would be disloyal, unloving, and verbally vicious

- They will be unforgiving and unwilling to reconcile
- They will be blasphemers, slanders, and traitors
- This seems to be what we see all over the internet

We live in a culture with the entire media dedicated to gossip, and they don’t care whose lives they destroy

Today it seems like the media’s goal is to embarrass anyone and everyone they dislike

What Should Be Our Moral Response?

Exaltation of Christ Over Self

- Godly people should be neither haughty nor proud
- We should be humble and exalt Christ over ourselves
- We should be “*clothed in humility*” – 1 Peter 5:5
- Putting on humility isn’t something that comes naturally
- You have to put it on like a garment
- We have to make a choice to allow God to work in us so we will put away our old prideful selves

Once you become a follower of Christ your life isn’t about you anymore; its about Jesus

- If we live this way we will always be thinking of ways for Christ and the Gospel to be presented through our lives
- We won’t be thinking so much about how we can get ahead
- When we get to heaven it won’t be about us, it will be about Jesus

As believers, we must take off our arrogant, narcissistic clothing, put on humility, and exalt Jesus

Ephesians 4:22–24 (NKJV)

²² that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, ²³ and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴ and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Submission to God's Authority and His Delegated Human Authorities

Because I am a Christian I am not destined to be a rebel

- Rebellion is not compatible with Christianity
- We must be submitted to God and those He delegates authority to
- Jesus submitted to His Father's authority – **John 5:19-20**
- He submitted to his earthly mothers authority – **Luke 2:41-52**
- In fact, she was the one who told Him to begin His earthly ministry – **John 2:1-11**

Jesus did not rebel against authority to exalt Himself or make a political statement

- He submitted to authority both in Heaven and on Earth

Acceptance of the Bible's Moral Standards

Our natural man wants to do the things the Bible says we shouldn't do as well as not do the things the Bible says we should do

- We all fail and make mistakes
- There is a difference between committing sin and choosing to live a sinful lifestyle
- You can't claim to be submitted to Christ and live your life the way you want

God isn't a vending machine where we can take what we want and leave everything else

- *“Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord’ and not do the things which I say?” – Luke 6:46*
- Lord means Master
- You can't say, *“Lord I want you to be Lord of my life, but I'm going to sleep with anyone I want and sell some drugs on the side.”*

You can't tell the Lord that there is a list of things that He just can't talk to you about

Loving Others Loyally and Sacrificially

Believers shouldn't be troublemakers, gossips, or mean spirited

- Jesus said, *“Blessed are the peace makers” – Matthew 5:9*
- We have become a very immoral and vicious nation

Our society condones abortion, sexual immorality, violence, and every other category by which God could judge a nation

- Our lives must show people the way to God rather than being under the influence of the culture
- God wants us to live our lives intentionally with the purpose of glorifying God
- We can be salt and light while loving people sacrificially – **Matthew 5:13-16**