

# THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN

## MARK 13:24–27

### *Introduction*

The greatest event yet to happen in the history of the world will be the return of Jesus Christ. The disciples wanted to know, “When will these things happen?” (Mark 13:4), and “What will be the sign of your coming?” (Mat 24:3). Jesus began to answer the second question about His return in this passage.

- I. The setting: after the distress or tribulation (v. 24).
- II. Event 1: there will be astronomical happenings (vv. 24-25).
- III. Event 2: there will be the return of the Son of Man in the clouds (v. 26).
- IV. Event 3: there will be the gathering of the elect (v. 27).

### **I. *Mark 13:24 The Return of Jesus Christ***

When will Jesus return? “Following that distress [tribulation]” (Mat 24:29-31). The disciples had asked two questions (Mark 13:4; see Mat 24:4).

1. When would the temple be destroyed?
2. What are the signs of the Lord’s coming and of the end of the age?

Jesus was now dealing with His coming again (v. 26); He was answering the disciples’ questions. He revealed exactly when He was going to return. He will return “in those days, following that distress [tribulation].” The idea is immediately after the great distress [tribulation]. In fact, Mathew uses the word *immediately* (24:29). Jesus even said that the days of the great tribulation have to be shortened in order to save mankind (Mark 13:20). Apparently, it will be shortened by Jesus’ return. Note a significant point.

Jesus did not return “following that distress [tribulation]” of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. (Mat 24:29-31.) This is clearly evident as we stand here centuries later. Therefore, what Jesus says in this passage is bound to refer to His coming again. This also indicates that the distress or tribulation just discussed will be the great distress [tribulation] lying out in the future. Jesus will return...

- “in those days, following that distress [tribulation]” (Mark 13:24).
- “immediately following the distress [tribulation] of those days” (Mat 24:29).

Both the great distress or tribulation and the Lord’s return will be tied together. The Lord’s return will follow immediately upon the heels of the great distress or tribulation. It is “in those days, following that distress,” that He will return.

It must be remembered that the terrible afflictions predicted by our Lord referred both to Jerusalem’s fall in A.D. 70 and to the great tribulation “unequaled from the beginning, when God created the world” (Mark 13:19; see Mat 24:21). The fact that Jesus said He would return “in those days, following that distress” tells us there are some terrible

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days of suffering and trouble coming upon the earth. But His return also tells us some glorious news.

1. He is definitely God. He is omniscient. He knows the future of the earth (evidenced by Jerusalem's destruction about forty years after His death, and the great trial yet to come upon the earth).
2. He is in control. He will return to shorten the day of trial and redeem mankind and the world. There will be an end to all trials (Mark 13:20).

## ***II. Mark 13:24–25 Astronomical Signs of the End Times and the Return of Jesus Christ***

The first event when Jesus returns will be astronomical happenings. The language is very descriptive.

- => “The sun will be darkened.”
- => “The moon will not give its light.”
- => “The stars will fall from the sky.”
- => “The heavenly bodies will be shaken.”

Very practically, such astronomical happenings occur now. The earth is sometimes darkened by dust from earthly catastrophes such as volcanic eruptions, wind storms, and smoke from huge fires. Of course, whatever darkens the sun hides the light of the moon from earth. The stars, that is, meteorites of varying sizes, fall throughout space often. “The heavenly bodies” being shaken could be the heavenly bodies outside our solar system that are called by the Bible “the heavenly array” (Deut 4:19).

Something should be mentioned here about the power of the atom. Of course, an atom bomb exploding on earth is powerful enough to darken the sun and moon from earth's view. Worldwide atomic warfare would cause so much dust and pollution it would be difficult for any man to see anything in outer space. But as the atom is known today, it could not affect the axis or rotation (the falling or shaking) of the sun and moon and stars unless there is to be an inter-galactic war of some sort way out in the future. Of course, there is always the possibility that there is a power much greater than what we know today. This is not to say that atomic warfare will never happen. There will be wars and rumours of war as long as the earth stands. But what the Bible teaches is that God is going to end all things, not man. When the world ends, it will be God's ending it by His own will and act and power.

