

## **Kingdom Now & To Come - THE FULL GOSPEL MESSAGE (cont.)**

### More on End Times - The Tribulation (Matt 24)

#### Matt 24:1-2

- Jesus predicts the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem
- We know from historical records that this was done in 70 A.D.
- Jews occupied the area from 66 A.D. until the Jewish-Roman War in 70 A.D.

#### Verse 3

- !!The disciples may have viewed this as one question, assuming the destruction of the temple to be synonymous with the end times. (this would be expected giving the Messianic hope at this point was still for the Messiah to win a war against Rome and set up kingdom)
- !!Jesus, however, answers the questions separately (destruction of Temple, end of age), AND uses the first to foreshadow the second.

#### Vs 4-5 = False Christs

- Will include false Christ's (not necessarily false Jesus, but false Messiahs to lead people in revolt, off God's path, away from the true Christ, etc.)
  - Antichrist = 1 John 2:18, 2:22, 4:3, 2 John 7
  - Man of lawlessness = 2 Thess 2:1-4, 7-10
    - Note the the very coming of Jesus will annihilate this false Christ. Given Rev 20, this eliminates the pre-millennial view which says that Jesus will come and reign for 1000 years before slaying the devil, his false prophet, and his beast of torment.
    - Note also in verses 1-4 that the false prophet/antiChrist will take his seat in the Temple of God, declaring himself to be God. **THIS IS IMPORTANT** for later in Matt 24:15 (abomination of desolation like Daniel).
  - The Beast = Rev 13:11-17, 16:13, 19:19-20

#### Vs 6-8 = Beginning signs of the times

- Note the end is a sign of the beginning (birth pains)
- Creation waiting to be renewed (reborn) - Rom 8:22

#### Vs. 9-13 = The Tribulation

- Note in verse 9 - the Great Tribulation and persecution will happen before the end comes!
- “You will be hated for my name” – Christians will not be raptured prior to the tribulation
- “The one who endures to the end” – the remnant (more on v.22 regarding the elect). It is ridiculous to then assume a Rapture will happen before the Tribulation.
  - Testing between the wheat and the chaff (visible church and invisible/true church)
- Systematic persecution of the church was, is, & will be part of the Christian experience. Those who claim God wouldn't allow his people to suffer have serious problems with scripture and history of the early church and many churches today all over the world.
  - Luke 14:27, Romans 8:17-18

#### Verse 14 = The close of the age

- Tension between persecution and the gospel going forward. Gospel ironically thrived under persecution!
- The end will come when the gospel is finished going out

#### Vs. 15-28 = the Abomination of Desolation

## The Personhood of God, pt.14 – The Work of Christ (cont.)

- Daniel prophesied about a foreign leader setting up his place in the temple of God and desecrating it (Dan 9:27, 11:31). This was fulfilled in 168 B.C. when Antiochus Epiphanes, having occupied Jerusalem, erected a pagan altar in the temple of God and sacrificed swine (pig=unclean) there.
- This happened again in 70 A.D. when the future emperor Titus ransacked the temple, and some allege erected the bust of the emperor at the altar
- BUT...it is also viewed as a foreshadowing of the coming end time when the anti-Christ will prop himself up in the Temple of God (now the Church - 1 Cor 6:19). this led early reformers to see the Pope, and his claims of infallibility as he rose through the Church, to be the anti-Christ redirecting worship to himself
- Note the days will be cut short because of the elect of God, but they are present and do endure it! Note also, it is not possible to lead the elect astray - because they are elect of God!

### Vs. 29-31 - 2nd Coming

- Then the Son of God will come in a flash. Then all will be made new (see also 1 Cor 15:50-58).
- The word "immediately" assures us that the ultimate abomination of desolation and tribulation (of which the others foreshadow) have yet to come.
- It also assures us that when Jesus comes back – the end is here. The elect are gathered, and the final trumpet is blown. There is no interim period of "kingdom almost". He will come with justice and vengeance, to right all wrongs. The end is...the end of this evil age.
  - There is no "middle age" between this one and the time when the elect are gathered and evil is thrown into the place where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth (jump ahead to Matt 24:44-51 for reference to finality of Christ's return).
  - Thus, the millennium of Rev 20 is viewed as a current reality (last class).

### Vs. 32-35 - Exegetical Issues

- "this generation will not pass away until.." has caused problems for some, leading them to adopt a view that the abomination and great tribulation have ultimately occurred in 70 A.D. (not as a foreshadow, but as the real thing).
- The problem is that Thessalonians and Revelation clearly see this as a still coming event. Furthermore, Jesus says "this generation will not pass away until ALL these things occur." His 2nd Coming has clearly not happened yet, and his 2nd Coming is the immediate antecedent of "these things" in v.34. Furthermore, the events that happen "immediately after" the tribulation have not happened either.
- Resolution: "generation" = can mean those born at the same time (contemporaries) OR those exhibiting common characteristics or interests (race, kind).

**Summary:** Millennium is figurative and current reality, Tribulation is sign of end and will coincide with the gospel having reached all, 2nd Coming is when evil is destroyed. [Rapture & Kingdom (new heaven & earth, new body, new Jerusalem) come next.]