

No one except God knows the time of the end of the world. How does anyone dare to teach that the Rapture and the Day of Judgment will occur on May 21, 2011? Doesn't the Bible say very plainly that no one can know the day or the hour of Christ's return? Indeed the Bible did teach that.

NO MAN KNOWS THE DAY OR THE HOUR?

The Bible tells why the Bible did teach that. In Acts 1:7, at the time that the New Testament church age was about to begin, Jesus taught His disciples:

And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power.

Jesus then said in the next verse:

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

From these verses we learn that during the church age there would be a great curiosity concerning the time of the end, but believers were not to be at all preoccupied with this question. They were to concentrate and focus all of their attention on the task of bringing the Gospel to the whole world.

Therefore, regardless of how brilliant or how learned a theologian or Bible student might have been, or how diligently they studied the Bible or faithfully served Christ, it was impossible to learn from the Bible the timetable for the end of the world. Anyone who claimed he knew the time of the end was always wrong.

Nevertheless, there is a very striking statement in the Bible. It is recorded in Ecclesiastes 8:5. There God declares:

Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth [*better translation: will know*] both time and judgment.

In the Bible a wise man is a true believer, to whom God has given a profound trust in the authority of the Bible. True believers have been in existence since the beginning of time. But the timeline of history as it is revealed in the Bible was never revealed to the hearts of the true believers. For example, throughout most of the church age it was generally believed that Creation occurred in the year 4004 B.C.

However, about 35 years ago God began to open the true believers' understanding of the timeline of history. Thus it was discovered that the Bible teaches that when the events of the past are coordinated with our modern calendar, we can learn dates of history

such as Creation (11,013 B.C.), the flood of Noah's day (4990 B.C.), the exodus of Israel from Egypt (1447 B.C.) and the death of Solomon (931 B.C.)*

However, it was not until a very few years ago that the accurate knowledge of the entire timeline of history was revealed to true believers by God from the Bible. This timeline extends all the way to the end of time. During these past several years God has been revealing a great many truths, which have been completely hidden in the Bible until this time when we are so near the end of the world.

How can this be happening?

That this should happen was clearly prophesied in the Bible. The Bible is the living Word that requires the Holy Spirit to open the spiritual understanding of the person reading or hearing the words of the Bible. Therefore, since it was not God's plan to open anyone's understanding of many truths of the Bible until very near the time of the end of the world, it is only now that exceedingly important Biblical truths are being understood. ***The Bible tells us that this was going to happen.***

THE BOOK THAT WAS SEALED

In the book of Daniel God has much to say about end-time events. Much of this was understood by Daniel, and because it was such awful information, great agony came upon Daniel. We read for example in Daniel 8:27:

And I Daniel fainted, and was sick *certain* days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it.

But then God told Daniel in Daniel 12:4 and 9:

But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, *even* to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. And He said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

In other words, God is telling us that there is important information concerning the time of the end that has been recorded in the Bible ("the book") but is not to be revealed by God until the world is near its end.

In Revelation 22:18-19 we read:

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of

the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

These verses absolutely assure us that after the Bible was completed about 95 A.D. no other words could ever be added to the Bible. Therefore, whatever end-time information had been given to Daniel, but was not to be understood until the time of the end, had to have been included in the Bible before the Bible was completed. However, God wrote it in such a way that it could not be understood until the world was almost at its end. Remember, understanding comes only from the Lord Jesus Christ, as we read in Luke 24:45: **“Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.”** This explains why the Bible is written in such complex and difficult-to-understand language. It is one reason why Christ spoke in parables, even as we read in Mark 4:34: **“But without a parable spake He not unto them.”**

THE BOOK IS OPENED

But then we read in Revelation 5:1-9:

And I saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four *and* twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.

These verses teach that there is a book that had been sealed and that was to be opened by Christ, Himself. The only book that can be in view is the book that the Bible describes in Daniel 12.

This book was sealed with seven seals. Therefore, in order for the full information written in the book to become available for understanding, all of the seven seals must be removed. Indeed, Revelation 8:1 describes the removal of the seventh seal:

And when He had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

WHEN WAS THERE SILENCE IN HEAVEN?

