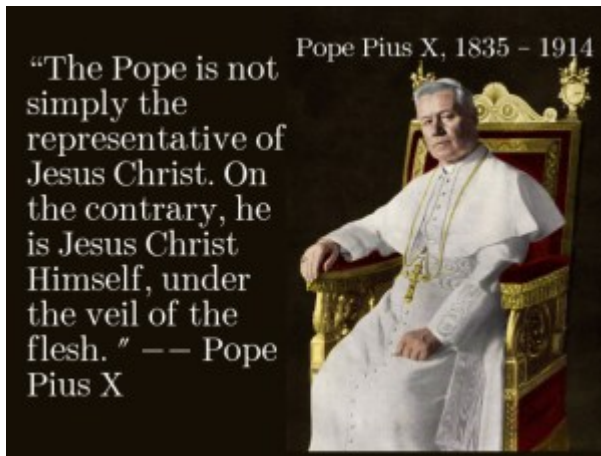


Is the Prophecy of Matthew 24:29-31 a Future Endtime Event?



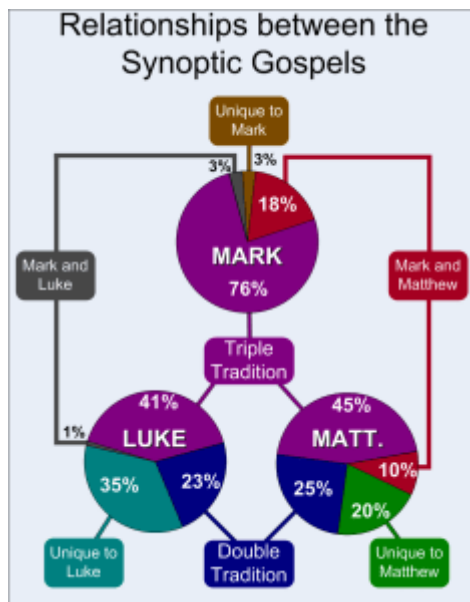
Alternative non-dispensational interpretations of Matthew 24:29-31 based on the historical views of Protestant Reformation Bible teachers and pastors.

Seven Events Evangelicals Incorrectly Believe Will be Fulfilled in the Endtime



Most evangelicals today are teaching false Endtime doctrines based on a false interpretation of Daniel 9:27. Futurism originated with a Jesuit priest Francesco Rivera in the 16th century.

The Olivet Discourse in All Three Synoptic Gospels Compared Verse by Verse



The Olivet Discourse is the message Jesus gave to His disciples on the Mount of Olives. This message is written in slightly three different ways in the three synoptic Gospels in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21. The Gospels Matthew, Mark and Luke are called **synoptic Gospels** because they include many of the same stories. And they stand in contrast to the Gospel of John, whose content is largely distinct.

In my opinion, Just as the Daniel 9:27 is one of the most misinterpreted prophecies in the Bible, Matthew 24 is one of the most misinterpreted chapters in the Bible. False doctrines of Dispensationalism and Futurism have tainted the thinking of the vast majority of evangelicals today. Most Bible believing Christians today interpret Matthew 24 as the Lord's description of events just before the end of the world. Is that what Mark 13 and Luke 21, the parallel passages of the other two synoptic Gospels teach? Let's find out by comparing them!

I believe it's very important to compare the three passages because through it's the same account of Jesus on the Mount of Olives, the wording is not always identical! And because they're not always identical, Mark 13 and Luke 21 sheds light on the words recorded in the Gospel of Matthew. Scripture interprets Scripture.

Prophecy of the destruction of the Temple

Matthew 24:1-2 "And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. {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."

Mark 13:1-2 "And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! {2} And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

Luke 21:5-6 "And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, {6} As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

Not much difference in the first three verses of the Olivet Discourse.

The disciples ask Jesus when it will happen and what the signs will be before it happens.

Matthew 24:3 "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?**"

Mark 13:3-4 "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, {4} Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the **sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?**"

Luke 21:7 "And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and **what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?**"

As you can see, only Matthew says "the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world", and not Mark or Luke. According to Strong's concordance, the Greek word for world is *aion* and from which we get our English word eon, meaning an age. With that in mind, a better translation for Matthew 23:3 would be, "the end of the Jewish age." Do you think I'm stretching it to say that? The Olivet discourse is all about the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Roman army in 70 AD. No Temple = no more animal sacrifices, the very heart and practice of the Jewish relation. Jesus was telling His disciples He is giving the Jews 40 more years to repent before He returns to destroy them!

This is connected to what "the sign of thy coming" means. It doesn't mean the second coming of Christ at the very end of the world, it means Christ's coming to destroy the people who rejected Him as their Messiah! How do I know Jesus returned in 70 AD? Jesus told the high priest Caiaphas He would return!

Matthew 26:63-65 "But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. {64} Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. {65} Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy."

God has given us an intellect to help us interpret Scripture. Some things are symbolic and others literal. Jesus told the high priest that he would see Him sitting at the right hand of power coming in the clouds of Heaven. It seems logical to me that the high priest would live 40 more years to the destruction of Jerusalem, and literally see Jesus in the clouds, and therefore know that he and the Jews are being judged by God through the Roman army for their rejection of Jesus as their Messiah, their Christ. It therefore can't possibly mean 2000 years later as some may interpret it.

Jesus tells them signs before the destruction of the Temple.

Matthew 24:4-14 “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. {8} All these are the beginning of sorrows. {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. {13} But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. {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.”

Mark 13:5-13 “And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you: {6} For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. (7) And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet. {8} For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows. {9} But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. {10} And the gospel must first be published among all nations. {11} But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. {12} Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. {13} And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”

Luke 21:8-19 “And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: **go ye not therefore after them.** {9} But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by. {10} Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: {11} And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. {12} But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name’s sake. {13} And it shall turn to you for a testimony. {14} Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: {15} For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. {16} And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. {17} And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake. {18} But there shall not an hair of your head perish. {19} In your patience possess ye your souls.”

Luke adds more information with “fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.” Flavius Josephus wrote about [seven signs](#) before the destruction of Jerusalem.

