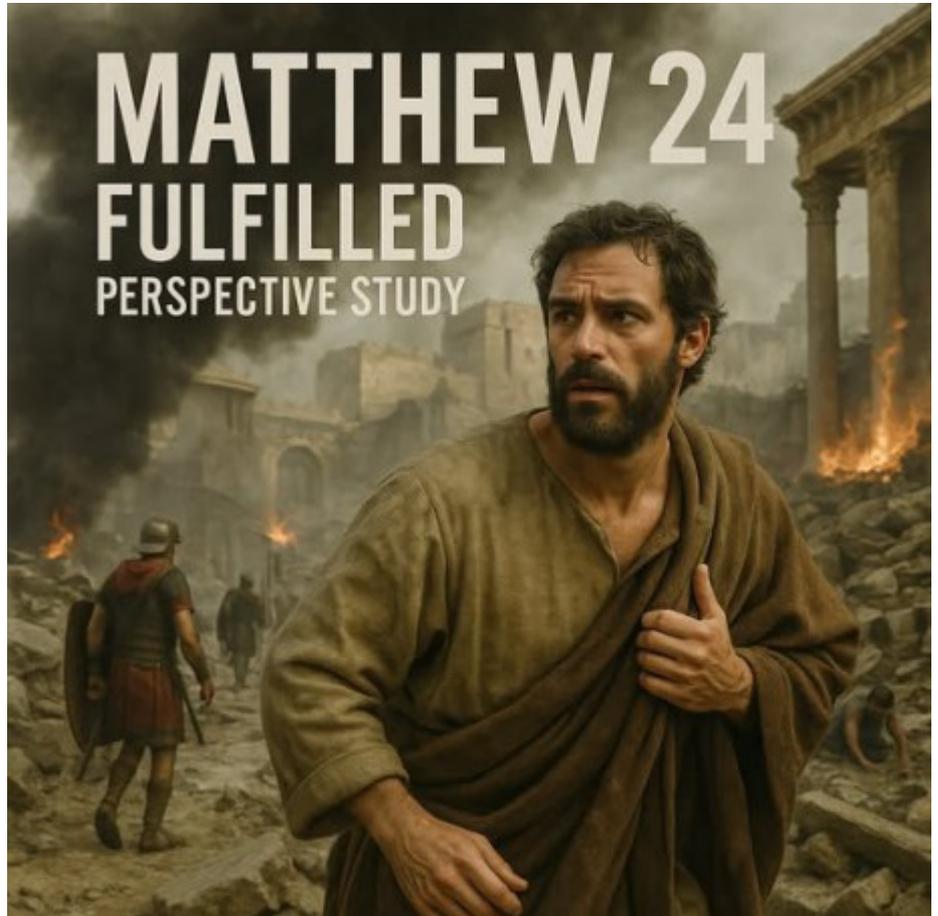


# Fulfilled Prophecies

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## MATTHEW 24 – FULFILLED PERSPECTIVE STUDY (NASB)



By Dan Maines

## MATTHEW 24 – FULFILLED PERSPECTIVE STUDY (NASB)

**1** Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him. **2** **And He said to them, "Do you see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down."**

**Commentary:** This prophecy was fulfilled in AD 70 when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple. Josephus records that the entire structure was dismantled so completely

that not one stone remained on another (*Wars* 7.1.1, p. 467).

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**3** As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "**Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?**"

**Commentary:** The disciples asked three specific questions: **WHEN** would the Temple's destruction occur, what would be the sign of His **COMING**, and what would mark the **END OF THE AGE**. They viewed all three as connected, referring to the close of the Old Covenant age, not the end of the physical world (cf. Matthew 13:39-40; Hebrews 9:26).

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**4** And Jesus answered and said to them, "**See to it that no one misleads you. 5 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will mislead many.**"

**Commentary:** Before AD 70, many false messiahs arose claiming divine authority (Acts 5:36-37; 1 John 2:18). Josephus records several such figures who deceived the people (*Wars* 2.13.4, p. 124; *Antiquities* 20.8.6, p. 382).

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**6** "You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. **7** For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. **8** But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pains."

**Commentary:** The decades before AD 70 were marked by political unrest, uprisings, and civil wars within the Roman Empire (Tacitus, *Histories* 1.2, p. 180). Famines occurred (Acts 11:28), and major earthquakes struck places such as Laodicea (AD 60) and Pompeii (AD 62). Jesus calls these the "beginning of birth pains," the early signs before Jerusalem's judgment.

