# Dr. Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church Matthew 24:36-44 | The Day and Hour of The Lord's Return Sunday December 14, 2025

#### **WELCOME:**

- Bibles in the back—our gift to you.
- My sermon notes are in the foyer—please take them home with you.

## **REVIEW:**

We have spent the last three weeks learning about prophecy in our verse-by-verse study of Matthew's Gospel.

Prophecy is an important Biblical genre for us to read and understand.

We all tend to want to know the future—

- Application for college
- Career-related—job, promotion, moving, raise.
- Family-related—daughter or granddaughter having a baby.
- Spiritual questions—How do I know for sure where I'm going after I die?

Then there's the subject of the Lord's return. When will Jesus return?

This question has been asked in every generation for the past 2,000 years—and nearly every generation has said, "It can't get any worse—Jesus has to come back soon."

Many of us have read the book of Revelation or been taught Revelation.

Many of us have seen TV shows and movies about the Apocalypse or the Rapture.

Chapters 24 and 25 of Matthew's Gospel deal with these questions.

In our study so far, Jesus has taught us sure signs/events to prepare us for the future —His Second Coming.

We have examined the judgment upon Jerusalem in the first century.

We have also studied the prophecy of the future judgment on the entire world.

One of our key points over the last several weeks is that, as the Church, we are not to fear Jesus' Second Coming but rather to prepare for it.

It's in that preparation of prayer, trust, and faith where our spiritual muscle is built, and a joy to share Jesus with others.

# **INTRODUCTION:**

Today, Jesus addresses the Disciples' question of timing.

They wanted to know the same thing we do—when?!

Jesus addresses this question the only way Jesus can—by asking another question.

What is it? What does it mean for us?

\*Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.\*

## **SCRIPTURE:**

**Matthew 24:36**— "Now concerning that day and hour no one knows—neither the angels of heaven nor the Son—except the Father alone.

**Matthew 24:37**—As the days of Noah were, so the coming of the Son of Man will be.

**Matthew 24:38**—For in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah boarded the ark.

**Matthew 24:39**—They didn't know until the flood came and swept them all away. This is the way the coming of the Son of Man will be.

Matthew 24:40—Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left.

**Matthew 24:41**—Two women will be grinding grain with a hand mill; one will be taken and one left.

Matthew 24:42—Therefore be alert, since you don't know what day your Lord is coming.

Matthew 24:43—But know this: If the homeowner had known what time the thief was coming, he would have stayed alert and not let his house be broken into.

Matthew 24:44—This is why you are also to be ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

These are the holy words from the authoritative, inerrant, inspired, infallible, sufficient, and efficacious Word of Almighty God.

## PRAY:

Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice; let the sea and all that fills it resound. Let the fields and everything in them celebrate. Then all the trees of the forest will shout for joy before the Lord, for he is coming for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with his faithfulness. (Psalm 96:11-13)

### **EXEGESIS:**

**Matthew 24:36**— "Now concerning that day and hour no one knows—neither the angels of heaven nor the Son—except the Father alone.

Here's the good news—we have passed the hardest part of these prophetic passages.

Verse 36 is a transition statement from the details and signs of Jesus' Second Coming to a collection of four parables that we'll discuss next week.

Each parable has the same emphasis—watchfulness.

Each parable asks the same question—"Are you ready?"

Matthew 24:36— "Now concerning that day and hour no one knows—

Jesus uses OT prophetic language again—

**Matthew 24:19**—Woe to pregnant women and nursing mothers in those days!

**Matthew 24:22**—Unless <u>those days</u> were cut short, no one would be saved. But <u>those days</u> will be cut short because of the elect.

Matthew 24:29—"Immediately after the distress of those days,

We'll see Jesus use that same prophetic terminology four more times in our passage today.

Where does He get it from?

**Jeremiah 33:15**—<u>In those days</u> and at that time I will cause a Righteous Branch to sprout up for David, and he <u>will</u> administer justice and righteousness in the land.

