

Matthew 24:26-35: So, if they say to you, “Look, he is in the wilderness,” do not go out. If they say, “Look, he is in the inner rooms,” do not believe it. ²⁷ For as the lightning comes from the east & shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ²⁸ Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather. ²⁹ Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, & the moon will not give its light, & the stars will fall from heaven, & the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰ Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, & then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, & they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power & great glory. ³¹ And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, & they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. ³² From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender & puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. ³³ So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁴ Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. ³⁵ Heaven & earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

Intro: In Matthew 24, Jesus is lovingly warning His sheep of God’s future judgment in the destruction of God’s temple & God’s future judgment in the return of Christ at the end of the age. Jesus’ main concern in this chapter is to teach His disciples how to live faithful lives & continue to trust & obey Him during these times of great judgment & destruction. Faithfulness is what Jesus wants! And it’s what we want! I’ve also been arguing that the destruction of Jerusalem & the leveling of the temple is a historical prefigurement/foreshadowing of what is to take place on a grander scale with regard to the Jesus’ second coming & the end of the age. In Matthew 24 there is a dual fulfillment, one before A.D. 70, & one before the return of Christ. **Last week:** Proclaim the Gospel wherever you go, prepare for suffering, hold fast to Christ & His Word, & you shall be saved!

Know Christ & His Word, trust & obey Him, & you will be ready for the return of the King.

1. When Jesus (The Son Of Man) Comes, Everyone Will Know

Matthew 24:26-28: So, if they say to you, “Look, he is in the wilderness,” do not go out. If they say, “Look, he is in the inner rooms,” do not believe it. ²⁷ For as the lightning comes from the east & shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ²⁸ Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.

Jesus’ coming will not be hidden! You won’t need to be told about it! It won’t be in the wilderness or in an inner room. It will be like lightning flashing from the east shining as far as the west! It will be like vultures over a corpse

2. When Jesus Comes, There Will Be Great Judgment

Matthew 24:29-30: Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, & the moon will not give its light, & the stars will fall from heaven, & the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰ Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, & then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, & they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power & great glory.

a. There was a kind of coming of Christ to judge Jerusalem & a coming of Christ to the Father in glory for vindication (in Daniel 7:13-14): 1) In 70 AD, Jesus came in judgment on Jerusalem, Israel, & the temple:

- **Isaiah 26:21:** For behold, the **LORD is coming** out from his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity, and the earth will disclose the blood shed on it, and will no more cover its slain.
- **Micah 1:3:** the **LORD is coming** out of his place, & will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth.
- In 70 AD, Jesus came in judgment on Israel & Jerusalem, & the temple was destroyed. **Jesus is God!**

2) There was a kind of coming Christ to the Father in glory for vindication in 70 AD: Matthew 24:30: they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power & great glory.

- **Daniel 7:13-14:** I saw in the night visions, & behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, & he came to the Ancient of Days & was presented before him. ¹⁴ And to him was given dominion & glory & a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, & languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.
- **Matthew 26:63-64:** the high priest said to him, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the

Son of God." ⁶⁴ Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power & coming on the clouds of heaven."

- The end of the age is the end of the Jewish age & Christ comes into His own reign as the temple is destroyed, Christ is vindicated, & He comes into His own authority.
- The mourning of all tribes is a reference to Zechariah 12:10-14 & the mourning of all the tribes of Israel "when they see the vindication of Jesus whom they have pierced." (Sam Storms) - not repentance but lamentation.

b. Double Fulfillment: Christ will finally come on the last day to judge the world: Rev 19:11-16: Then I saw heaven opened, & behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful & True, & in righteousness he judges & makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, & on his head are many diadems, & he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, & the name by which he is called is The Word of God. & the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white & pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, & he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe & on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. [The mourning will be of all tribes & nations because of God's judgment.]

c. The sign of the Son of Man in 70 AD: The sign is the destruction of Jerusalem as Christ is vindicated in heaven: "And then will appear the sign of the Son of Man [who's] in heaven" - Destruction of Jerusalem/Temple

d. The sign of the Son of Man at Christ's final coming: 1) His coming is the sign (Mark/Luke say He comes!); 2) His banner/ensign/flag; Like an army battle flag; represents His ideals & inspires devotion to His cause.

e. Signs in the heavens appear when God brings judgment on sinners (like 70 AD): The sun being darkened & the moon not giving its light are ways the prophets in the OT spoke of great judgments of God.