An extreme literalism needs to be avoided when interpreting these verses, for there is just so much we do not know about the laws (powers) of nature and the forces God has put in motion throughout the universe. However, there is no reason for not understanding the Lord's words as actual or literal events.

What the present passage seems to mean is that the whole universe is going to be affected by Jesus' coming to earth. The sun and moon and the stars and powers (laws) of heaven will be affected in the sense that they *will open up and receive Him*. They will serve notice that this is the Creator, the Son of Man, God's very own Son, who is now coming to earth in great power and glory. Imagine a spectacular fireworks display, and perhaps it will give us a little glimpse of what Christ is saying. A simple question is: Why would not everything, including the heavenly bodies, put on a display (that would be terrifying to man) when its Creator, the Son of God, returns?

Note in the verses below that the astronomical bodies are affected because of *the evil of men and the wrath of God* that is being shown. That is, the scene of falling stars (meteorites) is not for the purpose of man's witnessing a spectacular event; it is to point to the Son of God, to His judgement's falling upon the earth. Every man is going to know beyond any doubt that Jesus is coming in all the power and the glory of God Himself. As Jesus said, "with great power and glory" He is coming. He is coming that "every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil 2:10-11).

The words "great power and glory" indicate that He is coming to subject all men to His rule and reign and to execute judgment upon the earth. Scripture definitely reveals that astronomical happenings will precede and accompany the coming of the Lord.

**Isa 13:10-13** *The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light. The rising sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light. I will punish the world for its evil, the wicked for their sins. I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty and will humble the pride of the ruthless. I will make man scarcer than pure gold, more rare than the gold of Ophir. Therefore I will make the heavens tremble; and the earth will shake from its place at the wrath of the Lord Almighty, in the day of his burning anger.*

**Isa 24:17-22** *Terror and pit and snare await you, O people of the earth. Whoever flees at the sound of terror will fall into a pit; whoever climbs out of the pit will be caught in a snare. The floodgates of the heavens are opened, the foundations of the earth shake. The earth is broken up, the earth is split asunder, the earth is thoroughly shaken. The earth reels like a drunkard, it sways like a hut in the wind; so heavy upon it is the guilt of its rebellion that it falls — never to rise again. In that day the Lord will punish the powers in the heavens above and the kings on the earth below. They will be herded together like prisoners bound in a dungeon; they will be shut up in prison and be punished after many days.*

**Joel 2:30-31** *I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.*

**Joel 3:15-16** *The sun and moon will be darkened, and the stars no longer shine. The Lord will roar from Zion and thunder from Jerusalem; the earth and the sky will tremble. But the Lord will be a refuge for his people, a stronghold for the people of Israel.*

**Mark 13:24-25** *“But in those days, following that distress, ‘the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’ ”*

**Luke 17:29-30** *But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulphur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. “It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed.”*

**Luke 21:25-26** *“There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror; apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken.”*

**Acts 2:19-20** *I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.*

**Rev 6:12-17** *I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red, and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as late figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind. The sky receded like a scroll, rolling up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. They called to the mountains and the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”*

Note the exact words of the verses of Revelation above since they are referring to the same event as Jesus (v. 30; see Rev. 6:17). The coining of Christ will trigger a great earthquake on earth and astronomical happenings in the heavens above (vv. 12-14). Men, great and small, will be terrified and hide themselves (v. 15) and cry for immediate death instead of having to face Jesus (v. 16). Why? Because they will know something: “The great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?” (v. 17).

The disciples had asked, “What will be the sign of your coming, and of the end of the age?” Jesus is answering them: terrifying astronomical happenings will be a sign.

### **III. Mark 13: 26 The Actual Return of Jesus Christ, the Son of Man**

The second event is the actual return of Jesus, the Son of Man Himself. Note three significant points.

1. It is the Son of Man who comes. Jesus claimed that He is the Son of Man, the Son of God incarnate in human flesh as the Perfect Man (See *Jesus, the Son of Man*, Mat

8:20). In that day, there will be no doubt about who He is (see Mark 14:61-62). Right now, He is recognized only by believers, but then it will be unmistakable: He is the Son of Man.