Matthew 24:36— "Now concerning that day and hour no one knows—

The Disciples want to know the exact date and time of His Return—so do we today!

Jesus could not be any clearer—nobody knows!

**Matthew 24:36**— "Now concerning that day and hour no one knows—neither the angels of heaven...

The highest heavenly beings in Heaven don't know the date or time of Jesus' return!

Matthew 24:36— ... nor the Son—

Jesus doesn't even know!

**Matthew 24:36**— except the Father alone.

Only God the Father knows when Jesus is returning.

Yet, Jesus' answer is unsatisfactory to the Disciples, so they ask Him again after the resurrection.

Acts 1:6—So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?"

**Acts 1:7**—He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority.

Jesus told the Disciples twice—no one knows, and you don't need to know.

It seems straightforward—"no one knows" means *no one*, knows.

Yet, some pastors ignore this verse.

In 2022, Pastor Ade Abraham—of *Royal Christ Assembly* (Nigeria) said he knew the date and time of Jesus' Second Coming— and then demanded that each member of the church pay a \$214.00 "fee" to secure their "ticket to heaven."

This year, a South African preacher (Mhlakela) claimed he had a divine vision of Jesus sitting on His throne and was told that the Rapture/Second Coming would happen on September 23 or 24, 2025 (dates coinciding with the Jewish festival of Rosh Hashanah/Feast of Trumpets).

Danie Botha — originally a gospel singer — publicly supported the same dates. He said the Holy Spirit gave him the date and encouraged believers to be "rapture ready."

People were to be "rapture ready" in September—now it's December.

**Jude 8**—these people—relying on their dreams—defile their flesh, reject authority, and slander glorious ones.

These are the stunts that happen when people don't obey God's Word as God's authority.

Now, what is disturbing is not that we don't know, but what Jesus says about Himself.

Matthew 24:36— ... nor the Son—

That's a bit unsettling, isn't it? Even Jesus Himself doesn't know the day or hour of His return?!

How is that possible?

How is it that the second person of the Trinity doesn't know something?

Doesn't Jesus know everything?

Here's where one of the greatest mysteries comes into view.

Jesus is both God and man—both divine and human.

God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is omnipresent (everywhere at one time), omnipotent (all-powerful—needs nothing to sustain Him), and omniscient (all-knowing).

This means that Jesus, as the second person of the Trinity, has all these divine characteristics.

Jesus repeatedly demonstrated that He knew people's thoughts throughout the Gospels, thereby revealing His divine omniscience.

To the Pharisees...

**Matthew 9:4**—Perceiving their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why are you thinking evil things in your hearts?

To the Disciples...

**Luke 9:47**—But Jesus, knowing their inner thoughts, took a little child and had him stand next to him.

To the nation of Israel...

Jesus predicted the destruction of Jerusalem—and it happened just as Jesus prophesied with 100% accuracy.

But somehow and in some way, His divine nature did not always communicate everything it knew to His human nature.  $-\mu$ 

So, when Jesus says that He doesn't know the day or hour, He speaks from His humanity.

The only people who have a problem with this are those who want to deify the human nature of Jesus, saying that Jesus wasn't truly human.

But that's not what Scripture states:

**Philippians 2:6/7 NLT**—Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges;

Jesus possessed all these divine powers, but chose not to exercise many of them in His humanity.

Jesus is omnipresent, yet he walked nearly everywhere He went.

Jesus is omnipotent, yet he became hungry and tired.

Jesus is omniscient, yet he laid aside his knowledge.

Yet, in Mark 5:30–32, Jesus asked, "Who touched me?"

In Mark 9:16, he asked the disciples, "What are you arguing about ...?"

In John 5:6, he asked a man how long he had been sick.

In Matt 20:32, He asked, "What do you want me to do for you?"

Didn't Jesus know all these things? Yes and no,

Why did Jesus lay aside His divine attributes?