Several years ago we had learned that the silence in Heaven for about half an hour referred to the 2,300 days that were the first part of the 23-year (exactly 8,400 days) Great Tribulation period. This period began on May 21, 1988. It was during this 2,300-day period that, both in the churches and throughout the world, very few, if any, were saved. Revelation 8:1 reports that there was silence in Heaven. This would have been the situation beginning on May 21, 1988, because joy in Heaven occurs as sinners repent. In Luke 15:4-32 the Bible reports this joy in Heaven, a joy that was not in silence.

We had learned that May 21, 1988 was the last day of the church age and was also the first day of the 23-year period of Great Tribulation, during which Satan has been employed by God to officially rule all of the churches as well as the whole world. During the first 2,300 days of this 8,400-day period the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from all of the churches as well as the entire world. This produced silence in Heaven. This sad situation is to continue in the churches until the end of the 23-year Great Tribulation period. However, beginning 2,300 days after May 21, 1988 (the end of the church age), the Holy Spirit was again poured out, producing what the Bible calls the “latter rain” (Zechariah 10:1; James 5:7) throughout the world (but not in any church), and God began a final great harvest of salvation, bringing great joy in Heaven. This salvation is not occurring in any church, but will continue outside of the churches to the end of the Great Tribulation, on May 21, 2011.

Because at the beginning of the Great Tribulation period (May 21, 1988), Christ removed the seventh and final seal from this book that Daniel was commanded to seal, we can now understand why it is that during these past years God has revealed to us so much new truth from the Bible. This includes the precise time of the end and much about God’s Judgment plan. The word “time” is a synonym for “hour.” Judgment refers to the Day of Judgment, which is frequently called “the Day.” Thus, to know time and Judgment as prophesied in Ecclesiastes 8:5 is to know the “day” and the “hour.” This fits perfectly with the mercy and love of God for the whole world. Remember, God gave Noah precise information so he could warn the world of impending destruction. Similarly, God commanded Jonah to give the people of Nineveh the precise day He planned to destroy the city of Nineveh. Likewise, in His mercy and love God has given the true believers of our day the exact time of the Rapture, which is the first day of the Day of Judgment, so that they can warn the world. How kind, how gracious, how loving God is. And wonderfully, God is still saving many people today (Revelation 7:9-14) even as He saved the citizens of Nineveh in Jonah’s day (Matthew 12:41).

A SOLEMN WARNING TO THOSE IN THE CHURCHES

A knowledge of the actual time of the Rapture and an understanding of Judgment Day is of enormous significance. God warns in 1 Thessalonians 5:2-3 of the Day of Judgment coming to destroy those who deny that near the end of the world the true believers will know the time (the hour) of Christ's coming to bring to Heaven (to rapture) the true believers and to begin the Day of Judgment (the day). There God tells us:

For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

In Revelation 16:15 Christ teaches that He, Himself, will come as a thief (see also Revelation 3:3). Christ obviously is not a thief. He is Holy God. But He and Judgment Day will come like a thief. In John 10:10 God describes what a thief does when he comes: **"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy."**

Thus when Christ comes with Judgment Day, He comes to take away life and to destroy those for whom He comes as a thief.

THE THIEF COMES IN THE NIGHT

Christ and Judgment Day come in the night. In 1 Thessalonians 5:3 Christ tells us, **"When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them."** Because destruction comes upon them, we can know for certain that these people are not saved. Being unsaved, they are in spiritual darkness. They are in the night. Judgment Day is coming for them as a "thief in the night." Yet they believe they are at peace with God and safely under His care. WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE?

The language of this verse describes perfectly all of those in the world who on May 21, 2011 are still following any church. Because churches teach many things that are not true to the Bible, including a plan of salvation that is contrary to the Bible, and the Holy Spirit has abandoned all churches, those still following any church on May 21, 2011 are not saved. Nevertheless churches teach their members that:

1. They as confessing members of their church are safely in Christ's care.
2. No man can know the day or hour of Christ's return. Therefore, they are certain that Christ will come as a thief in the night.

These dear people do not realize at all that they, themselves, are in spiritual nighttime, a condition that guarantees that when Christ comes they, themselves, will be destroyed in the Day of Judgment. **How awful!** It is the true believers who know the time (the hour) and much about Judgment Day (the day). They are not in the nighttime of spiritual darkness.

REMEMBER, God is very, very merciful and loving. There is hope for anyone who humbly cries, who begs, and beseeches God that maybe they, too, might become saved.

See Adam When, first published in 1974. English copies can be obtained free of charge by contacting Family Radio, Oakland, CA, 94621 USA, or by downloading from the web site: www.familyradio.com.