

Dear Reginaldo,

Thank you for your questions to the New Haven Bible Students web page.

In your first question you wanted to know how we might compare Noah's day to our day. Matthew 24, known as "The Lord's Great Prophecy," is probably the most notable of all the prophecies connecting the story of Noah with the events of our time. The key question Jesus' followers wanted to know was, "What shall be the sign of thy coming [presence]?" Among the signs he gave to answer their question are the words found in Matthew 24:37-39. "As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming [presence] of the Son of Man." From these scriptures we gather that Noah's day was very similar to ours. Today there is an unawareness of the Lord's presence, just as there was an unawareness of the impending Deluge. The Apostle Peter makes a similar comparison. "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, saying, 'Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.'" (2 Peter 3:3-4)

How, then, can we relate Noah's day to ours? The mind frame of humanity today is actually quite similar. As life continues its hectic pace with its eating and drinking, with its marrying and giving in marriage, the Christian, unless awake and observant, may find himself swept along in the current of events. Yet the Apostle Paul assures us in 1 Thessalonians 5:4, "But ye brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." Continuing in verse 6, "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." The strong evidences around us should keep us awake to righteousness and the service of the Lord, for they indicate the fact of His presence and the imminence of His kingdom. For more information on our Lord's Second Presence, we have attached a file entitled, "Our Lord's Return." We pray it will be helpful to you.

In relation to the question above, you asked when Christ's Millennial kingdom would begin.

As far as we know there are no direct prophecies found in scripture indicating how long it will be before Christ's kingdom is set up on earth. But there are prophecies indicating that we are very near the end of this age. In Matthew 24, we are given many signs (the regathering of the nation of Israel, as represented by the fig tree [verse 32], being the greatest of these) that indicate that our Lord is present and that his kingdom will soon be established. In Luke 17:26 we also learn that "just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man." The moral condition of the world today is similar to the moral condition of the world in Noah's day.

We believe that most of the prophecies in Matthew 24 have already been fulfilled and, thereby, confirm that our Lord is present and in the process of tearing down this present evil system. Some Christians of late have gone further and have calculated by using chronological data as to when the end of the age will actually come. As there is no direct prophecy that pinpoints a future date, we are therefore careful not to focus on any particular date. We prefer to leave the matter as a topic of interest to be studied and discussed among Christians, if their minds are so inclined.

However, there are numerous scriptures describing the events that will ensue during the Millennium. The dead will return from their graves and be afforded an opportunity to turn their backs on sin and give full allegiance to God through the saving grace of Jesus. During this phase the earth will also be perfected. The promise is that the “desert shall blossom as the rose” (Isaiah 35:1). Man will learn the true meaning of God's command to administer and have dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:26, 2:15). Finally, at the end of the Millennium, Christ and his Church will have completed their work of restoration and reconciliation to God. Sin and sinners will be no more and the human race will be ready to enter into the state of everlasting life (Revelation 21:3-4).

In your third question you asked how we might show unity as Christians.

“The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we are all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.” (1 Corinthians 12:12-13) These scriptures tell us just how necessary the interaction of the body members of Christ is in the development of each Christian.

The spiritual body of Christ is similar to that of the human body, with its many parts working together harmoniously. When one or more of its parts is adversely challenged, the whole body suffers. In the Apostle Paul's day, the Corinthians were not thinking spiritually, but quarreling among themselves, and, thereby, becoming sectarian, adhering to one or another individual. Paul admonishes them for pulling apart. He tells them that he and Apollos had been working together, (collaborating) to help them grow, but without God giving the increase, their work in and of itself would amount to nothing (1 Corinthians 3:1-11). The Corinthians did not understand that Paul and Apollos had completely different roles to play in establishing this early church. Just as important as it was for the early church, collaboration among Christians today is especially crucial because the influences in the world are so destructive to the Christian's thought process. Cooperation alone does not do enough to ward off these influences, thus allowing them to infiltrate the body of Christ. But, by aggressively working together, these worldly influences can be overcome.

How can we demonstrate Christian unity? We can be supportive of our fellow Christians even though they may be serving in differing capacities or experiencing trials that we do not comprehend. Although we are all members of the one body of Christ, we each have unique roles that together form a unity or completeness. Paul gives us sound advice in Ephesians 4:32. "And be kind one to another and tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God has forgiven us through Christ."

We hope we have answered your questions. Please write us again.

Sincerely,

The New Haven Bible Students