

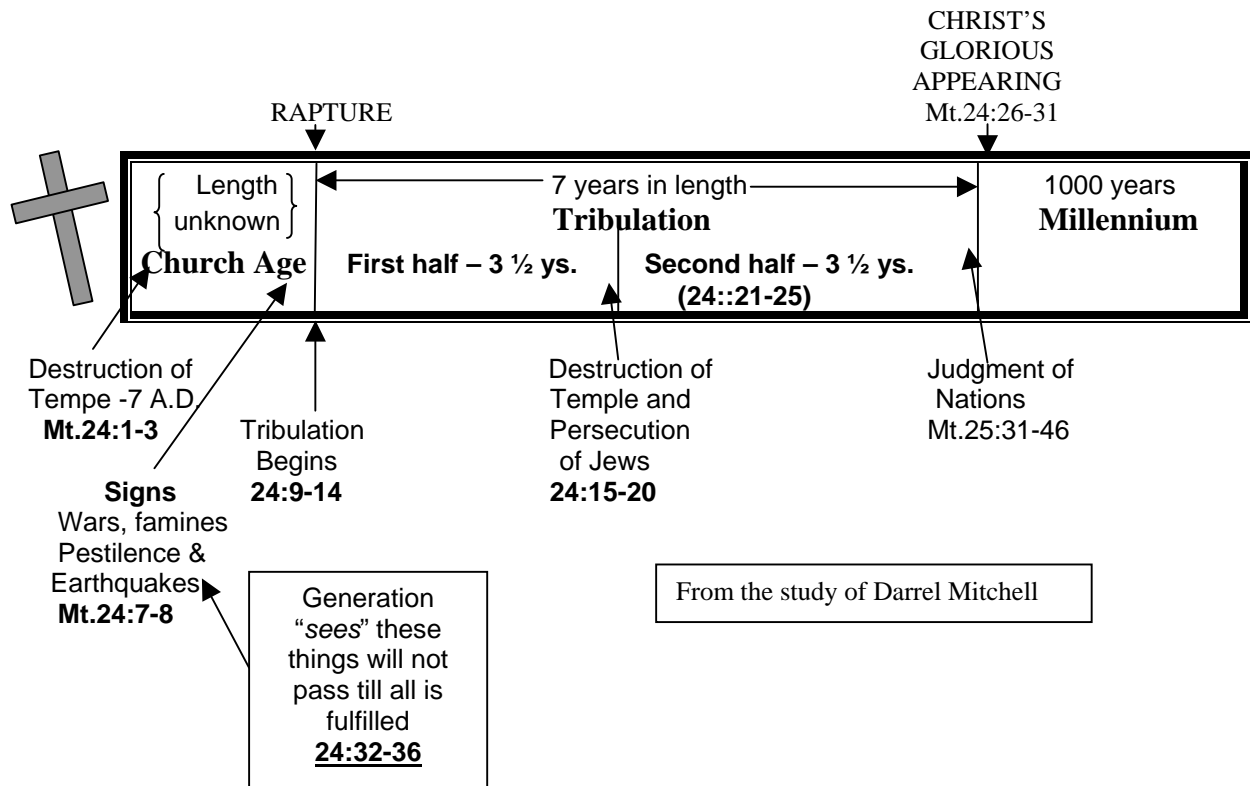
The Prophetic Time-Line of Matthew 24 & 25

A problem I had for years in understanding Jesus’ Olivet Discourse was that I attempted to find “*the Rapture*” – as did many authors, books, and commentaries I studied – in Jesus’ answer to His Disciple. However, the Church Age is **not** in Matthew 24 because it is a message delivered to Israel following their rejection of Christ as their Messiah. Jesus was predicting the events of *Israel’s* future – even though much of it, of course, can apply to us today, simply because it reveals “*end-time events*” – and the urgency of being prepared for the end!

Jesus gives this discourse because of the questions His disciples asked. Jesus had just predicted the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem (Matthew 24:2) – *this took place in A.D. 70*. The disciples were familiar with Daniel’s prophecy of the destruction of the Temple, that was associated with end-time events – therefore, they knew Jesus was speaking of the end-times that Daniel predicted. When Jesus said what He did in verse 2, the disciples asked, “*What will be the sign of Your coming?*” and “*What will be sign of the end of this age?*”

Jesus’ answer in chapter 24 and 25 is in response to His disciples’ inquires as to “*The sign of His return to earth – in glory to set up His kingdom*” – and – “*the signs of the end of this age.*”

The “*rapture*” **cannot** be found in Matthew 24 and 25 – as we will see!



Jesus’ Olivet Discourse

There are certain passages of Scripture that are vastly important, messages of Christ that the believer needs to understand. Scriptural passages such as, the Sermon-on-the-Mount, or Jesus' upper room message – called “*The Holy of Holies*” of Scriptures – found in John 13 through 17, and Matthew 13, where Jesus gives His illustrious parables of “*The kingdom of Heaven.*”

In the 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew Jesus gives His “*Olivet Discourse*,” answering urgent questions asked by His disciples concerning His return to earth and the end of this age.

Matthew 24 Explained

Jesus’ Olivet Prophecy

[Also in Mark 13 and Luke 21]

(I) Destruction of Jerusalem predicted

Verse 1 *And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.*

Notice the setting, Jesus was leaving the Temple, walking away when His disciples came up to Him to call His attention to the beautiful Temple buildings. **Why?** Why would they draw His attention to the Temple? They had been in and out of it many, many times! The reason was because of what Jesus had just said. Let’s take note of what Jesus says in Matthew **23:37-39**, “*O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again until you, say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’*”

Jesus' disciples were saying, in essence, “***There is nothing that indicates desolation here.***” See the beauty of the Temple, its strength and sturdiness. The appearance of the Temple seemed to contradict what Jesus had just said.

The prophecy Jesus gives in Matthew 24 and 25 was uttered *outside* the Temple on the Mount of Olives (Mt. 24:3), while Luke 21 was spoken *in* the temple before Jesus went out (Lk. 21:1, 27-28). Herod's Temple was about 500 cubits square, made of white marble was one of the wonders of the ancient times.

Verse 2 *And Jesus said unto 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.*

Jesus gives a definite, positive prophecy then He and His disciples walk silently out of the city of Jerusalem and pass on to the Mount Olive.

This prophecy was fulfilled a generation later in 70 A.D. when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans; Dan. 9:26; Lk. 21:20-24). Josephus says that some stones were 94 feet long, 10 1/2 feet high, and 13 feet wide. There were 162 columns which held up the porches that were 52 feet high. Every stone was removed and a plow run over the place where it stood, fulfilling Mic. 3:12.

(II) Three great questions

[Also Mk 13:3 & Lk.21:7]

Verse 3 *And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?*

The most commanding view of the temple was obtained from the mount of Olives. Here Jesus speaks “*privately*” – In Luke 21 Jesus speaks “*publicly.*”

The disciples ask:

1. “*Tell us when these things will be?*”
2. “*What shall be the sign of Your coming?*”
3. “*What will be the signs of the end of the age?*”

First, the disciples were asking about the destruction of the Temple, however, they then asked about the “*presence*” of Jesus, Himself.

