

SIGNS OF HIS COMING

MATTHEW 24:1-31

If you had lived when Christ was on earth . . .

If you were one of His followers . . .

If you had seen what they had seen . . .

What would you have been thinking?

As times began to get rough, and persecution set in,

what do you suppose would be going through your mind?

If you were a Jew living in Jesus' day, how might you have interpreted the events they were seeing?

JEWISH EXPECTATION OF THE KINGDOM

Based on Daniel 9 and Zechariah 9, **three steps to restoration** expected:

What God promised:

- 1) **Restoration to land**
- 2) **Coming of Messiah**
- 3) **Blessing for Israel**

Messianic expectation was high—everyone was expecting Messiah.

Those who took Daniel's time table seriously knew the 69 weeks were coming to an end!

Jews had a problem:

Jewish Christians had a problem:

-Israel returned to land

-Israel returned

-Messiah didn't come

-Messiah came

-No blessing

-No blessing

What happened to God's plan for Israel? Had God forgotten?

Matthew was written to answer that question:

What happened to God's plan for Israel?

Matthew demonstrates that **Messiah came as promised**

Jesus demonstrates that He is their Messiah:

By His credentials and witnesses

By His words

By His supernatural and Messianic acts

Evidence is sufficient for anyone who wants to know the truth.

In spite of the evidence **Israel rejects their Messiah**

He rejects Israel; institutes new program—the church.

He proclaims judgment against that evil generation which rejected the evidence and rejected Him.

They're to be destroyed—**Prophecy fulfilled in A.D. 70.**

Rome destroys Jerusalem

BUT--God isn't through with Israel!

Christ will return at end of the age and fulfill His promise to another generation that genuinely seeks His arrival and receives Him.

MESSIANIC AUTHENTICATION 1-7

MESSIANIC MINISTRY 8-10

MESSIANIC REJECTION FORESEEN 11-13:52

MESSIANIC OPPOSITION 13:53-18

MESSIANIC PRESENTATION AND REJECTION 19-25

After preparing His disciples for rejection they would endure with Him, Jesus returns to the crowd.

Luke tells us: Jesus fixed his eyes toward Jerusalem—He's headed for that definitive event.

Formal Presentation 19-21:17

Formal Rejection 21:18-22:46

Formal Response 23-25

After the religious leaders conclude their attempts to trap Jesus and reveal their rejection of Him and lack of desire to know the truth, Jesus addresses the crowds.

This is His formal response as King to the nation who has rejected Him.

PROCLAMATION OF JUDGMENT ON THAT GENERATION 23

The announcement of judgment began in Matt. 23.

What group was Jesus talking about in Matt. 23?

What did He say about them?

His message begins with a summary proclamation of judgment against the religious leaders of the nation for their rejection of Him.

Warning concerning the motives of the religious leaders 23:1-12

Woes directed against the religious leaders 23:13-32

What would happen to them? Why?

Pronouncement of judgment on this generation 23:33-36

Having condemned the religious leaders for hypocrisy and deception, Jesus announces the judgment to come on this generation.

They have followed these leaders and rejected their Messiah.

How does the chapter conclude?

Lament concerning desolation of Jerusalem 23:37-39

Jesus laments the judgment which is about to come on Israel.

This was not the way He wanted it to be.

He loves them and wants to care for them but they're unwilling.

Therefore God must judge them.

Their state will be like the fig tree Jesus cursed.

They have been fruitless and will now become desolate, until they are ready to receive Him.

Then He will return.

His lament

His concern for them

The judgment to be announced in 24-25 is the continuation of Matt. 23.

PREDICTION OF COMING JUDGMENT (the tribulation) 24-25:46

Jesus already demonstrated who He is

The nation demonstrated their rejection of Him through the response of official representatives, priests and other religious leaders.

Jesus already promised the formation of a new group "*called out*" from Israel and from the nations as well-- the church.

Now He announces what's ahead for that generation of Israel which rejected Him.

After completion of proclamation of judgment, Jesus explains to His disciples the events which will follow.

He doesn't want them to be unprepared for the unfolding of God's plan in the coming days.

