

Introduction: Discerning the Times

Blessed be the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I welcome you to this moment of reflection on the words of life. By God's grace, we're reminded today of a vital spiritual truth that's especially urgent in these last days: **discerning the times and knowing what God expects of us.**

Biblical Context: Jacob's Sons and Tribal Identity

Jacob, also called Israel, had twelve sons (Genesis 35:22-26), each with a distinct character. Over time, their descendants formed the twelve tribes of Israel, each with unique roles and spiritual attributes. For example:

- **Judah** was a tribe of leadership and kingship (Genesis 49:10),
- **Levi** was the tribe of the priesthood (Deuteronomy 10:8),
- **Joseph's house** was marked by fruitfulness and favor (Genesis

49:22–26).

Among these, **the tribe of Issachar** stood out—not for strength or military prowess—but for **spiritual insight and discernment**.

Issachar: A Tribe of Discernment

When King Saul died, Israel faced a leadership crisis. The tribe of Benjamin (Saul’s tribe) hoped the kingship would stay in their lineage, while others supported David, the anointed of the Lord (1 Samuel 16:13). In that moment of national tension, the question wasn’t just *who was next*—it was *what is God saying about this moment?*

This is where **the sons of Issachar** became crucial.

1 Chronicles 12:32 says:

“Of Issachar, men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, 200 chiefs, and all their kinsmen under their command.”

Their insight helped unify the tribes under David's leadership. They discerned not just **the political climate**, but more importantly, **God's timing** and **His will**.

God Values Spiritual Discernment

The tribe of Issachar illustrates a deeper biblical principle: **God honors those who seek wisdom and understanding, especially concerning His timing and will.**

This echoes **Proverbs 3:5-6**

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

It's not enough to follow traditions or make decisions based on feelings or cultural expectations. God calls us to **discernment**—to understand the times and align our choices with His purposes.

Application for Today: Living in the Final Church Age

As New Testament believers, we're called to be like the sons of Issachar—spiritually alert, grounded in Scripture, and sensitive to God's voice in our generation.

Sadly, many Christians live spiritually unaware, going through the motions of religion—attending church, claiming salvation—but without understanding the **prophetic times** we're in.

Jesus rebuked this mindset in

Luke 12:54-56

"When you see a cloud rising in the west, you say at once, 'A shower is coming.' And so it happens.

And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, 'There will be scorching heat,' and it happens.

You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?"

Jesus' words challenge us: **Are we discerning the season we are**

living in? Do we recognize that **we are the final generation before Christ's return?**

Prophetic Insight: The Laodicean Age

According to **Revelation 2-3** The Church has passed through **seven symbolic church ages**, culminating in the **Laodicean age**—the lukewarm, self-satisfied church (Revelation 3:14-22). This is the age we live in now.

Christ warns:

*“So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.”
—Revelation 3:16*

This sobering warning is not for the world—it's for the church. It reminds us that **spiritual complacency in the last days is dangerous.**

Why Discernment Matters Now More Than Ever

We are witnessing the rapid fulfillment of biblical prophecies:

- The rebirth of Israel (Isaiah 66:8),
- Global deception (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12),
- False prophets and counterfeit gospels (Matthew 24:11-24),
- Lawlessness and cold love (Matthew 24:12),
- A growing apostate church (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

And soon, the Church will be caught up (raptured) as promised in **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**. Yet many believers are not ready, because they don't recognize **the hour**.

Call to Action: Are You Living Like a Child of Issachar?

Take a moment to reflect.

- Are you spiritually awake or spiritually distracted?
- Are you pursuing a relationship with God or relying on routine religion?
- Do you understand the times—or are you ignoring the signs?

Like the sons of Issachar, we must be people who:

1. **Study Scripture seriously** (2 Timothy 2:15),
2. **Seek the Holy Spirit's guidance** (John 16:13),
3. **Live in readiness for Christ's return** (Matthew 24:44),

4. **Lead others in truth and clarity** (Ephesians 5:15–17).

If we do this, we'll live not in fear, but in **wisdom, hope, and purpose**.

Conclusion: The Time Is Now

We are not just living in the last days—we are living in **the last hours** of the Church age. The window of grace is still open, but time is short. Let us not be caught unaware.

May the Lord grant us spiritual discernment, like the sons of Issachar, that we may know what the Church—and each of us—ought to do.

Shalom.

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