

THE CHRIST-CENTERED LIFE

Jesus Explains the End Times

Matthew 24

INTRODUCTION: Many people are fascinated by the end times, as am I. However, I find that many are confused by the end times. They don't know whether their understanding is premillennial, postmillennial, or amillennial. They don't know whether the rapture is pretrib, midtrib, or posttrib, or even what those terms mean.

I understand. The study of end times is one of the most interesting subjects in Scripture, but it is also one of the most challenging. There are two reasons for that.

- One, because the teaching about the end times is scattered throughout the Bible: Genesis, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, each of the Gospels, Acts, most of the N.T. letters, and of course the Book of Revelation.
- The book that has the most information about the end times is the Revelation. But Revelation can only be understood after one has thoroughly studied all of the rest of the Bible. There is a reason why God inspired this book as the last of the Holy Scriptures.

However, there is one place where you can find the divine "Cliff's Notes." In a single chapter of his gospel, Mt. 24, Matthew records what Jesus said regarding the end times. If you want a life that is Christ-Centered, surely you will want to have an understanding of the future that is centered in what Christ said.

I would suggest to any of you who are serious about having a Jesus-centered perspective on the end times, to just listen intently this morning. Then later this week, go to our website and pull up a copy of the notes of this sermon I am preaching to you today. From the text and this explanation make your own set of notes that you can understand either in your Bible or on separate pages, physical or digital.

This morning, we are going to walk through Matthew 24, verse by verse.

| MATTHEW 24 | DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE |
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| 1 Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. | |
| 2 And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not <i>one</i> stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down." | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfilled in 70 A.D. by Romans |

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| <p>3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what <i>will be</i> the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"</p> | <p>THREE QUESTIONS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When will the temple be destroyed? 2. What will be the sign of Your coming? 3. What will be the sign of the end of the age? <p>The key to understanding Mt. 24 is this: Jesus answers the questions in the order in which they were asked.</p> <p>First, Jesus tells them what life will be like before the destruction of the temple.</p> |
| <p>4 And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.</p> | |
| <p>5 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.</p> | <p>And in those days of the early church, there were many heretics, imposters, and wolves who tried to deceive.</p> <p>Next Jesus tells us of what has proven to be a long period of history which He called</p> <p>THE BEGINNING OF SORROWS</p> |
| <p>6 And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all <i>these things</i> must come to pass, but the end is not yet.</p> | |
| <p>7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.</p> | |
| <p>8 All these <i>are the beginning of sorrows.</i></p> | |
| <p>9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.</p> | <p>Remember, Jesus is talking to Jewish men! Indeed the Jews have been hated throughout history.</p> |

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| 10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. | |
| 11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. | |
| 12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. | |
| 13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved. | <p>All of these things have happened and continue to happen. We still live in the BEGINNING OF SORROWS</p> <p>But something else will be happening also.</p> |
| 14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations , and then the end will come. | <p>THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go, make disciples • Be witnesses of Me <p>Now we are ready of the answer to the second question:</p> <p>What will be the sign of Your coming?</p> |
| 15 “Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand), | <p>THE SIGN OF CHRIST’S COMING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revelation reveals that the antichrist will set up his throne in the Holy of Holies and declare himself to be god. |
| 16 “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In his rule over the earth he will target Jews and Christians for persecution. |
| 17 Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. | |
| 18 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. | |
| 19 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! | <p>Why? Because it is hard to run and hard to move to a new place when you are pregnant or have a little baby!</p> |

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| <p>20 And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.</p> | |
| <p>21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.</p> | <p>THE SIGN OF THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST IS THE TRIBULATION. Which Daniel reveals is seven years long.</p> |
| <p>22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.</p> | <p>The elect here are people who were lost and therefore not raptured. But God sends 2 witnesses and 144,000 missionaries to proclaim the gospel and many are saved from every tribe, tongue, and nation.</p> <p>So do not think the rapture cannot take place until every people group hears the gospel. God will complete the spread of the gospel in the first half of the tribulation.</p> |
| <p>23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here <i>is</i> the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe <i>it</i>."</p> | |
| <p>24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.</p> | |
| <p>25 See, I have told you beforehand.</p> | |
| <p>26 "Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, <i>He is</i> in the inner rooms!' do not believe <i>it</i>."</p> | <p>Revelation reveals that the False Prophet will promote the antichrist as the god and messiah to be worshipped. But he is not the real Christ!</p> |
| <p>27 For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.</p> | |
| <p>28 For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.</p> | |
| <p>29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from</p> | |

