

## **A summarized covering of Matthew 24 and 25 and Luke 21**

There are many scriptures in the Old and New Testament that are prophetic and reveal what is ahead in this world and what has happened and what is now happening. It however requires diligent study and seeking the Holy Spirit's guidance to understand. The word of God is veiled so that those unbelievers will not understand but the believers are given understanding. If you are a believer then you should be studying prophecy. These are warnings for the believer not to error in our walk.

**Mathew 24 and 25 and Luke 21 are some of these prophetic writings from Jesus' mouth and given to us so that we will understand and not be fooled by the world's ways.**

As Jesus was ending His ministry, He told His disciples many of the things that would happen in the future. These are primarily in Matthew chapters 24 and 25 and Luke 21. Jesus explained what would happen to Israel (the destruction of the temple and the city) and the end of the age and His return for the church. It is important to understand that there are parables and teachings that are directed at three different happenings.

Happening one was the destruction of the temple and the city. This is not answered in Matthew but is answered in Luke. Happening two is His return for the church. Happening three is His second coming to judge the world and to set up His Kingdom. There are three different events which has confused the church for a long time.

As the disciples were coming out of the temple with Jesus and the disciples commented on their amazement about the temple buildings and Jesus answered "I tell you the truth. Not one stone will be left on another; everyone will be thrown down." Later they asked 1- When will this happen? 2-What will be the sign of your coming? 3- and the end of the age.

**The answer that did not have a question.**

Matthew 4 through 8 tell us that there will be false Christs and that there will be wars and rumors of war, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation

and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places, but all these are the beginning of “birth pangs”.

As the times pass the events of wars and earthquakes and famines and pestilence will increase in frequency and strength like a woman’s birthing process. So, we will see in history a gradual increase in such things until the return for the church and the second coming of Christ to set up His kingdom. We have been seeing these things happening in the last 100 plus years.

**So, let us look at some of these items and see if we have some “birth pangs” going on.**

### **World wars**

It used to be wars were localized to smaller locations but did not spread to the whole world but now with World war 1 we see many nations being involved and a much larger area. Maps were changed and kingdoms set up and kingdoms taken down. The Ottoman Empire was taken down and the British Empire was raised up. The maps were redrawn for the land of Palestine and the British took over the rule of that land. The British then were favorable to restore the land to worlds Jews. That did not happen at the end of World War 1 but did happen after World War 2. The world of borders and rulers were changed around the world. God sets up kingdoms and takes down kingdoms.

This has been made possible by increase in transportation and communications. Then within a few years we saw another World War 2 happen and it encompassed a much larger area, and many more countries were involved and even greater increases in transportation and communication abilities and then the Atomic bomb was invented and was used for the first time on human beings. We are not sure when the next world war will happen but there are many lesser wars going on and it is just a matter of time until it breaks out on a global scale. Revelation tells us this will happen, and billions will be killed. Study the revelations of the seals in book of Revelation. After World War 2 the worlds borders were again changed, and one was the Nation of Israel was established in 1948. God sets up kingdoms and takes down kingdoms as He chooses.

### **Transportation**

For ages, the basic transportation was either walking or riding a horse or using sail boats. That has drastically changed and now we have all manner of cars and aircraft

and rockets and trains and fast boats and submarines and we do not know what is coming next. We can now go around the world in a short time. Man carrying space craft can go at lighting speed to other parts of the earth and now to other planets and the moon. What will we do next? Will we be there to do good or evil? I think there will be a limit that God sets on what we can do.

### **Communication**

I guess writing is old but was done by hand using scrolls and other media. Runners were used to get messages to others. Well, all that changed with the printing press. We now see many amazing forms of communication such as computers, television, cell phones, satellites, and internet. All these have exploded over the last century and especially in the last twenty years. These forms of communication are good if they are for good purposes, but they can create much evil. It makes it easier for evil powers to control the population. Birth pangs?

### **Pestilence**

With travel escalating because of faster transportation and faster communication we are exposed to any pestilence that occurs in the world to spread rapidly. We are seeing an example now in our society with Covid 19 and other spreadable diseases. These appear to be escalating more rapidly now. Birth Pangs?

### **Earthquakes and famines and natural calamities**

Jesus said these things would be the beginning of birth pangs. I see these happening at a greater rate than before. A study of earthquakes shows more severe activity in the last few years. Famines and natural calamities are growing in number and severity.

### **Weather**

The natural occurrence of hurricanes and tsunamis and other things are worrying the scientists of today. Many are blaming these things on global warming. But the word warns us that these things will grow in intensity as we get closer to the end of the age.

### **Israel**

The most obvious sign we see is that Israel is now back in their land after 2000 years and they are the center of world attention. They are oppressed on all sides. Jesus said learn the lesson of the fig tree when you see the leaves coming out then the time is right at the door. Israel is often referred to as a fig tree. So, when you see all these things coming together be warned. Israel is our time clock for the end of the age.