Because if he didn't, Jesus wouldn't have lived a truly human life.

If Jesus endured life with no human limitations, His incarnation would have been a charade.

If the crucifixion caused Jesus no pain, how could He be the Lamb of God who takes away sin?

So all that to say this—Jesus honestly and truly did not know the date or time of His Second Coming.

## **KEYPOINT 1:**

We should stop thinking about when Jesus returns and live as if every day could be that day.

Many Christians live their lives exegeting the newspapers instead of the Scriptures.

They spend their time looking at world events through their lens of eschatology—rather than fulfilling the Great Commission by sharing Jesus day by day.

Scripture doesn't ask the question, "When will Christ return?" Instead, it asks, "Will you be ready?"

When the kids say, "Here I come, ready or not," — that is what Jesus is communicating.

### **KEYPOINT 2:**

Jesus is coming according to the sovereign plan of God—Jesus is coming when He is coming.

Now, a question that usually comes up at this point is—"Does Jesus know now?"

Jesus didn't know the date and time in His humanity before the resurrection and ascension, but what about now, as He sits at the right hand of the Father?

There's a good possibility of that—after the resurrection and before the ascension...

**Matthew 28:18**—Jesus came near and said to them, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.

Does that authority include the knowledge of His return? :)

Matthew 24:37—As the days of Noah were, so the coming of the Son of Man will be.

So Jesus tells the Disciples, it's not the day or time that matters—here's what does—readiness.

People in Noah's day pointed and laughed at the crazy religious guy building a boat.

Rain? Flood? Boat? What is all that, they asked?

They had never seen rain, much less a flood, so there's no need for this gigantic ark.

Until the time of the flood itself, the earth was apparently covered by some vapor canopy.

Because they never experienced rain, they refused to believe it to be true.

Because they had never seen such a calamity, they ignored the idea that it could happen.

**Matthew 24:37**—As the days of Noah were, <u>so the coming of the Son of</u> Man will be.

Jesus' illustration points to how the flood waters came about <u>suddenly</u>—and that those who were not ready drowned.

In other words, the same thing will happen to people at Christ's return.

The world will say, 'Where is this "Jesus?"

**2 Peter 3:3 NLT**—I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth and following their own desires.

**2 Peter 3:4 NLT**—They will say, "What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created."

**2 Peter 3:5 NLT**—They deliberately forget that God made the heavens long ago by the word of his command, and he brought the earth out from the water and surrounded it with water.

**2 Peter 3:6 NLT**—Then he used the water to destroy the ancient world with a mighty flood.

**2 Peter 3:7 NLT**—And by the same word, the present heavens and earth have been stored up for fire. They are being kept for the day of judgment, when ungodly people will be destroyed.

**2 Peter 3:8 NLT**—But you must not forget this one thing, dear friends: A day is like a thousand years to the Lord, and a thousand years is like a day.

**2 Peter 3:9 NLT**—The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.

While Noah built the ark, Noah also preached repentance.

What kept the people from repenting? Tous tells us...

Matthew 24:38—For in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah boarded the ark.

The world did what it does today—living their lives as if there are no consequences, only concerned about today.

Think about this, Noah built the ark and preached about righteousness for 120 years, and no one except for his family repented.

Bottom line, Noah and his family were ready and lived—everyone else was unprepared and died in their sins.

The world says that God won't judge anyone because He loves everyone—they take John 3:16 out of context and don't finish the passage.

They think God will give them a pass—but that's not what Jesus Himself says—

**Matthew 24:39**—They didn't know until the flood came and swept them all away.

Flood is *kataklusmos* is the Greek noun meaning "deluge."

We get *cataclysm* from it.

Matthew 24:39—This is the way the coming of the Son of Man will be.

Like the people of Noah's day, the people of the Tribulation will be warned and warned again.

And then there will be a deadline.

**Matthew 24:40**—Then two men will be in the field; one will be <u>taken</u> and one left.

Two men working in a field would be coworkers today—two men doing the same job in an office, cooking in a restaurant, or as salesmen in a retail store.

