

Matthew 24.32-5.1

“Take a lesson from the fig tree. From the moment you notice its buds form, the merest hint of green, you know summer’s just around the corner. So it is with you: When you see all these things, you’ll know he’s at the door. Don’t take this lightly. I’m not just saying this for some future generation, but for all of you. This age continues until all these things take place. Sky and earth will wear out; my words won’t wear out.

“But the exact day and hour? No one knows that, not even heaven’s angels, not even the Son. Only the Father knows.

“The Arrival of the Son of Man will take place in times like Noah’s. Before the great flood everyone was carrying on as usual, having a good time right up to the day Noah boarded the ark. They knew nothing—until the flood hit and swept everything away.

“The Son of Man’s Arrival will be like that: Two men will be working in the field—one will be taken, one left behind; two women will be grinding at the mill—one will be taken, one left behind. So stay awake, alert. You have no idea what day your Master will show up. But you do know this: You know that if the homeowner had known what time of night the burglar would arrive, he would have been there with his dogs to prevent the break-in. Be vigilant just like that. You have no idea when the Son of Man is going to show up.

“Who here qualifies for the job of overseeing the kitchen? A person the Master can depend on to feed the workers on time each day. Someone the Master can drop in on unannounced and always find him doing his job. A God-blessed man or woman, I tell you. It won’t be long before the Master will put this person in charge of the whole operation.

“But if that person only looks out for himself, and the minute the Master is away does what he pleases—abusing the help and throwing drunken parties for his friends—the Master is going to show up when he least expects it, and it won’t be pretty. He’ll end up in the dump with the hypocrites, out in the cold shivering, teeth chattering.”