

Why Study Prophecy?

Text: Matthew 24:32-44

“Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.

³³ So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!

³⁴ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

³⁶ “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

³⁷ But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

³⁸ For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

³⁹ and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

⁴⁰ Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left.

⁴¹ Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.

⁴² Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.

⁴³ But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.

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

- Tonight, we are going to discuss some important reasons for studying and understanding Biblical Prophecy:

I. UNDERSTANDING END-TIME PROPHECY SERVES TO PROTECT US FROM DECEPTION! (MT. 24:4 & 5)

And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.

⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.

- Notice the words used by Jesus:

A. HE TELLS US TO "TAKE HEED"

1. Why must we be so careful?
2. We have the ability to be deceived!
3. As we commit ourselves to stay guarded and to be careful we will be safe against those who might deceive!

B. HE ALSO TELLS US THAT MANY WILL COME IN HIS NAME!

1. Jesus uses the word many for a reason. There will be many deceivers in the end-times!
2. These deceivers come with a good message and great resume but they are indeed deceivers!
3. Jesus warned us that many people will be deceived by this onslaught of deception!

C. SO WHAT ARE WE TO DO?

1. As we study God's Word we build ourselves up!
2. Our knowledge will protect us from those who come to deceive!
3. The deceivers are coming, but we will be ready for them! We will stand safely in the understanding of God's Word!

- **What are some of the deceptive messages that are circulating today that result in extreme damage to the church?**
 - The Rise of New Age Movement!
 - The I'm OK, You're OK Message! (Seeker Sensitive, User Friendly Gospel)
 - Extremism! (Moving to the Right or the Left)

II. UNDERSTANDING END-TIME PROPHECY HELPS US TO DISCERN THE DAYS AND DISARM FEAR! (V.6-13)

And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

⁷ *For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.*

⁸ *All these are the beginning of sorrows.*

⁹ *“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake.*

¹⁰ *And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.*

¹¹ *Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.*

¹² *And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.*

¹³ *But he who endures to the end shall be saved.*

- Understanding allows us to...

A. ENDURE HARDSHIPS! (V.6-9)

1. The Last Days will be marked by many troubles and much suffering!
2. We can endure with patience as we understand what is going on around us!
3. There are great possibilities of extreme persecution but again understanding will serve as a defense from discouragement!

B. RESIST THE SPIRIT OF OFFENSE! (V.10)

And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.

1. He we see Jesus using that word, many again!
2. The spirit of offense will flow like water in these last days and we must protect ourselves!
3. When we recognize what is a work among us, we can combat that spirit through prayer and the Word!

C. GUARD OUR HEARTS FROM THE EFFECTS OF INIQUITY! (V.12)

And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

1. We can see already a spirit of iniquity that is abounding!
2. With this attitude and rise in evil there will be an attack up our love!
3. Jesus refers to our love growing cold! What love?
 - a) Love for God!
 - b) Love for others!
 - c) Love for His Word and His House!

- **How can we increase our ability to endure?** (V.13)

...he who endures to the end shall be saved.

III. UNDERSTANDING END-TIME PROPHECY WILL HEAT UP OUR MESSAGE AND SPEED UP OUR EVANGELISTIC EFFORTS! (V.14)

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

A. JESUS MAKES IT VERY CLEAR THAT HE WANTS THE GOSPEL TO BE PREACHED AROUND THE WORLD!

B. THIS PREACHING WILL SERVE AS A WITNESS TO ALL NATIONS!

C. THE END WILL COME AFTER THE GOODNEWS HAS CIRCLED THE GLOBE!

- **Why must we spread the Gospel to the Whole World?**