1. A star stood over the city like a sword, and a comet – remaining for a whole year. **Matthew, we know, also likes the idea of a star hanging over a particular spot on earth.**
2. At a Feast of Unleavened Bread, at 3 am, a bright light, as bright as midday, appeared around the altar and sanctuary, lasting for an hour.
3. During the same feast a cow brought for sacrifice gave birth to a lamb in the middle of the Temple courts.
4. At midnight the East Gate of the Inner Sanctuary opened of its own accord. This solid bronze gate normally required 20 men to shut it, and it was fastened with iron bars secured by bolts.
5. Shortly after the feast, before sunset, there appeared in the sky over the entire country chariots and regiments of soldiers racing through the clouds and surrounding the towns.
6. At Pentecost the priests **who were performing the normal Inner Temple ritual at night** heard a violent movement and loud crash, then a loud cry of many voices: “Let us go hence!”
7. Four years before Jerusalem’s war with Rome, Jesus the son of Ananias proclaimed doom for the city – especially at the feasts, and from the Temple. He spoke as one possessed for 7 and a half years, “Woe to Jerusalem”, was beaten by the authorities, and was killed during the siege.

Jesus tells His followers when to flee Jerusalem and Judea.

Matthew 24:15 “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:)

Mark 13:14 “But when ye shall see the **abomination of desolation**, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judæa flee to the mountains:

Luke 21:20-21 “And when ye shall see **Jerusalem compassed with armies**, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

Matthew and Mark say to flee when they see “abomination of desolation” and Luke says to flee when they see, “Jerusalem compassed with armies.” I submit to you that the abomination of desolation, therefore, is the armies of Rome about to attack Jerusalem and not some idol the Antichrist puts in the Temple as many have interpreted it.

Jesus tells His followers where to go, what to do, and why.

Matthew 24:16-21 “Then let them which be **in Judæa flee into the mountains:** {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. {19} And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! {20} But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: {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. “

Mark 13:15-19 “And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take any thing out of his house: {16} And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment. {17} But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! {18} And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter. {19} For **in those days shall be affliction**, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.”

Luke 21:21-24 "Then let them which are in Judæa flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. {22} "For these be the **days of vengeance**, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. {23} But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and **wrath upon this people**. {24} And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

As you can see, Mark and Luke add more detail and clarify exactly what the "great tribulation" is! Mark calls it days of affliction and Luke calls it days of vengeance! Affliction upon whom? Vengeance upon whom? Upon the Christ rejecting unbelieving Jews! And where were they? In Jerusalem. Many of them fled to the Temple and were killed there. None of the Christians were there. They in obedience to Jesus' command fled Jerusalem and Judea and went to the mountains where they were safe. The Lord must have fed and took care of them there.

These scriptures are clearly about the attack by the Roman army by the Jews for their rebellion. The Lord was going to punish the Christ rejecting Jews but did not want His people to be caught up in that judgement. He therefore told His followers to flee Jerusalem and Judea when they saw the Roman army coming. He warned the Christians who were not in Judea not to return to it. He told them to make haste to flee for their lives. He told them to pray it won't happen in winter when it's much more difficult to travel, and to pray it won't be on the Sabbath day when the gates are closed.

The war against the Jews shortened for the Christians sake.

Matthew 24:22 "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

Mark 13:20 "And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days."

Missing in Luke.

If the Romans had gone on destroying in this manner, the whole nation of the Jews would have been destroyed. For the Christians particularly those days were shortened.

Warning about false teachers

Matthew 24:23-26 "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. {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. {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."

Mark 13:21-23 "And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; believe him not: {22} For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. {23} But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things."

Already told in **Luke 21:8** "And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them."

Christians today need to be very careful who they listen to! There are many false teachers, dispensationalists, futurists, doctrines tainted by Jesuits. And there are prosperity Gospel preachers who rip off the poor while they live in luxury. And some churches are even infiltrated with witches! We need to make sure we are following what the Bible actually teaches and not just what some preacher says it teaches. Let's be like the Bereans and search the Scriptures for ourselves to see if what the preacher or teacher is saying is what the Bible actually says!

Acts 17:10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto **Berea**: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.

11 **These were more noble than those in Thessalonica**, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and **sought the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.**

Jesus uses a parable of lightning, a carcass, and eagles

Matthew 24:27-28 "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. {28} For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together."

Not in Mark.

Not in Luke

Adam Clarke's interpretation: "The Lord, points out the very march of the Roman army: they entered into Judea on the East, and carried on their conquest Westward, as if not only the extensiveness of the ruin, but the very route which the army would take, were intended in the comparison of the lightning issuing from the east, and shining to the west. Clarke also interprets the "carcass" as the Jewish nation which was morally and judicially dead and the "eagles" as the armies of Rome gathered around the dead nation. It's makes sense to me!

The Historicist interpretation of Scriptures futurists consider to be about the end of the world.

Matthew 24:29-31 "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: {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. {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."

Mark 13:24-27 "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, {25} And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. {26} And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. {27} And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven."

Luke 21:25-28 "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; {26} Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. {27} And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. {28} And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

From Adam Clarke's commentary: "Commentators generally understand this, and what follows, of the end of the world and Christ's coming to judgment: but the word immediately shows that our Lord is not speaking of any distant event, but of something immediately consequent on calamities already predicted: and that must be the destruction of Jerusalem. "The Jewish heaven shall perish, and the sun and moon of its glory and happiness shall be darkened – brought to nothing. The sun is the religion of the Church; the moon is the government of the state; and the stars are the judges and doctors of both. Compare Isaiah 13:10; Ezekiel 32:7, Ezekiel 32:8, etc."

In the prophetic language, great commotions upon earth are often represented under the notion of commotions and changes in the heavens: –

The fall of Babylon is represented by the stars and constellations of heaven withdrawing their light, and the sun and moon being darkened. See Isaiah 13:9, Isaiah 13:10.

The destruction of Egypt, by the heaven being covered, the sun enveloped with a cloud, and the moon withholding her light. Ezekiel 32:7, Ezekiel 32:8.

The destruction of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes is represented by casting down some of the host of heaven, and the stars to the ground. See Daniel 8:10.

