

THE DAYS IN WHICH WE LIVE

A message exploring how we (Bible Believing Christians) should live in these ever darkening end-time days; focussing on Yeshua's words in Matthew chapter 24.

Headings

Introduction – We Live in Dark Days
Yeshua Told Us It Would Be Like This
The Beginning of Sorrows
Yeshua's Exhortations

Introduction – We Live in Dark Days

- **The Darkness seems to be growing at an ever faster rate**
 - **The Pace of the Decline** in every aspect of life seems to be accelerating
 - In Morality – both individually and collectively
 - In Family Life
 - In Our Government
 - In Our Laws
 - In Community – caring less for others
 - In the Church – apostasy grows at an increasing rate

- **It Becomes Easier to Not Care**
 - **The Feeling of Helplessness** – the tidal surge is too great
 - People feel there is Nothing They Can Really Do to halt the decline
 - The Absence of Anyone to Turn To for Help
 - **The Response of Ceasing to Care**
 - Switching Off becomes a way out – turn on the TV and tune out
 - Focus on Oneself becomes the way to go
 - Compromise – and let it all happen

- **It Becomes Easier to Despair**
 - **Those Who Care can find they Start to Despair**
 - The Feeling of Helplessness
 - The Lack of Anyone to Help
 - **For Some the Despair becomes Overwhelming**
 - Troubles seem to Increase like a Tidal Wave
 - The Increase of Psychological Illness and Depression

- **Christians too can Be Affected in This Way**
 - **How does the Christian Live in Dark Days?**
 - **The Answer is to Look to the Lord**
 - **The Apostle Paul's Favourite Verse has the Answer** – quoted in *Romans 1: 17;*
Galatians 3: 11; and Hebrews 10: 38:

*“Behold the proud, his soul is not upright in him; but **the just shall live by his faith.**”*
Habakkuk 2: 4

Yeshua Told Us It Would Be Like This

- **Yeshua's Confidential 'End-Time' Briefing**
 - **Recorded in *Matthew 24: 1-14* and also in *Mark 13: 1-8* and *Luke 21: 1-9***
 - **It is clearly a private briefing** as they sat on the Mount of Olives
 - Yeshua prophesies of the Temple's destruction (*Matthew 24: 1-2*)
 - **The Disciples ask Three Questions** (*Matthew 24: 3*)
 - When shall These Things Be?
 - What shall be the Sign of Your Coming?
 - What shall be the Sign of the End of the World (KJV) or Age (NKJV)?
 - **Yeshua speaks of 'When shall These Things Be?'** in *Matthew 24: 4-14*, describing the period from his death until the start of the Tribulation
 - **Yeshua speaks of 'the Sign of the End of the Age'** in *Matthew 24: 15-28*, describing the commencement of the Tribulation
 - **Yeshua speaks of 'the Sign of His Coming'** in *Matthew 24: 26-44*, describing His coming as King and Judge – unexpectedly for most
 - It is followed by four parables about watchfulness and service (*Matthew 24: 45 – 25: 30*), and
 - Then follows a description of the judgement at the end of the Millennium (*Matthew 25: 31-46*)

- **Yeshua Describes The Days In Which We Live** (*Matthew 24: 4-14*)
 - **Days of Deception**
 - **Be Watchful** (Take Heed) so that you **Do Not Get Deceived**
 - **We Need to Know the Truth**
 - **Three Things we Must Do to Know the Truth**
 - Focus on our Relationship with Yeshua – He is the Truth
'Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."'
John 14: 6
 - Listen to the Holy Spirit – He is the Spirit of Truth
"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come."
John 16: 13
 - Study & Know the Scriptures – It Speaks Truth to Our Soul
'Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.'
John 17: 17
'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.'
2 Timothy 3: 16-17
 - **There Will Be Many 'false christs'**
 - Many false messiahs will appear who will succeed in deceiving many
 - The current rise of many false cults and apostate churches are a prelude to this – indeed often there are in these churches 'false christs'
 - In its fulfilment it may be that there are false religious leaders who are Jews claiming to be the Christ, this will be common in the 'Great Tribulation' (the last 3½ years of the tribulation)
 - **Don't forget – Yeshua told us these things would happen!**

