

[E-4] CAN CHRISTIANS KNOW WHEN THE LORD WILL RETURN?

A. Facts from the Old Testament.

1. Noah knew the exact day that the floods would come. (Gen. 7:1-4)
 2. Abraham knew his descendants would go into captivity and exactly how long it would be before the land of Canaan would be theirs. (Gen. 15:13)
 3. Abraham and Lot knew that Sodom and Gomorrah would be destroyed. (Gen. 18:20 - 19:29)
 4. Joseph knew how many years Egypt would have good crops, when the famine would come, and exactly how long it would last. (Gen. 41:29-30)
 5. Isaiah told Hezekiah exactly how many more years he'd live. (Is. 38:5-8)
 6. Jeremiah knew exactly how many years Israel would be in exile in Babylon. (Jer. 25:11; 29:10)
 7. Jeremiah knew exactly when Babylon would fall. (Jer. 25:12)
 8. Daniel knew the exact year the messiah would be put to death. (Dan. 9:24-27)
- B. Other references from the Old Testament:

King James Version	King James Paraphrase
(7) Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets. (Amos 3:7)	(7) Surely the Lord GOD {Jehovah} will do nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets. ({30} Amos 3:7)

King James Version	King James Paraphrase
(16) Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there <i>am</i> I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me. (Is. 48:16)	(16) Come near to Me, hear this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there <i>am</i> I: and now the Lord GOD {Jehovah}, and His Spirit, has sent me. ({23} Is. 48:16)

King James Version	King James Paraphrase
(3) I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them; I did <i>them</i> suddenly, and they came to pass. (Is. 48:3)	(3) I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of My mouth, and I showed them; I did <i>them</i> suddenly, and they came to pass. ({23} Is. 48:3)

King James Version	King James Paraphrase
(20) The anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly. (Jer. 23:20)	(20) The anger of the LORD {Jehovah} will not return, until He has acted, and until He has performed the thoughts of His heart: in the latter days you will consider it perfectly. ({24} Jer. 23:20)

King James Version	King James Paraphrase
(3) Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not. (Jer. 33:3)	(3) Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know. ({24} Jer. 33:3)

C. Conclusion from the Old Testament: God's children always knew when the Lord was about to act, what He was going to do, and how long certain events would take place. The ungodly were also warned but they refused to believe.

D. References from the New Testament:

King James Version	King James Paraphrase
(36) But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. (37) But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. (Mat. 24:36-37)	(36) But of that day and hour no one knows no, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only ^g . (37) But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be ^h . ({40} Mat. 24:36-37)

-- See note A-1 above on what Noah knew. The phrase 'day and hour' has specific meaning with regard to the Jewish calendar which is based upon the New Moon. Note the **present tense** verb "**knows**" -- to translate as "**will know**" is a **mistranslation of God's word!!** The verb "**knows**" literally means to "reckon" or to "calculate" or more literally "has seen". A correct translation would be: "But of that day and hour no one has presently calculated." -- Even if the verse is **willfully mistranslated**: "But of that **DAY** and **HOUR** no one **WILL** know." The limitation is to **DAY** and **HOUR**. **On the earth at any given time there are two days present!!!** Those who have travelled across the International Date Line understand.

King James Version	King James Paraphrase
<p>(1) But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.</p> <p>(2) For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.</p> <p>(3) 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.</p> <p>(4) But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.</p> <p>(5) Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. (I Thes. 5:1-5 KJV)</p>	<p>(1) But of the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need that I write to you.</p> <p>(2) Because you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.</p> <p>(3) Because when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction will come upon them, as birth pains upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.</p> <p>(4) But you, brothers, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.</p> <p>(5) You are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. ({52} I Thes. 5:1-5 KJP)</p>

"Now as to the times and seasons brethren you have no need for anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While **they** are saying, 'Peace and safety!' then destruction will come upon **them** suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child, and **they** shall not escape. But **you** brethren, are not in the darkness that the day should overtake **you** like a thief; for **you** are all sons of light and sons of day. **We** are not of night nor of darkness." (I Thes. 5:1-5) Note the **emphasis upon pronouns!** Most of the time these verses are quoted, the phrase following the word "But" are intentionally or unintentionally left out!!!