We must not take this text out of its setting, or interpret these questions just to make them fit our belief about prophecy. It is true that Jesus' answer leads to a much larger area of prophecy than their questions, however it is important to remember that Jesus' answer *began* with these questions. It was these three questions of Jesus' disciple that prompted and initiated Jesus' response in this Olivet Discourse.

You will note that Jesus spoke of wars, plagues, famines, natural disasters, religious apostasy and intense persecution of the people of God, - these are miserable conditions that will exist on the Earth just prior to the return of Jesus Christ according to the Bible.

This is not a pleasant scenario, but it is the truth. I didn't make this up! These are the words of Jesus Himself. He said in verse 8 that these things would be the “*beginning of sorrows,*” or literally the “*birth pangs,*” the world would experience in the Last Days.

As we study, keep in mind that, Matthew 24 begins with Jesus talking to *His disciples*. He had just told the *multitude of people* in Matthew 23 of the woes and judgments that were to come upon Jerusalem and He had berated the Jewish religious leaders for their self-righteous hypocrisy. In fact, He called them “*hypocrites*” seven times in that passage. He also said they were blind fools, children of hell, and snakes who could not escape damnation – these were pretty strong words.

Jesus prophesied that the Temple itself, the center of Jewish religious life, would be destroyed so completely that not one stone would be left on top of another (Matthew 24:2).

Jesus' disciples were amazed at His radical predictions, and they wanted to know three things: ***when*** would all these destruction occur, and ***what*** would be the sign of the end of the world, ***when*** Jesus would return?

Three questions asked:

1. When will Jerusalem be destroyed? Answered in verses 1-3 and Luke 21:12-24.
2. What will be the sign of Your coming? Answered in verses 4-26, 37-39.
3. What will happen when You come? Answered in verses 24:27-31, 40-51; Mt. 25:1-46.

Twenty-four signs of the second coming:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deceptions (Mt. 24:4-5, 11, 24) 2. False Christs (Mt. 24:5, 23-26) 3. Wars and rumors of wars (Mt. 24:6-7) 4. Famines (Mt. 24:7; Rev. 6:5-6) 5. Pestilences (Mt. 24:7; Rev. 6:8) 6. Earthquakes (Mt. 24:7; Rev. 6:12-17) 7. Anti-semitism (Mt. 24:9; Mk. 13:9, 13) 8. Offenses (Mt. 24:10; cp. Mt. 18:1-10) 9. Betrayals (Mt. 24:9; Mk. 13:12) 10. Hatred (Mt. 24:10; 2Tim. 3:1-9) 11. False prophets (Mt. 24:11, 24; Rev. 13) 12. Lawlessness abounding (Mt. 24:12) 13. Love decreasing (Mt. 24:12-13; 2Tim. 3) 14. Increased missionary work (Mt. 24:14) 15. Abomination of desolation
(Mt. 24:15; Dan. 9:27; 2Th. 2:4; Rev. 13) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. New Jewish nation in Judea
(Mt. 24:9, 15-26; Ezek. 37; Dan. 9:27) 17. New Jewish temple
(Mt. 24:15, 26; Rev. 11:1-2; Dan. 8:9-13;
Dan. 9:27; Dan. 11:45; 2Th. 2:4) 18. Great tribulation of 3 1/2 years
(Mt. 24:21; Dan. 12:1; Rev. 12:1 -- Rev. 19:21) 19. Martyrdoms (Mt. 24:9, 22; Dan. 8:24; Rev. 7:9-17;
Rev. 11:7; Rev. 15:2-4; Rev. 20:4-6) 20. Flight of Jews from Judea
(Mt. 24:16-21; Rev. 12:6, 14; Isa. 16:1-5; Ps. 60:4-8;
Dan. 11:40-45; Ezek. 20:33-38; Hos. 2:14-16) 21. Increased satanic powers (Mt. 24:24; 2Th. 2:8-12;
Rev. 13; Rev. 16:14; Rev. 19:20) 22. Surfeiting (Mt. 24:38; Lk. 17:28; Lk. 21:34) 23. Sex crimes (Mt. 24:38; Lk. 17:27) |
|---|---|

24. Procrastination and lethargy (Mt. 24:39)

(III) Signs of the Second Coming of Christ
(A) 8 signs beginning Jewish sorrows

[Also Mk 13:8; Lk.21:8 and Rev – chapters 6-9]

Verses 4 *And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. 5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. 6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.*

The disciples did not understand the concept of Jesus' "Advent" – His return to earth. Like the prophets of the Old Testament, they did not see this present Church Age in God's prediction for the future. This concept was revealed to them later [Read Ephesians 2:13-14 and 3:1-6]. They realized that Jesus would pass from their midst and somehow escape from the hostility of the Roman rulers, however, they did not understand the concept of His leaving earth and returning again sometime in the future. They were asking, "Since this Temple is to be destroyed, when will it be? Since You are coming in judgment, how, and when, will it take place?"

Without an understand of this present Church Age, the disciples asked about the prophecy Jesus gave concerning the destruction of the Temple – and of the end of "the age." They asked, "When will these things be? When will You return? When will be the consummation of this present age?"

Jesus spends the next verses answering these specific questions the disciples had asked about, and, even though the signs Jesus predicts concerns His coming in revelation of power and great glory – what Jesus said is still pertinent to us today.

Wars and Rumors of Wars

These verses (4 through 7) are a real eye-opener, Jesus said, "Many will make use of My name, but don't be deceived by them and don't be troubled, the end is not yet!" Note that Jesus reveals the answer to their question about the destruction of Jerusalem, but, He tells them, "the end is not yet."

Mt. 24:4-26 are unfulfilled – Mt. 24:27-51; Mt. 25:1-46 will be fulfilled at the second coming and in eternity. There are many warnings against being deceived (Mt. 24:4-5, 11, 24; Lk. 21:8; 1Cor. 6:9; 1Cor. 15:33; Gal. 6:7; Eph. 5:6; 2Th. 2:3).

Jesus gives general information about what things would be like in the Last Days before the end of the world - or **literally**, in the Greek, at the "**end of the age.**" That phrase, "the end of the age," has the connotation of the end of a distinct period of time, rather than the ultimate end of everything that exists. So what Jesus is talking about here is the end of the current "age," or the period of human history in which we now live, that will "end," with the Tribulation period.

Verse 8 *All these are the beginning of sorrows*

The first eight signs of Mt. 24:4-7 are the beginning, not the end of sorrows. The word translated, "sorrows" is from the Greek, "odin," meaning, birth pangs (Gal. 4:19, 27; 1Th. 5:3; Rev. 12:2). This refers to the troubles of Israel in the tribulation (Mt. 24:15-21; Isa. 66:7-8; Jer. 30:4-7; Dan. 7:21; Dan. 8:9-14, 24; Dan. 9:27; Rev. 12).

