

Prophecy Update
The Pieces are in Place
Matthew 24

How many of you like doing Puzzles? - I don't have the patience for them. But my wife loves them.

A)Holidays and Vacations - always has a puzzle going - the harder and more pieces the better.

B)One day we were at **an 50th Anniversary party for a couple in the church - at the OCSD senior center**

C)As we were walking out - they had a table set up with Puzzles for Loan - they had a great one - looked really good.

1)lets borrow it

D)Denise went home and a couple of days later - went to work on it -

She gets to the very end - there is ONE PIECE MISSING!

A)Do you know how frustrating that is?

B)Well when it comes to the Puzzle we could call Bible Prophecy - there is not a single piece missing.

C)All the pieces are in place that need to be in place for our Lord to return.

There is noting that was declared would happen that needs to happen

A)Now in talking about the Puzzle pieces - we could talk about the nation of Israel being reborn as a nation 1948 - Prophesied

B)Never happened before - a nation that seized to exist for almost 2,000 yrs suddenly coming back to life -

C)We have talked about that miracle before

We could talk about the alliance of Russia and Iran - prophesied in Ezekiel 38

A)How these two nations are going to lead a group of nations into battle against Israel - in the last days - that Puzzle piece is in place

B)We have talked about that - before as well

We could talk about the rise of Globalism around the world - and how many leaders and nations are calling for a more unified world

A)How that puzzle piece is in place for the nations to come together under the leadership of the Antichrist during the tribulation

B)We have also talked about that as well

C)We have also talked about - how the technology is in place for the world to become a cashless society -

1)Overwhelming interest world wide - to head in that direction

D)That will happen when the Antichrist comes into power

We could talk about how Israel is a thorn in the side of the nations of the world - Zechariah - Cup of trembling

A)We have talked about that in the past as well.

B)We could talk about how over 300 prophecies concerning the birth death and Resurrection of Jesus have already been fulfilled

C)Jesus fulfilled those prophecies we can rest assured that he is going to fulfill his prophecy to return ONE DAY

1)The Puzzle pieces are in place folks

But here is what I want to do tonight - I want us to consider what Jesus said here in Matthew 24 -

A)what would be happening in the world leading up to his return

B)Matthew 24

³Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? **And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"**
Context

⁴ And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. ⁶ And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars.

See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ **All these are the beginning of sorrows.**

Sorrows = Birth pangs - You know what happens when a woman is getting closer to her due date.

A) Those birth pangs become more frequent and more intense.

B) When it comes to the things that Jesus is describing here - we could say these have always been problems in the World

C) Always false Christ and false religions - Always wars and rumors of war

D) Always famines, diseases and earthquakes in various places

But in the last days there will be an increase.

A) Consider a couple - Famine

B) According to new UN study- \$750,000 people are on the front line of famine and starvation -

C) **World Food Programme** - There is an 'all-time high' of 49 million people in 46 countries at risk of succumbing to famine or famine-like conditions, and at the same time, a total of 276 million people are facing acute food insecurity in 81 countries.

Or let's talk about War:

Wars in the past 90 years killed more people than during the previous 500 years combined ("War and Conflict").

An estimated 203 million people were killed by wars just in the 20th century (Matthew White, *Historical Atlas of the Twentieth Century*, 2010, "Deaths by War").

D) The thing that is scary to think about is that during the Tribulation time those numbers will grow exponentially-

1) After the 4th seal a 4th of the earth's population is going to be killed

E) Current population - **8 billion - talking 2 billion people**

1) **Unless those days were shortened - no flesh would survive**

Right now - Birth pangs - those days - All out Labor - Intense and horrific

A) But here is what I want to zero in on tonight V. 36

³⁶ "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. ³⁷ But as the days of Noah *were*, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ³⁸ For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

B) Jesus said the days leading up to his return are going to be like the Days of Noah -

1) Luke 17 he adds that they would be like the days of Lot

²⁶ And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: ²⁷ They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. ²⁸ Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; ²⁹ but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed *them* all. ³⁰ Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. Luke 17:26-30

C) What was the central issue of the days of Noah and Lot - Defiance against God -

1) With Noah it was world wide - they pushed God out of their culture

D) With Lot it was two cities Sodom and Gomorrah -

A lot of people think the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was Homosexuality

A) But that was merely a symptom of the root Issue of Defiance against God

B)According to Ezekiel 16:49 the root issue of the sin of Sodom was Pride.

