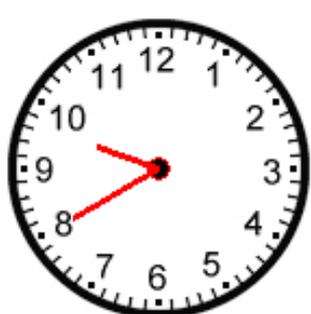
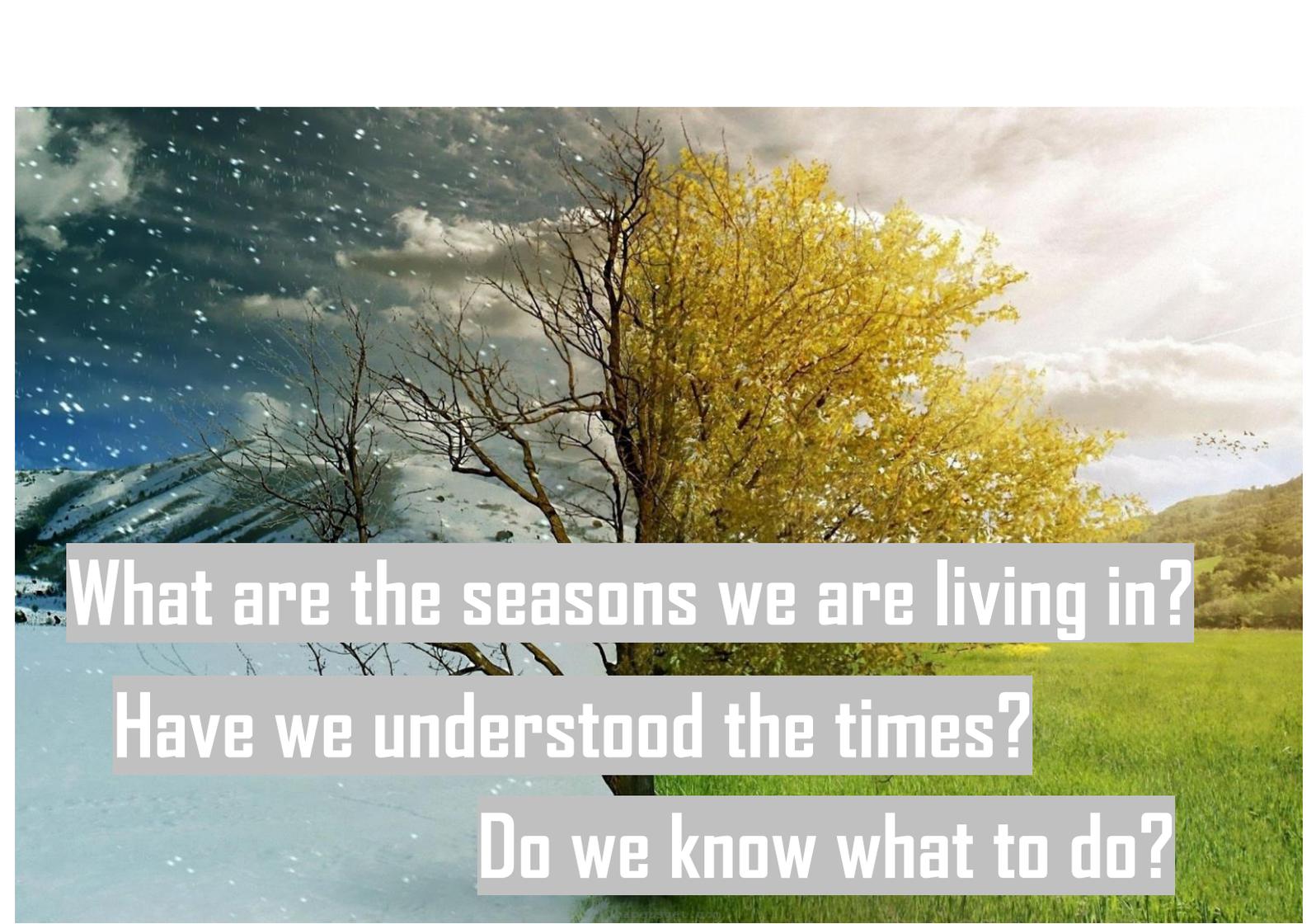


Week 1

Joel 2 Lifestyle



Making sense of the Global Crisis



What are the seasons we are living in?

Have we understood the times?

Do we know what to do?

Matthew 24:6-8

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.

For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.

MAKING SENSE OF THE GLOBAL CRISIS

At the turn of the Millennium, there was a TV commercial with this punchy tag line “What time is it?” Indeed, this is a question Christians should be asking ourselves. Since the start of the 21st Century, countless tumultuous events have happened.

We can vividly recall Sept 11th 2001 when many eyes all around the world watched on TV in shock and disbelief, as we see two planes carrying passengers smash right into the Twin Towers in New York. The SARS epidemic hit Singapore right at her core. Shopping malls and clinics were deserted. Fear took hold of the island for 2 full months.

The relentless waves of Asian tsunami pounding the land remain etched in many memories. Then came the global financial crisis in 2007 and 2008 whose effects linger till today. In the Middle East, the sudden and swift emergence of the ISIS with the cruel persecutions of Christians shocked many believers. Then came the increase in terrorist attacks with the more recent multiple bombings in Paris, which continue to capture headlines.

Why are all these events happening?



