

Matthew 24:36-51 - “Be Ready”

1. 24:36 – “Of that day and hour no one knows”
What day? Jesus’ Coming or His Appearing?
 - a. Jesus’ Coming (His Return)? No:
 - i. Revelation and Daniel give precise timing regarding the “last days”: “3½ years – 42 months – 1,260 years
 - ii. The days leading up to Jesus’ return will be days of wrath, not peace
 - b. Jesus’ Appearing (The Rapture)? Yes:
 - i. Noah entered the ark 7 days before the rain came, while things were still quiet and “normal”; the Rapture comes 7 years before Jesus’ return, while things are quiet and peaceful and ordinary.
 - ii. 24:38 – “For as in those days before the flood . . . **until the day when Noah entered the ark**”
 - iii. 24:40-41 – a graphic description of the Rapture (the only words of Jesus that seem to refer to the Rapture – see 1 Thessalonians 4:15)
2. 24:42, 44 – The call to “stay awake” is for our sake, so we will be ready to be taken, and not be so distracted by the world that we are not ready and are left “in the outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth” - see Matthew 8:12 {the sons of the kingdom, Israel, will be left}, 13:42 and 50 {the furnace signifies the wrath of God that purifies the earth from sin}, 22:13, 24:51, 25:30.
3. 24:43 – Who is the “thief”?
 - a. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4 - “The day” is a thief
 - b. Revelation 3:3 – Jesus comes “as a thief for those who are not prepared”
 - c. Revelation 16:15 – Jesus comes as a thief
 - i. We are to “stay dressed” (be ‘clothed’ in Jesus’ righteousness, not our own)
 - ii. Otherwise we are ‘naked and exposed’ – that is, our own ‘goodness’ will become a source of shame, unable to cover the sin nature in us, and making us unworthy to be taken (see Job 40:5,6; Matthew 22:11-13; Romans 3:19; 1 Corinthians 1:29)
 - iii. The only thing that makes us ‘worthy’ to be taken is the goodness of Jesus that he gives us at the cross, in exchange for our sinfulness, so we gladly confess our sins, and so ‘keep our feet clean’ (John 13:10)
4. 24:45-47 – “Who is the wise servant?” – The one who gives proper care to the “household”
 - a. A special command for apostles and pastors (see John 21:15-17 - whose ‘household’ is the Church); who are entrusted with ‘feeding the flock’ with the Truth, the milk and meat of Faith (1 Peter 2:2 and Hebrews 5:11-14)
 - b. Also a call to all believers to give themselves ‘proper care’ and feed on Christ (John 6:51-55), not the false teachings of this world
 - c. Proper care includes ‘times of refreshing’: “God gives wisdom, knowledge and joy to those who please him (Ecclesiastes 2:26)”
5. 24:48-51 – Who is the wicked servant? The one who lives only to satisfy his or her own appetites
 - a. “Eating and drinking” with others who serve only their own appetites instead of keeping company with those who seek to please Jesus – Hebrews 10:25 and 2 Corinthians 5:9)
 - b. They are “hypocrites” – ‘pretend believers’