

Matthew Chapter 24 Second Continued

Matthew 24:25 "Behold, I have told you before."

“Behold, I have told you before”:

Meaning not before in this discourse, though he had (in Matthew 24:5), signified also, that false christs, and false prophets should arise, but before these things came to pass; so that they had sufficient notice and warning of them, and would be inexcusable if they were not upon their guard against them.

Which when those things came to pass; it would furnish a considerable argument in proof of him as the true Messiah, against all these false ones showing him to be omniscient.

And so would serve to establish their faith in him, and would be a means of securing them from such deceivers.

Matthew 24:26 "Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, [he is] in the secret chambers; believe [it] not."

“Believe it not”:

No one should consider the claims of self-styled messiahs because all of them are false.

When Christ returns, no one will miss it (verses 27-28).

Matthew 24:27 "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

“For as the lightning cometh out of the east”:

This is not designed to denote the quarter from which he would come, but the manner.

He does not mean to affirm that the "Son of man" will come from the "east," but that he will come in a rapid and unexpected manner, like the lightning.

Many would be looking for him in the desert, many in secret places; but he said it would be useless to be looking in that manner.

It was useless to look to any particular part of the heavens to know where the lightning would next flash.

In a moment, it would blaze in an unexpected part of the heavens, and then shine at once to the other part.

So rapidly, so unexpectedly, in so unlooked for a section would be his coming (see Luke 10:18; Zechariah 9:14).

There will be a magnificent Light that, in appearance, looks like lightning.

When Jesus (Son of man), comes back, it will not be a secret.

The Light will be so bright everyone will know.

Matthew 24:28 "For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together."

“There will the eagles be gathered”:

The location of a carcass is visible from great distances because of the circling carrion birds overhead (Job. 39:27-30).

Similarly, Christ’s return will be clearly evident to all near and far.

The same point is made by the lightning in verse 27.

The vulture and dead body imagery here also speaks of the judgment that will accompany His return (Rev. 19:21).

Verses 29-31:

The reference to the events “immediately after the tribulation;” Such as the sun being darkened and the stars falling, refer to the cataclysmic events that will accompany Christ’s millennial kingdom on earth.

His return will be marked by the “sign of the Son of man in heaven,” which will identify His coming to the tribes of the earth.

The “clouds of heaven” indicate that Christ will come from heaven to the earth (Dan. 7:13-14; 2 Thess. 1:7-9).

The “angels” are the same agents of judgment as (in 13:39).

The “elect” are the saved who have come to faith in Christ by the grace of God and are gladly anticipating their Lord’s return.

Matthew 24:29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:"

“The sun be darkened”:

Such phenomena are a common feature of the Day of the Lord prophecy (see Isa. 13:9-10; Ezek. 32:7-8; Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15; Amos 8:9).

The ultimate fulfillment of these prophecies takes place during the time of the Beast’s reign (Rev. 6:12-13; 8:12).

Matthew 24:30 "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

“The sign of the Son of man”:

I.e., the Son of man Himself is the sign.

The events described here precisely parallel the description (in Dan. 7:13; Rev. 19:11-21).

“All the tribes of the earth mourn”:

I.e., over their own rebellion.

Israel in particular, will mourn over their rejection of the Messiah (Zech. 12:10-12).

Jesus went to heaven on a cloud, and the angels told the disciples that were looking on, that He will come back the same way He went.

Here is the fulfillment of that prophecy.

He truly will come back in the clouds.

Then He will not be as of one of us, but in Power and Great Glory.

This is when we will see Him in all of His heavenly attire.

We will know for sure who it is with His eyes like flaming fire, white flowing hair, feet like burning brass.

Then He will be King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Of course, He has always been that, but then we recognize Him as that.

Matthew 24:31 "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

“From one end of heaven to the other”:

All the “elect” from heaven and earth are gathered and assembled before Christ.

This is the culmination of world history, ushering in the millennial reign of Christ (Rev. 20:4).

Verses 32-33:

The illustration of the “fig tree” is referred to as a “parable.”

The immediate context seems to refer to the fig tree in a natural (not symbolic), sense.

While it is clear in Scripture that Israel is symbolized at times by the fig tree (Chapter 21), the usage here simply seems to be that as these events reach the apex of their fulfillment, the actual and ultimate return of Christ follows immediately.

Matthew 24:32 "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer [is] nigh:"

“Parable of the fig tree”:

When the fig branch “puts forth its leaves,” only a short time remains until summer.

Likewise, when the final labor pains begin, Christ’s return is near, “even at the door” (verse 33).

Matthew 24:33 "So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, [even] at the doors."

Signs are indications that Christ is about to return to earth.

Technically, they refer to the revelation of Christ, and not the Rapture.

There are obvious signs during the seven year Tribulation before the revelation, but there are no signs that precede the Rapture.

However, there are conditions that suggest the Rapture will happen soon.

No one will ever know the date of Jesus’ return until He comes.

Still there are certain things happening in our world to suggest that His return may be very close.

These are:

1. Israel’s return to the Promised Land;
2. The obvious accelerations of lawlessness;
3. Increase of apostasy (1 Tim. 4:1);

4. The socio-religious climate preparing for the one world church; and
5. The rapid acceleration of life-threatening conditions – such as potential atomic annihilation, population explosion, and pollution, that require Christ's return before events run their natural course and terminate the world.

Paul listed certain conditions which, though true in every age, appear to be more prevalent today (2 Tim. 3:1-5).

The Christians in Thessalonica lived in expectation of Christ's imminent return, just as all Christians ought to live today.