There are eight signs Jesus mentions that will take place at the beginning of “*Jewish sorrow*.” There are:

1. “*Many will make use of My name*” – verse 5
2. “*They will deceive many*” – verse 5
3. “*There will be rumors of war*” – verse 6
4. “*Nation will go to war with nation*” – verse 7
5. “*Kingdom will fight against kingdom*” – verse 7
6. “*There will be famines*” – verse 7
7. “*There will be pestilences*” – verse 7
8. “*There will be earthquakes in different parts of the world*” – verse 7

(B) 8 signs during the sorrows of Israel

[Also Mk 13:9]

Verses 9 *Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.* **10** *And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.* **11** *And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.* **12** *And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.*

Then -- during birth pangs of Israel – Jews will be hated by the Gentiles.

Verse 13 *But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

The word translated, “*end*,” from the Greek word “*telos*” means, “*the actual end of anything*” (Mt. 24:6, 14). The Greek word, “*sunteleia*,” meaning, “*the joining of two ages*” is not the Greek word that is used here in Mt. 24:13 – as it is in Mt. 13:39, 40, 49; Mt. 24:3; Mt. 28:20 and Heb. 9:26. Here “*telos*” means the end of life or the age as it may be.

The Greek word that is translated, “*saved*” is, “*sozo*” – It is used 110 times in the New Testament” – to be saved from of *sin* (Mt. 1:21; Heb. 7:25), *danger* (Mt. 14:30; Mt. 27:42), *spiritual conflict* (Jn. 12:27; 1Tim. 4:16), *sickness* (Jas. 5:15), *hell* (Jn. 3:16-18; Mk. 16:16), and *slavery* (Jude 1:5).

Verse 14 *And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

Note that Jesus refers to “*the Gospel of the kingdom*” – not the message of Church – “*salvation.*” **Then** - the “*end*” – not the rapture – but the end of this age – will come!

In verses 9-14 Jesus gives signs that will take place during the time of “*Israel’s sorrow*,” the Tribulation period. Jesus states, “**THEN**” these things will happen . . . ”

1. “*They will be delivered to be afflicted*” – verse 9
2. “*They will be killed*” – verse 9
3. “*They will be hated of all nations for Christ’s sake*” – verse 9
4. “*Many will be offended*” – [stumble, fall away – lose heart] – verse 10
5. “*Many will betray one another*” – verse 10
6. “*Many will hate one another*” – verse 10
7. “*There will be many false prophets*” – verse 11
8. “*Iniquity will abound*” – verse 12
 “*He who endures to the end will be saved*” – verse 13

“*The Gospel of the kingdom* [Note: Not the Gospel of salvation, but the Gospel of the kingdom] *preached to all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end* [not the Rapture – but the end of this age] *come*” – verse 14

(C) 17th sign: Abomination of Desolation – [Daniel 9:27]
[Also Mk13:14]

Verse 15 *When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)*

“*When*” – marks the starting point of the middle of Daniel's 70th week when the Antichrist will break his 7-year covenant with Israel and enter Judea to take over Jerusalem as his capital and the Jewish temple as his capital building (Dan. 9:27; Dan. 11:40-45; Dan. 12:1, 7; 2Th. 2:4; Rev. 11:1-2; Rev. 12:1-17; Rev. 13:1-18). All this prophecy from Mt. 24:15 on must be fulfilled the last 3 1/2 years of this age.

“*Abomination of desolation*” refers to the Antichrist and his image in the Jewish temple at Jerusalem during the last 3 1/2 years of this age (Dan. 8:9-14; Dan. 9:27; Dan. 11:45; Dan. 12:1, 7, 11; Rev. 13:1-18; Rev. 14:9-11; Rev. 20:4-6).

Verse 15 speaks of the “*abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet.*” The “*abomination of desolation*” refers to the Antichrist and his image in the Jewish temple at Jerusalem during the last 3 1/2 years of this age (Daniel 8:9-14; 9:27; 11:45; 12:1, 7, 11; Revelation 13:1-18; 14:9-11; 20:4-6).

Jesus predicts the defeat of Israel during this period of time in verses 16-20

(D) 18th sign: defeat of Israel by Antichrist
[Also Mk 13:15]

Verse 16 *Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:*

Then - when Antichrist enters Judea and takes over the temple (Dan. 9:27; Dan. 11:40-45). Israel will have to flee from Judea.

The mountains refer to Edom and Moab which escape the Antichrist (Rev. 12:6, 14).

“Then *let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains*” - when Antichrist enters Judea and takes over the Temple (Daniel 9:27 and 11:40-45). Israel will have to flee from Judea. The “*mountains*” referred to is Edom and Moab, where Israel goes to escape the Antichrist, Revelation 12:6, 14.

Verses 17 *Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:*

18 *Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.*

Referring to Israel fleeing from Judea without taking time for valuables, lest Antichrist's armies overtake them.

Verse 19 *And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!*

It will be hard on women with children or those great with child to flee before the swiftness of the invaders.

Verse 20 *But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day:*

Pray that the invasion will not take place in winter as it would be difficult to flee without preparation at this time; nor on the Sabbath, because orthodox Jews hold it unlawful to travel more than a mile on that day (Acts 1:12), so would be overtaken by the invaders.

(E) 19th sign: Great Tribulation

[Also Mk 13:19; Dan.12:1 and Rev, chapters 12-19]

Verse 21 *For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

“**For then**” - the great tribulation of the last 3 1/2 years of this age will begin (Dan. 9:27; Dan. 11:40-45; Dan. 12:1, 7, 11; Jer. 30:4-7; Rev. 7:14; Rev. 11:1 -- Rev. 19:21).

Verse 22 *And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.*

The Greek word that is translated, “shortened” means, “curtailed.” The persecution itself will be cut short (Rev. 11:1-3; Rev. 12:6, 14; Rev. 13:5; Dan. 12:7).

The “*elect's sake*” refers to Jews, not the Church because:

1. Jesus is answering a Jewish question (Mt. 24:3; Mt. 25:31-46; Acts 1:6)
2. False Messiahs primarily concern Israel (Mt. 24:5, 23-26)
3. Anti-semitism proves it (Mt. 24:9)
4. The travail of Israel (note, Mt. 24:8)
5. The abomination of desolation concerns Israel only (note, Mt. 24:15)
6. The Jewish temple (note, Mt. 24:15)
7. Flight of Israel (notes, Mt. 24:16)
8. The Sabbath is Jewish (note, Mt. 24:20)
9. The great tribulation (note, Mt. 24:21)
10. Jews are the only people to be gathered (note, Mt. 24:31)
11. The coming of Christ is to deliver Israel (Mt. 24:29-31; Mt. 25:31-46; Zech. 14)
12. Judgment of the nations is based on treatment of Israel (25:31-46)
13. The eagles eating carcasses was predicted to be at the time of Israel's deliverance (Mt. 24:28; Ezek. 39:17-22; Lk. 17:34-37; Rev. 19:17-21)
14. The church will be raptured before the above events

(F) 6 signs during the Great Tribulation

[Also Mk 13:21]

Verse 23 *Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.*

“**Then**” – during the great tribulation days of Mt. 24:15-21.

