

1 Peter 2:6-11 Last days.

**Matthew 24** <sup>10</sup>At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other.

**Then** the love of *many* (Gk: vast number, majority) will grow cold. The process?

### Offence, betrayal, hatred

Proverbs 18:19 offended people build walls of 'protection' NT calls these strongholds: 2 Corinthians 10:3-5. The nature of God is to give and to give. The nature of offence 'withholds'. Judas: offended, betrayed, hated.

Hatred: not the definition of loathing but of 'loving less' (putting second place: Lk, 14:25-27)

**Matthew 24 11**and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people.

**Then** many deceived (who are deceived? The offended?) An offended heart is breeding ground for deception.

**Matthew 24 12**Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold,

Increase in 'lawlessness' Gk: anomia – lawless thoughts – the love described in verse 12 is 'agape' (unconditional love of God – not phileo, stoic or erotic) and is therefore speaking of Christians.

### ***In the last days the love of the church grows cold...***

Expectations. Luke 17:1 Offences must come. Do we have the right to 'be offended?' An offended believer has forgotten what Christ has done. 2 Peter 1:8-9.

Matthew 18:21 how many times? **His** unforgiveness is inexhaustible. V21-35: parable of the unmerciful servant (an unpayable debt forgiven – considered our salvation)

Acts 24 <sup>16</sup>So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man. Strive; exercise... strength prays for those who abuse you Matt 5:44

Psalms 35 <sup>11</sup> Ruthless witnesses come forward; they question me on things I know nothing about. <sup>12</sup> They repay me evil for good and leave my soul forlorn. <sup>13</sup> Yet when they were ill, I put on sackcloth and humbled myself with fasting. When my prayers returned to me unanswered, <sup>14</sup> I went about mourning as though for my friend or brother. I bowed my head in grief as though weeping for my mother.

*Pray for them as family – 'exercise' response to hurts.* I love you but??? Waiting for an apology?? Ephesians 4:32 Father forgive them for they know not what they do... When did Christ forgive?

Offence is a snare Gk: 'skandalon' 2 Timothy 2 26and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will. Exercise senses and be free of offence.