- **Wars and Rumours of Wars**
 - **We See the Beginning of this Today**
 - Today we have Many Wars Ongoing that are reported in the media
 - ❖ Ukraine & Russia
 - ❖ Israel & Hamas
 - ❖ And several more
 - But Many Wars are 'hidden' and unreported
 - ❖ Islamists slaughtering Christians in Nigeria
 - ❖ Indeed, there has been Islamic persecution of Christians in many Middle East countries
 - ❖ Turkey and Iraq have committed genocide against the Kurdish people
 - ❖ Many such wars and atrocities go unreported
 - **Rumours** (Greek: *akoē*) implies 'having the sense of' as well as what we think of as a rumour
 - Today we have increasing tension and likelihood of wars in many areas – China & Taiwan, Israel & Lebanon, North Korea & South Korea, even Iran and USA
 - **It would be easy to think that we are seeing Yeshua's words fulfilled today, but what we see is mild compared to what will be**
 - **Don't forget – Yeshua told us these things would happen!**
- **Nation Rising Against Nation**
 - **Nation** (Greek: *ethnos*) means race or tribe
 - Today we have many Arabic peoples (and others) seeking the annihilation of the Jewish people – evident in pro-Palestinian protests
 - But we see this today also in 'Black Lives Matter' and 'BAME' (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) strife and protests
 - The favourite slander used by the liberal and woke of their opponents is 'Racist!'
 - **Don't forget – Yeshua told us these things would happen!**
- **Kingdom Rising Against Kingdom**
 - **Kingdom** (Greek: *basileia*) means royalty or rule or realm
 - We have already mentioned many kingdoms which are rising against other kingdoms
 - Today we also see (although many are blind to it) the rise of the global elite and groups seeking to usurp the democratic power of peoples to determine their rule and lifestyle
 - ❖ Principal amongst these today would be the World Economic Forum, and their accomplices Bill Gates, the WHO, etc
 - **Don't forget – Yeshua told us these things would happen!**
- **Famines, Pestilences & Earthquakes**
 - **Famines** (Greek: *limos*) means scarcity of food
 - World leaders are alarmed by the spectre of famine due to the growth of world population

- But the truth is that, with modern farming and rearing techniques and with equitable distribution, there need be no shortages
 - In the 21st century we have seen major famines in Niger (2005/2006), the Horn of Africa (2006), Somalia – due to drought (2017) and South Sudan (2017)
 - Whilst some famines are due to climate events, such as drought; there are some with financial, political (including war) or ethnic causes - affecting marginalised groups or ethnicities
 - There seems now to be an agenda to reduce population through restriction of farming and livestock rearing capabilities – promoted by the likes of the WEF and Bill Gates (who has bought up much farmland in the USA and elsewhere) - such actions will result in famines caused by deliberate action
 - **Pestilences** (Greek: *loimos*) means a plague
 - We are all aware of **historic pestilences** which killed millions of people – the Black Death (14th century), Smallpox (late 15th / early 16th centuries), Spanish Flu (1918) and HIV/Aids (1980's onwards)
 - **In recent years we have experienced the pestilence of Covid** – which, it now seems clear, was man-made (through 'gain of function' research on bacteria) and deliberately released to create an opportunity for mass vaccination with genetic modification objectives leading to many deaths
 - We now have the WEF and WHO warning of 'Disease X' – and the news indicates something of deliberate policy...again to reduce population
 - **Earthquakes** (Greek: *seismos*) means a commotion of the air or ground
 - Earthquakes are attracting increasing attention – not only those now occurring but also those that are expected
 - The modern communications make us aware of earthquakes much more than we would have been years ago...statistically there does not seem to be an increasing trend, just annual variations in the number of these quasi-random phenomena
 - ❖ In 2023 there were 19 major earthquakes (magnitude 7.0 or higher) and 15,600 seismic events in total
 - ❖ The year with the most major earthquakes was 2010 (23)
 - Why does the Lord mention earthquakes especially? – Possibly because they are associated with the completion of God's judgements – the seventh trumpet and the seventh bowl (*Revelation 11: 19, 16: 18*)
 - **Don't forget – Yeshua told us these things would happen!**
 - **Believers will be Persecuted by the World**
 - **Deliver You Up** (Greek: *paradidōmi*) means to surrender, yield up or betray
 - This translates a technical word, in this context, used for handing over a prisoner for punishment
 - This is the same warning Yeshua gave to His disciples when He sent them out to preach, heal, raise the dead and cast out demons
- “But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony - to them and to the Gentiles.”*
- Matthew 10: 17-18**