### **Question one – When will the temple be destroyed and no stone left on another?**

As we read Matthew you do not find the answer as to when question one will happen. In Luke, the question will be answered. Look at Luke 21 and we will find the answer. “When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies you will know that its destruction is near.” They will fall by the sword and they will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled down by the gentiles until the times of the gentiles are fulfilled which is the return of Christ. This was fulfilled in 70 A D when Titus came to destroy the temple and the city. This was the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written.

They were warned to flee the city also when they see the “abomination of desolation” set up which is in Matthew 24:15. They will not be captured and taken as prisoners to the nations at that time because that had already happened at the time the temple was destroyed. This is another future time. Matthew goes on in verse 21 “For there will be great distress unequalled from the beginning of the world until now and never be equaled again”. This is the description of the middle of the “Great Tribulation” which will happen right before Jesus’s second coming. They are two different events. Do not get confused and get off track. The fleeing from the surrounding armies in 70 A D has already happened. The future fleeing is when the “abomination of desolation” is set up at the middle of the 7-year covenant with the anti-Christ and he declares he is God. Therefore, you must use wisdom when studying prophecy because there are similar events described in scripture and sometimes many years between events. The bible is a spiritual book and cannot be understood without the Holy Spirit providing spiritual understanding of just not this one scripture but the whole word.

### **Question two—What will be the signs of your coming?**

This question is also a little complicated to answer. First, we must understand that there are two events that could be Jesus’s coming. The first event to happen is when He comes back for His church. This is Jesus’ coming. Scripture tells us that there are no signs before His coming for His church. It will happen suddenly without warning as a thief in the night.

Although we do not know the day or the hour it is my belief that the coming for the church will be some time before or at the time the anti-Christ reveals himself by

making the covenant with Israel, but the scriptures do not tell us when, so we are reminded to stay ready. The reason I think it is before the tribulation period is because the scriptures say that the church is not appointed for wrath and the tribulation will be the wrath of God.

**Matthew 24:36 through 25:30 are parables that describe Jesus' coming for His church** which is those that are "born again" or "born from above" and are therefore the **Body of Christ**. Be aware of the parable of the "wheat and the tares" for there are counterfeits in the organizational church. They look like Christians but bear no fruit because the Holy Spirit does not abide in them. Therefore, when I use the word church, I am not referring to the organizational church but to the true church.

No one knows the hour not even the Son. It will be like the days of Noah. Noah and wife and children entered the Ark, and the door was shut, and no one could get in. Only those that are His in the church can get in. The same story is given in the parable of the ten virgins. Those that did not have oil for their lamps could not get in after He had come. The oil is representative of the presence of the Holy Spirit. Have we been "born again" and thus have the Spirit in us? We should take care to always walk in the Spirit. Therefore, we must abide in Him and He in us so that we can bear much fruit.

So, we are warned to "be ready at all times" because it will be sudden without warning. Everything will be going on normally like marriage and eating and drinking. Two will be in the fields one will be taken and one left. Two women will be grinding at the hand mill, and one will be taken and one left. It is important to remember you want to be the ones taken for they will be with the Lord. The other parables speak to the servants that took care of the work of the church and the servants that ignored that work. Then another parable about the talents reaffirmed the same message of judgement for those in the church. For we will be judged at Jesus coming for His church to get our rewards or lack of rewards. So, we are to persevere to the end and not take our eyes off the prize of resurrection and eternal life.

### **Question three –What will be the signs for the end of the age?**

There are many signs about Jesus's second coming which is the end of the age of the gentiles. First Israel must exist, and the anti-Christ must make a covenant with them for 7 years. Remember the parable of the "fig tree" when you see the leaves

coming out summer is near. When you see all these things happening the end is right at the door. There will be wars, earthquakes and famines that will be like birth pangs (getting stronger and more frequent).

**We see in Matthew 24 verse 9 going through verse 35 and again in Matthew 25 verse 31 through verse 46 the words pertaining to the end of the age which is the second coming of Christ.**

The reason for the break in the scripture in Matthew 24: 35 is that the word has been presented in a chiastic form with the first section of verses 9 through 35 being interrupted with Matthew 24 verse 36 through Matthew 25 verse 30 being an account of the coming for the church.

This form of writing gives the first message to be compatible to the last message. Therefore, all that is in between is a different message. So, we see the description of the signs of the end of the age are in two segments separated by the long segment with the description of the coming for the church. Therefore, we cannot assume that the writings in scripture are in chronological order or necessarily continuing with the same theme.

Let us then look at Matthew 24 :9-35 to explore some of the information given to describe the signs of the end of the age.