- **Isaiah 13:10:** For the stars of the heavens & their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light.

f. These signs in the heavens will happen when God brings the final judgment on sinners at Christ's final coming: Revelation 6:12-17: When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, & the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, ¹³ & the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. ¹⁴ The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, & every mountain & island was removed from its place. ¹⁵ Then the kings of the earth & the great ones & the generals & the rich & the powerful, & everyone, slave & free, hid themselves in the caves & among the rocks of the mountains, ¹⁶ calling to the mountains & rocks, "Fall on us & hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, & from the wrath of the Lamb, ¹⁷ for the great day of their wrath has come, & who can stand?"

Unbelieving friend, are you ready? **GOSPEL!** (Faith Alone!)

Charles Spurgeon: If our sins are as high as the mountains, the ocean of His atonement is like Noah's flood, covering the utmost summit.

Know Christ & His Word, trust & obey Him, & you will be ready for the return of the King.

3. When Jesus Comes, The Elect From All Nations Will Be Saved

Matthew 24:31: And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, & they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

a. There is a sense in which the language here can describe what was happening in the spread of the Gospel before & up till 70 AD: The word or "angels" can simply mean "messengers". So this language would point messengers – preachers of the Gospel, going to preach to the nations & elect from every nation being saved.

- **Colossians 1:5-6:** the Gospel, which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit & growing
- **Colossians 1:23:** the hope of the Gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven
- **Trumpet call:** Points to the Lev 25:9-10, Day of Atonement & year of jubilee; ultimate jubilee; final redemption!

b. But this language also points us to the final fulfillment of the return of Christ at the end of the age when He will gather all the elect to enjoy the new heavens & new earth: 1 Cor 15:52: in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, & the dead will be raised imperishable, & we shall be changed.

- **Rev 7:9-10:** behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes & peoples & languages, standing before the throne & before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, & crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

This gathering of the elect can take place because our great King & Lover Jesus Christ was treated by wicked men as a false christ & a false prophet, spit upon & beaten & nailed to a tree, though He was & is the only true & living Christ! He performed signs & wonders of a type never seen in this world that only should have lead people to Him, the Way, the Truth, & the Life, but they killed Him anyway! When He died, the sun was darkened & the earth was shaken, & He gave up all His power & glory & there was no angel to help Him or gather Him in His greatest time of need!! Yet He arose!!!! What love is this?!

Jesus is coming back with great power and glory! Beauty like you've never seen it! Power like you've never seen it! Glory & majesty like you've never seen it! And one day we will see Him with new, glorified bodies – new glorified eyes, & on that day, we will know that all the pain & suffering we endured for His sake will have been worth it! All the self denial will have been worth it!

Hope is a powerful motivator to live life to the fullest for the glory of Jesus! If you know for a fact that your greatest worries or your greatest fears or the greatest possible evil you could ever imagine happening to you or the greatest troubles in your life – if you could know for a fact that it all would someday be made all good & only serve to increase your future, eternal happiness, you would have a great, unshakable hope! That's what the return of Christ is about! In Him, you'll have it all! Christ is all! All joy; all happiness; all satisfaction; all hope; all love; all fulfillment; all desires fully quenched in Him Who is all in all! And all things sad will become untrue & serve you!

c. Jesus is God: Who commands angels in the Old Testament? The LORD God Almighty!

- **Ps 91:11:** For He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.

- **Ps 103:20:** Bless the LORD, O you His angels, you mighty ones who do His word, obeying the voice of His word!

Who commands angels in the New Testament? Jesus Christ!