The "fig tree" is symbolic of the house of Israel.

You remember that was what was meant when Jesus cursed the fig tree.

So this was talking about when Israel lives again.

The "blooming" means to me is when Israel became a nation in 1948.

Here this Scripture is saying, when you see Israel reunited and become a nation again, know that the coming of the Lord is near.

In fact, even at the door.

Matthew 24:34 "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."

"This generation":

This cannot refer to the generation living at that time of Christ, for "all these things", the abomination of desolation (verse 15), the persecutions and judgments (verses 17-22), the false prophets (verses 23-26), the signs in the heavens (verses 27-29), Christ's final return (verse 30), and the gathering of the elect (verse 31), did not "take place" in their lifetime.

It seems best to interpret Christ's words as a reference to the generation alive at the time when those final hard labor pains begin.

This would fit with the lesson of the fig tree, which stresses the short span of time in which these things will occur.

This is speaking of the generation in whose lifetime all these signs occur.

That generation will not pass away until "all these things be fulfilled."

In other words, the previously listed signs will continue to multiply throughout the church age and reach their ultimate climax at the end of the age in the generation of those who will live to see the entire matter fulfilled in their lifetime.

Verses 35-38:

Verses 35 and 36 warn against attempts to set an exact date for Christ's return at the end of the church age.

To speculate that "day" and "hour" do not eliminate "year" is a gross oversimplification.

The "Father only" knows the time of Christ's return since it has been set by His authority (see Acts 1:7).

However, we are given a comparison to the "days of Noah" (and the Flood), which illustrate and prefigure the condition of humanity at the time of Christ's return.

The last generation, like the one of Noah's day, is pleasure-oriented and self-gratifying by "eating and drinking."

The reference to "marrying and giving in marriage" may refer to carrying on the normal course of life without heeding the impending judgment.

Matthew 24:35 "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

"Heaven and earth shall pass away":

The "heaven" refers to the physical universe.

Some scripture interpretations include the words "with a roar".

The "roar" connotes a whistling or a crackling sound as of objects being consumed by flames.

God will incinerate the universe, probably in an atomic reaction that disintegrates all matter as we know it (see 2 Peter 3:10).

The elements will be destroyed with intense heat.

The "elements" are the atomic components into which matter is ultimately divisible, which make up the composition of all the created matter.

This means that the atoms, neutrons, protons, and electrons are all going to disintegrate.

Then the whole of the physical, natural earth in its present form, with its entire universe will be consumed (Isa. 24:19-20; 34:4).

This is called “the Day of the Lord” which is a technical term pointing to the special intervention of God in human history for judgment.

It ultimately refers to the future time of judgment whereby God judges the wicked on earth and ends this world system in its present form.

The Old Testament prophets saw the final Day of the Lord as unequaled darkness and damnation, a day when the Lord would act in a climactic way to vindicate His name, destroy His enemies, reveal His glory, and establishes His kingdom

And then destroy the world (Isaiah 2:10-21; 13:6-22; Joel 1, 2; Amos 5; Obadiah 15; Zechariah 14; Malachi 4; and 2 Thessalonians 1:7; 2:2).

It occurs at the time of the tribulation on earth (Rev. 6:17), and again 1,000 years later at the end of the millennial kingdom before the creation of the new heavens and new earth (verse 13; Revelation 20:1 - 21:1).

We know that somewhere in the future, the heaven and earth will pass away, because we read we shall have a new heaven and a new earth.

Jesus is the Word of God.

He is also, eternal.

By this, we know the Word is eternal.

Matthew 24:36 "But of that day and hour knoweth no [man], no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."

“Day and hour”:

The disciples wanted to fix the precise time, but this was not for them to know (Acts 1:7).

No one knows for sure the hour or the day that the Lord shall return to the earth.

We read (in Luke chapter 21 verses 34-36): "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and [so] that day come upon you unawares." "For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

What in the world is surfeiting in verse 34?

This is about over indulgence, and how it can cloud our senses to the point where we miss God and become ensnared in the things of this world.

Even though we do not know the day or hour, we can see all around us the signs.

We have an expectancy in our hearts, if we truly love Jesus.

We must not grow lax and fall back in sin as the Scriptures above are saying in Luke.

Jesus recommended that we use that time to pray.

The moment we are not expecting Him, is when Jesus will return.

We must be ready.

The Jewish bride waits at her home, until the groom builds her a home approved by his father.

The groom does not even know the time.

When the father is satisfied that the house is ready, he sends his son for the bride.

The groom stands on a hill just outside the city and blows the trumpet.

The bride must be ready, and when she hears the trumpet, goes to meet her groom.

They steal away together.

Matthew Chapter 24 Second Continued Questions

1. What are we to do, if we hear that Jesus is in the desert?
2. What shall the coming of the Son of man be like?
3. What do you think V-28 means?
4. When will the sun be darkened?
5. When the sun turns dark, what powers shall be shaken?
6. The great tribulation covers how many years?
7. What subdivisions of it are there?
8. When shall the sign of the Son of man appear in heaven?
9. When shall the tribes mourn?

10. How had Jesus gone to heaven before?
11. When shall we see Him in His heavenly attire?
12. What will Jesus be called when He comes back?
13. What is His purpose in coming?
14. In V-32, the fig tree was what?
15. When did Israel become a nation?
16. What should we know when we see these signs?
17. What two things, that we classify as permanent, shall pass away?
18. What will we not know?
21. What are we warned against?
20. What are we to do to prepare?
21. What Jewish custom reminds of the second coming of Christ?