And this very destruction of Jerusalem is represented by the Prophet Joel, Joel 2:30, Joel 2:31, by showing wonders in heaven and in earth – darkening the sun, and turning the moon into blood. This general mode of describing these judgments leaves no room to doubt the propriety of its application in the present case.

The falling of stars, i.e. those meteors which are called falling stars by the common people, was deemed an omen of evil times.

Verse 30 Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man – The plain meaning of this is, that the destruction of Jerusalem will be such a remarkable instance of Divine vengeance, such a signal manifestation of Christ's power and glory, that all the Jewish tribes shall mourn, and many will, in consequence of this manifestation of God, be led to acknowledge Christ and his religion. By της γης, of the land, in the text, is evidently meant here, as in several other places, the land of Judea and its tribes, either its then inhabitants, or the Jewish people wherever found.

Verse 31 He shall send his angels – Τους αγγελους, his messengers, the apostles, and their successors in the Christian ministry.

With a great sound of a trumpet – Or, a loud-sounding trumpet – the earnest affectionate call of the Gospel of peace, life, and salvation.

Shall gather together his elect – The Gentiles, who were now chosen or elected, in place of the rebellious, obstinate Jews, according to Our Lord's prediction, Matthew 8:11, Matthew 8:12, and Luke 13:28, Luke 13:29. For the children of the kingdom, (the Jews who were born with a legal right to it, but had now finally forfeited that right by their iniquities) should be thrust out. It is worth serious observation, that the Christian religion spread and prevailed mightily after this period: and nothing contributed more to the success of the Gospel than the destruction of Jerusalem happening in the very time and manner, and with the very circumstances, so particularly foretold by our Lord. It was after this period that the kingdom of Christ began, and his reign was established in almost every part of the world. To St. Matthew's account, St. Luke adds, Luke 21:24, They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shalt be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. The number of those who fell by the sword was very great. Eleven Hundred Thousand perished during the siege. Many were slain at other places, and at other times. By the commandment of Florus, the first author of the war, there were slain at Jerusalem 3,600, Josephus. War, b. ii. c. 14. By the inhabitants of Caesarea, above 20,000. At Scythopolis, above 13,000. At Ascalon, 2,500. At Ptolemais, 2,000. At Alexandria, 50,000. At Joppa, when taken by Cestius Gallus, 8,400. In a mountain called Asamon, near Sepporis, above 2,000. At Damascus, 10,000. In a battle with the Romans at Ascalon, 10,000. In an ambush near the same place, 8,000. At Japha, 15,000. Of the Samaritans, on Mount Gerizim, 11,600. At Jotapa, 40,000. At Joppa, when taken by Vespasian, 4,200. At Tarichea, 6,500. And after the city was taken, 1,200. At Gamala, 4,000, besides 5,000 who threw themselves down a precipice. Of those who fled with John, of Gischala, 6,000. Of the Gadarenes, 15,000 slain, besides countless multitudes drowned. In the village of Idumea, above 10,000 slain. At Gerasa, 1,000. At Machaerus, 1,700. In the wood of Jardes, 3,000. In the castle of Masada, 960. In Cyrene, by Catullus the governor, 3,000. Besides these, many of every age, sex, and condition, were slain in the war, who are not reckoned; but, of those who are reckoned, the number amounts to upwards of 1,357,660, which would have appeared incredible, if their own historian had not so particularly enumerated them. See Josephus, War, book ii. c. 18, 20; book iii. c. 2, 7, 8, 9; book iv. c. 1, 2, 7, 8, 9; book vii. c. 6, 9, 11; and Bp. Newton, vol. ii. p. 288-290.

Many also were led away captives into all nations. There were taken at Japha, 2,130. At Jotapa, 1,200. At Tarichea, 6,000 chosen young men, who were sent to Nero; others sold to the number of 30,400, besides those who were given to Agrippa. Of the Gadarenes were taken 2,200. In Idumea above 1,000. Many besides these were taken in Jerusalem; so that, as Josephus says, the number of the captives taken in the whole war amounted to 97,000. Those above seventeen years of age were sent to the works in Egypt; but most were distributed through the Roman provinces, to be destroyed in their theatres by the sword, and by the wild beasts; and those under seventeen years of age were sold for slaves. Eleven thousand in one place perished for want. At Caesarea, Titus, like a thorough-paced infernal savage, murdered 2,500 Jews, in honor of his brother's birthday; and a greater number at Berytus in honor of his father's. See Josephus, War, b. vii. c. 3. s. 1. Some he caused to kill each other; some were thrown to the wild beasts; and others burnt alive. And all this was done by a man who was styled, The darling of mankind! Thus were the Jews miserably tormented, and distributed over the Roman provinces; and continue to be distressed and dispersed over all the nations of the world to the present day. Jerusalem also was, according to the prediction of our Lord, to be trodden down by the Gentiles. Accordingly it has never since been in the possession of the Jews. It was first in subjection to the Romans, afterwards to the Saracens, then to the Franks, after to the Mamalukes, and now to the Turks. Thus has the prophecy of Christ been most literally and terribly fulfilled, on a people who are still preserved as continued monuments of the truth of our Lord's prediction, and of the truth of the Christian religion. See more in Bp. Newton's Dissert. vol. ii. p. 291, etc.

The meaning of the parable of the fig tree

Matthew 24:32-35 "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: {33} So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. {34} Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. {35} Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Mark 13:28-31 "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near: {29} So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors. {30} Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done. {31} Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away."

Luke 21:29-33 "And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; {30} When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. {31} So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. {32} Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. {33} Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away."

Adam Clarke commentary: **Learn a parable of the fig-tree** – That is, These signs which I have given you will be as infallible a proof of the approaching ruin of the Jewish state as the budding of the trees is a proof of the coming summer.

My commentary of **This generation shall not pass away**: Jesus was talking to his disciples who were mostly young. They would live 40 more years to see all these things, namely the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem by the Roman army.

Jesus exhorts us not to fall spiritually asleep.

Matthew 24:36 "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

Mark 13:32-33 "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. {33} Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

Not in Luke.

How many times in history were people caught off guard and unprepared for a disaster? The destruction of Lahaina in Maui is a recent example.

Who was left behind? The fortunate ones!

Matthew 24:40-41 "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."

