

NOTE: This file contains Parts 1-3 of the message: “LIVING AT THE TIME OF THE END”.

Opening Scripture(s):

Revelation 2:7, 1 Peter 4:7, Matthew 24:1-14, and 24:23-25 KJV and NLT

7Anyone who is willing to hear should [listen] the Spirit and [understand] what the Spirit is saying to the churches...” Revelation 2:7

7The end of the world is coming soon. Therefore, be earnest and disciplined in your prayers.” 1 Peter 4:7

4And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. **5**For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.” Matthew 24:14-5 KJV

The disciples asked Jesus 3 questions “most disciples today” are afraid to ask:

- 1) When shall these things be? [WHEN] will this happen?
- 2) What shall be the sign of thy coming? [WHAT] will the sign you are about to return?
- 3) What shall be the sign of the end of the world? [WHAT] sign will signal the end of the [world or age]? *Jesus gave at least 13 signs in those 17 verses!*

There is coming an end to the world as we know it.

*All “signs” indicate we’re living in the “times” Jesus described. The first sign Jesus gave His disciples was **deception!** (24:4-5) According to Jesus, **the end will come—when the Church’s work on earth is done!** (24:14).*

“Other major signs” are given throughout the Old and New Testament concerning the time of the end.

THERE ARE “REASONS” WE’RE NOT COMFORTABLE ABOUT TALKING ABOUT “THE END OF TIME” ...

We talked about some of them in Part 1 and we’ll discuss other reasons throughout this series.

This [message and prophecy series] is for those who’ve been given the grace to both RECEIVE and LOVE the Truth!
All of us will know by the end of this series whether we’ve been given that “divine grace”—or NOT!

LIVING AT THE TIME OF THE END, part 1

THE “STRATEGIES AND MEANS” TO DECEIVE AND MISLEAD PEOPLE ARE “SOPHISTICATED” AND ADVANCING WITH “ALARMING SPEED”!
“LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND” is what Jesus said 7 times that the Holy Spirit is saying to the Churches!

In Part 1, we have 2 important main points or thoughts:

1. Four reasons we’re not “MORE SERIOUS” or “NO LONGER” interested in prophecy and the end times.

1. Too many “false prophecies” have “eroded confidence—*not only in prophecy but also in “the inerrancy” of God’s Word!*
2. PAST and RECENT predictions about the Rapture, Christ’s return, and the End of the World that failed to come true.
3. There is not enough “ENTHUSIASM” for the Word in local churches for “EXHAUSTIVE STUDIES” on doctrine and prophecy.
4. What most people [including many Pastors] know or believe about prophecy and the end times didn’t come from “exhaustive personal study” of Scripture—but from “spiritual mentors”, so-called “prophecy experts”, and “charismatic zealots”—who FICTIONALIZE and SENSATIONALIZE “certain biblical topics” to sell books and make movies and devotionals to sell to churches.
DISCLAIMER: The danger with books and movies—no matter who well-written—is the authors and filmmakers give the reader and viewing audience THEIR OPINIONS, OFFER TOO MANY OPEN-ENDED POSSIBILITIES, and LEAVE TOO MANY QUESTIONS OF “ETERNAL WEIGHT AND VALUE” UNANSWERED—AS IF UNIMPORTANT!

WHILE I’M AT IT, LET ME SAY THIS: You’re not going to learn everything you need to know about Christ, His return, or the end times from me or this one message!
All of you need to throw yourselves MORE DEEPLY into God’s Word and pray for a “DEEPER UNDERSTANDING”—as IF your SOUL depended on it! Because it does!

2. Six reasons we’re not comfortable talking about “THE END OF TIME”—but why we SHOULD and MUST.

1. Those who know they’re LIVING AT THE END OF TIME are forced to acknowledge they’re actually LIVING ON THE EDGE OF ETERNITY!
2. “An End” forces us to “grapple with” UNPLEASANT EVENTS we’d rather not deal with. And the notion of “An End” forces us to “wrestle with” UNKNOWN EVENTS we cannot CONTROL or PREVENT happening.