Verse 24 *For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*

Satanic powers will be manifest in the Tribulation (2Th. 2:7-12; Rev. 13:1-18; Rev. 16:13-16; Rev. 19:20; Dan. 8:24). The “*elect*” – Jewish elect (See note for verse 22).

Verses 25 *Behold, I have told you before.* **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.*

“*Secret chambers*” - Read Daniel 11:45; 2 Thessalonians 2:4 and Revelation, chapter 13.

In verses 23 through 26 Jesus gives the signs that will take place during the Great Tribulation, the last 3 and ½ years.

1. “*Men will say, ‘Lo here is Christ’*” – verse 23
2. “*False christs will arise*” – verse 24
3. “*False prophets will arise*” – verse 24
4. “*There will be signs and wonders performed to deceive many*” – verse 24
5. “*Some will say ‘Christ is in the desert, or some secret place’*” – verse 26

Jesus tells of the manner of His coming, when He returns with His saints “*in power and great glory,*” at the end of the Tribulation period.

(4) The Manner and Time of the Second Coming Advent

[Also Mt. 25:31; Mk.13:24; Lk.17:33 and 21:25; 2 Th 1:7 and 2:8; Jude 14; Rev.1:7; 19:11; Dan. 7:13; Zech.14:1-5]

Verse 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.*

Refers to the time of Christ’s revelation and the manner in which He will come.

Verse 28 *For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.*

Where the dead bodies are slain at Armageddon the birds will be gathered together to eat them (Job 39:30; Ezek. 39:17-22; Lk. 17:34-37; Rev. 19:17-21). The rapture will have taken place years before this. Christ is not a dead carcass (as some teach) nor are the saints eagles to be caught up to such a carcass. This is not in the air, but on earth (Ezek. 39:17; Rev. 19:11-21).

Verse 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:*

“**Immediately after the tribulation**” – these things will take place! “*Those days*” refer to the *Great* tribulation – the last half of the Tribulation period “Sun darkened, moon not give light, stars fall from heaven, and powers of heavens shaken” - See Revelation 6:12.

Verse 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.*

“**And then**” – immediately *after* the tribulation the Son of man will return in power and great glory (Mt. 24:29-31; Mt. 25:31-46). All the tribes of the earth mourn, including the armies of all nations surrounding the city (Zech. 14:1-5; Rev. 1:7). Many will not *see* Christ until He is here reigning and the saints take over all parts of the earth – Then people will go up to Christ (Isa. 2:2-4; Isa. 52:7; Isa. 66:19-21; Zech. 8:23). They will see the Son of man coming with the natural eyes. This is not a spiritual coming (2Th. 1:7-10; Rev. 19:11-21; Zech. 14:1-5). Christ went away in clouds and He will return with clouds (Acts 1:9-11; Dan. 7:13-14; Rev. 14:14, 16). He will come in *power* sufficient to defeat the armies of earth and Satan, all his fallen angels and

demons in one day (Zech. 14; Rev. 19:11-21; Rev. 20:1-3; Jude 1:14; 2Th. 1:7-10; Isa. 24:21-23; Joel 2). He will come in *great glory* – Mt. 25:31; 2Th. 1:7-10; 2Th. 2:8.

Verse 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.*

Literal angels accompany Christ to earth (2Th. 1:7-10) to gather Israel (Dt. 30:4; Isa. 11:11-12) and separate the tares from the wheat (Mt. 13:38-50).

Trumpets always sounded at gatherings of Israel (Ex. 19:13-19; Lev. 25:9; 1Sam. 13:3; 2Sam. 2:28). This trumpet is predicted in Isa. 18:3; Isa. 27:13; Zech. 9:14. This is not the same as the seven trumpets of Rev. 8:2, 6 or the trumpets in connection with the resurrection of the righteous (1Th. 4:16; 1Cor. 15:51-58).

The “*Elect*” are Jewish (See notes for Mt. 24:22).

The “*four winds*” refers to the four directions of the earth (Isa. 11:11-12; Rev. 7:1-3; Rev. 20:8).

(5) Parable of the fig-tree

[Also Mk 13:38 and Lk 21:39]

Verse 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:*

“*The parable of the fig tree*” is the first of four parables in Mt. 24-25, illustrating the nearness of Christ’s return (Mt. 24:32-33).

The fig tree is universally interpreted to mean the Jewish nation, however, Jesus must of meant more than that for Luke adds, “*and all the trees*” (Luke 21:29). – “*Putting forth its leaves*” indicates that summer is near, “*so likewise*” the signs of verses 4-26 indicate the nearness of Christ's coming. So observe and understand the signs of the times, and compare them with the predictions of the word, as from thence to foresee what is at the door, that you may provide accordingly. The fig tree, “*when its tender shoots appear and are breaking into leaf*” [As the New English Bible translates verse 32] – its budding and blossoming signifies summer is in close proximity.

Don't pass over this verse too lightly! Notice first, Jesus warns His disciples lest they be led astray (verses 4-5). He speaks of future things dealing with matters of utmost importance, things of great peril. He tells them, “*Don't wonder from the clear declaration of Scripture and arrive at some fanciful interpretation.*”

Jesus began by saying, “*Take heed*” – in modern vernacular would be, “*Watch out!*”

Jesus prophesies, “*What is the future for Israel?*” in verses 5-35. He gives warnings for His followers in Matthew 24:36 to 25:30, as we will see. He also shows what the future for the Gentile nations will be – in Matthew 25:31-46.

Verse 33 *So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.*

Jesus refers to His second coming – ***not the rapture!*** There are no signs of the rapture for it is itself one of the greatest signs of the second coming. There are no prophecies to be fulfilled before the rapture for it could have taken place any time in the past or can take place any time in

the future without any sign or prophecy coming to pass (Tit. 2:13; Phil. 3:20-21). All signs of the coming of Christ point to the second coming – (Christ’s revelation in power and great glory) – and not the rapture. There will be at least seven years between the two events. The rapture is not the second coming, because Christ does not come to the earth at that time. He meets the saints in the air and takes them back to heaven (1Th. 2:19; 1Th. 3:13; Rev. 19:1-11). The saints stay in heaven with Him for these years and then return to the earth at the second coming (Zech. 14:5; Jude 1:14; Rev. 19:11-21).

(6) All signs of this prophecy will take place in one generation

[Also Mk 13:30 and Lk 21:32-33]

Verse 34 *Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.*

The statement, “*this generation,*” occurs 16 times in the New Testament and always of a particular span of life – and not of a race of people, as some teach (See Mt. 11:16; Mt. 12:41-42; Mt. 23:36; Mt. 24:34; Mk. 8:12; Mk. 13:30; Lk. 7:31; Lk. 11:30-32, 50-51; Lk. 17:25 & 21:32).