C)We don't need you God - we can do it our own way - our own morals

1)Rampant and gross Homosexuality was the result of that

And a close study of Genesis 6 reveals the Defiance in the days of Noah resulted in the following

A)The thoughts and intents of men were only evil continually

B)There was an increase in Violence - and increase in Sexual immorality

C)So bad in that God said - My Spirit can no longer strive with man - I am going to destroy the world - start over with Noah

D)Similar thing with Sod and Gom- their Wickedness is great and they need to be destroyed

1)lest others be affected by their wickedness

Thus you could say that Noah and Lot were both "LAST DAYS" believers -

A)Noah lived up to the last day of the world at that time

B)And lot lived up to the last days of his city

C)Close tonight by considering both of these men - what we can learn from them about being last days believers

D)But the point I am making is Jesus said the last days would be like the days of Noah and Lot

So here the question I want us to consider tonight - Are the days that we are living in like the days of Noah and Lot

A)At the very least - Birth pangs of a culture that more and more in living in Defiance against God

B)The UK and Canada are both considered post Christian nations

C)Historians tell us that - **the USA follows about 10 years behind those countries**

The UK and Canada are definitely places where the majority are living in Defiance against God

A)If we are not there yet - America is quickly heading in that direction

B)How did we get here/

C)Consider History- Throughout the Middle Ages, the Western world, at least had an understanding of objective truth.

D)The existence of God was taken for granted, which provided a basis for belief in absolute values of right and wrong.

The Reformation of the 1500-1600s set this truth on fire.

A)But by the time we came to the 1800's the secular thinking of the Enlightenment (or the Age of Reason) radiated from France like a **Force-field** across Europe and to the New World.

Many of the Enlightenment thinkers could not totally shake off belief in the existence of God,

A)But they described a God who was at best disinterested and uninvolved with the world. Deism

B)They taught humans were the true moral force in the universe.

C)The rising tide of humanistic secularism was introduced into America's educational system by John Dewey,

Dewey was a shy, bookish educator who hailed from Vermont.

A)Dewey's core principle was the rejection of absolute, unchangeable truth.

B)This humanism, of which Dewey was a fountainhead . . . became pervasive in our American schools, especially on the graduate level.

C)And You could say the rest is History

You could sum up this Defiance of God and the digression of the western world like this -

A)We went from a time where it was Impossible to NOT Believe in God

B) To a time where it was Possible to NOT Believe in God

C) To our present day where the prevailing thought is it is Now Impossible TO Believe in God

D) If you believe in God and if you believe the Bible is God's word and therefore the source of Absolute truth - **you are weird**

1) And it is getting to the point now - not just weird **but dangerous**

This too is a part of the signs that Jesus said here in Matthew 24 would be happening in the last days - when people are living in Defiance against God

⁹“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. ¹⁰ And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. ¹¹ Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. ¹² And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

The Defiance against God that is happening our day is marked by 3 things that Jesus mentions in these verses

- Disdain V.9-10
- Deception V. 11
- Distortion V.12

A culture of Disdain V.9-10

A) We are living in the time of Cancel Culture - **Not going away - it is only going to grow.**

B) During the time when the Antichrist is in Power - Cancel Culture will be at an all-time high

1) If you do not get with his plan - you will be **cancelled permanently**

C) That might be hard for us to imagine here in America- we are not that bad - name calling - silencing - but Killing

D) Did you know that this is already happening in other countries in the world - especially in places like Russia and China

1) Between 170-360 million people have been killed by their governments in the 20th century

E) Somewhere in the neighborhood of between 60-80 million people have been killed by the GOVT of Russia alone in the 20th century

But with the rising tide of Cancel culture here in the Western world - it is easy to see how we are moving in that direction.

A) It is a puzzle piece - it is a sign of the times - we never called it that - Cancel culture but is exactly what the Antichrist is going to do

B) Notice how Jesus says: **And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.**

C) The Greek word translated “betray” is **important.**

1) It doesn't mean betrayal in the sense of saying negative things about coworkers so that you get a promotion instead of them.