Matthew 24:31: He will send out His angels with a loud trumpet call, & they will gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. [**Jesus Christ is the LORD God Almighty!**]

Know Christ & His Word, trust & obey Him, & you will be ready for the return of the King.

4. There Is A Sense In Which Jesus Came In His Disciples' Generation

Matthew 24:32-34: From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender & puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. ³³ So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates.

³⁴ Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

a. The lesson from the fig tree: Jesus uses a parable or object lesson to explain what He has been saying. Fig trees were common in Israel where Jesus was, & people knew that once the leaves came out on the fig tree, summer was coming right behind. Summer was near. The main focus of this parable is on the “these things” the disciples asked Jesus about privately in Matthew 24:3.

Matthew 24:3: As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be, & what will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?"

Then all these you, you, you's . . . V. 4: See that no one leads you astray; **V. 6:** And you will hear of wars & rumors of wars; **V. 9:** they will deliver you up to tribulation & put you to death, & you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake; **V. 15:** when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel; To V. 26

Matthew 24:2-3: he answered them, "You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down." ³ As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be

Matthew 24:33-34: So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁴ Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

The "these things" and "all these things" has an immediate (this generation) & maybe even primary focus on the destruction of the temple in 70 AD.

Then there is a shift to primarily focus on Jesus final, second coming: See the contrast: Matthew 24:36: But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.

Matthew 24:44: Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

b. This generation will see "all these things": (Some argue: ethnicity; generation at end of world; wicked gen.)
- **Matthew 23:35-36, 38:** on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth . . . ³⁶ Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation . . . ³⁸ See, your house is left to you desolate
- **Sam Storms:** The word for "generation" occurs 27 times in the Gospels & never once means "race." Every time the words "this generation" occur in the Gospels they mean Jesus' contemporaries; **Ken Gentry:** Surely Jesus does not denounce the first-century temple in which He is standing (24:1) by declaring it 'desolate' (23:38), prophesying its total destruction (24:2), then answering the question 'when shall these things be?' (v. 3), and warning about the temple's 'abomination of desolation' (v. 15) only to speak about the destruction of a totally different temple two thousand years (or more) later.

D. A. Carson: "This generation" can only with the greatest difficulty be made to mean anything other than the generation living when Jesus spoke. [This generation can't include Jesus' return – only the Father knows! V. 36]

5. What Jesus Says Happens

Matthew 24:35: Heaven & earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

a. Why does Jesus bring up heaven & earth passing away now? 1) 70 AD: Sam Storms: [Citing Crispen H. T. Fletcher-Louis, speaks of] an impressive amount of biblical & extra-biblical evidence that the temple was thought of "as the point at which the creation had taken place & around which it now revolved – the Navel of the Earth; the meeting point of heaven & earth – the Gate of Heaven." More important still "was the belief that the temple was regarded as the 'epitome of the world, a concentrated form of its essence, a miniature of the cosmos'.

2) When Jesus finally returns, heaven & earth will pass away & there will be a new heavens & new earth!

b. What Jesus says happens: We've seen this over & over again in the last few sermons on Matt 24. Everything Jesus said about God's judgment on Israel & Jerusalem & the temple happened just as He said it would!

According to the OT, Whose Words never pass away? God! **Isa. 40:8:** The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. **Ps. 119:89:** Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens.

Jesus' Words are everlasting Words because He is the everlasting God! **Jesus is God!**

Know Christ & His Word, trust & obey Him, & you will be ready for the return of the King.

Jesus Is The Highest Class; His Beauty None Can E'er Surpass; His Every Word Shall Come To Pass;
In Him All Joys We'll Amass!

Talk is cheap
Our words are a vapor
We say we will do but then we don't do
But what Jesus says happens, and His Word stands forever!

Talk is cheap
We plan and speak our plans and then they don't go according to our plan
Our tongues are a fire and a world of unrighteousness
They are a restless evil, full of deadly poison and cannot be tamed
But Jesus can tame anything, anytime, anywhere all by Himself!
And what Jesus says happens, and His Word stands forever!

