

The End of The World - *Matthew 24:36-25:46*

Caveat: I have differentiated this following section from the prior one stating that what came before, 23:36-24:35, occurred by A.D. 70 and what follows, 24:36-25:46, occurs at the end of time. However, there are those that take the position that what follows continues to be a part of the A.D. 70 era and is a continuation of that material. Although I don't share that position, theirs is a convincing one and should not be dismissed out of hand.

This discourse began when the disciples ask this question: "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" (Matthew 24:3, ESV)

The first question "*when will these thing be*" was answered in verses 24:4-14.

The second question "*what will be the sign of your coming*" was answered in 24:15-35.

The third, "*and of the end of the age*" is now before us in 24:36-25-46. It is by far the largest of the three sections.

Be Ready (24:36–25:30)

'About That Day and Hour No One Knows' (24:36)

Timing Indicator #1

Verse 24:33 made it clear that one could **know** that "**these things**" were near, **at the very gates**—the signs of the interim period resulting in the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple in A.D. 70. However, 24:36, speaking of a far distant future event, states that "**that day and hour no one knows.**" This provides a major chronological break in our story. **Prior to this verse, the disciples could know the timing of Jesus' coming in judgment on Israel. After this point, no one knows the day or the hour of Jesus' final coming in history.**

Timing Indicator #2

Matthew 24:36 "But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.

But concerning¹.... The combination of these two Greek words is found 16 times in the Greek New Testament.

Matthew 20:6 And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?'

Matthew 22:31 And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God:

Matthew 24:36 "But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.

¹ "Περί δε"

Matthew 27:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Mark 12:26 And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’?

Mark 13:32 “But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

John 16:11 concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

Acts 21:25 But as for the Gentiles who have believed, we have sent a letter with our judgment that they should abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality.”

1 Corinthians 7:1 Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: “It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.”

1 Corinthians 7:25 Now concerning the betrothed, I have no command from the Lord, but I give my judgment as one who by the Lord’s mercy is trustworthy.

1 Corinthians 8:1 Now concerning food offered to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” This “knowledge” puffs up, but love builds up.

1 Corinthians 12:1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed.

1 Corinthians 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do.

1 Corinthians 16:12 Now concerning our brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to visit you with the other brothers, but it was not at all his will to come now. He will come when he has opportunity.

1 Thessalonians 4:9 Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another,

1 Thessalonians 5:1 Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you.

The point is this, does this phrase “**but concerning**” point the reader forward or backward? In general, I think we can say that these passages look forward to new material or a new statement concerning old material. They do not appear to return the reader to the prior paragraph or statement. If that is the case here in Matthew 24:36, then we must conclude that this phrase is moving us into something new, not addressing the last few verses—the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

Timing Indicator #3

that day.... There are two ways the word **that** can be used. One, it may refer back to the material just completed, 24:32-25 for instance. This would be to the destruction of Israel and its Temple. Or, two, it may reference the future, the last coming of Jesus in time for instance. However, in conjunction with the phrase **but concerning** it seems more certain that it focuses us on the future.

The following verses give an illustration on how **that** is used of a future event.

“On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’”
(Matthew 7:22, ESV)

“which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.” (2 Timothy 1:12, ESV)

Timing Indicators #4 and #5

Two other facts make an important contribution to this question. The first is the conclusion of the old inclusio “...*this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.*” (Matthew 23:36 and 24:34). This concludes a section of material, that appears to be certain. And the second, the presence of a new inclusio “*day and hour*”—“*no one knows*” (Matthew 24:36 and 25:13). This initiates a new section of material, that appears to be the case, even if it is not certain in the minds of some.

A return to the first timing indication: When you combine this with, one, the certainty of Jesus’ knowledge of the earlier coming destruction of Jerusalem (“*but the end is not yet*” 24:6; “*at the very gates*” 24:33), and two, the uncertainty of his knowledge of the last days (“*no one knows*” 24:36), the conclusion must be that these are two different time periods.

day and hour.... As stated, this verse and this phrase **day and hour** introduce a new inclusio concluding in 25:13 with the same words.

*“Watch therefore, for you know neither **the day nor the hour.**”* (Matthew 25:13, ESV)

no one knows.... Up to this point Jesus has known the “*day and hour*” of “*all these things*” that were soon to happen to “*this generation.*” However, in the material that follows Jesus does not know the “*day and hour.*” The “*day and hour*” inclusio and this “*no one knows*” statement makes a major break between this and the last pericope.

