

10/18/26

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MATTHEW

CHAPTER 24:1-14
THE SIGN OF JESUS' RETURN

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Well, it took us 2 studies, but we made it through the 8 “woes” to the Scribes and the Pharisees.
1. At the base minimum, even for Christians, I think it was great “self-check” to see if a bit of “religion” has crept into our lives and walk with the Lord.
 2. I think we would all agree that “playing the actor” or as Matthew put it, being a “hypocrite” is something none of us desire to do.
 - a) But it is VERY easy to preach what we do not practice!
 - b) And that is where a vibrant, vital walk with the Lord becomes so important.
 - c) If we keep our walk with the Lord real, up close and personal, we won’t have to “fake it”.
 - (1) And I also think we could agree that this is what the Lord desires of us, not the dead “religion” of the Scribes and Pharisees.
- B. This morning, we begin (in **Chapter 24**) what is known as the Olivet Discourse.
1. Forgive me if this seems rudimentary but to better understand the name give here:
 - a) It is called Olivet because Jesus says these things from the Mount of Olives.
 - (1) **Matthew 24:3 (NKJV) — 3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will* be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”**
 - (2) And the word “discourse” means, = dialog, conversation, discussion, speech or chat!
 - (3) So quite simply put, this is a discussion between Jesus and His disciples as they sit on the Mount of Olives, looking out over Jerusalem, just to the West of them. They can see the Eastern Gate from where they sit.
 - (a) But first, Jesus comes out of the Temple after His discussion with the Scribes and Pharisees, and it is quite apparent that the disciples are a bit shaken by the announcement that Jerusalem would be destroyed.

II. MATTHEW 24:1 (NKJV) — 1 THEN JESUS WENT OUT AND DEPARTED FROM THE TEMPLE, AND HIS DISCIPLES CAME UP TO SHOW HIM THE BUILDINGS OF THE TEMPLE.

- A. This may seem odd at first, but remember what he told them in the preceding chapter:
1. **Mat 23:37 "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together,**

the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. 38 "Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!

- a) The "your house" He is talking about is the Temple where they were all standing!
 - (1) So, the disciples take the opportunity, while they are exiting the temple, to point out to Jesus the enormity of **the Temple buildings**.
 - (2) I have seen some of these original stones and even *Josephus, the Jewish historian, says, there "were several stones which were 45 cubits in length, 5 in height, and 6 in breadth;" that is, more than 70 feet long, 10 wide, and 8 high.* (e-sword – Barnes commentary)
 - (a) Look at Jesus' response:

III. **MATTHEW 24:2 (NKJV) — 2 AND JESUS SAID TO THEM, "DO YOU NOT SEE ALL THESE THINGS? ASSUREDLY, I SAY TO YOU, NOT ONE STONE SHALL BE LEFT HERE UPON ANOTHER, THAT SHALL NOT BE THROWN DOWN."**

A. They can't comprehend it, but Jesus assures them that the destruction of Jerusalem WILL happen just as He predicted!

- 1. This begins to set in, as they make their way to the Mount of Olives.

IV. **MAT 24:3 NASB AS HE WAS SITTING ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES, THE DISCIPLES CAME TO HIM PRIVATELY, SAYING, "TELL US, WHEN WILL THESE THINGS HAPPEN, AND WHAT *WILL BE* THE SIGN OF YOUR COMING, AND OF THE END OF THE AGE?"**

A. As their whole world gets turned upside down, the disciples try to make some sense of it all.

- 1. You see they were still holding out for the hope that Jesus was going to overthrow the Roman government and set up His kingdom right then and there.
 - a) They finally realize that His kingdom will not be established until His second coming, so they ask Him when that will be!

V. **MATTHEW 24:4–6 (NKJV) — 4 AND JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID TO THEM: "TAKE HEED THAT NO ONE DECEIVES YOU. 5 FOR MANY WILL COME IN MY NAME, SAYING, 'I AM THE CHRIST,' AND WILL DECEIVE MANY. 6 AND YOU WILL HEAR OF WARS AND RUMORS OF WARS. SEE THAT YOU ARE NOT TROUBLED; FOR ALL *THESE THINGS* MUST COME TO PASS, BUT THE END IS NOT YET.**

A. Jesus begins to tell them of the "events" that will come to pass leading up to His return:

- 1. **5 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.**
 - a) Will it be that simple? Will we be able to quickly and easily identify these people because they are saying they are "christ"?
 - (1) Perhaps we should think a little deeper: Isn't another name for Jesus Christ, "Savior of the World"?
 - (a) In times of crisis - there will always be someone that rises to the occasion and claims the name of "savior"!
 - (i) You might even be able to think of one or 2 right now!
 - (ii) But there is only One true Christ - the Savior of the

World!