D) Nor does it mean betrayal in terms of deceiving others or turning on someone who used to be your friend—stabbing them in the back.

E) Instead, the text is talking about **betrayal in the sense of intentionally revealing or exposing something that is hidden.**

It's the same idea as betraying a secret—

A) or people betraying the Jewish identities of their neighbors to the secret police during the days leading up to World War II.

B) So Jesus is describing a culture leading up to the end times that would be marked by people who actively **root up, expose, and betray those around them.**

C) Wouldn't you say that kind of betrayal is commonplace in our world today?

I read a story about a Pastor Charles Hodges who is the Pastor of Highlands Church in Birmingham Alabama

A) Highlands is a large multi-cultural church that is actively involved in serving their community

B) They feed the poor, volunteer in schools - engage the sick

C) During the pandemic, Church of the Highlands served thousands of meals, made masks, hosted blood drives, and helped other churches with online services.

But one day Pastor Chris Hodges like a post on social media from a conservative pundit.

A) A teacher at a local High schools saw that he liked it and took offense.

B) A high school English teacher living in Birmingham saw what pastor Hodges had done and felt uncomfortable.

1) She created a Facebook post to address that discomfort, including an image of Hodges's name next to the notorious "likes."

C) It blew up and turned into a Scandal - here is the result of that.

In less than two weeks, the Birmingham Housing Authority voted to cut ties with Pastor Hodges and the Church of the Highlands,

A) no longer allowing the church to rent space for one of its campuses.

B) The Housing Authority also cut ties with Christ Health Center, a separate ministry founded by Church of the Highlands to provide **free health services for residents of public housing.**

Now, stop and think about that. A local government shut down a free clinic for the poor in the middle of a public health crisis!

A) Why? In their words, "Pastor Hodges' views do not reflect those of Housing authority of the Birmingham district and its residents."

B) But That wasn't the end. **The Birmingham Board of Education also voted to cut ties with Church of the Highlands after the so-called scandal.**

C) For several years, the church had rented two high school auditoriums to serve as additional campuses on Sunday mornings, paying more than \$800,000 to the district for that privilege.

D) No more. The leases were terminated immediately.

Here locally - Remember during Pride month - The city of Vista Govt buildings were fly the Gay pride flag instead of the American Flag

A) One of our Worship leaders Joe H - wrote a very nice letter to the Vista city council letting him know - not right - didn't approve

B) Someone who works at the city - took his comments and posted them on FB - call him Homophobic and a hater

C) That is the world we are living in today and it is only going to get worse

Our society preaches tolerance - but in reality we are becoming more intolerant and polarized by the day.

A) If you don't agree with the what is being described as the Popular opinion - which it isn't - loudest voices

B) If you don't agree and get in line expect to be canceled

1) Lose friends - livelihood - and eventually even your life

**A culture that is living in Defiance of God - becomes a culture of Disdain
Also a Culture of Deception - V.11 false teachers on the rise**

A) We see young people leaving the church and the faith in record numbers

B) We live in the age of the "nones" - young people who don't identify with any religious affiliation

C) Deconstruction - Christian Musicians - leaders and Pastor who have denounced the faith

D) One of the most noteworthy was a Young Mega church Pastor Joshua Harris - Left his church - Divorced his wife - Denounced his faith

1) And then had the audacity to offer a course to help young people deconstruct from the faith as well.

E) I would not want to be that guy on judgment day - Woe to those who cause little ones to stumble -- Mill Stone

As grieving as this is it shouldn't surprise us - We were told this would be happening in the last days.

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,² speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron." 1 Timothy 4:11-2

² Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;⁴ and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. 2 Timothy 4:2-4

The last thing I want to touch on before we consider Noah and Lot as and see what we can learn from them as last days believers

A) This Defiance against God - that has led to a culture of Disdain and culture of Deception

B) Has also led to a culture of Distortion - ¹² And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

C) Love for God and love for others growing cold - resulting in a Distorting of God's View of life,

1) of marriage, of sexuality and now gender

D) Listen the Bible is clear - about how God views us Life!

²⁶ Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness..... Genesis 1:26

Life - Created in the image of God

A) Life begins at conception -

"For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. ... Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them" (Psalm 139:13, 16).