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| <p>heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.</p> | |
| <p>30 Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, 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.</p> | <p>The return of Jesus to the earth –</p> <p>THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST</p> |
| <p>31 And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.</p> | <p>Notice that the elect, the saved, are already in heaven, and they will be gathered to follow the Lord as He returns for the Battle of Armageddon to defeat the antichrist and Satan.</p> <p>Next, Jesus answers the third question:</p> <p>What will be the sign of the end of the age?</p> <p>What age? When they asked the question, they were only days from the beginning of the age of the church!</p> |
| <p>32 “Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer <i>is</i> near.</p> <p>When the fig tree comes out of dormancy the season of summer is here.</p> | <p>THE FIRST SIGN OF THE END OF THE CHURCH AGE IS THE BUDDING OF THE FIG TREE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fig tree is Israel. • Israel came out of dormancy in 1948. |
| <p>33 So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!</p> | <p>The beginning of the end of the church age was when Israel was reborn, and the Jews began to regather to their homeland.</p> |
| <p>34 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.</p> | <p>Jesus promised that some who witnessed this event will be present for the end of the church age. There will be people older than me who will see the End of the Church Age.</p> |
| <p>35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.</p> | |

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| 36 “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. | This sign does not reveal the day and time, but only the <u>season</u> of the end of the church age. |
| 37 But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. | THE SECOND SIGN OF THE END OF THE CHURCH AGE IS WICKEDNESS WILL BE AS IT WAS IN NOAH’S DAY. |
| 38 For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, | |
| 39 and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. | THE END OF THE CHURCH AGE COMES WITH THE RAPTURE , the sudden snatching away of born again Christians. |
| 40 Then two <i>men</i> will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. | Followers of Christ will be taken up to Heaven. |
| 41 Two <i>women will be</i> grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. | Those who have not trusted Christ will be left. Left for what? To enter the Tribulation. |
| 42 Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. | |
| 43 But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. | The warning is to be ready! For while we can recognize the season of the Rapture, we cannot know the day or hour. |
| 44 Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. | We can be ready by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being saved! • Living ready! |
| 45 “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season?” | |

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| 46 Blessed <i>is</i> that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. | |
| 47 Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. | |
| 48 But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' | |
| 49 and begins to beat <i>his</i> fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, | |
| 50 the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for <i>him</i> and at an hour that he is not aware of, | |
| 51 and will cut him in two and appoint <i>him</i> his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. | One half to two-thirds of those who enter the tribulation will die before the end of the seven years. |

You see, **Jesus told His disciples about the end time by answering the three questions that they asked.**

- 1. When will the temple be destroyed?**
- 2. What will be the sign of Your coming?**
- 3. What will be the sign of the end of the age?**

But the disciples did not put the questions in correct chronological order!

When we put the events in chronological order, they unfold like this.

THE TEMPLE IS DESTROYED – 70 A.D.

THE BEGINNING OF SORROWS – starts in 70 A.D.

THE BUDDING OF THE FIG TREE, ISRAEL – 1948 – indicating the season of the End of the Church Age We live in the season of the End of the Church Age and the Rapture. 73 ½ years is the average life span.

LIFE LIKE THE DAY OF NOAH – the season of the End of the Church Age

SUDDEN RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH – the Church Age ends as the Church all goes to Heaven

THE BEGINNING OF THE TRIBULATION – the sign of the Second Coming of Christ

THE ANTICHRIST DECLARES HIMSELF GOD AND BEGINS KILLING JEWS AND CHRISTIANS – further sign of the Second Coming of Christ

CHRIST RETURNS TO DEFEAT THE ANTICHRIST AND SATAN AT THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON – 7 years after the Rapture

In the next chapter Jesus talks about what happens to the lost at the rapture and what happens to Christians evaluating whether they lived ready.

Are you ready? Are you saved? Are you living ready?