2. All men and every eye shall see Him return. This is what is meant by “they.” Mathew actually says, “All the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming” (Mat 24:30). His return will be visible to every man on earth, and every man shall then acknowledge Him to be Lord, God’s very own Son (Phil 2:9-11; see Rev 1:7).
3. He is coming “in the clouds with great power and glory.” Picture the scene: the backdrop of heaven is pitch dark, without any major light from the sun and moon. And then, suddenly, as quickly as the flash of lightning, the most brilliant focus of light ever known to man appears. The Shekinah glory of God shines in the person of Jesus Christ as He appears to the world. The Son of Man is there, in the clouds, having returned in great power and glory just as He said He would.

*Acts 1:11* “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

*2 Th 1:7-10* And give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marvelled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.

*2 Th 2:8* And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendour of his coming.

*Rev 1:7* Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.

*Rev 19:11-16* I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but He himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. “He will rule them with an iron sceptre.” He treads the wine-press of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.



## MATHEW 08:20 JESUS, THE SON OF MAN

*Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." **Mathew 08:20***

Jesus is not only what an ordinary man is, a son of man; Jesus is what every man ought to be, the Son of Man Himself. He is the Ideal Man, the Representative Man, the Perfect Man, the Pattern, the Embodiment of everything a man ought to be. Jesus Christ is the perfect picture of a man. Everything God wants a man to be is seen perfectly in Jesus Christ (see John 1:14; Col 2:9-10; Heb 1:3.)

The title also means the Ideal Servant of man. It stresses His sympathy for the poor, the broken-hearted, the captives, the blind, the bruised, the outcasts, the bereaved (see Luke 4:18). Jesus is the Pattern, the Model, the Perfect Example of concern and caring. He served and set a perfect example of how every man ought to serve other men.

Jesus calls Himself "the Son of Man" about eighty times. It is His favourite term. The title 'Son of Man' is probably based upon the Son of Man in Daniel (Dan 7:13-14). Scripture also gives a picture of Jesus as the heavenly Son of Man contrasted with Adam as the earthly Man (1 Cor 15:45-47). Each serves as a Representative Man for the human race in God's plan for world history.

***Mat 9:6** "But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..." Then he said to the paralytic, "Get up, take your mat and go home."*

***Mat 16:13,16** When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

***Mat 20:28** "Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

***Mark 8:38** "If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."*

***Luke 19:10** "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."*

***John 5:26-27** "For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man."*

***John 13:31-32** When he was gone, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once."*

*Acts 7:56* “Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”

*Rev 1:12-13* I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lamp stands, and among the lamp stands was someone “like a son of man”, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. □

#### **IV. Mark 13:27 The Gathering of the Elect**

The third event when Jesus returns is the gathering of the elect. There are two significant points made in this verse.

1. The angels of God “gather His elect.” Who are the elect?  
=> They are the people who cry (pray, converse, share) day and night unto God (Luke 18:7).  
=> They are the people who are justified by God (Rom 8:33).  
=> They are the people who are “holy and dearly loved, [who] clothe [themselves] with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience” (Col 3:12).
2. The elect are gathered from all over the earth. They shall be gathered from the most remote spot on earth and carried to “*the ends of the heavens.*”

*Mat 25:31-32* “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.” ■

# THE END TIME AND ITS WARNING TO BELIEVERS MARK 13:28–37

## *Introduction*

Christ had just covered the signs of the end time and of His return. The truth is glorious, for it stirs hope and gives a picture of the future glory that can be man's. But one thing is needed: man must turn his life over to God or else he will be banished from the presence and glory of Christ forever. Christ gives six critical warnings to man.

- I. The signs point to the end and are discernable (vv. 28-29).
- II. The events occur rapidly — in one generation (v. 30).
- III. The events are a surety — irrevocable (v. 31).
- IV. The exact time is unknown — neither the day nor the hour is known (v. 32).
- V. The need is to be on guard — stay alert (vv. 33-36).
- VI. The warning is to all — watch (v. 37).