This verse refers to the last generation living on earth at the time all these things will be fulfilled. These things will be fulfilled in one generation only and not in several of them.

Verse 35 *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*

The words, “*pass away,*” are translated from the Greek word, “*parerchomai,*” meaning, “*to change from one condition or state to another; pass away, as a person passes away in death, or as old things pass away at the new birth*” (2Cor. 5:17). It never means annihilation, but a change only. The heavens and earth are eternal (Ps. 72:5-17; Ps. 89:3-37; Ps. 104:5; Eccl. 1:4) and cannot pass out of existence. They will be changed (Heb. 1:10-12; Heb. 12:25-28; Rom. 8:21-23), be renovated by fire (2Pet. 3:5-13), and be renewed (Rev. 21:1), but never pass out of existence. Jesus said, “*Heaven and earth will be changed, but My words will not be changed.*”

The generation that witnesses the fulfillment of these signs “*will not pass away, until all these things will be fulfilled!*”

When will this happen?

(7) Exact date of Christ’s coming unknown

[Also Mk13:34 and Acts 1:7]

Verse 36 *But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.*

Jesus taught that as a woman knows she must travail if she is with child but knows not the day or the hour, so it is with the sudden destruction. We may know the times and seasons of it, but not the day or the hour. Since the second coming of Christ brings this sudden destruction it means that men will not know the exact day or the hour of His coming. This will always be the case, as predicted by Christ in Mt. 24:36, 39, 42-51; Mt. 25:13. Jesus Christ and angels do not know the day or hour of the second coming (Mk. 13:32).

Therefore, it is folly for any one to make predictions and set dates for the return of Jesus Christ to earth, for the end of the times of the Gentiles, for the battle of Armageddon, or for the sudden destruction of 1Th. 5:3.

(8) Christ's coming will bring destruction to many wicked

[Also Lk 17:22; 1Th 5:1 and Jude 14]

What Will Christ's Coming Be Like?

Verses 37 *But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, 39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*

Just as sin continued up to the very day Noah entered the ark, so sin will continue up to the day of the second coming of Christ. Hence, there is no room for a Millennium of righteousness before Christ's coming. In fact, Christ must come before the Millennium begins (Rev. 19:11 -- Rev. 20:10) and sin will continue in the Millennium (Isa. 65:20-25; Rev. 20:7-10; Eph. 1:10). The purpose of the Millennium is to put down all sin and rebellion (1Cor. 15:24-28).

The phrase, "took them all away," is rendered "destroyed them all" in Luke 17:27, that is, the ones that needed to be destroyed, and saved Noah and family. So Christ will destroy some at His coming and leave some to replenish the earth in the Millennium (Zech. 14:16-21; Isa. 2:2-4; Isa. 66:19-21; Rev. 20).

(9) Armageddon: some destroyed and some left alive

[Also Lk 17:26; 21:34; Rev, chapters 19-21; Zech 14:16]

Verses 40 *Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.*

"Then," refers to Christ's Second Coming, not at the rapture, as many believe. (Mt. 24:29-31; Mt. 25:31-46). "Taken" like the flood "took them all away" or destroyed them (Mt. 24:39; Lk. 17:27). Did the flood rapture or destroy the people that it took away? So the second coming, when Christ's come in power and great glory at the Revelation, will not *rapture* but *destroy* many at the battle of Armageddon to make the carcasses that will be eaten by the fowls of Mt. 24:28; Lk. 17:34-37; Ezek. 39:17-22; Rev. 19:17-21. (See notes for verse 28).

Some will be "left," not destroyed, like Noah and his family were left and not destroyed. At Armageddon many will be left to continue living on earth when Christ reigns (Zech. 14:16-21; Mt. 25:34, 46; Isa. 2:2-4; Isa. 66:19-21; Rev. 20:4-10).

Verse 42 *Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.*

In view of the coming of Christ suddenly when He is not expected, you that will be living on earth after the rapture and at the very coming of Christ, be watchful (Mt. 24:39-42). This refers to the literal visible coming to the earth with the raptured saints.

(10) Parable of the faithful servant

[Also Lk 12:35-38]

Verses 43 *But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.*

44 *Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.*

45 *Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? 46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.*

This is the second parable of Matthew 24 and 25, illustrating readiness, and faithfulness, in view of Christ's coming.

The word, "*blessed*," or "*happy*," is used of people who have godly characteristics as:

1. Broken spirit (Mt. 5:3; Mt. 11:28-30; Ps. 51:17; Isa. 57:15; Isa. 66:2)
2. Penitent spirit (Mt. 5:4; Isa. 61:2; Jas. 4:9; 2Cor. 7:9-11)
3. Mild-tempered, gentle spirit (Mt. 5:5; Mt. 11:29; Ps. 37:11; 1Pet. 3:4)
4. Hungering, thirsting spirit for righteousness
(Mt. 5:6; Ps. 34:10; Ps. 42:1-3; Ps. 63:1; Ps. 84:2; Jn. 7:37-39)
5. Compassionate and merciful spirit (Mt. 5:7; Mt. 18:27; 1Pet. 3:8)
6. Pure spirit (Mt. 5:8; Phil. 4:8; 1Tim. 1:5; 1Tim. 3:9; 1Tim. 5:22; 1Pet. 1:22)
7. Spirit of wisdom and mediation (Mt. 5:9; Rom. 14:19; 1Cor. 13)
8. Longsuffering and forgiving spirit
(Mt. 5:10-12; Mt. 10:16-28; 1Cor. 13; 1Pet. 3:14-17; 1Pet. 4:3-19)

Verses 47 *Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. 48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; 49 And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; 50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, 51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Here is another description of eternal hell, not the grave (Mt. 13:42, 50; Rev. 9:2). Adjective used to describe the eternal retribution are: "*wailing*," in Mt. 13:42 & 50; "*weeping and gnashing of teeth*" in Mt. 8:12; Mt. 22:13; Mt. 24:51; Mt. 25:30; Lk. 13:28 – all these passages of Scripture picture bitter remorse and pain.

Matthew 25 Explained

(11) The parable of the ten virgins

Verses 1 Then *shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. 2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.*

The "*Then*" of verse 1, refers to the second coming at the end of the tribulation when Christ comes with His saints (Mt. 25:3, 27-31, 33, 36, 39-51), not at the rapture when He comes for them. It is important to note the connecting adverbs of time from Mt. 25:15 to 28 – "*when*" of Mt 25:15 – "*then*" of Mt. 25:16 – "*then*" of Mt. 25:21 – and "*then*" of Mt. 25:23. These cover 3 1/2 years from the setting up of the abomination of desolation in the middle of Daniel's 70th week to the second coming at the end of this week. Then in Mt. 25:29 we have a new time element, the second coming itself, immediately after the tribulation of Mt. 25:15-28. Note the events connected with this by the same kind of adverb of time: "*then*" of Mt. 25:30, – "*then*" of Mt. 25:40 – and – "*then*" of Mt. 25:1.

