

“THE END” AS DEFINED BY JESUS

Matthew 24-25 is commonly called “The Olivet Discourse” because Jesus gave this address to His disciples on the Mount of Olives. This was given just a few days before the crucifixion. It has been called “the most important single passage of prophecy in all the Bible” Someone else has said, “it provides the master outline of end-time events”. I call Matthew 24-25 a “Prophetic Seed Plot” because here Jesus introduces new seeds of end times information that the rest of the New Testament then builds on.

It is here that Jesus introduces us to two phases of His Second Coming. The first phase is signless and comes as a SURPRISE; the second phase has all manner of obvious signs and therefore is totally predictable once these signs begin to happen.

It is Jesus Himself Who first introduces the SURPRISE first phase of His Second coming as seen here in Matthew 24. It is Jesus Who is the first one to introduce the first aspect of His second coming as being like a thief who comes in the night which the rest of the NT writers (Paul, Peter, John) then build on (Mt. 24:43-44).

In Matthew 24:3 the disciples asked Jesus, “what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of age?” All the way through Jesus is essentially dealing with what marks the END OF THE AGE – that is the end of the pre-Messianic or the pre-kingdom age that climaxes in the 2nd Coming.

And we don’t have to wonder what END is in view because Jesus in the flow of thought in Matt. 24:15 tethered the idea of “the end” to what Daniel prophesied in the 70th week of Daniel prophecy as found in Daniel 9:24-27.

When Jesus references “the end” in this context He is speaking of the end related to the 70th Week of Daniel commonly called the 7-year Tribulation Period that will usher in the 2 coming of Christ to the earth. The 7 year-tribulation period is divided up into two 3 and ½ year segments.

(Daniel’s 70th Week – Matthew 24:4-14)

Matt. 24:4-8

3 ½ Years

“All these are but the beginning of birth pangs” (v. 8)

“but the end is not yet.” (v. 6)

Matt. 24:9-14

3 ½ Years

“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation...” (v. 9)

“and then the end will come.” (v. 14)

Key connector Words

Related to the first half of the 7-year Tribulation...

v. 6 “the end is NOT YET”

v. 8 “the BEGINNING of birth pangs”

Related to the last half of the 7-year Tribulation...

v. 9 “THEN they will deliver you up to tribulation...”

v. 14 “then THE END will come.”

In summary, the disciples asked what will be “the sign of Your coming and of the end of the age?” (v. 3). Jesus proceeded to describe various SIGNS that will define the 7-year Tribulation Period which will culminate in the 2nd Coming. In Matt. 24:4-8 Jesus listed deception, widespread war, famine, pestilences, and earthquakes as just the beginning, but the final end is not yet. What Jesus lists corresponds to the first 4 seal judgments in Rev. 6:1-8. This relates to the first half of the Tribulation Period. Verse 9 then transitions to the 2nd half of the Tribulation that brings us to the very end.

The Flow of the Olivet Discourse

- 24:1-3 – The Setting and Questions
- 24:4-35 – Tribulation (“sign events”) culminating in the 2nd aspect of the Second Coming

24:4-8 – First Half of the Tribulation

24:9-14 – Second Half of the Tribulation

24:15-28 – Recapitulation of Second Half of the Tribulation

24:29-31- Second Coming

24:32-35 – Parable of the Fig Tree

Some people don't believe in studying prophecy and others don't take the prophetic Scriptures “normally” (literally) which of course allows for figures of speech even as we constantly use in our everyday conversation. But to dismiss prophecy is to cut out HUGE chunks of Scripture because 28% of the Bible was prophetic at the time it was given. This makes the Bible uniquely a PROPHETIC book. To dismiss prophecy is to greatly devalue the Bible.

Jesus as He was getting leave His earthly ministry by way of the cross prepared us for what is to come. He wanted us to know these things so that we might as a way of life LIVE READY and as God's people WARN the world that it is on a collision course with God's judgment if they don't repent! (cf. Acts 17:30-31)

God has provided a SAVIOR in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, but He must be received by faith for WHO He is as Lord and Savior! The only way to pass from the position of “death” to that of “life” is through Jesus.

LIVE READY!

John 1:12 (NKJV)

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

John 5:24 (NKJV)

24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.