

Wars and Rumors of Wars

Mark 13:7-8

Introduction: We are living in volatile times. Our country continues to battle threats of terrorism. Radical Muslim countries are constantly threatening war. China is making overtures about taking Taiwan (an ally) and Russia is invading Ukraine.

The world has gone mad. Is the U. S. about to be swept into war? Is the end of time just around the corner?

I. Christ told His disciples not to be troubled by these things (Matt. 24:6-8; Mark 13:7-8; Luke 21:9-11).

A. *“These things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.”* We may never know why these things must happen (Isa. 55:8-9). Yet, we know God is in control.

B. Christ told His disciples to be on guard during these uncertain times (Matt. 24:9-13). They could expect:

1. Tribulation to the point of death.
2. Hatred from all nations for Christ’s name sake.
3. False prophets deceiving people.
4. Lawlessness to the point that love grows cold.

C. We live in such times. Wars and natural disasters occur constantly. But the things that should concern us most are the things that could destroy our souls. *“But he who endures to the end shall be saved.”*

II. Jesus’ disciples were not unlike us at all. They wanted to know things beyond their understanding (Matt. 24:3).

A. In response, Jesus was concerned they might be misled (Matt. 24:4).

B. Why is deception the primary concern?

1. Because many con artists and fortune tellers come out of the woodwork during wars and disasters with all the answers.
2. They love a crisis even to the point that some will claim to be the Messiah (Matt. 24:5).

III. What do we know about these uncertain times?

A. We know that deceptive people are out speculating about the end of time.

1. Only God knows the end of time (Matt. 24:36; Mark 13:32-33).

Jesus doesn’t even know when the end will come.

2. What makes us think that any man knows more than Christ when they predict the end of time? That is another reason why Jesus said, *“Take heed that no one deceives you.”*

B. We know that deceptive people are out speculating about the meaning of wars and disasters.

1. No one knows the mind of God that they may decipher the meaning of wars and disasters (Rom. 11:33-34; 1 Cor. 2:11). The best a man can do is to speculate.

2. When Job's three friends speculated they knew the reason for Job's troubles, Job rebuked them (Job 11:7). They had no clue but they deceived themselves into thinking they had the reason.

C. We know that worry can snare our souls (Luke 21:34-36).

1. We are to watch for our souls and avoid being affected by cares of life lest we be unfruitful and counted unworthy for eternal life (Matt. 13:22).

2. We need to keep our focus on the eternal goal.

IV. What about Armageddon as prophesied in the book of Revelation? Isn't that a sign of the coming end?

A. If we are looking for a sign, no sign will be given (Mark 8:11-12). The Lord has already provided everything we need to know.

B. There is only one mention of Armageddon in the Book of Revelation. It is mentioned when the 6th angel pours out the 6th bowl (Rev. 16:12-16). Armageddon refers to the judgment day that occurs in heaven.

C. The end will come at an unexpected time (Matt. 24:36-44).

Conclusion: Again, Jesus' admonition against being deceived applies here. Jesus warns us not to be deceived into thinking the end is predictable or that wars have any meaning in our lives. *"See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet."*

If we are watchful for our souls, we will be ready when the end comes. That is all that is important. It doesn't matter how we die but if we are ready when we die.