

**Intro:** For 2,000 year's people have wondered about **the events of the End Times** and the **Signs of when Jesus would return**. In fact, terms such as *Millennium*, *Tribulation*, *666*, and *Anti-Christ* are used in the media all the time. – **The recent invasion on Israel** has seemingly shaken up a hornet's nest, so I want to spend the next few weeks reviewing what Jesus taught his disciples regarding **THE SIGNS OF THE END (Matt 24:1-44)**

As we delve into this chapter, there are **two things** that I want to make clear before we start:

- 1) The complexity of **Matthew 24**, **Mark 13**, and **Luke 21** has caused much disagreement amongst bible interpreters. **We will rely upon context**, corresponding verses, and the Holy Spirit for our interpretation.
- 2) The context mainly **deals with Israel** and the **Tribulation period in the latter days**, not the church!

**I. SIGN OF THE TEMPLE (1-2):** As far back as (**Matt 17**), Jesus made certain remarks that seemed odd to his disciples, because they assumed that He was about to establish His messianic kingdom. But when He stated that **the house in Jerusalem would be left desolate (Matt 23:37-39)**, *they were a bit perplexed...*

As they departed from the Temple, the disciples pointed out how glorious the buildings were, as if to declare that there was some value there...

**A. It was Glorious (1)** – The *Herodian Temple* was quite impressive! Made with massive **foundation stones**; some (40'x12'x12'). The **gates** were brass, the **courts** were marble, and the **Temple** itself was covered with gold. – *They disciples gazed at the buildings, but Jesus' assessment was different! He declared...*

**B. It would ALL be Destroyed (2)** – Jesus' prediction in these verses marks the beginning of Israel's destruction...It would surely take place! – This was literally fulfilled in A.D. 70, when the **Roman Emperor Titus**, **destroyed the temple with fire!** Every stone was literally sifted through and **thrown down** into the Kidron Valley in order to strip the stones of their gold! (*An unbelievable thought to the Jewish mindset*)

1. Jesus foresaw this event and predicted it would happen as the result of **divine judgment**.
2. Jesus' prediction confirms His credibility towards the future signs of the end times.

**II. SIGNS IN THE NATIONS (3-14):** Jesus made this shocking prediction as He made his way to the *Mt. of Olives*; a hill which sits East of the city, just above the Kidron Valley; near the Garden of Gethsemane. (**Mark 13:3**) tells us that four disciples approached Jesus privately: **Peter, James, John, and Andrew**. *They...*

**A. Inquiry of the Times (3)** – Jesus' prediction prompted these disciples to ask two questions: **(1) When will this happen?** i.e., when will the temple be destroyed and not one stone left on another? **(2) What will be the sign of Your coming and of the end of the Age?** (*Questions that we desire to know also*)

**B. Interpreting of the Times (4-14)** – Jesus didn't seem particularly interested in talking about the circumstances of **"the end."** His disciples provoked the questions, and **Jesus accommodated them with a few comments**. The comments provided are the signs that alert the nations that **judgment is beginning**.

1. **The Beginning of Sorrows (4-8)** – This period speaks of **various troubles** scattered throughout History. Scripture compares the sorrows (v.8) to that of a woman in labor (Isa. 13:6-11; 1 Thess 5:3). *"For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape."*

- a. **Signs of Religious Deception (4-5)** – Jews have often been led astray by False Prophets/Christ's

b. **Signs of Wars (v. 6-7a)** – There have always been wars in the world and there will be until the very end. **They are only signs...**the end is not yet. (*In Luke 24:9, when you hear, do NOT be terrified!*)

c. **Sign of Famines (7b)** – **War** and **Famine** usually go together. (Rev 6:6) *predicts terribly high prices for food in the latter days (have you been to the grocery store lately?)* – **Pestilences** (1991 – The AIDS epidemic was out – *This freaked me out also!*) – **Earthquakes** (being from S. Cal, I still can never get used to them, but hearing of their increase...freaks me out! – *Covid-19 pandemic...these are just the beginning of sorrows!*)

2. **Escalating Chaos (9–14)** – *Have you noticed the spike over the last decade?* – **We see these signs** in the world today, how they are seemingly **getting more intense** each day. **They serve as reminders to Stay focused on Jesus**, as we know His coming of the Lord is near.

a. **Worldwide Persecution (9)** – Christians have always been hated by the world, but here we have **an acceleration of persecutions and murders**. (*America has already been infiltrated*)

b. **Worldwide Chaos (10–13)** – *Those who once were true to each other will betray each other!* This suggests that marriages, families, communities, and nations will be torn asunder. **Lawlessness will abound (v.12)**, for even the law enforcement agencies will not be able to keep the peace.