“In very strong contrast to the emphasis in v. 33 concerning what *can* be known—namely, the experienced signs of the interim up to the point of the nearness of the parousia of the Son of Man—the present verse clearly indicates the *impossibility* of knowing the time of the Son of Man’s coming and the end of the age in advance of their actual occurrence....”²

² Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14–28* (vol. 33B; Word Biblical Commentary; Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 716.

But people want to know. In fact, like many in our day, the Thessalonians were also asking about *the times and the seasons*, or signs of *the day of the Lord*. Jesus responds that there will be no signs but his coming will be like *a thief in the night* (24:43).

“Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.” (1 Thessalonians 5:1–2, ESV)

Signs were for the judgment coming of Jesus to Israel; the last coming in time will not be preceded by signs for of that day, **no one knows**.

“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.” (2 Peter 3:10, ESV)

not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son.... Even the Son while on earth is not privy to this information.

This verse confirms the closure of verse 24:34. Up to that point, Jesus had knowledge as to when these things would happen “*this generation*.” After that point, Jesus had no knowledge of the timing of the material that is to follow this verse.

This verse deals with *day and hour* questions. It does not deal with whether these things will happen or not. That fact is certain. “Such a warning prevents those who are suffering from building up undue expectations of the time that would set them up for exploitation (24:23–27)”³

In fact, this is how the Church was exploited right before Jesus judgment coming in the first century.

“Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There he is!’ do not believe it.” (Matthew 24:23, ESV)

“So, if they say to you, ‘Look, he is in the wilderness,’ do not go out. If they say, ‘Look, he is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe it.” (Matthew 24:26, ESV)

And, this is how the Church is being exploited today.

Exploitation is exactly what Christians are undergoing today with the signs of the times being a constant refrain, “Look, here is the Christ!” But Christian, Jesus has told you otherwise; do not allow yourself to be exploited by that next book blaring out that [dispen]sensationalists headline, “*Eighteen reasons Jesus is Coming in 2018*,” just \$19.95, get yours today! Remember Jesus words “*no one knows*” (24:36; 25:13).

“He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority.” (Acts 1:7, ESV)

The Days of Noah (24:37–41)—The return of Christ is in normal times.

³ Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2009), 590.

The Homeowner and the Thief (24:42-44)—The return is unexpected.
The Faithful or the Unfaithful Servant (24:45-51)—The return is sooner than expected.
The Parable of the Ten Maidens (25:1-13)—The return is later than expected.

The Days of Noah (24:37-41)

Matthew 24:37 For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

coming⁴.... There is a general opinion that the word *parousía* (*παρουσία*) refers only to the last coming of Jesus. However, the word appears in Matthew 24:27 and in its context there it refers to the judgment coming of Jesus in A.D. 70. So, it is not limited in use to the final coming of Jesus at the end of time.

*Matthew 24:27 For as the lightning comes (*exérchomai* *έρχομαι*) from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming (*parousía* *παρουσία*) of the Son of Man.*

There are several words for coming in the Olivet Discourse and they appear to be used interchangeably.

*Matthew 24:3 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 (*παρουσία*) and of the end of the age?”*

*Matthew 24:30 Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming (*έρχομαι*) on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

*Matthew 24:37 For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming (*παρουσία*) of the Son of Man.*

*Matthew 24:39 and they were unaware until the flood came (*έρχομαι*) and swept them all away, so will be the coming (*παρουσία*) of the Son of Man.*

*Matthew 24:42 Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming (*έρχομαι*).*

*Matthew 24:43 But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming (*έρχομαι*), he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into.*

*Matthew 24:44 Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming (*έρχομαι*) at an hour you do not expect.*

*Matthew 25:27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming (*έρχομαι*) I should have received what was my own with interest.*

⁴ coming *παρουσία* "...to come to be present at a particular place—'to come, to arrive, to come to be present.'" Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains. New York: United Bible Societies.

We might expand this research and look at every use of the word *παρουσία* in the New Testament, not just Matthew 24 and 25.

Matthew 24:3 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?"

Matthew 24:27 For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

Matthew 24:37 For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

Matthew 24:39 and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

1 Corinthians 15:23 But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.

1 Corinthians 16:17 I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have made up for your absence,

2 Corinthians 7:6 But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus,

2 Corinthians 7:7 and not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more.

2 Corinthians 10:10 For they say, "His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account."

Philippians 1:26 so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

Philippians 2:12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,

1 Thessalonians 2:19 For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?

1 Thessalonians 3:13 so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

1 Thessalonians 4:15 For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers,

2 Thessalonians 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.

2 Thessalonians 2:9 The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders,

James 5:7 Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains.