Not in Mark.

Not in Luke.

Adam Clarke's commentary: **Then shall two men – two women – one shall be taken, and the other left** – The meaning seems to be, that so general should these calamities be, that no two persons, wheresoever found, or about whatsoever employed, should be both able to effect their escape; and that captivity and the sword should have a complete triumph over this unhappy people.

I hope you see these verses are not talking about the Rapture as the popular "Left Behind" series by Tim LaHaye indicates. It's talking about the killing of Jews by the Romans.

Warnings to watch and stay spiritually awake!

Matthew 24:37-51 “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.” “Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. {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. {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.”

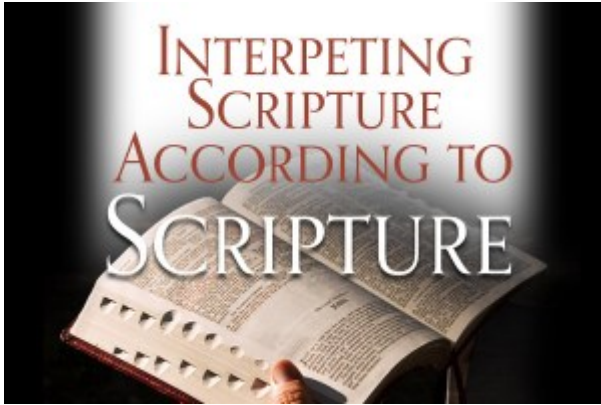
Mark 13:34-37 “For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: {36} Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. {37} And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.”

Luke 21:34-36 “And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. {35} For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. {36} Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”

Self-explanatory.

For more commentary of the Olivet Discourse, please see [Adam Clarke's Commentary on Matthew 24](#)

[Using Scripture to Interpret Scripture](#)



The Bible itself is the best commentary to refer to in order to find the correct interpretation and meanings of important words. Scripture is its own best interpreter.

[The Destruction Of Jerusalem](#)



Forward by the Webmaster:

I was inspired to transcribe part of Dr. Chuck Baldwin's message on the destruction of Jerusalem from a YouTube posted by Liberty Fellowship. I was not asked by Liberty Fellowship to do this. I am receiving no remuneration from them.

I think this message is extremely important for all Christians to know. It contains information that I certainly didn't know. And I think having a message in text format makes it more accessible to all. It sure helps me absorb the message deeper in my heart when I can read it. I hope you appreciate it and share this article with your friends.

The Destruction Of Jerusalem – by Dr. Chuck Baldwin

Open your Bibles please to Matthew chapter 23. Matthew chapter 23. I am preaching a message today that most of you have never heard a message of this nature preached in your life. You might be a senior citizen well up in years. I would venture to say you've never heard a message like I'm going to bring today, not because this message is not important, it is critically important,

but the problem is there has been a great falling away among the Church over the last hundred years, and many of these great truths of the Word of God are not being taught any longer. This is one of those.

I'm speaking today on the destruction of Jerusalem. Matthew chapter 23 in verses 37 and 38, hear what Jesus said:

Matthew 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

God introduced His covenant with Moses with mighty signs and miracles as we have already discussed. Again and again, again and again, the children of Israel, in spite of those miracles, rejected God, His Word, and His messengers. God sent them warning, after warning, after warning, prophet after prophet, miracle after miracle, oppressor after oppressor, and still Israel remained stiff-necked, hard-hearted and obstinate.

Moses in Exodus 32:9 said, "I have seen this people and behold it is a stiff-necked people."

In Exodus 33:5: "For the Lord said to Moses say unto the children of Israel ye are a stiff-necked people."

In Deuteronomy 9:6 "Understand therefore that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land – the promised land – to possess it for thy righteousness." He's not giving you this land because you have been righteous. "For thou art a stiff-necked people."

Deuteronomy 9:13: "Furthermore the Lord said unto me saying I have seen this person and behold it is a stiff necked people."

2nd Chronicles chapter 30 and verse 8: "King Hezekiah said now be he not stiff necked as your fathers were."

In Acts chapter 7 verse 51 Stephen said: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, you do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye."

Jesus said to Jerusalem, "Thou that stonest the prophets, killest them that are sent unto thee." Jesus meant that.

Samuel was stoned against by the people, threatened, rejected, and mauled over by public opinion, Isaiah murdered with a wooden saw by King Manasseh, Joel, Uzziah, the son of King Amaziah, clubbed him to death. Amos, the son of a priest, drove a nail through his Temple. Micah was murdered by Joram, the son of Ahab. Habakkuk, stoned to death by Jews in Jerusalem. Ezekiel murdered by the chief of the Jews in Chaldea. Zachariah, King Joash murdered this prophet between the steps and the altar of the Temple, and then sprinkled his blood on the horns of the altar. Jeremiah, imprisoned, tortured, starved, and stoned to death by the Jews.

Look at Jeremiah chapter 19, take your Bibles to Jeremiah chapter 19, hear the prophecy of Jeremiah relative to the destruction of Jerusalem. Jeremiah chapter 19. I'm going to be giving you a *lot* of material today, and I know it may be hard to remember everything that I'm going to say that's why I hope that you'll get the video afterward, but I hope you'll watch intently at this prophecy of Jeremiah as it is applied to the destruction of Jerusalem, because *every single thing* that Jeremiah said in this chapter came to pass, and we will see it in this message.

Jeremiah 19:1 ¶Thus saith the LORD, Go and get a potter's earthen bottle, and take of the ancients of the people, and of the ancients of the priests;
2 And go forth unto the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is by the entry of the east gate, and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee,
3 And say, Hear ye the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle.
4 Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents;
5 They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind:
6 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that this place (Jerusalem) shall no more be called Tophet, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of slaughter.
7 And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place; and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hands of them that seek their lives: and their carcasses will I give to be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth.
8 And I will make this city desolate,

What did Jesus say? "Jerusalem, your house is left unto you desolate."