Without His explanation they might become disillusioned on account of the events they see happening.

What happens in the beginning of Matt. 24?

WARNING OF IMMINENT JUDGMENT 24:1-3

The disciples come out of the temple admiring its great beauty.

Jesus warns them that **this beautiful new temple will be destroyed!**

Its gonna come tumblin' down.

Jerusalem will soon be judged.

It's temple will be destroyed.

Not one stone will be left standing on another.

How do they respond to this prediction?

His prediction encourages their question concerning the end of the age.

They ask two questions-- *What are their questions?*

When will this happen?

What will be the sign of the end of the age (your coming)?

Does He answer them? Where? The answers are reversed:

24:4-31-The signs

24:32-51-The time

What are the signs to watch for?

He explains the events which will precede His return. (24:4-51)

Answers to these questions apply to immediate future & persecution related to immediate judgment on that generation in A.D. 70.

Ultimately apply to final judgment during tribulation, immediately preceding our Lord's coming.

3 Signs of His return 24:4-31

1. Tribulation 24:4-26

At the end of the age there will be a period of tribulation.
During which time there will be a yearning for His coming [Brackets: 5, 23-26]

Description of first half 4-8

Time begins with international turmoil, caused by politics and nature.

False Christs 4-5

Political conflicts 6-7a

Natural disasters 7b

It's "the beginning of birth pains"-the beginning; 8

it's NOT the end! [time break between beginning and end!]

Beginning of birth pangs—just the initial sign.

It's part of the process.

It inevitably leads to the birth

But it's NOT the end of the age—it's NOT the sign of His coming!

Description of second half 9-14

Bad conditions get worse!

Hard times intensify in 2nd half, concluding with persecution
for those who proclaim Christ.

Faithful are persecuted 9

Natural consequences of affliction follow:

Many abandon the faith 10

False prophets deceive many 11

Many grow cold 12

Faithful are delivered 13

24:13 *Who will be saved?*

Does this mean you can lose your salvation?

Salvation from what? Cp. 24:9-10

Not a reference to salvation from sin

Context is talking about a fierce persecution.

God is going to intervene.

In spite of appearances, not all the faithful will die

At the end God will come rescue some of them.

Gospel preached everywhere 14a

Refers to the good news concerning Christ's coming kingdom—the king is
coming soon!—that message will be announced everywhere!

THEN the end comes! 14b

Warning to flee 15-21

Those waiting for Christ during this tribulation should be alert!

Sign to flee: an abominable thing which causes desolation.

It fulfills Daniel's prophecy.

When Antichrist breaks covenant in middle of tribulation and persecutes God's people.

Immediate future: Antiochus sacrifices swine in temple.

Early church: believing they're IN the tribulation, escaped when they saw Rome marching in to "devastate" the city.

Another "forerunner"—a type-of REAL thing, that comes in middle of tribulation.

While the exact fulfillment of this prophecy is not clear now, it will be apparent to those who live through this period.

When they see that sign, they should escape to the hills, for

Following the warning comes period of unequaled persecution

Limitation of length 22 *Will the tribulation be shortened?*

Suffering will be so intense that no one could survive.

if God did not intervene supernaturally to end the period, but . . .

God intervenes to end the affliction.

God's original plan calls for His intervention—it's not a change of plans!

Appearance of false Christs 23-26

During this suffering, **desire for Christ's return grows**.

Many claim to see Him

Many people follow them

[2nd sign of His coming and of the end of the age:

Sign has to do with *THE WAY* He comes—it's not what people claim! It's a ...]

2. Visible Sign of Christ's coming 24:27-30

Jesus warns His followers not to chase after these popular "citings!"

His coming won't be like that.

When He comes, it will be apparent to all, like lightning in the sky.

3. Regathering of Israel 24:31

He sends angels to gather His people from wherever they've been scattered.

HOW SHOULD WE ACT IN THE LIGHT OF THIS PASSAGE?

How should we then live?

Call to readiness Call to purity Call to faithfulness

We can trust God in midst of affliction.

He's in charge.

He has a plan.

We know who wins!

Our role in proclaiming good news to the world—because bad news lies ahead!