

What Christ said about the End Times

The Great Tribulation

Matthew 24:16-20

then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house, 18and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. 19And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! 20Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath.

When the **Antichrist** goes into the temple and declares himself god and wants to be worshipped- get out of **Judea** as fast as you can.

It would **appear** that the Jewish folks at this time are following the law of Moses because of the Sabbath restriction.

Verse 21

For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be.

The Tribulation will last **seven** years. The Great Tribulation will be the last **3 ½** years when things will ramp up.

Verse 22

And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.

This verse is not talking about the **rapture**. What Jesus is talking about is the preservation of **Israel** (the elect). God will shorten this persecution so that **Israel** will not be destroyed.

Verses 23-27

Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There he is!' do not believe it. 24For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. 25See, I have told you beforehand. 26So, if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out. If they say, 'Look, he is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. 27For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

Jesus is warning that during the Tribulation there will be false **christs** and false **prophets** and they will do great miracles and will try to lead people away.

Also, people will say **Jesus** is here or there- but Jesus makes it clear when He comes back- you will know it. In fact, His coming will draw a **close** to the Tribulation.

Lightning- is known for its **speed**, power, and its widespread visibility. His coming will be sudden, public, and powerful- there will be no **doubt** of his second coming.

Verse 28

Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.

This verse is referring to the dead bodies being devoured by **birds** (Revelation 19:17-18).

Verses 29-30

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

After the **tribulation** the earth will experience cosmic disturbances when Jesus comes back. Signs in the **sky** will precede His coming (Luke 21:25-26).

- There will be a great shaking of the universe. There will be great darkness then Christ will come back with his Shekinah Glory (Zechariah 14:6-7)
- **Clouds**- signifies the presence of God (Exodus 16:10; 2 Chronicles 5:13-14; Daniel 7:13-14).
- *The tribes of the earth will mourn*- the people who will still be alive will mourn because of their **rebellion** (Zechariah 12:10; Romans 11:25-26; Isaiah 59:20). It would appear that when Christ returns many **Gentiles** and **Jews** will turn to Christ.

Verse 31

And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

It would appear that Jesus will dispatch the angels to gather the **elect** (Israel) who had been scattered all over the world. Christians are already with Jesus.

Trumpet- will announce the gathering of His people to be placed in her land.

It should be noted that those who believe the rapture occurs before the **tribulation** or in the middle teach that this is not speaking of the church.

The Parable of the Fig Tree (Verses 32-35)

Verses 32-34

“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. 33So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. 34Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.”

When one would see leaves on the fig tree-summer is near. In other words, when you see all these things happening in the tribulation, Jesus’ second coming is near.

Some have taken this text and have tried to **use it** to say it is referring to **Israel** getting back into its land in 1948 and **that generation** will not pass until Christ comes back.

Verse 35

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

Jesus here is not talking about the New Testament but this **prophecy**. His prophecy, will be fulfilled.

Verses 36-39

“But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. 37For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. 38or as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, 39and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

Jesus makes it very **clear** that only the **Father** knows the date. The angels of heaven do not know the date nor timeline. Not even Jesus knew in His **humanity** the time. It would see that Jesus regained full divine knowledge after the resurrection.

Days of Noah- Jesus is saying that the world, like in Noah’s day, did not **expect** judgment but suddenly judgment came, so it will be with Christ’s second coming.

Verses 40-42

Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. 41Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left. 42Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

This is not talking about the **rapture**. Rather, unbelievers being taken away **for judgment** just like in the days of Noah.

Verses 43-44

But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. 44 Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

If a **homeowner** would be vigilant to guard his earthly possessions- how much more should a **believer** guard his spiritual rewards which are far greater. Jesus also compares himself to a thief because he will come **unexpectedly**.

Jesus Gives a Parable on Preparedness (Verses 45-51)

Verses 45-47

“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? 46 Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. 47 Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions.”

This parable is a little different than others because it is about the same **character** but Jesus gives two alternative outcomes. Jesus is making a point to his **followers** that they might go astray.

The servant is a manager or supervisor over the **other servants**. This servant takes care of his master's household. The meaning of what Christ is saying is that this servant honors his master by serving and living for his **lord**.

Verses 48-51

48 But if that wicked servant says to himself, ‘My master is delayed,’ 49 and begins to beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards, 50 the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know 51 and will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The alternative is to act like Jesus' coming is **delayed** and then act irresponsibly and wickedly because one thinks there is a lot of time to repent.

It would **appear** this parable pictures those who delay coming to Christ and due to Christ's second coming or their own **death** that it is too late to repent. Thus, resulting in eternal damnation.

Three points that Jesus makes in this parable:

- 1) God rewards his **servants** (Bema seat of Christ).
- 2) Faithful stewardship requires **perseverance**.
- 3) Those who postpone getting right with God may **run** out of time.