

Are We Living the Matthew 24 End Times?

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The topic of the end times has fascinated and deceived humans for generations.

It has led some misguided leaders to form cults and worship false deities, and alleged Christian leaders to claim they know when Jesus is returning.

The book of Matthew, chapter 24, gives a startling amount of detail into the end times and Jesus' return. But Jesus Himself said in verse 36, "Concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only."

Christians do not know when the Lord is going to return, but it would behoove them to pay attention to the signs of the times. Knowing when a shift occurs in culture, the Spirit and the world as a whole, gives discerning Christians a focus upon on which to pray. Having the knowledge of the times they live in provides the opportunity to use biblical wisdom in the face of global incidents.

Jesus warned about signs of the end times, and paying attention to what is going on in the world does not make one a conspiracy theorist. Matthew 24 gives an outline of the signs that will signal those times before Christ's eventual return, many of which are occurring today.

Having wars, and hearing rumors of wars, is not an occurrence that is unique to the current day. But when it falls in line with the other manifestations listed in the Bible, there is a strong case for putting these ideas together. With the war between Ukraine and Russia pushing Europe to the brink of a larger conflict, and China's constant threat to Taiwan and

other east Asia nations, the threats and rumors of wars is undeniable.

Famine is not a problem the United States has had to deal with when compared to third-world or underdeveloped countries. But these days, even the mighty U.S. has felt the strangle of worldwide supply lines. Suffering from a baby formula shortage, the inexplicable rash of food processing plants catching fire and farmers suffering from increased costs across all aspects of farming has the potential to lead to a catastrophic reduction in available food items in America. John Boyd Jr., president of the National Black Farmers Association, has already issued a warning about the state of farming across the country saying, "We're in a crisis right now." Even the USDA website begrudgingly acknowledges "the inventory of certain foods at your grocery store might be temporarily low before stores can restock," while maintaining there are "currently no nationwide shortages of food."

Worldwide, the struggle against famine is even worse. The World Food Program's executive director David Beasley has issued a warning about food shortages in the future. When he took over the program almost six years ago there were 80 million people in the world that were dealing with starvation. Now, after COVID and the war in Ukraine hindering food production even more, those numbers are closer to 345 million people dealing with starvation. Beasley elaborated on those numbers even more, and the consequences they will bring, "Within that are 50 million people in 45 countries knocking on famine's door," Beasley said. "If we don't reach these people, you will have famine, starvation, destabilization of nations unlike anything we saw in 2007-2008 and 2011 and you will have mass migration."

Pestilence and pandemics are still on the mind of many throughout the world. Having just lived through the unprecedented COVID pandemic and all the liberty stripping restrictions that came with it, there are still many other

diseases plaguing populations today. What is spreading at greater rates are sexually transmitted diseases (STD's), with an epidemic of AIDS in South Africa, monkeypox infecting the gay community worldwide and the rising spread of syphilis (to include congenital syphilis in infants which can lead to death, blindness and brain and nerve problems). While doctors, scientists and politicians look for ways to combat these spreading diseases, they are leaving out the most effective treatment: God ordained monogamy in marriage, between a man and a woman.

Finally, Jesus lists earthquakes as an indicator for His return. While scientists acknowledge they have recorded the most earthquakes ever in recent years, they attribute this to having better seismic instruments to identify the earthquakes. While that is a contributing factor, the average number of recorded earthquakes based on their magnitude is going up as well. Recently, the Salton Sea in California, which lays on the San Andreas fault line, experienced a swarm of 25 earthquakes within a 24-hour period. These earthquakes were on the smaller end of the scale, with the largest measuring 3.5 on the Richter Scale. As of Sept. 26, the Reykjanes Ridge in Iceland has experienced no less than eight recorded earthquakes ranging from 4.5 to 5.7 magnitude.

These occurrences, and many more throughout the world, do not give Christians a definitive idea of when Jesus will return. But as Matthew 24 ends, Jesus commands His disciples to be vigilant and watch what is happening around them:

"Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord will come. But know this, that if the owner of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not have let his house be broken into. Therefore, you also must be ready, for in an hour when you least expect, the Son of Man is coming," (Matt. 24:42-44). {eoa}

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