The "*Kingdom of heaven*," is not referring to the church – likened to ten virgins. This literally is, "*kingdom from the heavens*." It is headed by Jesus Christ for the purpose of re-

establishing the kingdom of God over this rebellious part of God's realm. Only found in Matthew because it is the gospel of Jehovah's King. It is a dispensational term and refers to Messiah's kingdom on earth. Offered by both John and Jesus (Mt. 3:2; Mt. 4:17; Mt. 10:7). Because it was rejected, it was postponed until Christ comes and set up the kingdom (Mt. 11:12, 20-24; Mt. 27:22-25; Lk. 19:11-27; Acts 1:6-7; Acts 3:19-26). It is now the realm of profession (Mt. 13:11-17, 30, 38-43, 47-50). The parables of the kingdom apply to this age. At the end Christ will come and set up a literal earthly kingdom forever (Mt. 25:31-46; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 19:11 -- Rev. 20:10; Zech. 14; Isa. 9:6-7; Dan. 2:44-45; Dan. 7:13-27; Lk. 1:32-33). During the first 1,000 years of His eternal reign He will put down all rebellion and rid the earth of all rebels. Then God will become "all in all" as before rebellion (Rev. 20:1-10; Rev. 21:1 -- Rev. 22:5; 1Cor. 15:24-28; Eph. 1:10). Anything said of the kingdom of heaven can also be said of the kingdom of God, because the former is only the earthly dispensational aspect of the latter.

The "*Kingdom of God*" refers to the sovereignty of God. It is used 70 times and the "*kingdom of heaven*" 33 times

The third parable of Matthew 24 and 25 illustrate *watchfulness* in view of Christ's coming. The ten virgins are ten young ladies who were friends of a certain girl that is married.

Verse 3 *They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:*

Five were foolish, because they did not take extra oil in separate vessels to replenish their supply in their lamps should the oil be used up.

Verse 4 *But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.*

Five were wise, because they took extra oil in separate vessels besides what they had in their lamps.

Verse 5 *While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.*

During the hours before midnight they all became sleepy and slept.

Verse 6 *And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.*

What is meant by, "*midnight?*" Jewish weddings were generally celebrated at night, starting at the rise of the evening star; but in this case there was some extra delay and the bridegroom and his friends arrived at midnight.

This was customary. Starting from the home of the bridegroom his friends began crying this and all along the route people would take up the joyous cry until it would get near enough to the home of the bride that it would wake up the sleeping ones. It was the duty of the ones chosen by the bride to welcome the bridegroom, therefore, the "*cry go ye out to meet him.*"

Verse 7 *Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.*

"**Then**" – when they heard the cry. They all arose to trim their lamps and get them in order. They all had lamps burning when they went to sleep, but the lamps of the foolish needed more oil. The Greek reads, "*our lamps are going out*" (in verse 8). They asked for oil from the extra that the wise had, but were sent to buy some quickly.

Verses 8 *And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.*

9 *But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.*

The “*lamp oil*,” is not referring to the Holy Spirit, as some think, because He cannot be bought and sold or divided between people at their request.

Verses 10 *And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. 11* *Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.*

The bridegroom that was married to a certain young lady, does not refer to Christ’s coming **for** His saints. [The marriage of the couple in this story does not refer to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb of Rev 19:1-10.]

The door was “*shut*.” Doors were always locked to uninvited guests and for fear of thieves who would rob the guests or carry off the bride for a ransom.

Verse 12 *But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not*

“*I know you not*,” was true, because they were friends of the bride, not necessarily the bridegroom who is called “*Lord*” in verse 11.

Verse 13 *Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh and of the talents*

This is the point that Jesus illustrated by this story of an oriental wedding: He was saying, “*You people on earth in the kingdom of heaven take a lesson from these virgins and be always watchful in view of My coming*.” The details of this parable must not be interpreted here – any more than if they were used in an illustration outside the Bible. They were necessary in order to make the story to illustrate **watchfulness**, but to teach various doctrines from them is unscriptural. No less than a dozen false doctrines are based upon the details of this parable.

Twelve False Doctrines:

1. Two kinds of Christians.
2. The oil is the Spirit baptism.
3. Wise are those with this baptism.
4. Foolish are those without it.
5. Born again people do not have the Holy Spirit.
6. Rapture will take place at midnight or middle of the tribulation.
7. One has to have the Spirit baptism to go in the rapture.
8. Only those baptized in the Spirit will be at the marriage of the Lamb.
9. Only those baptized in the Spirit will be in the bride of Christ.
10. One is not saved until he receives the Spirit baptism.
11. The door of mercy will be shut to the Gentiles after the rapture.
12. The bride is the church.

The Truth Is:

1. There is only one kind of Christian, the born-again (Mt. 13:38-49; Mt. 18:3; Jn. 3:3-5; 2Cor. 5:17-18; Rom. 6:7, 18, 22; Rom. 8:1-13; Gal. 5:19-24; Eph. 4:24; 1Jn. 2:29; 1Jn. 3:8-10; 1Jn. 5:1-4, 18; Heb. 12:14).
2. The oil here is not the Holy Spirit (note, Mt. 25:8).

3. Born-again people do receive the Holy Spirit (Jn. 3:5; Rom. 8:9-16), but not always the Spirit baptism which is another experience (Lk. 11:13; Jn. 7:37-39; Jn. 14:16-17; Acts 1:4-8; Acts 2:38-39; Acts 5:32; Acts 8:15-16; Acts 19:1-6).
4. The rapture will not take place in the middle of the tribulation, but before it.
5. The Spirit baptism is for the endowment of power from on high to do the works of Jesus (Lk. 24:49; Jn. 7:37-39; Jn. 14:12; Acts 1:4-8), not to save the soul or to qualify one for the rapture.
6. All Christians will be at the marriage supper of the Lamb, for all will go in the rapture.
7. All Christians will be in the bride of Christ, which is the New Jerusalem and not the church (Rev. 21:2, 9-10). Even Old Testament saints will be a part of the city (Heb. 11:10-16; cp. Heb. 13:14; Jn. 14:1-3).
8. The door of mercy will never be closed to Jews or Gentiles during the tribulation or any other time. Multitudes will be saved during the tribulation (Acts 2:16-21; Rev. 7:1-17; Rev. 12:17; Rev. 15:2-4; Rev. 20:4-6).

(12) Parable of the talents

[Also Lk 19:11 and Mt 16:27]

Verse 14 *For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.*

The fourth parable of Matthew 24 and 25 – illustrating **diligence** in view of Christ's coming (Mt. 25:14-30).

Verses 15 *And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. 16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. 17 And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. 18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.*

To understand the value Jesus put on these “talents,” it's important to remember that at \$600,000 each for talents of gold, 5 would be worth \$3 million; two would be \$1.2 million, and, even, one \$600,000.

Verse 19 *After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.*

The phrase, “*reckoneth with them*” has the meaning of, “*compared accounts.*” That phrase is only here and in Matthew 18:23-24.