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**9 "Then they will hand you over to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. 10 And at that time many will fall away, and they will betray one another and hate one another. 11 And many false prophets will rise up and mislead many people. 12 And because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will become cold. 13 But the one who endures to the end is the one who will be saved."**

**Commentary:** The book of Acts records numerous persecutions, imprisonments, and executions of believers (Acts 7:59; Acts 12:2). "Enduring to the end" refers to remaining faithful until the end of the Jewish-Roman War, when Jerusalem was destroyed. False prophets also arose, misleading the people to stay in the city during the siege (*Wars* 6.5.2, p. 435).

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**14 "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come."**

**Commentary:** By the early 60s AD, Paul wrote that the gospel had been proclaimed "in all creation under heaven" (Colossians 1:23; Romans 10:18). The term "whole world" (Greek: *oikoumene*) refers to the Roman Empire, the inhabited land of their time, not the entire globe.

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**15 "Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), 16 then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. 17 Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get things out of his house. 18 And whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak.**

**Commentary:** The "abomination of desolation" refers to the Roman armies surrounding Jerusalem (Luke 21:20), which was the signal for believers to flee. Early church historian Eusebius records that the Christians obeyed and escaped to Pella before the final siege (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3.5.3, p. 75).

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**19 "But woe to those women who are pregnant, and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 Moreover, pray that when you flee, it will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath."**

**Commentary:** Winter would make travel difficult, and Sabbath travel restrictions among Jews could hinder escape. Josephus notes that the Roman assault was timed near Passover, when travel in and out of the city was restricted (*Wars* 5.3.1, p. 400).

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**21 "For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will again. 22 And if those days had not been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short."**

**Commentary:** This describes the horrific events of AD 70. Josephus calls the destruction of Jerusalem the most tragic of all wars, with unparalleled suffering (*Wars* 6.9.4, p. 442). God "cut short" the siege to spare the elect, the believers who had fled beforehand.

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**23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'He is over here,' do not believe him. 24 For false christs and false prophets will arise and will provide great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. 25 Behold, I have told you in advance.**

**Commentary:** During the siege, false prophets inside Jerusalem promised deliverance, urging people to stay. Josephus says these impostors performed signs to keep people from surrendering to the Romans (*Wars* 6.5.2, p. 435).

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**26 "So if they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go out there; behold, He is in the inner rooms, do not believe them. 27 For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes as far as the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be. 28 Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather."**

**Commentary:** The "coming" here is a coming in judgment upon Jerusalem, not a bodily return to earth. Lightning imagery speaks of suddenness and visibility. The vultures (or eagles) are symbolic of Roman armies (their military standard was the eagle), gathering over the carcass of the city (cf. Luke 17:37).

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**29 "But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the 'Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky' with power and great glory. 31 And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet blast, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other."**

**Commentary:** This apocalyptic language is drawn from Isaiah 13:10 and Daniel 7:13-14, describing divine judgment using cosmic signs. "Coming on the clouds" is covenant judgment language, fulfilled when Christ judged Jerusalem through the Romans. The "angels" (messengers) gathering the elect refers to the gospel call and the preservation of believers throughout the empire.

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**32 "Now learn the parable from the fig tree: as soon as its branch has become tender and sprouts its leaves, you know that summer is near; 33 so you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door. 34 Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. 35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away."**

**Commentary:** The "generation" of Jesus' hearers lived to see the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 (about 40 years later). "Heaven and earth" here can refer symbolically to the Old Covenant order (Isaiah 51:16).

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**36 "But about that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. 37 For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. 38 For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be."**

**Commentary:** The comparison to Noah shows that judgment came suddenly while life seemed normal. Likewise, Jerusalem's destruction came swiftly upon those ignoring Jesus' warning (Luke 21:20-24).

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**40 "At that time there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. 41 Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left."**

**Commentary:** Those "taken" are taken in judgment (cf. Luke 17:34-37), while those "left" are the spared who escaped before the siege.

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**42 "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. 43 But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. 44 For this reason you must be ready as well; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will."**

**Commentary:** Readiness here meant heeding the signs and fleeing when the Roman armies appeared. The believers who

remembered Jesus' words escaped.

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**45 "Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household slaves, to give them their food at the proper time? 46 Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes. 47 Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. 48 But if that evil slave says in his heart, 'My master is not coming for a long time,' 49 and he begins to beat his fellow slaves, and to eat and drink with those who are habitually drunk; 50 then the master of that slave will come on a day that he does not expect and at an hour that he does not know, 51 and he will cut him in two and assign him a place with the hypocrites; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."**

**Commentary:** The "faithful servant" represents the believers who stayed watchful and obedient. The "evil servant" represents the unbelieving leaders of Israel who ignored the warnings and abused God's people. Judgment fell on them in AD 70.

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