

Matthew 24:1: *'And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. ² And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. ³ And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? ⁴ And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.*

Take heed that no man deceive you. The very first thing Jesus said to His Disciples... and this was privately, spoken only to His Disciples. Here, He was not preaching to an Old Testament crowd... here, He is telling His Disciples, the men who would, only 8 weeks from this time, be the ones who would be filled with the Holy Spirit and with power, the ones through whom the Church would be born. He is telling them something very important, something He wanted them to know, to understand and remember because He knew that He was also, by extension, speaking to us, all who would believe on Him through the eyewitness preaching of the Disciples to the World; He prayed: *'Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth... Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.'* John 17:17

Through these men, Jesus Christ would, for the next 2000 years, build His Church. This is for us, the Church, but also for Tribulation saints.

This explanation Jesus gives is intended for only three audiences: His Disciples, the Church and Tribulation Saints. He knows He will be crucified in a very short time; He knows that His Disciples will take this message to the World as the Church is born and then grows outward to all the Earth. Then, when the Church is removed, those who come to faith in Jesus Christ during the 70th Week of Daniel, the Tribulation, will need the truth and comfort of what Jesus is saying here. So, really, there are just two audiences: the soon future leaders of the Church and Tribulation saints.

The Disciples asked Jesus 3 specific things: 1. When will **the Temple be destroyed**? 2. What will be **the sign of Your coming**? 3. What will be **the sign of the end of the Age**?... NOT the end of the World... the end of the Age... the end of the Age of human, gentile government. The next Age will be the Age of the Lord Jesus Christ ruling over all the Earth for 1000 years; that Age begins with His coming in all power and glory at Armageddon as He destroys all His enemies, imprisons Satan, and probably the demons, and rules over an Earth which had been nearly destroyed but which would then begin to heal and grow to a pristine nature such as it was when it was first created. Then, at the end of the 1000 years, God will destroy the present Earth and Heavens and recreate them in complete perfection.

Jesus will answer three very different and very specific things. And... the Holy Spirit had inspired the Disciples to ask something that they did not even know would be in God's plan: **'the sign of Your coming'**: they were inspired to ask about the Rapture, 'His coming,' in the clouds, and then, **'the sign of the end of the age'** His physical return at Armageddon when He would inaugurate the next Age, His thousand year reign on Earth, His Millennial Kingdom. That one, they knew about and expected; it had been made very clear through the Old Testament Prophets. Remember, the mother of James and John asked Jesus: *'Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. ²¹ And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.'*

His coming Kingdom was no secret, no mystery; Every Jew knew of the Millennial Kingdom but what they did not know, that of which they had no concept, was the **mystery of the Rapture**, that there would be a 2000 year gap of time between the 69th and 70th Weeks of Daniel during which the Church would be born and grow; that was to be left for Paul to understand and then teach to the Church. The Church was still a mystery; the Disciples had no concept of that either.

When will the Temple be destroyed; when will Your coming for the Church be; when will be Your Kingdom?

Take heed that no man deceive you. Be alert! False teachers will abound.

As Jesus answers, He is speaking of differing times and to differing audiences. False teachers would have us believe that Jesus meant all these things would be accomplished within the lifetime of His Disciples, within the lifetime of that present 'generation.'

Jesus spoke first of the soon coming destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Romans just about 35 years after His Crucifixion and Resurrection but that is the only thing He was predicting to happen within the lifetimes of His then present listeners and even then, most of the Disciples had been martyred before A.D. 70 when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple.

If Jesus had meant for everything He was going to say to be concluded in that short time, then that and so much more of Scripture would have been worthless and meaningless to the multiplied millions who would come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ over the next 2000 years. Far more prophecy was intended for fulfillment in our lifetimes, in these, the End Times, than has ever been fulfilled to this time.