James 5:8 You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

2 Peter 1:16 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

2 Peter 3:4 They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation."

2 Peter 3:12 waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!

1 John 2:28 And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming.

From these verses it might appear that *παρουσία* may indeed be the key word that describes the coming of Jesus at the end of the world. However, let's take a look at how *ἔρχομαι* is used when addressing the coming of Jesus.

Matthew 8:29 And behold, they cried out, "What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?"

Matthew 10:23 When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next, for truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

Matthew 16:27 For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

Matthew 16:28 Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

Matthew 21:40 When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?”

Matthew 23:39 For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’ ”

Matthew 24:30 Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Matthew 24:42 Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

Matthew 24:44 Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

Matthew 25:31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.

Matthew 26:64 Jesus said to him, “You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

Mark 8:38 For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

Mark 9:1 And he said to them, “Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.”

Mark 12:9 What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others.

Mark 13:26 And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.

Mark 14:62 And Jesus said, “I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.”

Luke 9:26 For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

Luke 12:40 You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

Luke 12:43 Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.

Luke 13:35 Behold, your house is forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' "

Luke 21:27 And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

John 14:18 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

John 21:23 So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?"

Acts 1:11 and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

Acts 2:20 the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day.

1 Corinthians 4:5 Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.

1 Corinthians 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Thessalonians 5:2 For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

2 Thessalonians 1:10 when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.

Hebrews 10:37 For, "Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay;

Revelation 1:4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne,

Revelation 1:7 Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.

Revelation 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

Revelation 2:5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

Revelation 2:16 Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth.

Revelation 3:11 I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown.

Revelation 4:8 And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"

Revelation 16:15 ("Behold, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!")

Revelation 22:7 "And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

Revelation 22:12 "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done.

Revelation 22:20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

Reviewing these many verses that use *parousía* (παρουσία) and *érchomai* (έρχομαι) it becomes increasingly evident that they are used interchangeable and not much can be said of one that cannot be said of the other.

There was a coming of Jesus in judgment in the destruction of Jerusalem. But there will also be a coming of Jesus at the end of time.

Matthew 24:38 For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark,

Because the day and hour are unknown, people will be unaware when it happens, as they apparently were in the days of Noah. Eating, drinking and marriage are not mentioned here as illustrations of excess. Indeed, they are common activities of a normal life. These people did not perceive a coming judgment; neither will they at the last coming at the end of the world. It will be just another normal day.

Luke says something similar:

"Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot—they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building," (Luke 17:28, ESV)

And like Matthew, these are normal activities in a person's life. Compare this with the picture Jesus just put before the apostles of his judgment coming upon Israel: **wars, rumors of wars, famines and earthquakes:**

"For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places." (Matthew 24:7, ESV)

"This is a rather amazing contrast to the other details concerning the time of Jacob's Trouble."⁵ **Some believe that Jesus' final coming at the end of time will be in a period of crises often associated with the Great Tribulation. Jesus says otherwise; it will be an amazingly normal, even quiet, day.** "...this incalculability, not-knowing, or normalcy paragraph is in an almost unbearable tension with the preceding Sermon of Signs, especially with the ... abomination of desolation and the astral chaos.... **Signs and normalcy seem two different and contradictory phenomena.**"⁶

So, the next time you hear someone touting "wars and rumors of wars," leave it behind! **The opposite is found in Scripture: eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building.**

"While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape." (1 Thessalonians 5:3, ESV)

It's not apocalyptic signs of *war and rumors of wars* that points to the last coming of Jesus, it is "*peace and security*" that indicates the time of his final coming in history. That appears to be the most lucid sign that Jesus is coming.

Matthew 24:39 and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

They were **unaware** because *there were no indicators of a soon judgment*. Peter addresses this same future event saying:

"They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation." (2 Peter 3:4, ESV)

There simply are no "signs."

Swept them all away or ***took⁷ them all away....*** Some Dispensationalists use this verse to prove the rapture. However, as is so often the case, it is taken out of context. The comment is about those in Noah's day that were taken. It cannot be an analogy concerning the Church today for **it was the rebellious, God hating, world that was taken, not Noah and his family.** Luke talks about this saying, "*and the flood came and*

5 Barney Kasdan, *Matthew Presents Yeshua, King Messiah: A Messianic Commentary* (Clarksville, MD: Messianic Jewish Publishers, 2011), 309.

6 Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28* (vol. 2, Revised and Expanded Edition.; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 527.

