

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

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)

- 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

Discerning the Times

From the very beginning of creation God laid out how much time would be allotted for human history

- I believe we are at the end of that allotment
- The end is not coming because of something we have done
- We are so much better and so much worse than generations who have gone before us
- It is God who keeps a master calendar and clock
- We only happen to be the people living on earth when those run out

2 Peter 3:3–9 (NKJV)

³ knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, ⁴ and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation.”

⁵ For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, ⁶ by which the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water. ⁷ But the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. ⁸ But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Peter reminded his readers of the words that were spoken by the Old Testament prophets

- He then proceeded to a very specific prophecy concerning the end times
- He says in the end, there would be mockers scoffing about the end days
- He is not writing about godly people
- He is writing about unsaved, immoral individuals
- He writes that they will say, *“Nothing has ever changed. Everything has always been the same since the beginning.”*
- They willfully reject the Bible, prophecies, and warnings about their judgment
- They have made a conscious decision to close their eyes and ears to God’s word
- Just as in the days of Noah and the flood

The apostle then takes a sharp turn in his writing

- He tells them to remember, *“With the Lord, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”*
- He is referring to a verse from Psalms

Psalm 90:4 (NKJV)

⁴ For a thousand years in Your sight *Are* like yesterday when it is past, And *like* a watch in the night.

- Peter is writing about end times
- He is saying God isn’t playing around
- God is not disorganized

Remember, God has a plan, but it doesn't work like human plans

- He considers one day the same as one thousand years, and one thousand years the same as one day
- God has His own calendar and keeps His own personal planner
- He's still watching His calendar

The Way God Keeps Time

Isaiah 46:9–10 (NKJV)

⁹ Remember the former things of old, For I *am* God, and *there is* no other; I *am* God, and *there is* none like Me, ¹⁰ Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times *things* that are not *yet* done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'

- God revealed His calendar in Genesis
- This is what the Jewish Rabbi's taught throughout the years
- God has His own way of counting time
- It goes all the way back to the dawn of creation

Even though God is mysterious He has no intention of keeping His people in the dark

- He is not a secret keeper
- This is one reason God gives us prophecy
- He wants us to be prepared for everything

Amos 3:7 (NKJV)

⁷ Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.

- Bible prophecy isn't just for teachers and experts
- God authored it for you
- He wants you to be prepared
- He doesn't want us fearful and confused
- He wants us informed so we can face the future with courage and certainty

1 Thessalonians 5:1–5 (NKJV)

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, "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.

⁵ You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.

- The return of Jesus shouldn't be like a thief in the night for believers
- We should be aware so we can lovingly warn unbelievers
- We may not know the exact time, but we can know the season

When Jesus returns we will have our heads lifted up and ready for our Bridegroom

God's 7,000-Year Calendar

In the Bible God counts time in sevens

- He took seven days to create the world
- In **Leviticus 25** He tells His people to mark every seventh year as a Sabbath year
- At the end of seven Sabbath years they are to commemorate with the Year of Jubilee
- In Daniel's prophecy God declared 490 Prophetic years to the nation of Israel

In **Daniel Chapter 9** the angel that spoke to him told him that Israel would be given 70x7 years, and then the end would come

Throughout the centuries many Jewish scholars taught that the seven days in **Genesis chapter 1** correspond to 7,000 years of human history

- During the first 6,000 years humans will have the opportunity to manage the earth
- Then Christ will reign for 1,000 years
- This timing isn't arbitrary

Human's 6,000 years are over

It's not because of anything we've done we just happen to be that generation that is alive at its fulfillment

- At the very beginning God started His clock

God's Timeline Demonstrated in Two Ways

The Days of Creation and the Seven Millennia

Day One: Light separates from darkness – **Genesis 1:3-5**

- On the first day of creation God separates light from darkness
- Then the first humans sin and separate themselves from the God of light
- Light and darkness are separated physically and then spiritually
- This is the most significant event in the first thousand years of humanity

