

End Time Prophecy — 09/23/2017 ???

Yesterday, September 23, 2017, was, according to many prognosticators, supposed to be a very significant day for Christianity. I personally found no one predicting the ‘end of the world,’ but rather, a grand event that supposedly marked the ‘beginning’ of the end times. How to people come up with specific dates like this?

One preacher claimed that the statement that ‘no one knows the day and hour’ applied only people before Jesus ascended to heaven; *any-one disagreeing is a scoffer*.

Let’s consider two claims being made:

- ◆ Christians can figure out specific dates of prophesied events (i.e. end times).
- ◆ September 23, 2017 marked the appearance of a sign revealed in Revelation 14.

Jesus really did warn the people in his day saying: **“But of that day and hour no one know, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.”** (Matthew 24:36)

If you compare the text of Matthew 24 to the text of Luke 21 that relates the exact same teaching, the meaning becomes clear. Luke wrote to a Gentile audience. So, he ‘decoded’ the Jewish terminology that Matthew used. Matthew recorded, “When you see *the abomination of desolation...*,” Luke decoded, “When you see *Jerusalem surrounded by armies...*” The event Jesus warned his listeners about was the destruction of Jerusalem, which took place in their lifetime, in 70 A.D. That’s why Jesus said, “This generation will not pass away until all these things take place.” (Matthew 24:34)

So, Jesus’ statement about *no one knowing the day and hour* applied specifically to the destruction of Jerusalem.

So, is it possible that later Christians can figure out the ‘day and time’ of the end of the world?

Answer: NO!

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. (2 Peter 3:10)

Peter wrote about the end of time to a Christian audience well after the ascension of Jesus into heaven. Whether God revealed the end of time date to Jesus, as some claim, is immaterial. Peter said the time is unknown to us.

What about Revelation and the great sign?

John was instructed to write what he was told by an angel. At times he recorded the actual words of the resurrected/ascended Jesus. The following things were revealed to John:

- ◆ The things revealed “must shortly take place.” (1:1)
- ◆ Blessed are the ones who *read and heed* the writing, “for the time is near.” (1:3)
- ◆ An angel was sent to show John “the things which must shortly take place.” (22:6)
- ◆ Jesus explicitly said to John, “And behold, I am coming quickly.” (22:7)
- ◆ John was told NOT to seal up (hide) the book, “for the time is near.” (22:10)

Whatever people think about the imagery in the book of Revelation, John and his readers believed that the message was for them in their time. So, from our perspective, that is history.

Christians **should** anticipate the return of Jesus in readiness; not by spending time calculating the end of time. When predictions fail, it teaches unbelievers to stop listening! The gospel on the lips of a true disciple is a much better message to unbelievers than subjective predictions.