Not only do false teachers seek to deceive, but they and the rest of the World do their best to actually suppress the Truth of God's Word: *'For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness...'* (who suppress the Truth) Rom 1:18

For example. We live in the year 2022. That is, A.D. 2022, Anno Domini, Year of our Lord, 2022, 2022 years since the birth of our Lord. Time before His birth is counted as: B.C. **B**efore **C**hrist. Now, instead of seeing A.D. and B.C., we see: c.e. and b.c.e. which stands for: **c**ommon **e**ra and **b**efore **c**ommon **e**ra, as if some magical thing happened 2022 years ago on which we base passage of time, but never think it had anything to do with Jesus Christ; that is how ridiculous the World is in suppressing the Truth. The World is led by fools, those who say in their hearts, 'There is no God!'... fools who believe they will never stand before God in His Judgment.

Take heed that no man deceive you. Be alert! False teachers will abound.

Verse 5: *'For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.'*

Notice He didn't say, 'many will say, I am Jesus Christ,' they will do that, too, but they will say, 'I am Christ.' The false teaching in these End Times is that we all have, within us, a spark of divinity which can grow into our becoming '*christs*.' One false teacher, Witness Lee wrote: '**We** must see the all-inclusive **Christ**. The greatest mystery in the universe is that *He can become us and we can become Him*.' The Word tells us that we are *in Him* and He is *in us* and that we will become *like* Him but we will never *be* Him!

We now live in what the World calls: 'The New Age.' New Agers shrink Jesus to being just a man who attained *spiritual enlightenment* through occult practice which is exactly what is taught today with *contemplative spirituality* which is, now, even in so many of our seminaries. To New Agers, Jesus Christ is an *Ascended Master* like, but no better than, Zoroaster, Buddha, Moses and Mohammed, all of whom offer a way that we can achieve *enlightenment* but never to receive *Eternal Salvation*. We know that is only through Jesus Christ.

One current false teacher, a supposed christian, a leader of the *Emergent Church*, Brian McLaren has a book titled: 'Why Did **Jesus**, **Moses**, the **Buddha**, and **Mohammed** Cross the Road?' I don't know, Brian, why don't you explain to us how the Lord Jesus Christ is not Who He is and did not do what He did. Perhaps we'll see you at the *Great White Throne Judgment*.

Verse 6: *'And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. ⁸ All these are the **beginning of sorrows**.'*

We see all those things around us, today; they represent only the beginning of sorrows. Now Jesus is beginning to list things which would typify the World throughout the time of the Church but would grow in intensity and frequency as the time for His coming for His Bride, the Church, drew near. And, we are instructed to **not be troubled**; we are to trust Him to care for us and we are to look always for His coming for us in the Rapture, our 'Blessed Hope.'

Jesus promised that God would care for us, even as He does the birds and the flowers, and to Him, we are far more important than they.

Remembering these promises is especially important for us as we see the World spinning out of control, as we are tempted to worry about the reports of coming food shortages or the possibility of Russia launching nuclear weapons on The Ukraine or coming Monkey Pox shutdowns.

God is in control of all things, at all times, in all places and over all people: humans and spirits. God is always in complete and absolute control of the physical Universe which we see and the unseen spiritual Universe.

'All these are the beginnings of sorrows.' All we see is just the beginning; it will get far worse, soon; be ready!

Verse 9: 'Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. ¹⁰ And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.'

Jesus is speaking here to all of us; this was happening during the lifetimes of the Disciples, during all the time of the Church and it will only be far, far worse after the Church is removed. The most persecuted people of all times are Christians and Jews. The World hates us with a seething hatred and that hatred will be unleashed to its fullest extent once the Holy Spirit removes His work of restraining evil when the Church is removed at the Rapture. When Jesus said, 'Worry not; don't give heed for tomorrow,' He also meant when many would be delivered up to be killed. Even then, the Holy Spirit will strengthen and comfort those being led to slaughter.

Verse 11: '*And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.*'

The false prophets, through the time of the Church, have been far too many to even count. Modern ones: Jim Jones and his People's Temple in Guyana where more than 900 died following him. Ellen G. White of the Seventh Day Adventists, Joseph Smith of the Mormons, Charles Taze Russell of the Jehovah's Witnesses and so many more who've led multiplied hundreds of thousands to eternity in Hell. '... and shall deceive many!'

Verse 12: '*And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.*'

All these things are meant for the Church and for Tribulation saints.