Verse 20 *And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.*

The servant who had five talents gained another five talents, doubling his talents so he had \$6 million in the bank to give his lord.

Verses 21 *His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. 22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two*

talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. 23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

The servant who had two talents doubled his talents so he had \$2.4 million in the bank to give his lord.

Verse 24 *Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:*

The master of these servants in this story is not Jesus Christ.

Hardhearted man, thus accusing his master to excuse his own slothfulness.

The Greek word translated as, “*strawed*,” has the meaning of, “*scattered abroad*,” as if his master reaped without sowing. The attitude of a slothful man who thinks everything others do prospers where it would fail in his case.

Verse 25 *And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.*

Being “*afraid*” is another characteristic of a slothful man. He is always afraid to venture out in business and take risks.

Verse 26 *His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:*

His lord says, “*If you thought I was that kind of man, then you ought to have been faithful to your trust.*”

Verse 27 *Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.*

The “*exchangers*” were the bankers who would give interest; “*usury*,” meant there would at least be interest, even if there were no other profit.

Verses 28 *Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. 29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. 30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

He was a servant as much as the rest of them, but he became unprofitable (vs.14 & 19).

“*Weeping and gnashing of teeth*” – See notes for Matthew 24:51 – page 9

(13) Judgment of the living nations at Christ’s Second Advent

[Also Rev 19:11 and Zech 14]

The description of the last judgment

Verse 31 *When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:*

When will the Son of man come *in His glory*? Answer – “*immediately after the tribulation!*” (See Mt. 24:29-31; 2Th. 1:7-10; 2Th. 2:8 and Rev. 19:11-21).

For, “angels with him,” see notes for Matthew 24:31.

“Then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory!” When? - at the second coming (See Mt. 24:29; 25:34, 37, 41, 44, 45).

Christ will be “sitting on the throne of His glory!” – Also see Mt. 19:28 and Jer. 14:21.

Verses 32 *And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.*

All nations will be gathered for judgment at the end of the Tribulation period to decide which ones will enter into Christ’s glorious rein on earth for one thousand years. When Christ comes to set up His kingdom there will be a judgment of all nations on how they treated Israel. This is not the judgment of the wicked dead!

Contrasts between the Two Judgments:

Judgment of the nations Matthew 25:31-46	Judgment of the wicked Revelation 20:11-15
1. Living nations	the wicked dead
2. Before Millennium	after Millennium
3. Christ the Judge	God the Judge
4. On earth	in heaven
5. Two classes	one class
6. Some saved	none saved
7. Some destroyed	all destroyed
8. No resurrections	a resurrection
9. No books opened	books opened
10. Basis: persecution of Jews	all sins of all men
11. One generation	many generations
12. Gentiles only	Jews and Gentiles
13. Angels help	none mentioned
14. Some go to hell	all go to hell
15. Some enter kingdom	none enter it
16. Separation of good from bad	no good at all
17. To determine who continues to live on earth	none here will live on earth again
18. Some enter eternal life	none enter it

Sheep and goats were allowed to feed together by day but were separated at night, as each owner gathered his own. (For this time of end-time separation – read Matthew 13:39-50).

When Jesus says, “Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world,” He is stating that the purpose of this judgment is to determine who shall enter the kingdom (Dan. 7:9-14, 22; Rev. 11:15), and to give the meek the earth as promised (Ps. 37:11; Mt. 5:5).

Verse 37 *Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

The reason and basis of the judgment of the nations is God cursing or blessing nations according to how men have dealt with Israel. God will forever respect and fulfill the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 12:1-3). When Jesus said, “My brethren,” He was referring to the Jewish people, the brethren of Jesus according to the flesh (Mt. 10:6; Jn. 1:11; Rom. 9:5).

Verses 41 *Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. 44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. 46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.*

Some nations will be sent to the lake of fire and eternal punishment (Mt. 25:41, 46; Mt. 13:39-50; Mt. 24:51; Rev. 14:9-11; Rev. 19:20; Rev. 20:10).

Note, hell was prepared for Satan and his angels and no man needs to go there (Jn. 3:16-20). If he persists in serving Satan then he will have to spend eternity with him (Mt. 25:41, 46).

The Greek word, “*aionios*,” translated as “*everlasting*,” means eternal. It is translated “*everlasting*” and “*eternal*” of twenty things:

1. God (Rom. 1:20; Rom. 16:26)
2. The Holy Spirit (Heb. 9:14)
3. Life (44 times, Mt. 19:16, 29; Mt. 25:46; Jn. 3:16, 36; Rom. 6:22)
4. Salvation (Heb. 5:9)
5. Redemption (Heb. 9:12)
6. Inheritance (Heb. 9:15)
7. Gospel (Rev. 14:6)
8. Covenant (Heb. 13:20)
9. Kingdom (2Pet. 1:11)
10. Honor and power (1Tim. 6:16)
11. Consolation (2Th. 2:16)
12. Glory (2Th. 1:10; 1Pet. 5:10)
13. Resurrected bodies (2Cor. 5:1)
14. Things not seen (2Cor. 4:18)
15. Habitations (Lk. 16:9)
16. Destruction (2Th. 1:9)
17. Judgment (Heb. 6:1-2)
18. Damnation (Mk. 3:29)
19. Fire (Mt. 18:8; Mt. 25:41; Jude 1:7)
20. Punishment (Mt. 25:46)

The same Greek word is translated “*everlasting*” and “*eternal*” here in Matthew 25:46 and is used to describe both the eternal punishment of the wicked and the eternal life of the righteous; if one is eternal the other one is also everlasting.

**The Teachings of Prophetic Events are Interesting,
however,
There are some lessons to be learned for followers of Jesus Christ
Today!**

Responsibilities

Note, that beginning with verse 45, Jesus asks a serious question. Jesus commences this section with the question, “***Who then is the faithful and wise servant?***” and ends, speaking of our present responsibility, in the 30th verse of chapter 25.

Matthew 24:45 through 25:30 consist of parables, indicating the *responsibilities* resting upon those whom Christ was leaving in charge during a period in which He (as to bodily presence) would be absent from them – I would like to share what I believe to be insight into what Jesus was teaching here.

Keep in mind that in the midst of this Oliver Discourse, (Matthew 25:45), Jesus asks this essential and crucial question, “*Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time?*”

Jesus had been speaking of prophetic events, answering His disciple’s questions, however He changes, in Matthew 24:45, from just speaking of the prediction of future events – to give a revelation of present *responsibility*. From the question in 24:45, through chapter 25:31, is not only prophetic, but deals, as well, with responsibilities during this present age.

