

Motley Crew – March 16, 2011
Matthew 24:36-41
The Questions

Read Matthew 24:36-41

1. Is verse 36 really in red letters?
2. How was it in the days of Noah?
3. Where did the taken one go?
4. How well is the world keeping watch?
5. How well are we?

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Some Suggested Answers

Read Matthew 24:36-41

The Day and Hour Unknown

36 “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son,^[f] but only the Father. 37 As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. 38 For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; 39 and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. 40 Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. 41 Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

Footnote:

f. Some manuscripts do not have *nor the Son*.

1. Is verse 36 really in red letters?

Yes! Jesus said he didn't know according to His human nature.

2. How was it in the days of Noah?

We read [Genesis 6](#) (see below) and talked about how it was in Noah's day.

Genesis 6:5-8

5 The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. 6 The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. 7 So the LORD said, “I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them.” 8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

Dr. Lenski wrote:

They never “realized “ anything until the final, fatal moment. The fact that the ark was being built on dry land, that Noah told them why he built it, seemed like a great joke to them “until the flood came and took away all.” Exactly so shall be the Parousia; warnings enough and more than enough, but ears deaf, hearts obdurate, every sign being explained away “naturally,” “reasonably,” even “scientifically” until the fatal day arrives. It is not the wickedness of immortality that Jesus stresses but this ungodly, guilty, and damnable blindness. *Lenski*, p. 956.

they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage: not that these civil actions of life were criminal in themselves, had care been taken that they were not abused. It is lawful to eat and drink, provided it be in moderation, and not to excess; and to marry, and give in marriage, when the laws, rules, and ends thereof, are observed.... [Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible](#)

And knew not until the flood came,.... That is, they did not advert or give heed to what Noah said to them about it: they slighted and despised his warnings; they did not believe, that what he said of the flood was true; they had notice of it, but they would not know it, and therefore God gave them up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart; and so they remained, until it came upon them at once: [Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible](#)

As the days of Noe were. As the deluge surprised the world, so will the Lord's coming. [People's New Testament](#)

3. Where did the taken one go? (verses 41-42)

There is some scholarly debate – but Lenski is pretty good that the one taken was actually – “received.” Similar to being received home as one's final destination. Biblical texts indicate the ones left were left for the impending destruction.

We also wanted to be clear that Jesus doesn't set this up as the rapture to be followed by another 100 years. This is the Day. Reference was made to [1 Thessalonians 4](#) (see below).

Dr. Lenski wrote:

So it will happen that two men will be in the field, working there side by side, and two women “grinding at the mill” ... preparing the meal for the day. One is taken, received, the other is left, abandoned. The agent hidden in the passives [of the Greek text] is the Son of man. Why the one is graciously received by Christ while the other is left (see v. 31) does not need to be explained. The one was like Noah, the other like those caught in the deluge. *Lenski*, p. 956.

Matthew 24:31. “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.”

One is taken - Into God's immediate protection: *and one is left* - To share the common calamities. Our Lord speaks as having the whole transaction present before his eyes. [Wesley's Notes](#)

4. How well is the world keeping watch?

Grade: D-

5. How well are we?

After introspection I said C- but the class didn't think it was that high.

Doug speaking: As I wasn't here for the discussion, I might be out in left field (again), but I think that I will respectfully disagree with the group on this one. I feel that this group, and most of St. Paul's for that matter, is a lot higher than a C Minus. I'd give a B Plus.

When I look at the people in this group and this congregation, I see a deep commitment to the Lord. Do we love God? Yes. Do we love our neighbors? Yes. Do we do so perfectly? No, but we

regret that we don't. Can we be perfect? No, because of Original Sin. Do we repent of our sins? Yes. We all have room for improvement.

But throughout the history of the Bible, what God had demanded is a repentant people who love Him and who love others. As long as we continue to (1) love God, (2) love others, and (3) repent of our failings, our God will be happy with us, and we will be as ready as we ever can be for that unexpected coming. The bottom line is: we're watching and waiting, and keeping our oil jars filled (Matt. 25:1-13).

We closed with prayer. The noon Lenten service in the sanctuary followed.

Cited Scripture

Genesis 6 (New International Version, ©2011)

Wickedness in the World

1 When human beings began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, 2 the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. 3 Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not contend with[a] humans forever, for they are mortal[b]; their days will be a hundred and twenty years.”

4 The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.

5 The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. 6 The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. 7 So the LORD said, “I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them.” 8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

Noah and the Flood

9 This is the account of Noah and his family.

Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God. 10 Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth.

11 Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. 12 God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. 13 So God said to Noah, “I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. 14 So make yourself an ark of cypress[c] wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. 15 This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide and thirty cubits high.[d] 16 Make a roof for it, leaving below the roof an opening one cubit[e] high all around.[f] Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks. 17 I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. 18 But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives

with you. 19 You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. 20 Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive. 21 You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them.”

22 Noah did everything just as God commanded him.

Footnotes:

- a. [Genesis 6:3](#) Or *My spirit will not remain in*
- b. [Genesis 6:3](#) Or *corrupt*
- c. [Genesis 6:14](#) The meaning of the Hebrew for this word is uncertain.
- d. [Genesis 6:15](#) That is, about 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high or about 135 meters long, 23 meters wide and 14 meters high
- e. [Genesis 6:16](#) That is, about 18 inches or about 45 centimeters
- f. [Genesis 6:16](#) The meaning of the Hebrew for this clause is uncertain.

Note: An American football field is 360 by 160 feet, equaling 57,600 square feet. One of the decks on Noah's ark would be 33,750 square feet (about 60% of the area of the football field).