**Why?** No love for the truth results in no love for others! (*Dog eat Dog*)

- (v. 13) teaches that during this terrible period **only the believers who endure in faith, will be saved** when the Lord comes at the end and delivers them.

d. **Worldwide Evangelism (14)** – The gospel will reach every part of the globe in those days! (Rev 7:1–8) teaches that God will choose and seal **144,000 Jewish evangelists** who will carry the kingdom message to the ends of the earth, of which many get saved! (*aka Trib. Saints/Rev 7:14-15*)

**Closing Point:** We all know that disturbances within the nations have always existed, but **Jesus reveals that in the end they will continue to escalate**; **End-time Jew's and Unbelieving Gentiles** will continue to witness such events as a reminder of the Lord's eminent return.

- **Born again Christians** will witness these events also, **up to the point of the Rapture of the Church**. (*Depending on your view, but that is another bible study! Pre, Mid, or Post-Tribulation Rapture view*)

**III. SIGN OF TRIBULATION (15-28):** The emergence of the **'Abomination of Desolation'** is a major sign which marks the Desolation of Israel and the end of the world as determined by God!

**A. Initiated by the Abomination of Desolation (15)** – He is also referred to as the **Antichrist**. His actions will launch the time known as **Jacob's Trouble**, which is **the last 3 ½ year period...** the worst time ever since man has been on earth (v.21).

1. Prior to this point in time, **the Antichrist** will make **a covenant with the Jewish nation** (*still in unbelief*) for seven years ("one week," Dan. 9:27), and **will break it after 3 ½ years**, or at the middle of the tribulation period with this abominable act (v.15). (*Similar to the historical acts of Antiochus Epiphanes – Dan 11*)

- **Jesus spoke of this embracing (John 5:43)** *I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.*

2. He will set up his own image in the Jewish temple (Dan. 11:31; 12:11) and **force the world to worship him** (Rev. 13; 2 Thess 2:3–4). **THEN the Jews will know that they were deceived!** – Note Matthew's little parenthesis: "whoever reads, let him understand" **This is the great tribulation!**

**B. Instructions for Israel (16-20)** – Christ warned the Jews to flee Jerusalem (*Expound*)

**C. Inconceivable Period (21-26)** –At this time, **great deception** will take place! Many will be seeking some kind of savior! **Deceivers will arise, thus the warning... DO NOT GO AFTER THEM!**

**D. Identifiable Signs (27-28)** – As the disciples wanted to know the **events of the End Times** and the Signs of when Jesus would return... **I imagine their expression as Jesus foretold these things? He goes on...**

1. **Lightning (27)** – Jesus clarifies that when He comes, **His appearing will be evident to ALL!**

2. **Carcass (28)** – **Armageddon is coming!** During the **great tribulation** the armies of the nations will **assemble against Jerusalem** and will be annihilated! When carrion birds are circling, it is evident that carcasses are below (cf. **Rev 19:17-18,21b**) (*Dead Bodies and Blood everywhere! – Horses bridle Rev 14:20*)

**IV. SIGNS IN HEAVEN (29-31):** Distinct and apparent signs in heaven of which **every eye will see** Jesus coming in the Clouds.

**A. Immediate Disturbances (29)** – The word “*after*” provides a time stamp for understanding.

**B. Incredible Appearance (30-31)** – The SON OF MAN Himself is the SIGN! (Dan 7:13; Rev 19:11-21)

**CLOSING EXHORTATIONS:** What does Jesus emphasize in His response to the His disciples...**WATCH AND BE READY!**

- Believers should not be looking for signs, but for Him—a Person—to return! (**Phil 3:20-21**) *For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.*