Other verses in the Bible also support the value of unborn life:

Jeremiah 1:5 says, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

Isaiah 44:24 talks about God as "your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb."

Paul says in Galatians 1:15 that God "had set [him] apart before [he] was born."

B) Our culture has distorted that - not a baby - only a tissue - only a blob

C) Total disregard for Human life - 73million abortions happen every year world wide

D) 1.3 million babies are aborted in America every year

1) Praise God for the Supreme court ruling - Make it up to each state

Seen the new add by Newsome

20 Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!
21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight! Isaiah 5:20-21

See a Distortion today of God's view of Gender

²⁶ Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.....²⁷ So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; **male and female** He created them. Genesis 1:26-27

Jesus believed this:

⁶ But from the beginning of the creation, God '*made them male and female*. Mark 10:6

A) There should be no distortion about Gender - He made them- we don't make ourselves - He makes us - Male or female

B) We have distorted God's view of gender - Kids can decide what sex they want to be.

C) Now we have boys competing in girls sports - Unfair

See the Penn State Swimmer - who swam for a couple of years on the men's team - then took a year off - came back -

A) Now I am a woman and I want to swim with the girls

B) Dominating - Winning by Huge margins -

C) Pic of the Podium - notice how much bigger he is -

1) Notice the 3 girls huddled together

Girls are not happy and rightfully so

A) They are having college dreams dashed - the men are generally bigger and stronger - It is CRAZY

B) On top of that - now these men - are in the women's rest rooms and locker rooms - it is not right

C) Canada - Trans teacher male - now female - Giant Prosthetic breast

D) I feel really sorry for those people who have bought into this lie and delusion - Don't disdain - love on - pray for

1) Transgender community is quickly becoming a group of people recording the highest number of suicides

Distortion of life - a Distortion on Gender - and a distortion on Marriage

A) Jesus went on to say this on marriage - ⁷For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, ⁸and the two shall become one flesh. Mark 10:7

B) We live in a culture where Homosexuality is rampant - Same sex marriage is now legalized -

C) But this is in direct defiance against God and his word

D) God made it clear - Marriage is between a man and woman

1) Clear and distinct roles in a partnership

E) Because of man's Defiance against God - writing our own play book as it relates to these things

1) But it is a distorted playbook

Paul outlines this in the book of Romans

A) Paul said it starts with **Ingratitude** - "Although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened" (Romans 1:21).

B) It starts with a failure to worship God and acknowledge him as King

C) We make ourselves King - we pursue our agendas

Which leads to Idolatry - Paul describes it in this way "Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things" (Romans 1:22–23).

D) Key Phrase - glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man

We become like what we worship - Man has always been prone to worship ourselves

A) A God in our own image - and likeness - Twisting of the picture

B) Our wants - needs - desires take center stage instead of God

That leads to Immorality - ²⁴Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, ²⁵who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen" - Romans 1:24-25

When Mankind denies its creator we succumb to a lust-driven existence.

A) How can I please myself -

That leads to Iniquity - ²⁶For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. ²⁷Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men

with men committing what is **shameful**, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. Roman 1:26-27

Everything gets twisted and taken to the extreme

A)But Pastor Rob - I know several gay couples who are so nice and they really love each other - and are committed to each other

B)I to do - But that lifestyle - just like sex outside of marriage - just like the people committing adultery - is in Defiance against God

C)Saying - God you do not know what is best for me - So I am going to choose my own path

D)Scripturally you cannot get around that

Same sex attraction is a real struggle for some people.

A)Because we are fallen men and women - Sin Gene in us from our father Adam

B)We all have areas of struggle and temptation - for some people - theirs is same sex attraction

C)The attraction is not a sin - it is acting upon it that is the sin

D)In a similar way: A married man might have an attraction to a woman who is not his wife -an attraction is not a sin

1)That is called be human

E)It becomes a sin if he dwells on it - LUST - or if acts on it - that is called adultery

So all of us are having to navigate our way through Sanctification and deal with our own tendencies toward the flesh

A)Defiance is when I say - I don't agree with God - I want to sleep with others instead of my wife

B)Or I am tired of being married to this person - not working for me any more - I am going to Divorce my spouse and pursue this other person

C)Jesus said: it is because of the hardness of your hearts you do that type of thing

D)A hard heart is the epitome of a heart that is in Defiance against God

E)Prevalent Sexual immorality that we are seeing in our culture is a direct evidence of that - just like it was in the days of Noah

So Safe to say: Living in the days of Lot and Noah

A)How are we supposed to live ? Start with Lot. Lot shows us how NOT to live?