1 Thessalonians 4 (New International Version, ©2011)

Living to Please God

1 As for other matters, brothers and sisters, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more. 2 For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.

3 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should learn to control your own body[a] in a way that is holy and honorable, 5 not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God; 6 and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister.[b] The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before. 7 For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. 8 Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit.

9 Now about your love for one another we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. 10 And in fact, you do love all of God's family throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more, 11 and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, 12 so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

Believers Who Have Died

13 Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. 14 For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. 15 According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of

the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. 18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Footnotes:

- a. [1 Thessalonians 4:4](#) Or *learn to live with your own wife*; or *learn to acquire a wife*
- b. [1 Thessalonians 4:6](#) The Greek word for *brother or sister* (*adelphos*) refers here to a believer, whether man or woman, as part of God's family.

Parallel Verses

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The Day and Hour Unknown

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Footnote:

- f. Some manuscripts do not have *nor the Son*.

Mark 13:32

The Day and Hour Unknown

32 "But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

Luke 17: 26-37

The Coming of the Kingdom of God

26 "Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. 27 People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all.

28 "It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. 29 But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all.

30 “It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed. 31 On that day no one who is on the housetop, with possessions inside, should go down to get them. Likewise, no one in the field should go back for anything. 32 Remember Lot’s wife! 33 Whoever tries to keep their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life will preserve it. 34 I tell you, on that night two people will be in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. 35 Two women will be grinding grain together; one will be taken and the other left.” [36] [e]

37 “Where, Lord?” they asked.

He replied, “Where there is a dead body, there the vultures will gather.”

Footnotes:

- e. Some manuscripts include here words similar to Matt. 24:40

For Additional Study

Online Resources

[Book of Concord in PDF Format](http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/LCMS/TrigBOC.pdf), The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod
<<http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/LCMS/TrigBOC.pdf>> (2MB file)

These texts are in the public domain and may be copied and distributed freely. The source of these translations is *Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921).

A number of important Lutheran texts can be found in the Belief and Practice section of the website of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod: <http://www.lcms.org/pages/internal.asp?NavID=112>

John S. C. Abbott and Jacob Abbott, *Illustrated New Testament*
<http://www.studylight.org/com/ain/>

Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament*
<http://www.studylight.org/com/bnn/>

Harold F. Bult
<http://www.pericope.org/bult-notes/index.html> and
<http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/wittenberg-bult.html>

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The Adam Clarke Commentary
<http://www.studylight.org/com/acc/>

Burton Coffman, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*
<http://www.studylight.org/com/bcc/>

John Darby, *Synopsis of the Bible*
<http://www.ewordtoday.com/comments/matthew/darby/matthew1.htm>

The Greek Interlinear Bible,
http://www.scripture4all.org/OnlineInterlinear/Greek_Index.htm

Based on NA26/27. A word-by-word translation of the Greek New Testament.

David Guzik, *Commentaries on the Bible*

<http://www.studylight.org/com/guz/>

The Geneva Study Bible

<http://www.ewordtoday.com/comments/matthew/geneva/matthew1.htm>

John Gill, *Exposition of the Bible*

<http://www.ewordtoday.com/comments/matthew/gill/matthew1.htm>

Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Complete)

<http://www.ewordtoday.com/comments/matthew/mh/matthew1.htm>

Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Concise)

<http://www.ewordtoday.com/comments/matthew/mhc/matthew1.htm>

Jamieson, Faussett and Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*

<http://www.ewordtoday.com/comments/matthew/jfb/matthew1.htm>

B.W. Johnson, *People's New Testament*

<http://www.ewordtoday.com/comments/matthew/johnson/matthew1.htm>

John Lightfoot, *Bible Commentary*

<http://www.ewordtoday.com/comments/matthew/light/matthew1.htm>

Martin Luther, *Commentary on Galatians*

<http://www.studylight.org/com/mlg/>

J. W. McGarvey, *Original Commentary on Acts*

<http://www.studylight.org/com/oca/>

J. W. McGarvey and Philip Y. Pendleton, *The Fourfold Gospel* (also known as "Harmony Of the Four Gospels")

<http://www.ewordtoday.com/comments/matthew/four/matthew1.htm>

Alexander Maclaren's commentaries on the books of the Bible (various titles)

<http://www.gutenberg.org/browse/authors/m#a2330>

The NET Bible. <<http://bible.org/netbible/>> A completely new translation of the Bible with 60,932 translators' notes. It was completed by more than 25 scholars – experts in the original biblical languages – who worked directly from the best currently available Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts. Excellent notes, citing both the Greek and Hebrew, as needed. Greek and Hebrew fonts available without cost.

A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures of the New Testament*

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C. I. Scofield, *The Scofield Reference Notes* (1917 Edition)

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Charles H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David*

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R.A. Torrey, *The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*

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<http://www.antioch.com.sg/bible/vines/>

John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible*
<http://www.ewordtoday.com/comments/matthew/wesley/matthew1.htm>

Other Additional Resources:

<http://www.hymnsandcarolsofchristmas.com/SPLC/Motley%20Crew%20Research%20Resources.html>

Other Resources

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Alexander Maclaren, *Expositions of Holy Scripture* (Text from Project Gutenberg)

Robertson, A.T., *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville: Holman Reference, 2000). This “Concise Edition” is derived from the six-volume work by Robertson published in 1933. Robertson was also the author of 45 books, including numerous commentaries, a Harmony of the Gospels, etc. Also available online

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