Jeremiah 19:8 And I will make this city desolate, and an hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss because of all the plagues thereof.
9 And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend in the siege and straitness, wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall straiten them.
10 ¶Then shalt thou break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee,
11 And shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again: and they shall bury them in Tophet, till there be no place to bury.
12 Thus will I do unto this place, saith the LORD, and to the inhabitants thereof, and even make this city as Tophet:
13 And the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall

be defiled as the place of Tophet, because of all the houses upon whose roofs they have burned incense unto all the host of heaven, and have poured out drink offerings unto other gods.

14 Then came Jeremiah from Tophet, whither the LORD had sent him to prophesy; and he stood in the court of the LORD'S house; and said to all the people,
15 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon this city and upon all her towns all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words.

That was Jeremiah's prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem. Every word came to pass as we will see in a minute.

Description of Jerusalem

First, let's talk about the city of Jerusalem itself. It was built on two major mountains, and five lesser mountains. Three massive walls surrounded the city on every side except one side which was inaccessible. One wall was erected on a hanging rock and fortified by sixty towers. The middle wall had fourteen towers. The third wall had nearly 90 towers. In clear weather, one could see the Mediterranean Sea, Arabia, and the entire nation of Israel, from one vantage point. The towers were built of white marble. The tower stood between 90 and 135 feet high. Again, they all stood on the top of great hills and mountains. Nearby on the north side was the royal palace with its porticoes, galleries, apartments, groves, gardens, walks, fountains, aqueducts, all made from the costliest and most elegant materials. The Temple and the fort of Antonia were on the east side directly opposite the Mount of Olives. Inside the fort was the castle of Antonia, seventy five feet high, each side faced with marble. The towers of the fort were elegant and massive beyond description. The foundations of the lower Temple were four hundred and fifty feet deep, and the stones of which they were composed were more than 60 feet long and seven feet high, made of the whitest marble. The circuit of the whole building was four furlongs. Its height 100 cubits, 160 pillars each 27 feet high, ornamented and sustained the immense and ponderous edifice. In the front, spacious and lofty galleries wainscoted with cedar were supported by columns of white marble in uniform rows. In short, says Josephus, nothing could surpass even the exterior of this Temple for its elegant and curious workmanship. It was adorned with solid plates of gold that rivaled the beauty of the rising sun, and were scarcely less dazzling to the eye than the beams of that luminary. Of those parts of the building which were not guilt when viewed from a distance, some, says he, appeared like pillars of snow, and some like mountains of white marble. The splendor of the interior parts of the Temple corresponded with the external magnificence. It was decorated and enriched by everything that was costly, elegant, and superb.

In the lower Temple was placed the sacred curiosities; the seven-branched candlestick of pure gold, the table for the show-bread, and the altar of incense, the two latter of which were covered over with plates of the same metal, gold. In the sanctuary were several doors 55 cubits high, 16 in breadth which were all likewise of gold. Before these doors hung a veil of the most beautiful Babylonian tapestry composed of scarlet blue and purple,

exquisitely interwoven, and wrought up to the highest degree of art. From the top of the ceiling depended branches and leaves of vines and large clusters of grapes hanging down five or six feet all of gold, and of most admirable workmanship. In addition to these proofs of the splendor and riches of the Temple may be noticed its eastern gate of pure Corinthian brass, more esteemed even than the precious metals. The golden folding doors of the chambers, the beautiful carved work, gilding and painting of the galleries, golden vessels of the sanctuary, the vestments of scarlet, violet and purple, the vast wealth of the treasury, abundance of precious stones and immense quantities of all kinds of costly spices and perfumes, in short, the most valuable and sumptuous of whatever nature or art or opulence could supply was enclosed within the consecrated walls of this magnificent and venerable edifice.

On Palm Sunday Jesus entered into that city, Jerusalem. The people laid palm leaves in His path and shouted, Hosanna! Blessed be the king that cometh in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest. But listen to what Jesus said, Luke 19:41 through 44.

Luke 19:41 ¶And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,
42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.
43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,
44 And shall lay thee even – even – with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

On Wednesday of that week, Jesus rebuked and confounded the scribes and the Pharisees, and warned the disciples of the barbarous treatment that they would receive very soon at the hands of the Jews. He then said those words that we began this address with.

Luke 13:34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!

35 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate:

The Olivet Discourse

Turn in your Bibles to Matthew chapter 24 beginning in verse 1.

Matthew 24:1 ¶And Jesus went out, and departed from the Temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the Temple.

Not sure this was all of the disciples. It could have been Peter, James, John and Andrew, but they came out to Jesus and engaged in a private conversation with Him, and Jesus foretold the destruction of the city of Jerusalem.

Verse 2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things?

Remember this discourse took place on the Mount of Olives which commanded a full view of the city of Jerusalem and the Temple. Jesus and the disciples are looking at the city. They're looking at the Temple when Jesus said, "See ye not all these things?" Jerusalem, the Temple, the walls, the towers, the beauty, the grandeur, the riches. "Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. Jesus here predicts the city and the Temple's complete demolition.

Verse three: And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? – the destruction of Jerusalem – and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? Or the end of the age. meaning the end of the Jewish age, the end of the Jewish world, not talking about the end of the world as almost everyone interprets this verse to mean. Jesus is talking about the destruction of Jerusalem, the end of an age, the end of the Jewish system, the end of their city, the end of their Temple, the end of their worship. When shall these things be?

Verse 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.

Within a year after Christ's death and resurrection, many false Christs appeared. Dasu Theas the Samaritan, Simon Magus a second Samaritan false Christ, a false Christ named Tudas under the government of Felix, a host of false Christs appeared claiming to perform great signs and miracles. An Egyptian false Christ collected 30 thousand followers. In the time of Festus, another false Christ appeared, and this is just a sample of the hundreds and hundreds of false Christs that came into Judea and Jerusalem shortly after the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, just as He had predicted.

Verse 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.

This is not talking about the end of the world, this is talking about the destruction of Jerusalem. There were wars and commotions occurring so frequently between Jesus death and the destruction of Jerusalem that the whole interval could be regarded as the fulfillment of this prophecy. War between Herod and Aretas king of Arabia Petraea, the wars of Caligula, the wars against the Jews by the Greeks and Syrians in the city of Seleucia with a huge slaughter, the wars between the Jews and the Philadelphians at Perea, the battle between the Jews and Kuminus resulting in the deaths of 10,000 Jews, war between the Jews and the Samaritans, war between the Jews and the Syrians in Ceceria resulting in the deaths of 20,000 Jews, war in Damascus, Tyre, Ascalon, Gadara, and Scythopolis. In the first three cities I just mentioned 10,000 Jews were killed in one hour. The siege of Chapada killed 40,000 Jews. In Alexandria the Romans killed 50,000 Jews. You shall have wars and rumors of wars, nation against nation. It was all fulfilled just as Jesus

said between the time of Christ's death and the destruction of Jerusalem.

