In the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ, He gave us signs that would precede His second coming. He made it clear that when we observe certain signs earthquakes, wars, pestilences, false prophets, and societal upheavals we should know that His return is near. As recorded in

Matthew 24:3-8 (NKJV), His disciples asked,

> *“Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”*

Jesus answered by describing various signs:

- Wars and rumors of wars (v. 6)
- Famines, pestilences, and earthquakes (v. 7)
- Persecution and betrayal (v. 9-10)
- False prophets leading many astray (v. 11)

He emphasized that these signs would occur as part of the birth pangs, but they would not reveal the exact day of His return. What Jesus never revealed is the precise day when He would

come to take His church this remains a mystery. The lack of knowledge regarding the specific time of His return is one of the greatest challenges for Christians today. Despite all the signs being fulfilled in our time, people still look for a specific clue or signal that would alert them to the exact day of the rapture.

The Days of Noah: A Parallel to Christ's Return

Jesus Himself compared His second coming to the days of Noah, a period of rampant disregard for God's warning. In

> *Matthew 24:37-39 (NKJV), Jesus says:*
> "But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be."

No one in Noah's day anticipated the flood. They were consumed with everyday activities, eating, drinking, marrying, and living their lives, completely unaware that God's judgment was about to

descend. Jesus is telling us that His return will be the same it will catch many by surprise. As Noah entered the ark and the rain began, the people were taken unawares, just as the world will be when Christ returns.

This is why, in

> *Matthew 24:42-44 (NKJV), Jesus urges us to be vigilant:*
> "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

This is a call to spiritual vigilance. The exact day and hour of Christ's return will remain unknown to everyone, including His faithful followers. Even the "bride of Christ" (the church) will not know the specific time of the rapture. This is why believers are urged to stay spiritually alert, living faithfully according to God's will until the return of the Lord.

The Parable of the Faithful Servant

Jesus continued His teaching by emphasizing the importance of faithfulness and readiness in

> *Matthew 24:45-47 (NIV):*
> “Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. Truly I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.”

This parable illustrates the importance of doing the work of the Lord while we wait for His return. The faithful servant is one who continues to carry out his duties feeding others, fulfilling his responsibilities, and being diligent in the tasks God has assigned to him. This is the behavior that pleases God and ensures readiness for His return.

The Suddenness of the Rapture

In

1 Thessalonians 5:2-3 (NKJV), Paul wrote about the unexpected nature of the rapture:

> “For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 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.”

The return of Christ, including the rapture of the church, will come as a thief in the night. It will be sudden and unexpected. People will be going about their daily routines planning their futures, building their careers, enjoying their lives when, in an instant, the rapture will occur, and one will be taken, and the other left. This is consistent with

Matthew 24:40-41 (NKJV), where Jesus said:

> “Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and the other left.”

This illustrates that the rapture will be a selective event. Some will be taken to be with the Lord, while others will be left behind to face the tribulation.

The Regret of Those Left Behind

For those who miss the rapture, the consequences will be devastating. In

Matthew 25:11-12 (NKJV), Jesus told the parable of the ten virgins, emphasizing the regret of those who were unprepared:

> “Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'”

The unprepared virgins represent those who failed to be

spiritually ready for Christ’s return. When the door is shut, it will be too late for them to change their fate. They will be left in regret and sorrow, wishing they had been ready.

Similarly, in Luke 13:25-28 (NIV), Jesus speaks of the regret of those who are shut out of the Kingdom:

> “Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, ‘Sir, open the door for us.’ But he will answer, ‘I don’t know you or where you come from.'”

The time for repentance and preparation is now. Once Christ returns, there will be no more opportunities for repentance. The regret that follows will be eternal.

The Urgency of Repentance

There is still time, though it is very short. As we wait for the return of Christ, there is an urgent call for repentance.

In 2 Peter 3:9 (NIV), we are reminded that:

> “The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

Christ is offering one last opportunity for sinners to turn to Him before the rapture occurs. Today is the day of salvation. If you have not yet repented and placed your trust in Jesus Christ, do so now. Acknowledge your sin, turn away from it, and receive the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

Conclusion: Be Ready, for the Lord’s Return Is Near

In these final moments before Christ’s return, there is still a chance to make things right with God. The signs are clear, and the day of Christ’s return is drawing near. The rapture will come unexpectedly, and only those who are ready, living in faith and obedience to Christ, will be taken.

Shalom.

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