## **I. *Mark 13:28–29 The End Time and the Return of Jesus Christ***

Christ warned. The signs point to the end. The end and the return of Christ will be discernable. The fig tree illustrates what Christ meant. When the fig tree begins to put forth leaves, we know that summer is near. So when we see “these things” the signs He had been sharing, “know that it [His return] is near, right at the door.” Note two significant points.

1. Christ said, “*Know* that [His return] is near.” We are to know; He does not leave us an option. It is a command: we are to stay alert, looking for the signs of the time so that we *can know* how near His return is. This is the whole point of this passage. We are to be looking for His return *lest* it catch us unexpectedly.
  2. Christ was speaking of cause and effect: every cause has its effect. The signs covered by Christ are second causes (vv. 6-27). Christ was saying when the signs are seen, expect the result (effect): the coming again of the Son of Man. When believers see...
    - an unusual number of wars and natural disasters, they can know “the beginning of birth pains [sorrows]” has begun.
    - “many” false messiahs and prophets arising, they can know an enormous number of the lost and carnal will be tragically deceived.
    - bitter persecution, they can know that God will tolerate only so much against His people.
    - iniquity abounding and love growing cold, they can know that God will judge and stop such apostasy.
    - the earth about to be destroyed, they can know that God will not wait much longer.
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3. Christ says when the signs appear His return is immediate — near — at the door. The signs point to the *immediacy* of His return.

## **II. Mark 13:30 Events Related to the End Time**

Christ warned. The events occur rapidly. They happen in one generation. Just what is meant by “generation” is often disputed. However, it must always be kept in mind that the disciples had asked two questions, one about Jerusalem’s destruction and the other about the end of the world. In answering their questions, Christ did not draw a definite line between the two questions. The signs and events that precede one shall precede the other. Therefore, just as the signs and destruction of Jerusalem took place within a generation, the signs and destruction of the world will also occur within a generation.

Jesus was dealing with two questions throughout this passage. He was answering the questions: When will the temple be destroyed, and what shall be the sign of His return and of the end of the age?

Note something: Jesus was dealing with the end of the temple and with the end of the age, the destruction of the temple and the destruction of the age. He was covering the signs, the events that were to cause the judgment and to occur during the judgment of both the temple and the age. What is the point? The Scripture teaches that the same signs and events cause the judgment of anything. That is, the events (sins) that cause judgment upon one thing are the same events that will bring judgment upon everything else. Therefore, the signs that surrounded the destruction of Jerusalem are much the same as the signs that shall surround the end of the age. Therefore, what Jesus was saying had a double meaning and application.

The Lord’s words are applicable both to the disciples of His day and to all disciples who were to follow in succeeding generations. As long as the earth stands, the disciples of *the last days* (or ages) will face many of the same signs faced by those who experienced the destruction of Jerusalem. But there is to be one difference: at the end of the age, the signs will increase and intensify. The day is coming, so terrible, that it can be called *the beginning of birth pains (sorrows)* and *the great distress (tribulation)*.

## **III. Mark 13:31 Events Related to the End Time are Irrevocable**

Christ warned. The events are a surety. They are irrevocable. Christ is definite about what He has said. “Heaven and earth *will* pass away, but my words will never pass away.”

Note two things.

1. Heaven and earth will pass away. Christ is saying they are actually going to be done away with and cease to exist in their present condition (2 Pet. 3:10-11).
2. All that Christ has said — all about the great distress or tribulation and His return — *will* happen. The great distress (tribulation) and His return are more sure than heaven and earth.

In the eyes of some men, it has been a long, long time since Christ spoke these words; and an innumerable list of events have happened. Therefore, they assume the whole idea of the second coming is a fable, the figment of hopeful imagination. God knew this would happen.

*2 Pet 3:3-4; 8-13 First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.*

Three things are certain in human history: "the beginning of birth pains" (v. 8); the "great distress [tribulation], unequalled from the beginning of the world" (Mt. 24:21); and "the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory" (v. 26; Mt. 24:21). Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not the words Christ has spoken, not what He said would happen. What He said would happen will happen. The three events are certain.

