

THE LORD'S RETURN

Message 4

The Signs of His Coming

Scripture Reading: Matt. 24:1-3, 6-7, 14-15, 32, 37-39, 42; Eph. 5:27; Rev. 19:7; 2 Thes. 2:3-4; Dan. 9:27; Matt. 24:21; Matt. 21:18-20; Gen. 6:5, 11, 13; Luke 17:26-29, 32

I. The signs of the Lord's second coming include prophecies concerning Israel—Matt. 24:1-31:

- A. The condition and situation of the church is a sign to Israel concerning the Lord's coming; Israel needs to pay attention to the church:
 - 1. The gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth and then the end will come—Matt. 24:14.
 - 2. The church will be built up and the bride will be prepared to marry Christ as the coming Bridegroom—Eph. 5:27; Rev 19:7.
- B. Israel also needs to pay attention to what is taking place in the world; the things taking place generally, in the whole world, are a sign to Israel concerning the Lord's coming again:
 - 1. There will be wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, terrors, and great signs from heaven—Matt. 24:6-7; Luke 21:9-11.
 - 2. Antichrist will rise up and establish his empire full of lawlessness and destruction—2 Thes. 2:3-4:
 - a. According to prophecy, a powerful man will rise up and restore the Roman Empire—Rev. 13:1-8; 17:7-14.
 - b. Antichrist, a strong man, will make a covenant of peace with the nation of Israel for seven years—Dan. 9:27.
 - c. In the middle of the seven years, Antichrist will break the covenant, and the three and a half years of the great tribulation will begin—Dan. 9:27; Matt. 24:21.
 - d. Antichrist's image will be set up in the temple as an idol, and he will sit in the temple of God, exalting himself above every object of worship—Matt. 24:15, 21; 2 Thes. 2:3-4.

II. The signs of the Lord's second coming include prophecies concerning the church—Matt. 24:32—25:30:

- A. The church should pay attention to what is happening in Israel as a sign of the Lord's coming:
 - 1. The fig tree is a symbol of the nation of Israel and was cursed by the Lord—24:32; Jer. 24:2, 5, 8:
 - a. The fig tree was cursed by the Lord for being unfruitful—Matt. 21:18-20.
 - b. This curse upon the nation of Israel was fulfilled in A.D. 70 when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman prince Titus—Matt. 24:2.
 - 2. The Lord prophesied that the fig tree would become tender and put forth its leaves, signifying that the nation of Israel would come back to life again and begin outward activity —Matt. 24:32:
 - a. This took place when Israel became a nation in 1948; they regained Jerusalem from the Arabs in 1967.
 - b. The temple will be rebuilt before the great tribulation begins—Matt. 24:15; 2 Thes. 2:4.
- B. The church should not be befuddled but aware of what is happening in the world:
 - 1. The days prior to the Lord's coming will be like the days of Noah—Gen. 6:5, 11-13; Matt. 24:37-39, 42; Luke 17:26-32:

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- a. Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually; the earth was filled with violence—Gen. 6:5, 11-13.
 - b. The people were befuddled by the necessities of life—eating and drinking, marrying and being given in marriage; because of man's lust, Satan uses the God-ordained necessities of human life to stupefy, occupy, and befuddle man to keep him from God's interest—Matt. 24:38-39.
 - c. Just as in Noah's day, the people will not know that judgment is coming; the believers, however, should be watchful, for we do not know on what day our Lord will come—Matt. 24:39, 42.
2. The days prior to the Lord's coming will be like the days of Lot—Luke 17:28-32; Gen. 19:1-29:
- a. The people were eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, and building—Luke 17:28-32; Ezek. 16:49-50.
 - b. People were drugged and desensitized by their fleshly, worldly enjoyment—Eph. 4:19.
 - c. These conditions of evil living portray the perilous condition of man's living before the Lord's coming—Luke 17:26 (see note 2).