Pt 2: Six reasons we're not comfortable talking about "THE END OF TIME" but why we SHOULD and MUST, cont'd...

3. **Talking to "loved ones" about "the END TIMES** can be frightening or make us sad. Because we may have to "change" some of our plans or "abandon altogether" some of our fondest "hopes and dreams"—order to have Jesus and eternal life!
4. **When confronted with the truth—we may realize that "the PECULIAR PEOPLE"—we're supposed to be have become "TOO WELL-ADJUSTED" to this world!**
For context, let's look at **2 Timothy 4:9-11, 1 John 2:15-17, and James 4:4-5.**
5. **Fifth, the notion of "The End" causes many to FEAR they're not prepared—and might not survive "THE WORST" that's to come.**

This is a "legitimate fear"—and the promise of "suffering" for those who live a "godly life" is biblical—but scarcely mentioned in our Western churches! "Yes, and everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution." 2 Timothy 3:12
Having said that, the answer TO FEAR can't be TO JUST FEAR—BUT TO ARM AND EQUIP OURSELVES WITH THE TRUTH!

NOTE: When "sin has run its course" and the "last generation" of God's people have become "too good for this world"—He will bring an end to this world with all its evils—and usher in NOT THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT—but a NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH where everyone is "right with God"! **Hebrews 11:33-40, 2 Peter 3:11-13**

6. **Sixth, many teachings on "prophecy and the end times" CONTRADICT or CONFLICT with what we may've been taught or led to believe about God and the Devil—so we're not sure WHO'S RIGHT or WHAT TO BELIEVE! Such a condition is called "paralysis"!**

God provides a simple solution to the problem of FEAR and WHO and WHAT TO BELIEVE in Isaiah chapter 8.

"20Check [their predictions] against [my testimony]," says the LORD. "If [their predictions] are [different from mine], it is because there is [no light or truth] in them." Isaiah 8:20 NLT

THAT'S PART ONE...AND THE "REMNANT" OF GOD'S PEOPLE SAID...AMEN!

Stay tuned, as we dig a little deeper in Part 2!

CLOSING THOUGHT AND INVITATION TO ETERNAL LIFE

DO YOU KNOW WHAT'S AHEAD? ARE YOU "SPIRITUALLY PREPARED" FOR WHAT'S COMING?

ARE YOU IN JESUS?—AND DO YOU LOVE HIM? DO YOU OBEY HIM?

DO YOU LOVE YOUR CHRISTIAN BROTHERS AND SISTERS?

A QUICK REVIEW OF PART 1. We had 2 main points or thoughts in Part 1:

1. We gave 4 reasons we're not more serious or no longer interested in prophecy and the end times.
2. We gave 6 reasons we're NOT comfortable talking about the "end of time"—but why we SHOULD and MUST!

LIVING AT THE TIME OF THE END, part 2

QUESTION:

How many of you realize we're living at or near the time of the end? What are you doing "differently" in light of this realization?

We have 1 main point or thought and 5 subpoints in Part 2 of this prophecy series, "LIVING AT THE TIME OF THE END"...

1. The IMPORTANCE of prophecy—HOW WE GOT prophecy in the first place—and WHY only "recorded prophecy" can be "absolutely" trusted.

1. **Prophecy is "an illuminating light" in a dark world inundated with "false prophets, false teachers, and false miracles"!**
Psalm 119:105: "Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path." Go now to 2 Peter 1:12-19.

So, "recorded prophecy" is "an illuminating light" in a dark world. *But know this also...*

2. **Like the rest of Scripture—no "RECORDED PROPHECY" is of any "PRIVATE INTERPRETATION".**

"**20**Above all, you must understand that no prophecy in Scripture ever came from the prophets themselves, **21**or because they wanted to prophesy. It was the Holy Spirit who moved the prophets to speak from God." 2 Peter 1:20-21

"**16**For we were not making up clever stories when we told you about the powerful coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 1:16)

PROPHECY LOSES ITS VALUE AND INTENDED PURPOSES when "reduced to clever stories, private interpretations, or dramatic reenactments" and monetized for "entertainment purposes"—like The Left Behind Series and The Passion of the Christ—which by itself grossed in excess of \$600M globally!