#### **IV. Mark 13:32 The Unpredictability of the End Time**

Christ warned — the exact time is unknown. The day and hour are not known to anyone. God alone knows when Christ is to return. The general time will be seen by expectant believers, but the exact day and hour are known only by God.

1. The second coming is an actual event that is yet to happen. There is "that [fixed] day and hour" when Christ shall return.
2. The second coming is secret. "No one knows...but the Father." Throughout history some have thought they knew when Christ was to return (2 Th. 2:1-2). But Christ is explicit: "No one knows about that day or hour..."
3. Some things are to be left entirely in God's hands. The exact day and hour of the Lord's return is one of those things. The *watchful* believer will be sensitive to the season (fig tree, vv. 28-29) and know the generation (v. 30), but the exact hour and day are hid from men, even from the wisest and most spiritual men. *Only* God

Himself knows the day. If a man claims to know the hour and the day, he is a man from whom we should flee. That man's word is not of the Lord.

4. What did Christ mean when He said that even He did not know when He was to return to earth? If He is the Son of God, possessing the divine (omniscient) nature of God, how could He not know? When Christ came to earth, He "emptied Himself" (Phil. 2:7). This means at least the following:
  - a. He took on the nature of man; He became flesh and blood (Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:14).
  - b. He voluntarily surrendered and limited Himself to the nature of man *in some respects*. For example, men do not know the future. Christ limited Himself in knowing the future except when and where a demonstration of His divine omniscience was needed.
  - c. While man, Christ willed not to know some things and not to be able to do some things (for example, to be present everywhere, His omnipresence, Jn. 16:7). This enabled Him more effectively to identify himself with man in his limitations and needs.
  - d. While man, Christ subjected Himself completely to the Father. This means, of course, that He had to *live in* the Father and be *taught* by the Father (just as we are to live in and be taught by God, with the difference that Christ did so perfectly). This is a phenomenal truth. It means that God took His Son and pioneered the Ideal, Perfect life, teaching Him exactly how to live and what to say. Christ had "emptied Himself" in order to cast Himself *perfectly* upon God, trusting God to teach Him how to live and what to say day by day. He was Man, but there was one difference. He was living a perfect life, trusting and depending upon God completely. Therefore, God was able to fill Him completely and teach Him perfectly. Very simply stated, God was able to take Christ day-by-day and teach Him how to live and what to say and to do it *perfectly*. This is what Scripture proclaims and what Christ emphasized time and again.

**Heb 5:8** *Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered.*

**John 8:26; 28-29** *"I have much to say in judgment of you. But he who sent me is reliable, and what I have heard from him I tell the world." So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am the one I claim to be and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him."*

**John 12:49-50** *"For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."*

**John 14:10** *"Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work."*

**John 14:24** “He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.”

**John 17:8** “For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.”

Christ was God-Man, perfectly God, perfectly Man in one Person. There is no question about the teaching of Scripture on the Lord’s two natures. How did the two natures interwork? There is no way to know. We can never understand the two natures of Christ *beyond what Scripture says*. And this is the point: we are to live by faith, live by the revelation of Scripture. We either accept the record (message, testimony, news) about Christ’s becoming Man, or we reject it. That is exactly what God is after: belief in Him and in His Word — that He “so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life” (Jn. 3:16).

#### V. **Mark 13:33–36** *End Time: The Need to Stay Alert*

Christ warned — the need is to be on guard: stay alert. (See *Jewish Wedding*, Mt. 25:1-13 and *Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom at the Great Marriage Feast*, Mt. 25:1-13). There are four reasons the believer must keep watch.

1. The believer must keep watch because the time of the Lord’s return is unknown (Mk. 13:32).
2. The believer must keep watch because he has been given a specific task to do, and the job must be completed when Christ returns. The greatest of tragedies would be for a believer not to have finished the job Christ gave him to do. (See *Jewish Wedding*, Mt. 25:1-13 and *Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom at the Great Marriage Feast*, Mt. 25:1-13).
3. The believer must keep watch because Christ is returning unexpectedly, suddenly. It may be any day, any hour.
4. The believer must keep watch because he can be caught napping and sleeping.