Talk is cheap
Politicians are promising
TV commercials are conniving toward covetousness
The media is maneuvering and manipulating
Prosperity preachers are pilfering and profiting
But they don't know
That Jesus knows every secret motive and intent of their hearts and will make every secret known someday!
He always tells the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help Him – well – He is God!
He is the Truth incarnate!
And what Jesus says happens, and His Word stands forever!

Talk is cheap
Our fathers let us down
Our mothers let us down
Our husbands let us down
Our wives let us down
Our sisters and brothers let us down
Our best friends let us down
Our pastors let us down
But oh don't you know
That there is one Man – the God-Man – Who will never let us down, put us down, hold us down, or keep us down!
He's the Everlasting Father!
He gathers us together as a mother hen gathers her baby chicks under her wings to be saved, safe, & satisfied forever
He's the most loving, beautiful, caring, kind, compassionate, best, all satisfying Spouse you'll ever have by far!
He's our great Elder Brother Who always speaks the truth, always loves, always comforts – perfectly!
He's the best friend this world has ever known Who displayed the greatest love this world has ever seen when He
laid down His life for His friends on that cross!
He's the Pastor of pastors Who fearlessly feeds His flock the finest of food so they might be saved from the
fierceness of His Father's fury forever!
Because what Jesus says happens, and His Word stands forever!

Talk is cheap
Jehovah's witness are talking a false Jesus
Mormons are talking a false Bible
Muslims, Jews, Hindus, and Buddhists are talking false religions
Atheists are talking no God at all
But the truest, most amazing, most beautiful, most glorious talk that has ever been talked from any talker who has ever tracked across any terrain was talked by Jesus – the Word made flesh Who talked the talk and walked the walk like no one in the history of this universe!
Because what Jesus says happens, and His Word stands forever!

Talk is cheap
But God made us to talk
And to talk expansively about the exhaustive expanse of His extravagant, excellent, efficacious, love!
We are to talk Jesus up! Not that He needs to be talked up, for He's already as up as up can be up and more than anyone is up – He is up!
But everyone just doesn't know that He is the uppest of the up! So we must go and tell them and make disciples of all nations!
We must go and tell them that whatever they talk up is nothing compared to the King of UP!
We must tell them that He is the greatest and that He can take whatever is down in their lives and turn in right side up since He is the Up of ups!
His talk can turn the sexually immoral right side up!
His talk can turn the drunkards and drug addicts right side up!
His talk can turn the self-righteous church member right side up!
His talk can turn the most wrong side downest of the down person who has ever lived right side up to the up & up!
Because what Jesus says happens, and His Word stands forever!

Talk is cheap
But let us talk about what is most expensive!
Let us talk about our LORD Jesus Christ Who is God the Son and Who is all in all!
Let us talk about the death of our Savior on that cross!
Let us talk about the resurrection of our Savior and His absolute conquering of sin, death, and hell!
Let us talk about His ruling and reigning right now over every square inch of this universe!
Let us talk about His return when He will make every wrong right and wipe away every tear from our eyes!
Let us talk about Him with passionate love in our hearts, faithful and diligent action in our wills, truth on fire in our minds – all for His glory, honor, and praise!
Because what Jesus says happens, and His Word stands forever!

Christ Jesus' Coming Shines So Bright
Like Lightning Flashing, What A Sight
From East To West They'll See His Light
With Power, Glory, Greatest Might
He'll Come And All His Foes Will Fright
His Words Won't Pass, Forever Write
They Stand Eternal We'll Recite
He Died, Endured God's Wrathful Night
Took All Hell's Anger At Its Height

Then Rose All Death To Crush And Right
All Wrongs And Sadnesses He'll Fight
His Blood Shall Make Our Sin Robes White
He'll Gather All Elect Contrite
Who Shall By Faith Alone Invite
The God-Man To Their Hearts Ignite
A Flame Of Joy He'll Excite
Pleasures In Him, Our Great Delight!