(a) Put your faith in no other!

2. Then there are the wars and rumors of wars!
 - a) This has certainly come to pass. In my lifetime alone there have been many wars in which the United States has been involved.
 - (1) Israel is always at war. There are wars in South American, Asia, and most of the world, most of the time, but **those things must take place, but that is not yet the end.**

VI. MATTHEW 24:7–8 (NKJV) — 7 FOR NATION WILL RISE AGAINST NATION, AND KINGDOM AGAINST KINGDOM. AND THERE WILL BE FAMINES, PESTILENCES (COVID), AND EARTHQUAKES IN VARIOUS PLACES. 8 ALL THESE ARE THE BEGINNING OF SORROWS.

A. I asked my friendly A.I. to give me a short-list of earthquakes that have occurred in the last 5 years and this what “it” said:

1. In the last five years, notable earthquakes include the 2021 Haiti earthquake (magnitude 7.2), the 2022 Afghanistan earthquake (magnitude 6.2), the 2023 Turkey–Syria earthquakes (magnitudes 7.7 and 7.8), the 2024 Noto earthquake in Japan (magnitude 7.5), and the 2025 Myanmar earthquake (magnitude 7.7).
2. I then asked what the death toll was from those earthquakes:
 - a) The answer was Using the figures in the list above, the combined death toll is 71,612.
 - b) **(8) "But all these things are the beginning of sorrows.**
 - c) If I were one of the disciples right about now, I would at least be thinking, “Sorry I asked!”
 - (1) But there is more:

VII. MATTHEW 24:9–10 (NKJV) — 9 “THEN THEY WILL DELIVER YOU UP TO TRIBULATION AND KILL YOU, AND YOU WILL BE HATED BY ALL NATIONS FOR MY NAME’S SAKE. 10 AND THEN MANY WILL BE OFFENDED, WILL BETRAY ONE ANOTHER, AND WILL HATE ONE ANOTHER.

A. This surely came to pass, in the lifetime of the disciples, but I believe it is prophetic also.

1. Christians will become the “scourge” of the nations!
2. I said that in 2003 and it is very obvious today.
3. And as this hatred progresses, **many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another.**
 - a) You see when it is not “popular” or “fun” or “acceptable” or even down right “dangerous” to be a Christian, many will fall away.
 - b) And even today, in some families and in some cultures, if you become a Christian, it will cost you your life!

VIII. MATTHEW 24:11–14 (NKJV) — 11 THEN MANY FALSE PROPHETS WILL RISE UP AND DECEIVE MANY. 12 AND BECAUSE LAWLESSNESS WILL ABOUND, THE LOVE OF MANY WILL GROW COLD. 13 BUT HE WHO ENDURES TO THE END SHALL BE SAVED. 14 AND THIS GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM WILL BE PREACHED IN ALL THE WORLD AS A WITNESS TO ALL THE NATIONS, AND THEN THE END WILL COME.

- A. So, we get a glimpse of the reason for the delay of His second coming in **Verse 14**
"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come."
1. **2 Peter 3:9–10 (NKJV) — 9** The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. **10** But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.
 2. They Lord will take as much time as need to give all people a chance to hear the Gospel - to have a chance to receive Him as their Lord and Savior.
 - a) **2 Peter 3:8 (NKJV) — 8** But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.
 - (1) But make no mistake – that day will come! And the world will be judged for what they believe about Jesus!

IX. CONCLUSION

- A. And I will close with the remainder of **2 Peter Chapter 3**, because our teaching this morning could not be closed with anything better or more appropriate in view of what Jesus has just told the disciples about His return.
1. **2 Peter 3:11–18 (NKJV) — 11** Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, **12** looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? **13** Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. **14** Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; **15** and consider *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, **16** as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable *people* twist to their own destruction, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures. **17** You therefore, beloved, since you know *this* beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; **18** but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory both now and forever. Amen.