Here we find the idea of a sudden separation.

**Matthew 24:41**—Two women will be grinding grain with a hand mill; one will be taken and one left.

Think of a mother and daughter.

In both situations—men or women—they seem identical in their relationships to Christ, but at His return, one person will be taken and the other left behind.

We are not to overthink the verb "taken."

Jesus doesn't say where they are 'taken' to—

Those who believe in a sudden/secret "rapture" before Jesus' Second coming like these verses.

Hollywood likes these verses.

However, Jesus is <u>not</u> speaking of a sudden or secret rapture—the context is about divine judgment.

Verse 39 sets the scene with the flood as the means of divine judgment.

During the flood, those "taken" were swept away by water, while those "left" were protected in the ark.

In other words, Jesus is saying that at the time of His Second Coming, there would be a <u>separation</u>, just as the door of the ark separated Noah and his family from the rest of the human race.

# **KEYPOINT 3:**

The point is not destination, but division.

In both illustrations, we see the idea of coexistence of the 'saved' person and the 'lost' person—with a focus on readiness.

Matthew 13:30—Let both grow together until the harvest. At harvest time I'll tell the reapers: Gather the weeds first and tie them in bundles to burn them, but collect the wheat in my barn.'" — Emusis is an spreation.

So here's Jesus' key point:

Matthew 24:42—Therefore <u>be</u> <u>alert</u>, since you don't know what day your Lord is coming.

The Greek verb is *grēgoréō*. —To be aware, awake, watchful and vigilant.

The idea is that we live our lives in continued expectation of the Lord's return.

Corinthians 16:13—Be <u>alert</u>, stand firm in the faith, be courageous, be strong.

**1 Thessalonians 5:6**—So then, let us not sleep, like the rest, but let us <u>stay</u> awake and be self-controlled.

1 **Peter 5:8**—Be sober-minded, <u>be alert</u>. Your adversary the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour.

Jesus provides another illustration to ready us.

**Matthew 24:43**—But know this: If the homeowner had known what time the thief was coming, he would have <u>stayed</u> <u>alert</u> and not let his house be broken into.

First, most thieves are foolish—and it would take a foolish thief to announce that he was robbing your house.

It would also be insanity for a homeowner to not protect his home if he knew the date and time of the robbery.

What's the point? Jesus is comparing His Second Coming to the *unexpectedness* of a thief's coming.

Second, thieves steal what is valuable—that's why we are all careful with valuables.

We use passcodes and passwords, lock things up, use safe-deposit boxes, and have alarms on cars.

If we take such great care about temporary worldly things, how much more should we value and protect our eternal souls?

**1 Thessalonians 5:2**—For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come just like <u>a thief</u> in the night.

**2 Peter 3:10**—But the day of the Lord will come like <u>a thief</u>; on that day the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, the elements will burn and be dissolved, and the earth and the works on it will be disclosed.

**Revelation 3:3**—If you are not alert, I will come <u>like a thief</u>, and you have no idea at what hour I will come upon you.

**Revelation 16:15**—Look, I am coming <u>like a thief</u>. Blessed is the one who is alert...

Each of these verses emphasizes the <u>suddenness/unexpectancy</u> of Christ's return and our responsibility to be ready.

**Matthew 24:44**—This is why you are also to <u>be ready</u>, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

In this context, "being ready" refers primarily to "being saved."

When Jesus returns, this age of grace—the Church Age will end.

God's grace is up, and judgment comes upon the entire world—at this point, there will be two things that will happen:

- 1. Jesus will receive His church with divine glory.
- 2. Jesus will judge the world with divine fury.

Because on the day of the Lord's return, unbelievers will meet Christ as Judge and Believers will meet the Lord as Savior and King.

the second to last verse in scripture says:
"Ameno Come Lord Socie!" Per 22:20

APPLICATION:

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