King James Version	King James Paraphrase
<p>(20) Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.</p> <p>(21) For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake <i>as they were</i> moved by the Holy Ghost.</p> <p>(II Pet. 1:20-21)</p>	<p>(20) Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.</p> <p>(21) Because the prophecy did not come in old times by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke <i>as they were</i> moved by the Holy Ghost. ({61} II Pet. 1:20-21)</p>

Note on the New Testament: Those who are faithful are told to watch for certain signs. (Mat. 24) The Revelation was given for the stated purpose of revealing the last things. (Rev. 1:1-3) John was forbidden to seal up the knowledge he was given (Rev. 22:10) except for one exception (Rev. 10:4).

Conclusion by this writer:

The Lord has always made known what was going to happen, His faithful followers always knew and were prepared, and the ungodly were warned but their unbelief led to their destruction. It is my conviction that the Lord has given us detailed information about the last days for our comfort and He is ready to give understanding to any who are willing to seek that understanding from Him. The Lord does not want His children to be ignorant of the things that are coming; He gave us many prophecies for our instruction and we are foolish if we do not heed His instruction. **Not one verse of Scripture supports the belief that faithful Christians will be caught by surprise by our Lord's return.**

Note: Christians are never promised that we will not suffer tribulations nor even the Great Tribulation, but we are promised that we will never suffer the Wrath of God. (I Thes. 5:9)

The II Thes. 2 and the Revelation imply that those who are faithful before the Rapture occurs will be Raptured **soon after the Anti-Christ is revealed** {{{*****This could occur at any moment!!!**}}} and that those who are converted as a result of the Rapture and succeeding events will suffer martyrdom. (But note that these Christians have never suffered for Jesus' name and the martyrdom may be primarily for their own benefit.) The Anti-Christ will only be revealed to those who know what God's word teaches about him and believe God's word. {It is also possible that God will only reveal the Anti-Christ to those living in the middle east or those to whom He has a specific reason to reveal him.}

I do not agree with those who teach that Christians will not have to suffer. Indeed, II Tim. 3:12 implies that if we are not persecuted then we are not being faithful to God's Word! This also is in keeping with Jesus' statement that His followers would be hated by **all** nations because of **His Name's** sake. (Mat. 24:9) I believe that great persecution will arise following the Russian invasion if not sooner. This persecution will be primarily created by the apostasy of the "liberal" church and its denial of the genuine faith of true believers. There is One True Church and it exists in the hearts and lives of those who are truly faithful to God's Word. There is a false church, but it is not as some suppose the Catholic Church, the World Council of Churches, or any other organization. The false church consists of those of all denominations who claim to follow Jesus but who have not genuinely committed their lives to live for Him.

The true Church is not any one particular denomination as others suppose, but consists of the faithful of all denominations. I know of no Scripture which indicates anything otherwise, though I do believe that ultimately the apostate church will form one major ecumenical church which will ban all others after the Rapture has occurred.

The point of these last notes is to point out a major concern I have. That concern is that too many weak Christians and new Christians are being taught that they will not have to suffer, and I fear that such teaching which is totally un-scriptural will greatly contribute to the apostasy that will soon come full force into the churches. Many are not prepared to suffer for Christ and do not understand the great privilege we have to suffer for Christ's sake. Nor do they understand the temporal nature of these fleshly bodies and that death is not to be feared by God's children. Faithful children of God, please consider the possibility that you may suffer for your faith.

One other note: I have done a tremendous amount of research into the Gregorian calendar, the Prophetic calendar, the modern Jewish calendar, the Holy Days, and the numbers of Daniel. Some may suspect that I believe that at some point I may be able to predict when our Lord will come for the Rapture of the church. I want to point out here as well as in the notes referencing each of those subjects that **I personally do not believe that I or anyone else will be able to predict the "Day or hour" of our Lord's appearing for the Rapture but I do not rule that out 100%. I do believe the dates of Daniel and the Revelation are for the benefit of the Jews after the Christians have been raptured.** The fact that so much information is now being made known by our Lord concerning His word, His holy days, and the dates of Daniel is one more piece of evidence that we are living in the last generation.