- Persecution of believers has often been the official policy of rulers and governments
 - We see such persecutions today – teachers, medical staff and people in many walks of life who are losing their jobs because of their faith
 - We see believers being pilloried in the media for upholding biblical truth and God’s laws and morality
 - We see street and pulpit preachers arrested for speaking God’s word or even just reading scripture
 - Notice that, always in such persecution, the Lord says there is opportunity for testimony
 - **Hated by All Nations**
 - Increasingly we see nations persecuting believers and churches through law or oppression
 - This is most marked in our days in Islamic countries, but is seen in many nations – try being a Christian in North Korea!
 - **Don’t forget – Yeshua told us these things would happen!**
- **Many will be Offended – leading to Betrayal & Hatred**
 - Offended (Greek: *skandalizō*) means to scandalise, derived from a word meaning to entrap or trip up
 - The clear implication here is not only of family members but also of professing believers who fall away and turn against "one another" in shocking **acts of spiritual treachery**
 - **False Teachers in apostate churches** today demonstrate hatred of ‘bible believing Christians’ for holding to the truths of scripture – and even betray them by causing the media or authorities to criticise or persecute them
 - **The Lord told His disciples:** ‘*a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.*’ (Matthew 10: 36)
 - **So don’t forget – Yeshua told us these things would happen!**
 - **Many False Prophets will Arise**
 - **Today False Teachers in apostate churches deceive many as to the truth**
 - Teaching a prosperity, health and wealth lie
 - Teaching a ‘false christ’
 - With Worship that is Corrupted – such as in Hillsongs or Bethel
 - Thereby deceiving many who are seeking truth
 - **This is Alluring and Sounds Good – but it is Deception**
 - **So don’t forget – Yeshua told us these things would happen!**
 - **Lawlessness Will Abound**
 - **Lawlessness** (Greek: *anomia*) means illegality, violation of the law
 - **The Breakdown of Law and Order** is all too apparent today, on our streets and in our society
 - This is so much so, that there crimes which the police barely investigate
 - **Lawmakers Themselves Disregard the Law**
 - This is seen more and more in our days as politicians, either openly or secretly, break the law for political or personal gain

- We only have to think of the number of politicians who visited Jeffrey Epstein's island on several occasions to consort with young girls
- **Courts Too Disregard Law or Reality** to follow a preconceived end
 - The ICJ (International Court of Jew-haters) recently has disregarded law and reality to convict and censure Israel for its acts of self defence
- **Laws Are Made which are used to Convict or Prosecute Believers**
 - Today the law is used to limit free speech and even prayer
 - I sense it will not be long before public reading of scripture (even in church) will be banned because it is offensive
- **Whose Law**
 - Many of our laws today stand in direct opposition to Scripture – for instance abortion law
 - God's divine order is continually overturned in our law – we see this particularly in relation to marriage and sexuality in recent years
- **Love Grows Cold**
 - Yeshua makes clear the impact of this Lawlessness
 - 'The love of many will grow cold' – this is happening in our society generally – but also in the church
 - The Pressure to Compromise is leading many churches into apostasy and many believers' love for the Lord grows cold
- **The Impact of the Loss of a Christian Voice into the Nation**
 - As apostasy grows and bible believing churches and Christians dwindle in number
 - It is the decline of the 'restraining' influence of the Holy Spirit in our nation – causing a rise in lawlessness

'For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way.'

2 Thessalonians 2: 7

- **Again I say...don't forget – Yeshua told us these things would happen!**

- **The Beginning of Sorrows (Matthew 24: 8)**

- **Yeshua calls these days in which we live 'the Beginning of Sorrows'**

- **Beginning – because it will get worse**
 - We could hardly have envisaged twenty years ago that things would have reached such an ungodly state as it has today
 - The pace of decline is accelerating...and will continue to do so
- **Sorrows – because Believers hearts are Distraught**
 - We sorrow over the impact of the spiritual decline on our families, our communities, our churches and our nation
 - We sorrow as the world grows ever more deaf to the Christian voice
- **Beginning of Sorrows – because there will be a time of Tribulation**
 - It is coming soon
 - It will be almost unbearable
 - A Supremely Ungodly Coming World Leader (often called the Antichrist) will rule the earth for a short time
 - Many people will not survive the greater sorrow of Tribulation
 - Believers (saved in the Tribulation) will be hunted and killed

▪ **Yeshua Knows the End from the Beginning**

*'He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. **Colossians 1: 15-17***

○ **He Speaks of the Coming Tribulation (Mathew 24: 15-28)**

- He actually speaks of the last 3½ years of the 7 year Tribulation
- This He calls the 'Great Tribulation' – because it will be for Israel a time of great suffering under the hand of the Coming World Leader – but also a time of escape and rescue
- He directs His Disciples – and us – to Daniel's prophecy to understand God's agenda for Israel – see *Daniel 9: 24-27*