7 *swept ἀίρω* "...to lift up and carry (away)—'to carry (away), to carry off, to remove, to take (away).'" Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 206.

destroyed them all.” (Luke 17:27, ESV). That is how they were taken—in destruction, **not a good illustration of the rapture!**

Matthew 24:40 Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left.

Verse 39 speaks of the judgment of some and the deliverance of others. We are not told here or in verse 41 that the one taken is *delivered from* judgment or *taken in* judgment; either is possible.

“Historically, some have interpreted these passages as describing the rapture/catching up of believers (cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18). In that view (popularized in *Left Behind*, the recent Christian book series), the ones taken away in this passage are those blessed enough to be caught up to Messiah’s presence in the clouds. The others are left behind for the judgment of the Great Tribulation and the last war.”⁸ However, the Great Tribulation occurred in A.D. 70 and is now past. And the day of his last return is a rather quiet one as Jesus just said in verses 38 and 39.

taken⁹.... This word can be understood in both a positive or a negative sense to be taken to God or taken in judgment. In the context of the last verse “the flood came and took them all away,” it would seem to be used in a negative sense, taken in judgment. “In the light of the preceding verses, when the flood “swept away” the unprepared, that is probably the more likely sense here.”¹⁰ **“The “taking” here and in ver. 40 is not the rapture of the church, but the gathering out of all things that offend described in the parable of the wheat and tares (and thus parallel to the destruction of the wicked that were “taken” in the flood of Noah....”**¹¹ The flood *swept them all away* (24:39); not Noah and his family but the world. Noah was “left behind for God’s kingdom while the others were taken away, not for blessing, but for judgment.”¹²

“The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers,” (Matthew 13:41, ESV)

Matthew 24:41 Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left.

Working in a field and grinding at a mill are **common activities of people not expecting judgment**. In 13:30 it is the **first** of the two groups that are taken in judgment.

“Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds **first** and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.” (Matthew 13:30, ESV)

8 Barney Kasdan, Matthew Presents Yeshua, King Messiah: A Messianic Commentary (Clarksville, MD: Messianic Jewish Publishers, 2011), 310.

9 taken παραλαμβάνω “...to take or bring someone along with—‘to take along, to bring along.’” Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 202.

10 R. T. France, The Gospel of Matthew (The New International Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co., 2007), 941.

11 Jerome H. Smith, The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge: The Most Complete Listing of Cross References Available Anywhere- Every Verse, Every Theme, Every Important Word (Nashville TN: Thomas Nelson, 1992), 1084.

12 Barney Kasdan, Matthew Presents Yeshua, King Messiah: A Messianic Commentary (Clarksville, MD: Messianic Jewish Publishers, 2011), 310.

“The men and women left behind in the latter day will be left to enter the blessing of the Messianic Kingdom on Earth. It is those who are taken away that will have to contend with the impending judgment of God.”¹³

Either way, first or second, the one thing we can say with certainty is that one should be prepared when the Lord does come on that great day. That is what these stories are about.

The Homeowner and The Thief (24:42–44)

Matthew 24:42 Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

The message continues to be on an alert preparedness for the Lord’s return.

stay awake¹⁴.... We will see this word again in verse 25:13 and therefore have an inclusio around “the homeowner and the thief” 24:42-44, “the two servants” 24:45-51 and “the ten virgins” 25:1-13. Interestingly, the inclusio “*the day and the hour*” also ends at 25:13.

coming [ἔρχομαι]¹⁵.... Comparing the coming of verse 37 [*parousía* παρουσία] with the coming of this verse [*érchomai* ἔρχομαι], we see that these words are used *interchangeably*.

Matthew 24:43 But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into.

the thief... “...the disciples know the owner of a house would watch if he knew when the thief was coming ... so the thief could not break in.... Since no one knows at what time, or during what “watch,” the thief might strike, constant vigilance is required.”¹⁶

We have here a very short parable on the value of alertness. It insures that one is not taken by surprise and in doing so, suffers loss. It is repeated in the epistles.

“For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.” (1 Thessalonians 5:2, ESV)

“But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief.” (1 Thessalonians 5:4, ESV)

13 Barney Kasdan, Matthew Presents Yeshua, King Messiah: A Messianic Commentary (Clarksville, MD: Messianic Jewish Publishers, 2011), 310.

14 stay awake γρηγορέω “To watch, to refrain from sleep. It was transferred in meaning from the physical to the moral religious sphere...” Spiros Zodhiates, The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000).

