

THEN THE END WILL COME

Matthew 24 prophetically deals with things related to “the end”. The end in the context of Matthew 24 relates to the 70th week of Daniel commonly referred to as the 7-year Tribulation Period (cf. Dan. 9:27; Matt. 24:15).

Matthew 24:14 (NKJV)

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.

A specific gospel emphasis is emphasized here; namely “***this gospel of the kingdom***”. When John the Baptist came onto the scene he came preaching, “***Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!***” (Mt. 3:2). When Jesus followed, He came on the scene preaching, “***Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.***” (Mt. 4:17).

Subsequently what characterized Christ’s ministry was teaching and preaching the gospel of the kingdom with the accompanying evidence of healing all kinds and every sickness and disease which served as PROOF that He was indeed the Messianic King offering the kingdom on the condition of repentance.

Matthew 4:23 (NKJV)

23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

Matthew 9:35 (NKJV)

35 Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

But as the nation rejected Christ as seen in the blasphemy of the Spirit in Matthew 12; the kingdom program was then put on hold and delayed as seen in the parables of Matthew 13. After that, the kingdom was no longer offered – no longer is it said to be “***at hand***”. The language of the gospel of the kingdom is no longer used after Matthew 13. We don’t see it anymore in the gospel of Matthew until we get to chapter 24 – and then only in reference to “the end”. We don’t see it in the NT epistles.

We don't see it until we get to the future Tribulation Period which is the context here in Matthew 24. Then the GOOD NEWS of the kingdom will again become a prominent emphasis. Then once again the kingdom will be on the horizon – then once again it will be at hand and thus will again be the dominant emphasis that will be preached far and wide.

Today in the Church Age we are not preaching “***the gospel of the kingdom***” in the sense emphasized in Matthew.

Today we are preaching “***the gospel of Christ***” (cf. [Ro 15:19+](#), [1Co 1:9+](#), [2Co 2:12+](#), [2Co 9:13+](#), [2Co 10:14+](#), [Gal 1:7+](#), [Phil 1:27+](#), [1Th 3:2+](#)). It is also called by other names such as “***the gospel of the grace of God***” (Acts 20:24), but never in the epistles does it say we are proclaiming “***the gospel of the kingdom***” because we are not doing so in a direct sense like we see emphasized in the gospel of Matthew during Christ's earthly ministry or that will again be heralded in the Tribulation Period.

“Verse 14 is often misused to show that Christ could not return for His church at any moment because so many tribes have not yet heard the gospel. [But] this refers to the gospel of the kingdom, not the gospel of the grace of God.” – ***William MacDonald***

“The gospel of the kingdom is the good news of salvation in the Messiah with the **emphasis** that the **Messianic kingdom is about to be established.**” – ***Wycliffe Bible Commentary***

And note “**this gospel of the kingdom**” in this tribulation context will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

In the first half of the Tribulation God will raise up 2 special witnesses who will have a ministry that impacts the entire world as seen in Revelation 11. Then God will raise up 144,000 Jewish evangelists and they too will have a ministry that will impact the entire world. Immediately after the calling of the 144,000 are mentioned in Rev. 7:1-8 we read this...

- **Revelation 7:9 (NKJV)**

9 After these things I looked, and behold, **a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and**

tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands,

The implication is that the 144,000 Jewish evangelists will win huge multitudes of people to the Lord. But God is not done yet. He insists that “this gospel of the kingdom” be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations”.

So just before the climactic bowl judgments are poured out which will bring the labor pains of the tribulation period to maximum intensity issuing in the birth of the kingdom; just before this, God will send out an angel to preach the gospel to every tribe, tongue and nation.

Revelation 14:6–7 (NKJV)

6 Then I saw another **angel** flying in the midst of heaven, having the **everlasting gospel** to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to **every nation, tribe, tongue, and people**—

7 saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”

Nowhere else in the Bible do we find angels actually preaching the gospel. At this point God will employ even an angel in this task to canvass the world one last time, in effect crying out that people might even at this last moment respond.

The everlasting Gospel is that God triumphs forever which is essentially synonymous with the “gospel of the kingdom”. Note the emphasis on the fact that this message is going out to ALL peoples of the entire world (cf. Mt. 24:14).

The events of the Tribulation Period are “all world events”. God’s people will be “hated by ALL nations” (v. 9). The gospel of the kingdom will “be preached in ALL the world as a witness to ALL the nations” (v. 14). At this point God will be operating on a GLOBAL scale that uniquely involves the whole entire world at once.

This truly is the LAST CALL and then the end will come!

“If we let context rule our interpretation, the end to which Jesus refers is the end of the age, which is the initial question asked by the disciples ([Mt 24:3](#)).” – **Bruce Hurt**

“The end” here has the definite article which in context refers to a very specific END, namely “the end” that will usher in the 2nd Coming of Christ.

As we live in the Church Age Paul says we are those “**upon whom the ends of the ages have come**” (1 Cor. 10:11). We know we live at the end – we just don’t know how much of the end there is before we come to the FINAL END PERIOD as designated in the 70th week of Daniel.

Right now the stage is being set for the last day’s finale in which God’s judgment will come upon the entire world which will usher in the 2nd Coming of Christ to the earth.

God has deposited His truth to His Church so that we might be a witness to the world (1 Tim. 3:15). And part of that witness is to warn the world that judgment day is coming (Acts 17:30-31).

Noah preached a warning for 120 years and then the flood came. Lot tried to warn his family of impending judgment, but they didn’t take him serious and thought he must be joking (Gen. 19:14).

Soren Kierkegaard was a Danish Theologian who lived in the 1800s. He gave this illustration:

“A fire broke out backstage at a theatre. [An actor] came out to warn the public; they thought it was a joke and applauded. He repeated it; the acclaim was even greater.” Kierkegaard then said he thought this is how the end would come.

Peter says, “*know this first: that scoffers will come in the last days... saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming?’*” (2 Pet. 3:3). This is where we live.

There are NO overt signs in the church age as judgment comes to the earth like a thief in the night, but for those who have eyes to see we see the growing trends of hatred, lawlessness, and apostasy which are setting the stage for the Antichrist. The great sign in the Church Age (if you want to

call it that) is that of apostasy where people no longer take the warning of coming judgment seriously.

Even now we see the mystery of “**lawlessness is already at work**” (2 Thess. 2:7). Even now we see many antichrists are on the scene who are setting the stage for the Antichrist who is to come and by this we know it is the last hour (1 Jn. 2:18).

Even now the stage is being set, even now the warning is going forth that Judgment Day is coming and that people should get right with God while they still have the opportunity.

The Bible says, “**now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.**” (2 Cor. 6:2). The Bible says God, “**now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world**” (Acts 17:30-31). The Bible says God is patiently waiting because He is “**not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance**” (2 Pet. 3:9). The Bible says, “**Today, if you will hear His voice do not harden your hearts**” (Heb. 3:7-8).

Perhaps this is the year that Jesus will come in the Rapture and the world will enter into the Day of the Lord judgment! No one knows but we are told to be ready – to watch and be ready!

May our watchword be “Live ready!” The storm of God’s judgment is coming! Be ready! Live ready!