B)Lot saved soul - wasted life - RIGHTEOUS LOT

C)I don't know about you but I don't want to get into heaven by my barely making it - no rewards

Where did Lot go wrong?

A)Lot was the nephew of Abraham - When Abe left Ur to go the land that God was going to lead him to - Lot went with them

B)Early on in the Journey - Detour down to Egypt - the Picture of the World with all it immorality and trappings

C)God spared them - sent them from there - and blessed them -

Then herds of both Lot and Abe were growing as were their servants

A)Two big to go together - Disputes - Separate - you choose

B)This is when we see lot's first step in the wrong direction

C)Lot was attracted to the World - Genesis 13:10

It tells us there in Genesis 13:10 Lot looked at the plains of Sodom - they reminded him of Egypt -

A)That is where I want to go - that is where I want to be and raise my family

B)He had an attraction to the world -

C)Jesus and Paul both described the Christian life for the Believer as being in the world but not of the world

D) Living in it but we are not attached to it -
Citizenship in heaven

Jesus would say **Don't seek to lay of treasures here - in heaven**

Paul would write in Romans 12 **Don't let this world squeeze you into it's mold- Keep- Separate**

Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom - Genesis 13:12

A) His attraction grew - it always does - feed the flesh - the flesh gets stronger and the spirit gets weaker

B) Lot did what we often do - sometimes we want to see just how close we can get to the world - without getting sucked into it

1) Kid playing with Fire and not get burned - usually they end up getting burned

C) Following it's trends - we want to look like them - dress like them - talk like them.

D) and pretty soon we are just like them - there is no distinction

Lot moves into Sodom Genesis 14:12

A) Now he is living in the city - family is in the city - they end up being completely engulfed into the culture

B) At one point in the story - we even find Lot ends up in a place of leadership - gates - leaders sat - like city hall

C) Maybe he was trying to bring reform - or maybe he got so comfortable and so well liked and accepted -

1) Others asked him to help lead

D) Not sure - but we are told this: Living in the world took it toll on Lot and it always does

“...and delivered righteous Lot, *who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked*⁸ (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, *tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds* 2 Peter 2:7-8

E) Oppressed and tormented - That is the what happens we backslide

Lot neglected his family Spiritually - Genesis 18

A) He tries to warn his family - his daughters and son in laws - God is going to destroy this place - we need to get out

B) They didn't listen to him - warning fell on deaf ears - even his wife - ends up being lost

C) Lot makes it out with only his two daughters

Guys I can't tell you how many families I have seen try to live close to the world -

A) Suffer greatly - Divorces - kids hooked on drugs - or alcohol - kids that get in trouble - no longer walk with God

B) Can that happen to families that are fully following Jesus? Yes - but my experience is it is a lot less seldom

C) Much more prevalent in families - who are being squeezed into the mold of the World

D) Lot - an example of who we don't want to be

Noah a good example

Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord Genesis 6:8

A) Noah sought to follow God - live for God - God's grace - undeserved favor was upon him

B) PC - Being under the spot where the blessings flow out

Noah walked by faith believing the word of God - Hebrews 11:7

A) God said - I am going to flood the earth - rain out of the sky

B) Never rained before - Noah believed - faith in the word of God -

C) Took God at his word even though he didn't understand it completely

Noah moved with Godly fear - Hebrews 11:7

A) Reverence - took it seriously

**B)Obedience - started building that boat - Big task
- take 120yrs**

C)Huge - Cutting trees lumber

**D)Not backing down to opposition - ridicule -
1)Talk about Cancel culture**

**1st year Noah is a circus attraction - what are
doing Noah?**

A)Next 119 years Noah is a nut job -

Noah took care of his family Hebrews 11:7

**B)Only two people in Lot's family were spared -
all of Noah's family was spared**

**C)They followed their dad in his fear and
reverence for God**

Noah was a preacher of righteousness - 2 Peter 2:5

A)He had a concern for others

B)Warned and preached -

C)We need to be like Noah -