And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, Jesus said. Within that same period of time of this prophecy, this was literally fulfilled. In the reign of Claudius there was an great earthquake in Rome. There was an earthquake in Apamea, another earthquake in Syria, another one in Crete, there were earthquakes in Smyrna, Meletis Caius and Samos, another in Laodicea as well as Hierapolis and Colossi, and a dreadful earthquake occurred in Jerusalem a short time before the Roman siege against Jerusalem began. It **all** took place just as Jesus said. Jesus said, famines, great famines at the time extended through Greece and Italy but were felt most severely in Judea and especially in Jerusalem. Helena, Queen of Abiabeena, sent large supplies of grain to Jerusalem to help the starving in the city. The Gentile Christian Churches at the urging of the Apostle Paul sent much relief to the city of Jerusalem because of the starvation and famine in the city just as Jesus predicted.

Jesus said pestilences would occur. The first occurred in Babylon about 40 AD. The second occurred in Rome in 65 AD. Tens of thousands of people, maybe hundreds of thousands perished by the disease accumulating due to starvation and sickness. Dead corpses rotting on the streets, infected rats and insects, just as Jesus said, disease permeated the region for many years in between the death of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem. In Luke chapter 21 and verse 11 Jesus said:

Great Signs from Heaven

Luke 21:11 ...and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.

The following extraordinary signs occurred just as Jesus said:

A meteor resembling a sword hung over Jerusalem during one entire year. This could not be a comet for it was stationary and was visible for twelve successive months. A sword too, a fit emblem of destruction.

"On the eighth of the month, (before the feast of unleavened bread) at the ninth hour of the night, there shone round about the altar, and the adjacent buildings of the Temple, a light equal to the brightness of the day, which continued for the space of half an hour." This could not be the effect of lightning, nor of a vivid aurora, for it was confined to a particular spot and the light shone unintermittently thirty minutes, as the High Priest were leading a heifer to the altar to be sacrificed, and brought forth a lamb, in the midst of the Temple.

Such is the strange account given by the historian. Some may regard it as a "Grecian fable," while others may think that they discern in this prodigy a miraculous rebuke of Jewish infidelity and impiety, for rejecting the ANTITYPICAL Lamb, who had offered Himself as an atonement, "once for all," and who, by thus completely fulfilling their design, had virtually abrogated the Levitical sacrifices. However this may be, the circumstances of the prodigy are remarkable. It did not occur in an obscure part of the city, but in the Temple, not at an ordinary time, but at the Passover, the season of our LORD'S crucifixion, in the presence, not of the vulgar merely, but of the

High Priests and of their attendants, and when they were leading the sacrifice to the altar.

About the sixth hour of the night, the eastern gate of the Temple was seen to open without human assistance. When the guards informed the curator of this event, he sent men to assist them in shutting it, who with great difficulty succeeded. This gate, as hath been observed already, was of solid brass, and required twenty men to close it every evening. It could not have been opened by a "strange gust of wind," or a "slight earthquake;" for Josephus says, it was secured by "iron bolts and bars, which were let down into a large threshold; consisting of one entire stone."

Soon after the feast of the Passover, in various parts of the country, before the setting of the sun, chariots and armed men were seen in the air, passing round about Jerusalem. Neither could this portentous spectacle be occasioned by the aurora, for it occurred before the setting of the sun, or merely the fancy of a few villagers, gazing at the heavens, for it was seen in various parts of the country.

Beyond that, at the subsequent feast of Pentecost, while the priests were going by night, into the inner Temple to perform their customary ministrations, they first felt, as they said, a shaking, accompanied by an indistinct murmuring, and afterwards voices as of a multitude, saying, in a distinct and earnest manner, "LET US DEPART HENCE." This gradation will remind the reader of that awful transaction, which the feast of Pentecost was principally instituted to commemorate. First, a shaking was heard, this would naturally induce the priests to listen: an unintelligible murmuring succeeds; this would more powerfully arrest their attention, and while it was thus awakened and fixed, they heard, says Josephus, the voices of a multitude, distinctly pronouncing the words "LET US DEPART HENCE." And accordingly, before this period for celebrating this feast returned, the Jewish war had commenced, and in the space of three years afterwards, Jerusalem was surrounded by the Roman army, the Temple converted into a citadel, and its sacred courts streaming with the blood of human victims.

And the last and most fearful omen, Josephus relates that one Jesus, the son of Ananus, a rustic of the lower class, during the Feast of Tabernacles, suddenly exclaimed in the Temple, "A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the Temple – a voice against bridegrooms and brides – a voice against the whole people!" These words he incessantly proclaimed aloud both day and night, through all the streets of Jerusalem, for seven years and five months together, commencing in A.D. 62, when the city was in a state of peace, and overflowing with prosperity, and terminating amidst the horrors of the siege. This disturber, having excited the attention of the magistracy, was brought before Albinus the Roman governor, who commanded that he should be scourged. But the severest stripes drew from him neither tears nor supplications. As he never thanked those who relieved, so neither did he complain of the injustice of those who struck him. And no other answer could the governor obtain to his interrogatories, but his usual denunciation of "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" which he still continued to proclaim through the city, but especially during the festivals, when his manner became more earnest, and the tone of his voice

louder. At length, on the commencement of the siege, he ascended the walls, and, in a more powerful voice than ever, exclaimed, "Woe, woe to this city, this Temple, and this people!" And then, with a presentment of his own death, added, "Woe, woe to myself." He had scarcely uttered these words when a stone from one of the Roman engines killed him on the spot. The great signs just as Jesus predicted.

Matthew chapter 24 verse 8 Jesus continues saying all these are the beginning of sorrows.

