

Spooky Scriptures, Pt. 4

"Apocalypse Now: Signs of the End of the Age"

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Matthew 24:1-2 (NIV) *"Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings. "Do you see all these things?" he asked. "Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down."*

1. Do Not be Deceived

Matthew 24:4-8 (NIV) *"Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains."*

The greatest threat to your faith may not be the evil you recognize, but the deception you don't.

How do we Guard Ourselves from Deception?

1) Know the Word

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV) *"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."*

2) Test What You Hear

1 John 4:1 (NIV) *"Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world."*

3) Stay Rooted in Community

1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NIV) *"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."*

Hebrews 10:24-25 (NIV) *"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the Day approaching."*

Our goal as Christians is NOT calculating a date but understanding that everything through history is moving us toward the fulfillment of God's purposes.

2. Don't Give Up

Matthew 24:9-10 (NIV) *"Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other,"*

Following Jesus Does Not Promise an Easy Life

Matthew 24:11-12 (NIV) *"and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people.¹² Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold."*

You must refuse to allow the darkness you see to affect the love you are called to express.

3. Be Prepared

A. The Abomination of Desolation

Matthew 24:15-21 (NIV) *"So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand—then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let no one on the housetop go down to take anything out of the house. Let no one in the field go back to get their cloak. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again."*

B. Don't Be Fooled

Matthew 24:23-28 (NIV) *"At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Messiah!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it. For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you ahead of time.*

"So if anyone tells you, 'There he is, out in the wilderness,' do not go out; or, 'Here he is, in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather."

C. The King is Coming Soon

Matthew 24:27, 29-31 (NIV) *"For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man..." "Immediately after the distress of those days" "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." "Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other."*

The same one who warned us of the trouble to come is the one who promised to return in triumph.

Titus 2:13 (NIV) *"We wait for the blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ."*

How You Can Know You Are Ready:

1. Put your faith in Jesus Christ today.
2. Live in daily relationship with Him.
3. Stay Faithful until He comes.

Matthew 24:13 (NIV) *"But those who endure to the end will be saved."*