Day Two: The waters above and below separates

– **Genesis 1:6-10**

- On the second day God separated the waters above from the waters below
- In the second millennium God assessed the waters above and below as a judgement in the flood
- God brought the waters together and flooded the earth
- He then separated them, again just as He did on the second day of creation

Day Three: Seed-bearing plants begin to fill the earth with life
– **Genesis 1:11-13**

- On the third day God created plants with seeds
- For the first time the earth had life

In the third millennium of human history, the Lord made a lasting promise to Abraham that through his seed, all the nations of the earth would be blessed

Day Four: Lights fill the sky – **Genesis 1:14-19**

- On the fourth day God made lights to fill the sky – Sun, moon, and stars
- In the fourth millennium God raised up prophets to give light to Israel
- Then God sent His son, Jesus as the light of the world

Day Five: Living animals created – **Genesis 1:20-23**

- On the fifth day God created the first living creatures

In the fifth millennium God raised up new creatures who would inherit eternal life, because of Christ's life, death, and resurrection

Day six: Humans created as the crown of God's creation
– **Genesis 1:26-28**

- On the sixth day God created man and woman
- He told them to fill the earth and subdue it

In the millennium we are now living God has empowered the church to take the message of the Gospel and subdue the earth

Day seven: God rested – **Genesis 2:3**

- After God created everything He rested, on the seventh day
- In the seventh millennium God will restore the earth

All of humanity will rest with Jesus as our ruler for the next thousand years

Biblical Symbols

Prophetic symbols in the Bible are another way we can measure the 7,000-year span of human history

The Noah Connection

Jesus said the world would be as in the days of Noah at His return – **Luke 17:26-27**

- God could have placed Noah on the ark at any time He wanted
- He did it in his 600th year – **Genesis 7:6**
- Could Noah's age at the flood be symbolic for Jesus' return to rescue His people

The Wedding at Cana

John 2:6–11 (NKJV)

⁶Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. ⁷Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸And He said to them, "Draw *some* out now, and take *it* to the master of the feast." And they took *it*.

⁹ When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. ¹⁰ And he said to him, “Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the *guests* have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!” ¹¹ This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

- ***Miracles*** happen when God does something supernaturally that only He can do
- ***Wonders*** fill those who witness them with awe and wonder
- ***Signs*** point to something other than themselves

This was at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry

- He was at a wedding serving heaven’s wine
- What did Jesus do at the end of His ministry?
 - Served His disciples wine
- What will He be doing when He returns for us?
 - Serving us heaven’s wine

Matthew 26:29 (NKJV)

²⁹ But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom.”

- Many believe that the six water pots represent 6,000 years of human history
- This will end with believers at a wedding drinking Heaven’s wine with Jesus

God's 7,000-year calendar has been present since the very beginning, and that's what many Jewish and Christian scholars have believed for centuries

- Peter said that when the end came people would mock teachings about it
- They will willfully reject the authority of God's word and ignore the warnings

Judgement is coming to the world

- One day is as one thousand years and a thousand years as one day
- God isn't stalling or delaying needlessly
- In the present time He is offering every living person an opportunity to repent and believe
- Time is short and God is looking for people who will be living their lives for Him and prepared when He returns

What Time is It?

Matthew 24:3-8 (NKJV)

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?" 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. ⁶ And you will hear of wars and rumors 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. ⁸ All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

For the past seventy-plus years since Israel became a nation in 1948, we have been experiencing all of the signs Jesus gave in this passage – intensifying like labor pains

Matthew 24:32–35 (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. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

What Should Be Our Moral Response to the Times we are living?

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; it's 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

As believers, we must take off our arrogant, self-serving, 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

Jesus did not rebel against authority to exalt Himself

- He submitted to authority both in Heaven and on Earth
- 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**

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

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."*

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 (NKJV)

¹³ "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. ¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all *who are* in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.