**Thought 1.** Four tragic things can happen to a believer while he is waiting for the Lord to return.

- 1) A believer may fail to wait long enough. As the days, weeks, and years wear on, he may grow more drowsy, nodding more and more. Note the parable Jesus told. The owner simply failed...
  - to stay awake long enough
  - to keep his mind alert long enough
  - to look and listen to the noises (signs) long enough
  - to stand guard long enough

- 2) A believer may delay or postpone or slack up in his work for the Lord. He may figure he has time to do it later; therefore, he feels that he can set it aside for a while. He feels that a little sidetrack here and there will not hurt that much.
- 3) A believer may think he can go ahead and do what he wishes and cover it with the Lord later. He may think he will have time to correct the matter before the Lord returns.
- 4) A believer may begin to *think* like the world. However, God knows how the world thinks, and He has described it clearly for the sake of His dear followers (2 Pet. 3:3-4, 8-15).

**Luke 12:19-20** *And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'"*

**James 4:13-14** *Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.*

**Isa 56:12** *"Come," each one cries, "let me get wine! Let us drink our fill of beer! And tomorrow will be like today, or even far better."*

### MATHEW 25:01–13 JEWISH WEDDING

This event, so unlike what occurs in most countries, was a common custom among Jews. The wedding festivities, which lasted for a whole week, were centred in the home where the couple was to live. The bridegroom was allowed to show up at any moment and enter the house; but when he chose to come, he always sent a man ahead crying out, "Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!" This enabled everyone to prepare for his arrival. The bride had ten young ladies (virgins) who were always to be prepared to rush out and meet the bridegroom. In the event that he came at night, they were to have lamps ready so they could go out to light his path along the streets. This is the picture Christ was painting of His return. □

### MATHEW 25:01–13

#### JESUS CHRIST, THE BRIDEGROOM AT THE GREAT MARRIAGE FEAST

Throughout Scripture the symbolism lying behind this parable involves three pictures.

1. Christ is pictured as the bridegroom.

**Isa 62:5** *As a young man marries a maiden, so will your sons marry you; as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you.*



**Mat 9:15** *Jesus answered, “How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.”*

**John 3:29** *The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom’s voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete.*

**Rev 10:7, 9** *“But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets.” So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little scroll. He said to me, “Take it and eat it. It will turn your stomach sour, but in your mouth it will be as sweet as honey.”*

**Rev 21:2** *I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.*

2. Believers and the church are pictured as the bride of Christ.

**Isa 62:5** *As a young man marries a maiden, so will your sons marry you; as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you.*

**Hosea 2:19** *I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion.*

**Rom 7:4** *So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God.*

**2 Cor 11:2** *I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.*

**Eph 5:30** *For we are members of his body.*

**Rev 19:7** *Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.*

**Rev 21:2** *I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.*

**Rev 22:17** *The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.*

3. The return of the Lord is pictured as a great marriage feast.

**Rev 19:7, 9** *Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Then the angel said*



*to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!’” And he added, “These are the true words of God.”*

*Rev 21:9 One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.”* □

## **VI. Mark 13:37 End Time: A Warning to All**

Christ warned — the warning is to all: watch. No one is exempt: no believer, no unbeliever. Every man...

- is “to be on guard! Be alert!” (v. 33).
- is “to keep watch” (v. 34).
- is to “therefore keep watch” (v. 35).
- is not to be caught “sleeping” (v. 36).
- is to hear the warning: “what I say to you I say to *everyone*: ‘Watch!’” ■

### **MARK 13:37 WATCH (GREGOREO)**

To keep awake, to stay alert, to be watchful and sleepless, to be vigilant. It also includes the idea of being motivated, that is, of desiring, of holding and keeping one’s attention (mind) upon a thing. Watching also has the idea of being alert at the right time. It is at night that one really needs to stay awake and watch for the thief (1 Th. 5:4-9).

The Lord said, “Watch.” What does it mean for a believer to “watch” (Mt. 26:41; Mk. 13:33, 34, 36; 14:38)?

*1 Cor 16:13 Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.*

*1 Th 5:6 So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled.*

*2 Tim 4:5 But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.*

*1 Pet 4:7 The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.* □