15 ἔρχομαι “...to move toward or up to the reference point of the viewpoint character or event—‘to come, coming.’” Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains. New York: United Bible Societies.

16 Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelein (Ed.), The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke (Vol. 8, p. 510). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.” (2 Peter 3:10, ESV)

“Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you.” (Revelation 3:3, ESV)

Not much about signs in these verses!

So, where do you think Paul, Peter and John got this idea of Jesus coming like a thief? Perhaps from the Olivet Discourse?

There are many Christians today that are looking for the “signs of his coming.” Those signs which were mentioned in the earlier section in the Discourse were for his judgment coming to Jerusalem and his Temple. That’s past. **The last coming will have no signs. And that is the whole point of these parables**, “Obviously a thief does not announce his arrival in advance but comes when not expected.”¹⁷

Matthew 24:44 Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

“The message of vv. 36–43 is now summed up in a clear call to be ready for the Parousía at any time. The burglar illustrates not only that the time of the *arouse* is unknown, but more specifically that **it will be “a time you don’t expect.”**”¹⁸

for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

“But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.” (Matthew 24:36, ESV)

The Two Servants (24:45–51)

Matthew 24:45 “Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time?”

Who.... Jesus is not asking his disciples for the name of this person. This is a literary technique, “a way of inviting his hearers to reflect on their own state of readiness.”¹⁹

to give them their food.... “...the readiness of the good slave consists not in sitting by the *window watching* for his master, but in **getting on with the job he has been given**, while the fault of the bad slave is in his assumption that the master will not be back soon and that therefore he will not be held to account.”²⁰ **How much time and money are**

17 Barney Kasdan, *Matthew Presents Yeshua, King Messiah: A Messianic Commentary* (Clarksville, MD: Messianic Jewish Publishers, 2011), 311.

18 France, R. T. (2007). *The Gospel of Matthew* (p. 943). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co.

19 Morris, L. (1992). *The Gospel according to Matthew* (p. 616). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

20 France, R. T. (2007). *The Gospel of Matthew* (p. 944). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co.

daily wasted by Christians trying to figure out when the master is coming? Thousands of hours and millions of dollars that could have been spent in gospel service—wasted.

Matthew 24:46 Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.

when he comes. "...of course, to the coming of the Son of Man referred to in the preceding passage...."²¹

Matthew 24:47 Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions.

Interestingly, "The reward for faithful service is the opportunity of serving in a higher and more responsible place (not ease and rest forevermore)."²² "...faithful disciples will welcome this further and heavier commitment rather than feeling that they have earned a rest."²³ They will also be energized and empowered for this service as well.

Matthew 24:48 But if that wicked servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed,'

delayed²⁴.... If the judgment coming of Jesus in A.D. 70 would be considered a long time by some—40 years, how much more the delay of over 2,000 for the final coming at the end of time?

"They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation."²⁵
(2 Peter 3:4, ESV)

Matthew 24:49 and begins to beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards,

beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards.... Given the assumption that there will be no accountability, the true character of the man reveals itself; he is **wicked**. He has no long-term perspective on his responsibilities before the master; he lives for the moment.

Matthew 24:50 the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know

day when he does not expect him and at an hour.... It is this element, *day and hour*, began this section on the final coming of Jesus at the end of the ages; it will end the section in 25:13. There are no signs; *he will not be expected*.

Matthew 24:51 and will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

21 Hagner, D. A. (1998). Matthew 14–28 (Vol. 33B, p. 724). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.

22 Morris, L. (1992). The Gospel according to Matthew (p. 616). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

23 R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (The New International Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co., 2007), 944.

24 delayed *ὑποβίβω* "To while away time, linger, delay, defer, tarry...." Zodhiates, S. (2000). The complete word study dictionary: New Testament. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

cut him in pieces.... The image is one of total destruction for the unfaithful servant; he is literally cut in several pieces.

weeping and gnashing of teeth. This conclusion takes us to the final judgment, not to a temporal one at A.D. 70. Other passages below use the same weeping and gnashing of teeth terminology. Individually and collectively, they are the final judgment at the end of time.

“while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 8:12, ESV)

“and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 13:42, 13:50, ESV)

“Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’” (Matthew 22:13, ESV)

“And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 25:30, ESV)

“The good servant is prepared for his Lord at any time, is faithful throughout his delay, and in the end is highly rewarded. The wicked servant is faithless in his responsibilities, abusive to fellow servants, lax in waiting for his master’s return, and ultimately earns the punishment that is his due....”²⁵

25 Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke (Vol. 8, p. 510). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.