



Word Notes: Sunday 07/01/18

Roy Wheeler: The coming midnight hour

- Key texts: Matt 24:3 & 30-31 & 36-44

At Christmas we celebrate the coming of the Messiah in fulfilment of over 300 prophecies about his birth, life, death and resurrection, but that's not the end of the story. In faith we look forward to a second coming, the return of Jesus in triumph to lead his people home to a new life in eternity with God. Like the moments of silence before the striking of the clocks signifying the start of a New Year it might seem like God is silent but the purposes of God have not stopped. God is working towards that final midnight hour that will take us into a new age of great celebration and fulfilment. Three things for the believer to know:

### **1, The ignorance of the hour**

No-one knows the exact time but scripture also encourages us to discern the times. The world doesn't understand what is going on but we have an insight through scripture.

### **2, The characteristics of the hour preceding His return.**

Time will be "as normal". The world will not see what is going on but God desires His children to recognise and be ready.

### **3, What is the priority of the hour in which we live?**

Be watchful of the signs, be prepared but also be serving in his purposes.

## **Study & Application**

Matt 24:3-14 - The Signs of the times

- Why did Jesus share these things with the disciples?
- What is the take-home message of verses 6 to 8?
- What is Jesus ultimate encouragement (v13) and how will you respond?

Matt 25 – Our response.

- What is the key message to believers in the Parable of the Ten Virgins (vv1-13)? Think about who the virgins are, what each group did and the outcome of their actions.
- The punch line of the Parable of the Talents (vv 14-30) is in verses 29 & 30. What does that mean to you in regard to using your talents? What are "talents" anyhow – skills, gifts, money, resources, things, time? What are you investing in?
- Likewise, in Jesus' account of the final judgement (vv31-46) the punchline is in verses 45 and 46. Who do you think this latter group are? NB they call Jesus "Lord" (see Matt 7:21 & 22, Luke 6:46) – does that change your view?
- What then do you see as your response to knowing the times and being prepared? What will you determine to do in 2018 to grow into this purpose?