Luke 21 verse 12 Jesus said that before all these things they shall lay hands on you – the disciples – and persecute you delivering you up to the synagogues and into prisons being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. In the verse 16 of that chapter, and ye shall be betrayed both parents and brethren and kinsfolks and friends, and some of you they shall cause to be put to death. As we know John the Baptist had already been beheaded, Peter and John were in prison, Stephen was stoned to death, James was beheaded, Paul was beheaded, eventually all of the disciples except John were violently martyred, just as Jesus said.

Verse 14 in Matthew 24: And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached into all the world for a witness unto all nations and then shall the end come. He's not talking about the end of the world, he's talking about the end of the **Jewish** world, the end of the **Jewish** age, the Gospel shall be preached to all the world, then shall the end come. The persecution of the Jews against the early Church forced the apostles and disciples to flee the city of Jerusalem. The book of Acts records the preaching of the Gospel into all the world, Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossi, Thessalonica, Pontius, Cappadocia, Bethinia.

Colossians chapter 1 verse 23 listen to what the Apostle Paul said.

If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached – which was preached – to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister. Just as Jesus said, the Gospel would be preached to **everyone** in the world, everyone under heaven. So here Paul proclaims the fulfillment of Jesus prophecy which was preached to **every creature under heaven!**

All of this, all of this was Jesus prophecy of things preceding the destruction of Jerusalem. Everything we have discussed to this moment happened *prior* to the destruction of Jerusalem. They were the precursors of that which was to come.

The wars referred to earlier escalated between the Jews in Jerusalem and Rome until it reached a boiling point. Nero appointed Vespasian to prosecute the war against the Jews in Jerusalem. Assisted by his son Titus, they marched an army of 60,000 men against Jerusalem in 67 AD. As the Roman army marched through Judea towards Jerusalem, it spared no one, woman or child. The siege and surrounding Judea went on for 15 months. Vespasian leveled the cities of Galilee and the chief towns of Judea killing at least a hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants. The terrors and calamities in the coastal city of Joppa

were especially dreadful. Thousands of Jews took to ships to escape Vespasian's fury, but a great tempest of wind pushed the ships back to land, and hundreds of vessels were dashed against the rocks. Many Jews killed themselves to escape being tortured by the Roman army. Over four thousand dead bodies were strewn along the coasts, and thousands more were killed inland. Thus was fulfilled Jesus prophecy Luke 21:25 and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring.

While Vespasian returned to Caesarea to plan his great and final assault against Jerusalem, he was summoned back to Rome upon the death of Nero. His son Titus was left in charge of the Roman army. Thus there was a respite of almost two years before Titus would seize the city of Jerusalem. God again gave the Jews yet another chance to repent and turn to the Lord. After all these things that have already happened, pestilences, disease, death, earthquake, wars, 150,000 killed in Judea, after all of this there was a two-year respite. The Jews could have repented. The Jews could have turned to the Lord. God gave them another opportunity after **all of the opportunities** God had given Israel from the time of Moses, to the time of Joshua, to the Judges, to the prophets, over and over and over and over and over and over and over and over again for thousands of years God gave them an opportunity to repent, an opportunity to come to the Lord, an opportunity to obey God, an opportunity to be faithful to His Word, **so many opportunities** they're too numerous to count! And now on the very **verge** of their destruction, on the very verge of the total annihilation of their people, their way of life, their religion, their Temple, their city, God gave them another chance to repent. And they did not. Think of all the opportunities God gave the children of Israel from the time Moses delivered them from bondage all the way through the times of the prophets. The plagues, the judgments, the invasions, the captivity, the miracles, the deliverance. And then came John the Baptist and they killed him. Then came their Messiah, and they crucified Him. They're hard to stubbornness iniquity wickedness and blasphemy only grew worse and worse.

And now on the verge of total annihilation, the rebellion of the Jews against God intensified to unspeakable proportions. Inside the city of Jerusalem a great civil war broke out between the inhabitants. These two "factions" spared no one, women or children. They killed each other by the thousands. Eighty five hundred bodies lay rotting on the streets of Jerusalem killed by fellow Jews. Twelve thousand Jewish leaders were killed including many Pharisees. Their carcasses lay in heaps along the city streets. Unrestrained lawlessness ran rampant throughout Judea. There was no law. There was rampant, rampant, unbridled violence, murder, rape, pillage, plunder, death, destruction, **Jew against Jew!**

It was during this background that the city inhabitants became aware that the Roman army was approaching for its final assault. Listen to Jesus in Matthew chapter 24 begin reading from verse 15:

Matthew 24:15 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:)

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

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.

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

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

21 For then shall be great tribulation, (**He's talking about the destruction of Jerusalem!** There shall be **great** tribulation!) such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Let me pause right there. There has never in the history of the world been a slaughter, been an annihilation, been a destruction, of any people, of any city, anywhere in the history of the world, that compares to the destruction of the city of Jerusalem. And since that dreadful destruction, in modern history, with all of the advances in technology, and all of the warfare, the bombs, the planes, the ships, the guns, the canons, everything, World War I, World War II, think of all of the great horrors of military conflict that have taken place, to this very day there has never been an annihilation of any people, anywhere, in any war, that compares to the annihilation of the city of Jerusalem just as Jesus said in Matthew chapter 24 and verse 21, read it again, for then shall be Great Tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor shall ever be.

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.

And in Luke 21 verse 20 Luke adds this, Jesus speaking:

Luke 21:20 ¶And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed (or surrounded) with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

When you see the Roman armies surrounding this city, your doom is upon you. Previously Jerusalem had been invaded, Jerusalem had been captured, Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Chaldeans, but now Jerusalem will be utterly and totally annihilated.

The day on which Titus encompassed Jerusalem was the Feast of the Passover, the 37th anniversary of the day when the Jews crucified their Messiah, 37 years to the day. Unaware of the bloodshed and the mayhem that was taking place in Jerusalem, tens of thousands of Jews faithfully came to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover as they did each year, but in doing so this year they ignored the warning of Jesus.

Luke 21:21b ...and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. (The city of Jerusalem.)