3. **Prophecy provides "vision" to nations—and "restraint and encouragement" to upright citizens of that nation.**

"Where *there is* no revelation [vision, prophetic utterance], the people cast off restraint; But happy is he who keeps the law." Proverbs 29:18 NKJV
Judges 17:6 shows us the moral impact: "**6**In those days Israel [had no king]; all the people did whatever seemed right in their own eyes."
Good News Translation puts that verse this way: "There was no king in Israel at that time; everyone did whatever they wanted."

"**3**For a long time Israel was without the true God, without a priest to teach them, and without the Law to instruct them. **4**But whenever they were in trouble and turned to the LORD, the God of Israel, and sought him out, they found him. **5**During those dark times, it was not safe to travel. Problems troubled the people of every land. **6**Nation fought against nation, and city against city, for God was troubling them with every kind of problem.

7But as for you [Asa], be strong and courageous, for your work will be rewarded. **8**When Asa heard this message from Azariah the prophet, he took courage and removed all the detestable idols from the land of Judah and Benjamin and in the towns he had captured in the hill country of Ephraim. And he repaired the altar of the LORD, which stood in front of the entry room of the LORD's Temple." 2 Chronicles 15:1-8

Consider also Daniel 9:1-6: The prophet Daniel said he 2...was studying [not just reading!] the writings of the prophets. I learned from the word of the LORD, as recorded by Jeremiah the prophet... [WHAT to expect, WHY it happened, and HOW to pray!—that Jerusalem must lie desolate for seventy years.

3So I turned to the LORD and pleaded with Him in prayer and fasting..."

4. **When it comes to "prophecy"—the "pattern throughout Scripture" is—God always "warns" BEFORE sending judgment.**

"**7**Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets. **8**The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord GOD hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" Amos 3:7-8 KJV

"**12**You have done exactly what you have warned you would do against us and our rulers. Never in all history has there been a disaster like the one that happened in Jerusalem. **13**Every curse written against us in the Law of Moses has come true. All the troubles he predicted have taken place..." Daniel 9:12-13

5. **"Reliable prophecy" is "God-breathed"—and He relies on "trustworthy and reliable messengers"!**

"**1**Timothy, my dear son, be strong through the grace that God gives you in Christ Jesus. **2**You have heard me teach many things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Teach these great truths to trustworthy people who are able to pass them on to others." 2 Timothy 2:1-2

So, here's the Question: *Is everyone who claims to speak for God a "trustworthy messenger"?* 1 John 4:1-6

Praise God, there is at least One RELIABLE WITNESS! "Then the angel said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true: 'The Lord God, who tells His prophets what the future holds, has sent His angel to tell you what will happen soon.'" Revelation 22:6 (Read 22:6-7)

"**20**He who is the faithful witness to all these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon!" Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!" Revelation 22:20

THAT'S PART TWO...AND THE "REMNANT" OF GOD'S PEOPLE SAID...AMEN!

Stay tuned, as we dig a little deeper in Part 3!

CLOSING THOUGHT AND INVITATION TO ETERNAL LIFE

LIVING AT THE TIME OF THE END, part 3

In Part 3 of this prophecy series, we announced that we had 1 main point or thought and 3 subpoints...

1. In these last days, our “discernment” cannot rest on “natural laws or our gut feelings”—but on “inerrant” Scripture! Any other way, results in a “blind spot” the enemy and people can “exploit and use” against us! See Matthew 16:1-4.

Note: Scripture—and not “weather patterns, gut feelings, or our favorite news source”—confirm the “signs of the times”!

SO, WHAT ARE WE TO DO? THREE THINGS:

(1) STOP READING THE BIBLE—and start studying it—*comparing Scripture-to-Scripture!* JUST LIKE DANIEL DID!