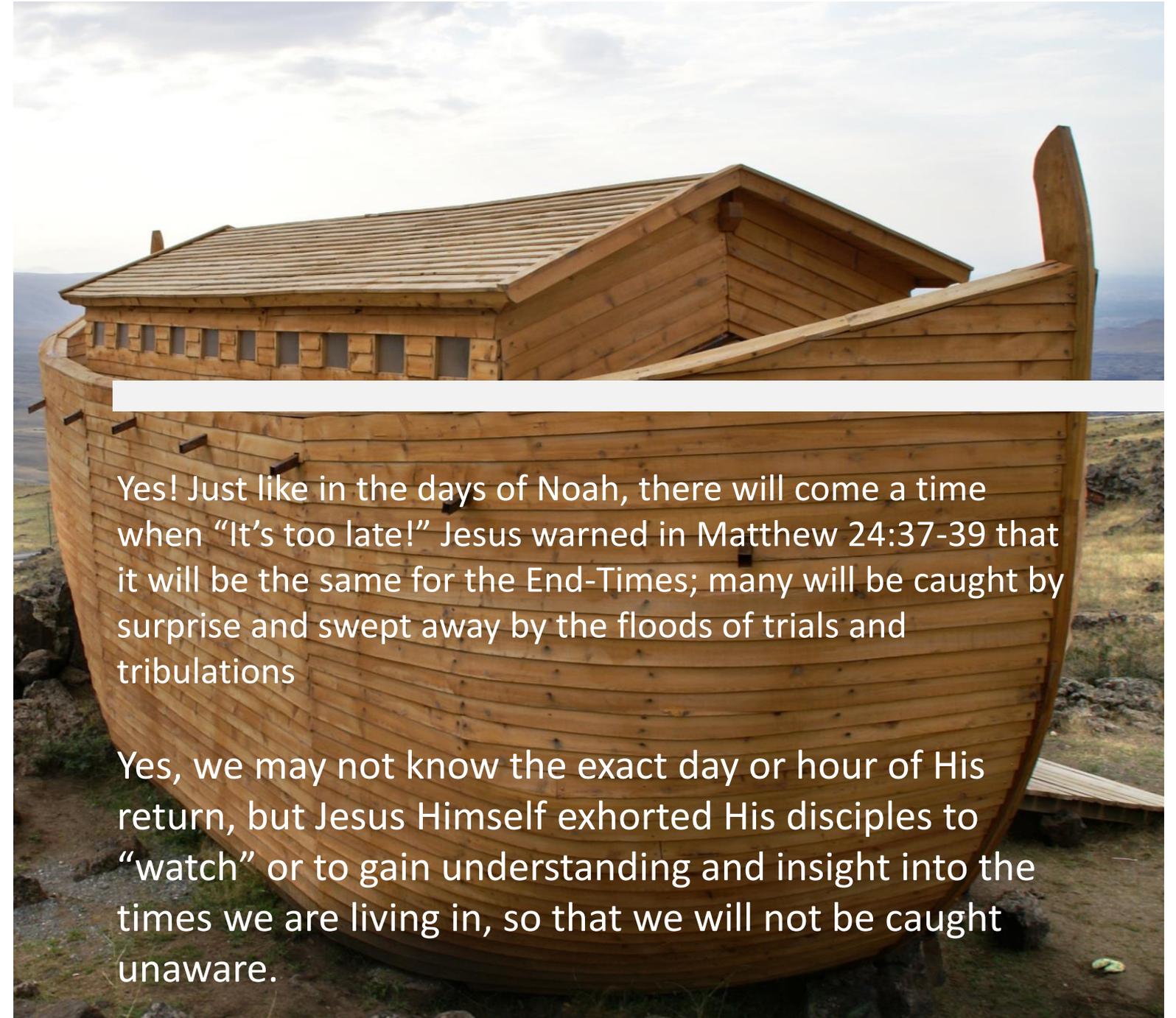
In Matthew 24, Jesus took great pains to share with his disciples details of event and trend signs that will take place before His return. These include earthquakes, wars and rumors of wars, pestilence and persecutions.

Jesus continued by warning that many would be caught unaware when He returns. He compared the days of His return to those of Noah. While Noah was building the ark, no one took heed or responded to his warnings. Imagine someone in our time spending many years building a large ship in the middle of the Great Sahara desert. Won't it catch your attention and curiosity?

“Why are you doing this Noah? Whatever for?”

“The flood is coming! The flood is coming!” Noah warned.

But no one took heed. Many thought Noah was crazy, because it had never rained in their times! They carried on with their lives as per normal, continued in their merriment, eating drinking and marrying right up to the day Noah entered the ark. The moment Noah entered the Ark and closed the door, it's too late!

A large, multi-story wooden structure built on a hillside, resembling Noah's Ark. It has a pitched roof and several windows. The structure is made of light-colored wood and is situated on a rocky, grassy slope. The sky is overcast.

Yes! Just like in the days of Noah, there will come a time when “It’s too late!” Jesus warned in Matthew 24:37-39 that it will be the same for the End-Times; many will be caught by surprise and swept away by the floods of trials and tribulations

Yes, we may not know the exact day or hour of His return, but Jesus Himself exhorted His disciples to “watch” or to gain understanding and insight into the times we are living in, so that we will not be caught unaware.

We are sons of light and sons of the day. We can know the times and seasons. We should be aware! God wants us to be prepared, so that we can stand in the midst of the shakings.

We cannot tell the exact day or hour, but we can know the generation of the Lord’s return.

It is serious! It is unprecedented! We are standing at a crucial juncture of human history! Take heed and gain understanding so that we will not be caught in a snare!



Readings and Prayers for the week

Readings for Week 1

Take some time to read the entire chapter of Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21:7-38.

What did Jesus share with His disciples about the End of the Age? What are the signs He listed? Do we see them happening around us?

Prayers for Week 1

Take some time to pray for the Church, using 1 Chronicles 12:32.

Ask God to give her the spirit of the sons of Issachar that she may have understanding, make sense of the times and know what she ought to do.

Pray for your friends, your family and your church.