

## Lesson 86 – WHEN WILL THE END COME?

Matthew 24:1-14

**(Matt. 24:1-3)** – This chapter of Matthew’s Gospel is known as the “Olivet Discourse” as the Lord delivered it to His disciples privately as He “*SAT UPON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES,*” sometimes referred to as “Olivet” in the KJV (2 Sam. 15:30; Acts 1:12) or “the mount facing Jerusalem” (1 Kings 11:7). It was a ridge running along the east side of Jerusalem, separated from the city walls by a ravine and the Brook Kidron. This is a prophetic discourse where the Lord spoke of future things, many of which have already been fulfilled and many which are yet to come. The disciples wanted “*TO SHEW HIM THE BUILDINGS OF THE TEMPLE.*” They were impressed with the beauty of this physical temple.

Recall that the first Temple of Solomon had long since been destroyed. The second Temple, built upon Israel’s return from captivity in Babylon and supervised by the governor, Zerubbabel, had wasted away to almost nothing. Here, the third Temple, was built by King Herod, and it was very impressive to men, but not to God. The worship of the Temple had denigrated into nothing more than a shrine to unbelief and idolatry. The Ark of the Covenant was long gone, and the priesthood was so corrupted that it had little or no resemblance to the original worship under the Levites.

The Lord said to 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.*” The Temple was a center for the worship prescribed by God for Israel under the Old Covenant Law. Like that Old Covenant, it was never intended to last forever. It was a physical picture and type of Christ and His church showing through the brazen altar, the blood sacrifices, and the high priest attending the holy of holies, sprinkling the blood on the mercy-seat, how God could be just to justify ungodly sinners by the blood of the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, and based on His righteousness alone. Christ told them that this temple would soon be destroyed as the Old Covenant would give way to the New Covenant fulfilled in Christ (Heb. 10:9). The disciples then asked Him, “*TELL US, WHEN SHALL THESE THINGS BE?*” AND THEY ADDED, “*WHAT SHALL BE THE SIGN OF THY COMING, AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD?*” The disciples believed that if the Temple was destroyed, it would mark the end of the age. So, Christ speaks to them of things that would come soon, i.e. the destruction of Jerusalem under the judgment of God, and things that would come later leading to His second coming and the end of the world.

**(Matt. 24:4-5)** – Jewish historians tell us that there were many in the days prior to the destruction of Jerusalem who claimed to be the Messiah. Multitudes followed them, just as multitudes follow false Messiahs in our day. But there is a far greater deception than that of any mere man claiming that he is the Christ. False Christianity presents men with a false Christ in the preaching of free will, works religion (2 Cor. 11:3-4, 13-15). There is

but one true Christ. He is that Christ Who is set forth in the Word of God in the glory of His Person (God manifest in the flesh) and in the power and success of His finished work of redeeming His people from their sins so as to insure their complete salvation. The true Christ of the Bible is – (1) God the Son in sinless human flesh (John 1:1-3,14; (2) the Surety of an Eternal Covenant (Heb. 7:22); (3) One Who came to save His people from their sins (Matt. 1:21); (4) the Savior Who has accomplished all that He came into this world to do (Gal. 3:13; Heb. 10:10-14); and (5) The Substitute and Redeemer Who shall be satisfied with the results of His redemptive, saving work (Isa. 53:10-12). A Christ who tries to save but fails, who tries to redeem but fails, who seeks but does not find, who calls any who do not answer is a false Christ, an impostor, and an antichrist!

**(Matt. 24:6-8)** – Conflict and wars between individuals, groups, and nations will continue. There will be no time of perfect peace in this world. There will be disease and natural disasters all over this world, *“BUT THE END IS NOT YET”* and *“ALL THESE ARE THE BEGINNING OF SORROWS,”* not the end. When wars, famines, and persecutions come, by which many are offended, we must continue looking to Christ, clinging to Christ, trusting Christ (John 16:32-33; Heb. 12:1-2). When others fall, we must not allow Satan to get an advantage of us (Eph. 6:10-18).

**(Matt. 24:9-10)** – Throughout the New Covenant Age, there will be a time of great apostasy where many who profess to believe the truth will forsake it unto damnation. All who apostatize were never truly saved (2 Thess. 2; Heb. 6:4-6; 10:23-31; 1 John 2:18-19).

**(Matt. 24:11-14)** – As *“MANY FALSE PROPHETS SHALL RISE, AND SHALL DECEIVE MANY,”* and *“BECAUSE INIQUITY SHALL ABOUND, THE LOVE OF MANY SHALL WAX COLD,”* there are two things assured for God’s true children. (1) All the true children of God, all who are truly saved by His grace in Christ (redeemed by His blood and justified by His righteousness imputed) *“SHALL ENDURE UNTO THE END.”* They shall all *“BE SAVED”* (John 6:37-39; Heb. 10:38-39; 1 John 3:1-10). (2) Because they are God’s elect from every nation, the Gospel will *“BE PREACHED IN ALL THE WORLD FOR A WITNESS UNTO ALL NATIONS.”* They will all hear the Gospel and be drawn to Christ by God in the power of the Holy Spirit (John 6:44-45; 10:14-16, 27-30; 2 Thess. 2:13-14).

*“AND THEN SHALL THE END COME”* – When the last one of God’s chosen people are brought into His kingdom, when they are brought by God to faith in Christ and repentance of dead works (2 Pet. 3:9-13), then Christ will descend from heaven, gather His church unto Himself for glory, and raise up the vessels of wrath to be judged by Him according to His righteousness (Acts 17:31). In then Christ’s righteousness will be the issue. All in Him are justified, and all who are without Him are condemned!