If you're in the country, stay there. Do not enter the city of Jerusalem. The tens of thousands, yea, hundreds of thousands of Jews did just that. Josephus, the greatest of all Jewish historians, was an eyewitness to the destruction of Jerusalem. He was **in** Jerusalem when the siege began. He was taken prisoner by the Roman army, and when they recognized who he was, they

spared his life, and they charged him to be an eyewitness on-site reporter, and to record every detail of the events that he witnessed during the course of this siege which is exactly what he did. Josephus said there were so many Roman crosses in Jerusalem one could hardly walk through the city. Rumors among the Roman troops were that Jews had swallowed gold, and you can imagine what the Roman troops did to the Jewish bodies in an attempt to recover the swallowed gold.

After visualizing the carnage that the Jews had inflicted upon themselves, and that now his troops were inflicting, Titus was so grieved at the scene that he stopped, raised his hand toward heaven, and prayed to God that he never intended so much death and destruction as the Jews had inflicted upon themselves. But the horrors of famine intensified. People were eating their belts, their sandals, the skins of their shields, dried grass and the order (???) of oxen. Men were eating each other, and women were eating their children. Remember the words of Jeremiah? Again Jesus warned Luke 23:28 as He was carrying his Cross to Mount Calvary and the women around Him were weeping Jesus said, "Daughters of Jerusalem weep not for me but weep for yourselves and for your children!" They had no idea what He meant, but Jesus knew what was soon to come to this city.

Finally, the Romans breached the inner wall, I am trying to make this as expeditious as I can leaving out so many details of this. Your imagination can take you to the scene and you can only imagine the horror that was taking place as I tell you about this. The Romans breached the inner wall and gained possession of the great Tower of Antonio in advance toward the Temple. Titus had determined in planning the siege to *not*, I repeat, to *not* destroy the Temple. He wanted to preserve it as a trophy of Rome. Titus would not have his way. As his soldiers began burning the Temple, Titus personally rode to the scene and commanded his men to spare the Temple. But so violent was the battle between the Romans and the Jews that they either did not see their commander, or if they did, they ignored him. Jews were rushing from every quarter to save the Temple. There is no language to describe the scene of fire and smoke and blood and death that ensued as the Jews fought desperately to save the Temple of God! And the Romans, obsessed with their destruction, it was something so unimaginable, it's impossible to describe.

The old and the young, the feeble and the fit, the priests and the commoners, the Pharisees and the scribes, mothers and fathers, parents and children, brothers and sisters, the ground could not be seen! The ground could not be seen for dead bodies. Men were not walking on the earth, they were walking on the bodies of the dead. In some parts of the city, blood was up to the horse's bridle.

Before the final demolition, however, Titus took a survey of the city and its fortifications. And while contemplating their impregnable strength, could not help ascribing a success to the peculiar interposition of Almighty God. He said, "Had not God himself aided our operations, and driven the Jews from their fortresses, it would have been absolutely impossible to have taken them. For what could men and the force of engines have done against such towers as these." – The Roman general Titus.

After this he commanded that the city should be raised – leveled – to the foundations. Of the Jews destroyed during the siege, Josephus records not less than 1,100,000, to which must be added above two hundred and thirty seven thousand who perished in other places, and innumerable multitudes who were swept away by famine and pestilence of which no calculation could be made. The actual number of Jews killed in the siege of Jerusalem was somewhere within a million at the least, and maybe two million dead.

In executing the command of Titus relative to the demolition of Jerusalem, the Roman soldiers not only threw down the buildings, but even dug up their foundations. You remember? Four hundred fifty feet deep! They dug up the foundations, and so completely leveled the whole circuit of the city that a stranger would scarcely have known that the city had ever been inhabited by human beings. Thus was the great city which only five months before had been crowded with nearly 2 million people, who glorified in its impregnable strength, entirely depopulated and level to the ground. And thus also was our Lord's prediction that her enemies shall, "lay her even with the ground," fully accomplished. This fact is confirmed by Eusebius who asserts that he himself saw the city lying in ruins.

Thus was literally fulfilled the prophecy of Micah in Micah 3:12

Micah 3:12 Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.

So significant was the destruction of Jerusalem, that it is the subject of a very large portion of prophecies in both the old and new testaments. Pause, sadly the vast majority of pastors either ignore these prophecies or they misapply them, and take away their meaning completely applying it to something that wasn't true! And so most people don't even realize how many **scores and scores of verses** in **both** the Old and New Testaments prophesy the destruction of Jerusalem! In other words, God placed the destruction of Jerusalem as a monumental sign and lesson, not to Israel, but to the Church.

First this caveat: Titus was the most unlikely man throughout the Roman armies to become a scourge to Jerusalem. He was eminently distinguished for his great tenderness and humanity, which he displayed in a variety of instances during the siege. He repeatedly made specific overtures to the Jews, and deeply lamented the infatuation that rejected them. In short he did everything which a military commander could do to *spare* them and to *preserve* their city and Temple, but without effect. Thus was the will of God accomplished by human agency, although contrary to the wish of Titus, and his predicted interposition to punish his rebellious and apostate people in this way rendered more conspicuously evident. In other words, by using Titus to be the one through whom the destruction of Jerusalem would come, **in itself, was a miracle**, a sign for the Church, **forever**, that everything about the destruction of Israel was divine in origin. It was the fulfillment of prophecy, the **judgment** of God **forever** upon Israel, Jerusalem, their Temple, and their religion.

Think of it: Not a single Christian perished in the siege of Jerusalem. Think

of it, Jerusalem is where the Church began. Remember the day of Pentecost 3,000 were saved baptized and added to the Church in one day, in Jerusalem. The Church grew by leaps and bounds! But not one single Christian died in the siege of Jerusalem. They were dispersed in persecution, and those that weren't heeded the Oracles of God pertaining to the destruction of Jerusalem, and left before the siege began.

When Jesus said, "This generation shall not pass before all these things were fulfilled," it came to pass just as He said. A generation is 40 years in biblical terminology. Within 40 years time everything that Jesus had predicted had come to pass. That generation of people did not pass. They saw, experienced, lived and died in that fulfilled prophecy.

For copyright reasons I deleted the last part of the text. Please see the YouTube to hear the rest of Pastor Baldwin's message.