○ **For Born Again Believers There Is A Glorious Future - Rapture**

*'For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be **caught up** together with them in the clouds **to meet the Lord in the air**. And thus **we shall always be with the Lord**. Therefore comfort one another with these words.'*
1 Thessalonians 4: 16-18

- **Caught Up** (Greek: *harpazō*) means to seize or catch away
 - ❖ In the Latin translation of the Bible this was translated as '*rapturo*' from where we get our word 'rapture'

See Separate Notes on 'The Harpazō – A Summary'

- **Timing** - there are various views of the timing of the Rapture
- **Pre Tribulation** – My study of scripture leads me to conclude that scripture teaches a Rapture that occurs before the Tribulation (the time of God's wrath)
 - ❖ There are several key passages which I find persuasive – see *Romans 5: 9; Ephesians 5: 6; Colossians 3: 4; 1 Thessalonians 1: 10 and 5: 9; Revelation 3: 10*
 - ❖ Most persuasive is the song of the 24 Elders – they sing in the Throne Room of Heaven, before the opening of the First Seal of the Scroll (that is, before the commencement of God's wrath)

'And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth."
Revelation 5: 9-10

- ❖ They can be none other than the church...redeemed saints out of every tribe, tongue, people and nation
- ❖ They are in heaven before the opening of the First Seal of the Scroll (that is, before the commencement of God's wrath) – before the Tribulation begins

See Separate Notes on 'In the Twinkling of an Eye -

The Doctrine of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture'

- Yeshua then speaks of His Second Coming – to Rule and Reign – see **Matthew 24: 29-31**
- Yeshua then gives Four Parables about Expectancy and Service – see **Matthew 24: 32 to 25: 30**
 - I recommend you read these after this message
- **Comfort- The Lord is Coming Soon for His Bride**
 - **Comfort One Another With These Words** – the last sentence of the passage we have read concerning the rapture urges us to take comfort from knowing the Lord is coming to take His bride to be with Him --- and that right soon!

‘Therefore comfort one another with these words.’ **1 Thessalonians 4: 18**

- **Comfort – Believers will not experience the Awful Fullness of Sorrows in the Tribulation**
- **Comfort – Yeshua is the Exalted King who is Coming Soon**

‘Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.’ **Philippians 2: 9-11**

- **Comfort – The Day of Rapture is Drawing Near**
 - ❖ The Evidence of the Darkness today tells us He is coming soon!
 - ❖ Watch Out & Listen Up on Feast of Yom Teruah!

- **Yeshua’s Exhortations**

- **Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled**

‘See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.’ **Matthew 24: 6b**

- **Keep Your Peace in these Days of the Beginning of Sorrows**

- **Your Peace is His Peace**

Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. **John 14: 27**

- **Pray in Every Situation and You Will Receive His Peace**

‘Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.’

Philippians 4: 6-7

- **I often think How Wonderful it is to Know the Lord and to Know His Love and His Peace** – and I wonder how people can manage without these blessings

- **Let the Holy Spirit Rule in Your Life**

- **One of the Fruits of the Holy Spirit in our Lives is Peace**

‘But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.’ **Galatians 5: 22-23a**

‘Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.’ **Romans 15: 13**

▪ **Keep Going – Endurance and Perseverance**

‘But he who endures to the end shall be saved’ **Matthew 24: 13**

○ **Endurance and Perseverance are God’s Gift**

- **God, as part of His saving work, secures a believer's perseverance**
- **Kept By the Power of God** – true believers “are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation” (1 Peter 1: 5)
- **The Guarantee of one's Perseverance is Built into the New Covenant Promise** – see *Jeremiah 31: 33-34*

▪ **The Spread of the Gospel**

○ **Yeshua then speaks of the spread of the gospel (*Matthew 24: 14*)**

- A real encouragement to endurance and to keep persevering

▪ **The Lord Rules Forevermore**

- **When everything looks so not right, and when it looks like the evil people are on the winning side – be reminded of these verses that are familiar to every Jew as they are from Psalm 92, the only Psalm written for the Sabbath day, thus being read every Shabbat in every synagogue:**

‘When the wicked spring up like grass, and when all the workers of iniquity flourish, it is that they may be destroyed forever. But You, Lord, are on high forevermore. For behold, Your enemies, O Lord, for behold, Your enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.’ **Psalm 92: 7-9**

‘The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing, to declare that the Lord is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.’ **Psalm 92: 12-15**