

October 5, 2016

Dear Brethren and Friends,

Are you READY... or NOT?

No greater challenge faces us than this question. Jesus said that we should be ready for His return—that we should be watching and actually knowing that the time has drawn near. Read again the momentous events revealed by Jesus in chapters 24 and 25 of Matthew—many occurrences prophesied are at play RIGHT NOW!

Are you watching? Can you relate world events to key prophecies of the end time, and do you truly believe what you are seeing?

Not many do, and it will be only the smallest minority of faithful Christians who will take Christ's admonition seriously to, "Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:36).

Jesus prophesied about the end of the age and compared it to events leading up to the worldwide Flood. He specifically referenced "the days of Noah" (Matthew 24:37; Luke 17:26). During that tumultuous and evil age, "Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD" (Genesis 6:8), and God said to Noah, "you are righteous before Me in this generation" (Genesis 7:1).

Noah and his wife and their three sons and their wives were all protected during the Flood. And so, too, in our generation, some will find grace in the eyes of God—Jesus promised this:

"And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened" (Matthew 24:22).

As the elect—that is, God's chosen people—what we now face in our immediate future is something for which we must prepare! Jesus has told us "beforehand" (Matthew 24:25), and overshadowing terror is coming:

"And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near" (Luke 21:25-28).

In chapter 25 of Matthew, the parable of the ten virgins is given, and the depiction is of those who have been called into God's Church. However, in awaiting the return of Jesus Christ and our redemption, the parable reveals that the virgins "all slumbered and slept" (verse 5).

As the parable continues, oil—a symbol of God's Holy Spirit—was running out. Only half of the virgins had enough oil, "and those who were READY went in with [H]im to the wedding; and the door was shut" (verse 10).

Brethren, we must not let ourselves be lulled into complacency thinking that the return of Jesus Christ is far off! To all Christians throughout every age, our preparation has been unmistakably clear:

"Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming"
(verse 13).

Are you READY... or NOT?

In Christ's Service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dave Harris".

Dave Harris