After characterizing two kinds of servants, beginning with Matthew 24:46 and running through the rest of the Olivet discourse, He gives three parables:

1. The Parable of the Household and the servants
2. The Parable of the 10 Virgins
3. The Parable of the Talents

Jesus tells of His coming in 24:44, “*So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect Him.*” He speaks of days that are to come when the Son of Man shall be manifested. However, now, in this day, He speaks of “*servants.*”

Matthew 24:46-51 gives a picture of rebellious souls, rejecting Him, saying, “*He delays His coming.*” They smite their fellowmen, and are drunken, but still He is patient. However, there is coming a day when His eyes will flash and He will descend from heaven in fire and flame, flashing glory. He will cast out all evil and take vengeance.

Jesus teaches that the purpose and mission of Christ in this day of God’s grace – in this Church Age – is to seek and to save the lost. Today, we are living in a probationary period, but someday that time will be over.

If anyone thinks of the mission of Jesus as simply *saving* men in order to take them to a life beyond, they have misread what Jesus taught – and what He prayed for!

Jesus turns from the negative survey to a more positive one beginning with Matthew 24:46, running through 25:30. This passage consists of *three* parables, indicating the responsibilities that rest upon the Church. Christ's *bodily* presence would be absent from the earth, but He would be present through His Mystical body, the Church.

Read these parables again, to refresh your memory of them:

- 1st Parable: Matthew 24:42-51
- 2nd parable Matthew 25:1-13,
- 3rd Parable, Matthew 25: 14-30,

THE SIMILARITIES IN EACH PARABLE:

(I) THE MASTER IS ABSENT

1. The master of the household, commits certain duties to his servants and then, he is absent!
2. The bridegroom is absent
3. The master (owner of goods) gives talents to his servants and then, he is absent

(II) THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE ABSENT MASTER

(with those from whom he is absent)

1. The servants represent his authority
2. The "*waiting*" of the virgins attest to their belief in his return
3. The servants prosecuted the master's business, with his goods
 - the talents - which he gave to them - are all his goods
 - not their ability - not their capacity
 - the talents do not stand for quality, but for quantity in this parable!

(III) THE RESPONSIBILITY WAS ALWAYS TO THEIR MASTER ALONE

1. The servant's responsibility to the absent master
2. The virgins responsible to be ready at any given moment
3. The servants who received talents and their responsibility to the master

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PARABLES:

1. Pictures of the master's household's **COMMUNAL** responsibility
2. Pictures the **INDIVIDUAL** soul's relation to his master, showing the wise and the foolish
3. Pictures the responsibility of carrying out master's enterprise in the world.

Let's look at these parables as a "*whole*," rather than in detail.

1. The parable of the Household gives the two examples, those who are faithful and wise and those who are called, "*The wicked*." This parable presents the Church as a household, over which Christ is Master.
2. The parable of the 10 Virgins shows our attitude toward Christ in the days of His absence.

3. The parable of the Talents show our responsibility of Christ's enterprises

First, let's look at the parable of the **Household**. Here, the church is Christ's household. He is the Master Who has left us in charge of is household.

The Greek word, translated "*household*," is found only one other time in the Scripture. It's in Revelation 22:2, where it states, "*the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*" Note, here, that this same Greek word is translated as "*healing*."

What relation can there be between "*healing*" and "*household*?" This question can only answered by an understanding of what this word translated as, "**household**" really signifies. It is a word from which we derive our word "*therapeutic*." The basic idea of this word is *healing*. This word "*household*" refers to those in the house that *serve*.

Look at Matthew 24:45 again, "*Who then is the faithful and wise servant?"* This word translated as "*servant*" is the word, "*bond-slave*," while the Greek word translated "*household*" also means "*servant*," it come from an entirely different word – a Greek word meaning "*one who performs a loving service*" – or, "*one whose purpose is to bring about a healing in service.*"

This is a case of "*metonymy*," – meaning, "*the use of a word for that of another to which it is related, to emphasize a concept.*" For instance, we say, "*A man keeps a good table*," when we are really referring to his food – or, we might use the word "*scepter*" when referring to *sovereignty*.

This word, "*household*," found in Matthew 24:45, is a parable suggesting the picture of a great house, with one Master. All those in the house are under His control. Their interests are constantly in His thoughts, while they are serving under His command.

Jesus uses the word that indicates the *love* principle in service – the tender healing ministry that only grows out of love. Thus, in a word, flaming and flashing with meaning, we discover our Lord's conception of His Church during the time of His absence.

His "*household*" serve, however, they serve by love – and their ministry is a *healing* ministry.

Note Matthew 24:45 carefully, "*Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath set over his household?"* This word, "*household*," must be interpreted by the consistent teaching of the Lord, that **service is the condition of greatness!**

The servant is "*set over*" – made ruler over; put in charge – he is a servant. Jesus taught "*Whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all*" (Mark 9:35 and 10:44).

This is not a picture of one in an official authority, but rather, it is a picture of one in the exercise of the ministry of healing – and of love!

SERVICE IS THE CONDITION FOR GREATNESS

We see the attitude of a faithful and wise servant. One who expresses an attitude of caring for all others while His Lord is away.

The attitude of “*the evil servant*” who says, “*My master is staying away a long time*” (delays his coming) and he turns to an evil course, instead of feeding and caring for the household. He “*beats*” them and, then, turns to companions of drunkards.

TWO RESULTS WHEN THE MASTER RETURNS:

1. The servant who was loyal is promoted and put in a place of authority.
2. The unfaithful servant is cut asunder and cast out.

We must not carry these parables farther than God meant them to go. Jesus is teaching that we prove our loyalty to our Lord by the way we serve one another. Disloyalty beats and slays the brethren.

In the parable of the Virgins, we see two attitudes – the attitude of the wise and the attitude of the foolish. They **all** “*went forth*,” however, some of them were careless. This parable is not a story of service, but rather, one of personal relationship.

There is no apparent difference between the ten virgins. They all spoke of their desire to meet the Bridegroom. Jesus, in this parable, is *not* speaking of particular section of Christendom, as some teach, but rather He is speaking of *individual* souls in relation to the Master.

Nothing is said in this parable about the “*responsibility in the household*,” but rather, it speaks of the “*attitude of the individual toward the Master*.” It speaks of those who have no eyes, no thought, no care, except for Bridegroom and the hour of His coming.

The Last Parable in Jesus’ Olivet discourse begins with, “*For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods*” (Matthew 25:14).

This parable speaks of the faithful use of talents brought the Master's “*Well done thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things*.” One of servants was **un**faithful – his life is exposed, his talents are recalled and he is “*cast out*.”

Note, again, that in the parable of the master and his servants reveals the mutual ministry that is to exist within the household, Matthew 24:46-51. We are to care for, and feed, others, not ill-treat, or beat, our fellow servants.

The parable of the 10 virgins reveals what our personal life must be, Matthew 25:1-13. It is to be an attitude of loyalty of love to Jesus Christ. Our love will be tested in loyalty in small, seemingly insignificant, things.

The parable of the talents reveals our responsible for Master's work, Matthew 25:14-30. Jesus has committed to us His goods and, in His absence, we are to represent Him to this world during this Church age.

1. The “*household*” at peace!
2. Lamps burning - ready!
3. The individual character is using his talents (working) for eternity!