Economies around the World are being purposely destroyed, inflation is being purposely caused to cause everyone to eventually have to be dependent on the government so that soon, no one will have the ability to buy or sell or engage in any commerce except they willingly receive a certain mark of allegiance to the coming World leader whom the Bible calls, the Antichrist. Everything we see happening around the World is being guided and forced by the ruling elite to bring in their one World government leader: the Antichrist. We see so much sin, debauchery, sexual deviancy, children being taught and groomed by Godless teachers for the sexual pleasure of depraved adults, children raised to hate the good and embrace the evil; our nations are being led by Godless, incompetent, evil hearted fools; good is called evil while evil is called good; is it any wonder that the love of many grows ever colder? It's so very hard to love our enemies, the enemies of God. It's increasingly difficult to really trust God to care for us... but we must; He is our only hope! The World and its governments hate us but God loves and cares for us always. He knows us and He loves us.

Verse 13: '*But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*'

Here's where we begin to ask, 'Of Whom is He speaking?'

First, we know, from God's Word that He chose and elected, from the foundation of the World, those to whom He would reveal Himself and give the faith to believe when He chooses to call each one to Himself. And, we know that Salvation has always been according God's grace through our faith in Him and His Word. Both of these are true and have been from the time of Adam and Eve until the final Judgment at the end of the Millennial Reign of the Lord Jesus Christ... always saved by grace through faith and that is the gift of God. Salvation is God's work from beginning to the end. He chose each one, He called each one, He saved each one and He is the One Who will carry each one safely until death, the Rapture or His coming at Armageddon.

This verse could more easily be understood as: 'But he that was chosen by God will endure unto the end because God has saved Him and will keep Him safe and secure even through a martyr's death.'

'And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.' John 10:28 When did Jesus say this? In the Old Testament when salvation was the same as it will be during the Tribulation. Every one, from all time, chosen by God will be kept secure until taken to Heaven.

'Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it (will faithfully continue His good work in you) until the day of Jesus Christ.' Philippians 1:6

'Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.' 1Pet 1:5

'For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.' He never takes it back! Romans 11:29

'Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,' Jude v24

'Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.' Hebrews 7:25

'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.' John 5:24 Again, Jesus said this in Old Testament times before His death and resurrection and the birth of the Church with the New Covenant.

'According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love' Ephesians 1:4

We could list 50 more verses proving His promise to keep us, everyone He chose, safe and secure. Those not chosen by God, even though they meet with Christians, now or during the Tribulation, will eventually fall back under persecution: *'They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.'* 1Jn 2:19

Verse 14: *'And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.'*

Now we come to a verse that is definitely meant for Tribulation Saints.

Jesus came to Israel and preached the Gospel of the Kingdom. That Gospel said, God has made many and special promises to Israel and those promises will all be fulfilled, to the letter, when their Messiah comes and takes His rightful throne, the throne of David, and rules over all the Earth for 1000 years and forever. Israel will be the head of all the nations, blessed far above all other nations of the Earth. *'I, the Lord Jesus Christ am Israel's Messiah. Believe on Me, receive Me and I will be your King forever.'*

That is the *Gospel of the Kingdom* which Jesus preached for 3 1/2 years; He presented Himself as Israel's King, at the conclusion of the 69th Week of Daniel, in His Triumphant Entry. That is not the Gospel being preached today. Currently, during the *time of the Church*, we preach Paul's Gospel, the Gospel of Salvation by Grace through faith. We are not Israel; we are the Church, the Body and Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Gospel of the Kingdom is not for us. Once the Church is removed, that same Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached again and it will reach all the World; it will be the same again: the Lord Jesus Christ is the rightful King of all the Earth and He is coming soon to take His throne and rule over all His Kingdom.

That Gospel of the Kingdom will once again be preached, by the 144,000 Jews, who'll be sealed at the beginning of the Tribulation, by the two witnesses who stand in the Temple for 3 1/2 years and then also by an angel flying above: *'And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, ⁷Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.'* Rev 14:6 The Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the World; it will happen during the Tribulation and then Jesus Christ will return in power, glory and majesty to rule and reign for 1000 years and then forever. This is not what is happening today! This is not the Kingdom Age; we are not citizens of the Kingdom; we are definitely not building or expanding the Kingdom, no matter what false teachers say. Our citizenship is in Heaven and we preach the Gospel of Salvation by grace through faith.