We saw some of the benefits that come from the discipline of “studying” the Scriptures in Daniel 9:1-3.

We saw that by studying the prophets and the prophecy God gave Jeremiah that Daniel learned his people would be slaves in Babylon for 70 years—and that they were slaves in Babylon NOT because the Babylonians were cruel—but because of SIN!

This understanding moved Daniel to “confess and repent of his own sins—and “fast and pray” because of the sins of his people!

(2) Some parts of Scripture—especially “prophecy”—can be “extremely difficult to understand”—and IMPOSSIBLE to understand without diligent study, prayer, and more fasting!

But just because something is “difficult to understand” doesn’t mean we shouldn’t TRY TO UNDERSTAND THEM!

Not UNDERSTANDING “*certain signs, times, and seasons*” can be hazardous to our salvation and our souls! **2 Peter 3:15-18**

(3) “Test everything”! *Again, the same way Daniel and other faithful servants of God have always done!*

“When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth. He will not be presenting His own ideas; He will tell you what He has heard. He will tell you about the future. He will bring Me glory by revealing to you whatever He receives from Me.” John 16:13-14

NOTE: “Test everything” doesn’t mean “suspicious of everything”! It means “carefully examine” using the tenor of Scripture—and the Holy Spirit as our Guide and Plumbline! **1 Thessalonians 5:12-22**

Daniel chapter 11 Read Daniel 11:29-35.

31His army will take over the Temple fortress, polluting the sanctuary, putting a stop to the daily sacrifices, and setting up the Sacrilegious object that causes desecration [Jesus cited this event in Matt. 24:15—and urged the reader to [pay attention] to what Daniel spoke about [here and [Daniel 9:26-27].

NOTE: This “desecration” will trigger a series of prophesied events leading up to the Great Tribulation and culminating with the glorious return of Christ!

32He will flatter those who have violated the covenant and win them over to his side. But the people who know their God [and prophecy] will be strong and will resist him. **33**Those who are wise will give instruction to many. But for a time many of these teachers will die by fire and sword, or they will be jailed and robbed. **34**While all these persecutions are going on, a little help will arrive, though many who join them will not be sincere. **35**And some of the wise will fall victim to persecution. In this way, they will be refined and cleansed and made pure until the time of the end, for the appointed time is still to come.”

When it comes to “testing people and Scripture”—we should TEST EVERYTHING—including the exercise of “spiritual gifts”! **1 Corinthians 14:26-29.**

Now, let’s consider two events in Scripture concerning prophecy:

(1) That great and notable Day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2.

Knowledge of God and understanding prophecy was needed THEN—and BOTH will be needed in the last days so we don’t sin against the Lord by “resisting the truth” because of our ignorance!

The “prophecy of pentecost” was foretold hundreds of years earlier by the prophet Joel (2:28-32) [Book of Joel right after Hosea]

Yet, when that day came... only who knew their God and had understanding could interpret the events and boldly declare—

THIS IS THAT WHICH WAS SPOKEN OF BY THE PROPHET JOEL! Go now to Joel chapter 2, then we’ll circle back to Acts 2:1-21.

IT’S IMPORTANT TO STUDY AND GET UNDERSTANDING—NOT JUST FOR OURSELVES—BUT TO HELP OTHERS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO KNOW THE LORD, but whose faith may be weak and those who may be lacking in understanding because they’ve not been fully discipled! See **Jude 1:20-23.**

(2) Another “notable event” happened in John chapter 12.

A “significant” prophecy of Zechariah (9:9) was fulfilled that day; but some missed it because it was UNSPECTACULAR! **John 12:12-16**

THAT LEADS ME TO A WARNING FOR US AS I CLOSE:

Don’t let the “UNSPECTACULAR” cause us to become “SPIRITUALLY DULL AND INDIFFERENT”—and miss *the PRESENCE and POWER of God at work among us!*

For this is also written: “...there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven’t strayed away!” **(Luke 15:7)**

THAT’S THE END OF PART 3. Stay tuned for the rest of Part 4 as we dig a little deeper!