You will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death and hated by all nations because of Christ—many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other—false prophets will arise and deceive many—wickedness will increase, and love will grow cold—but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. The gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations and then the end will come.

In the middle of the 7-year covenant, between the anti-Christ and Israel, the anti-Christ will declare he is God and will set up the “abomination that causes desolation”. We are given a way to understand this by Jesus as He refers us to the book of Daniel where you will find the foreshadow of the anti-Christ in the person of Antiochus Epiphanes who set up an abomination of desolation in the temple of that time. Also, we must look to the book of Daniel chapter 9 to understand the 7-year covenant with the anti-Christ.

The warning then was to those in Jerusalem to urgently flee to the mountains. As I mentioned in the section on question 2 this fleeing is not the same as the fleeing before the destruction of the temple in AD 70. Be wise and do not get confused.

Therefore, we must understand the whole bible to understand many prophetic writings. We must study the Old testament as well as the New testament. Our new covenant under Christ is not founded in the law for He fulfilled the law for us, but the prophets and other words are still necessary for understanding all the word. Many churches do not teach prophesy or encourage members to study the writings such as Daniel and Revelation. Without these teachings you cannot understand the bible properly and therefore are led to wrong conclusions such as believing that of replacement theology which says the church has replaced Israel in Gods plans. It is obvious that Israel is in the middle of Jesus teachings on the end of the age with instructions to the people to flee from Jerusalem and that there would be a temple to have an abomination set up in. Ignorance of scripture leads to many errors. IF you believe in replacement theology then read Jeremiah chapters 30 and 31. It is obvious that Israel will be restored.

There will be great distress unequalled from the beginning of time until now and never to be equaled again. If those days had not been shortened no one would survive but they will be shortened. False prophets and false Christs will appear and perform many miracles and signs to deceive even the elect if possible. I have told you ahead of time. Do not go after them.

This will be the “great tribulation” which is the last 3.5 years of the tribulation. Which is the fulfillment of Jacob’ troubles so this time is for Israel which is to bring them to the point that they as a Nation will weep and mourn as for a lost son (see Jeremiah) and will acknowledge that Jesus is Messiah and say the words recorded In Matthew 23:29 For I tell you that you will not see me again until you say, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord”.

This then is one of the reasons for this tribulation. The Jews as a nation had to come to the point of brokenness and repent and turn to the Lord as a nation and seek Him. Then and only then can Jesus’ return and set up the kingdom, for the Nation of Israel had rejected Him at His 1<sup>st</sup> coming and has now accepted Him like an only son. The other reason was to bring satin under judgement and to defeat him and

lock him in the abyss for 1000 years so the nations could not be led astray. There will be total peace for 1000 years because the Messiah Jesus will be on the throne ruling.

For as lightening comes from the east is visible even in the west so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

Immediately after the distress of those days –the sun will be darkened –the moon will not give its light—stars will fall from the sky—the heavenly bodies will be shaken. **“At that time, the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory”**. He will send his angels with a loud trumpet call and will gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

Therefore, it will be obvious that Jesus has returned. There will be no doubt and the world will mourn and the remnant of the Nation of Israel will be saved.

**We now see another scene in Matthew 25:31 which will carry us to verse 46.**

**“When the Son of Man comes in great glory and the angels with Him, He will sit on His throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him and He will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on the right and the goats on the left.”**

This then are the nations of the world that are left after the tribulation and the war that happened at His second coming. The church has already been raptured and as recorded in Revelation 19 we will return with Him. The church has already been judged and given its rewards. So, the judgements that follow are for those left on this earth.

To the sheep on his right, He said “Come you who are blessed by my Father, take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.

- **For I was Hungry, and you gave something to eat.**
- **I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink.**
- **I was a stranger, and you took me in.**
- **I needed clothes and you clothed me.**

- **I was sick and you looked after me.**
- **I was in prison and you visited me.**

They wanted to know when they did this, and He said that when you did this to the least of these my brothers you did it to me.

Then He will say to the goats on the left “depart from me” you who are accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. This group also said when did we not do these things for you and He will say when you did not do these things to the least of these brothers you did not do them for me.

Then they will go away to eternal punishment but the righteous to eternal life.

Therefore, this is the judgement of those that are left on the earth at Christ second coming. These are people that still have their natural bodies and will live in the kingdom of Christ for a thousand years. There was no mention of faith, but it appears these were believers in the tribulation years and helped their fellow man in those troubled times. It reminds me that it is never too late to show kindness and mercy to our fellow man.

Although these are not a part of the church for, we have already been raptured and have received our new glorified bodies and will rule and reign with Christ for those 1000 years.

I would suggest that you read the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter of Daniel for further enlightenment.

Therefore, persevere and stay to the end brothers and sister in Christ.

Your brother in Christ  
Howard

