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By Dan Maines

Matthew 24

Matthew 24:1-2

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

† The disciples admired the glory of Herod's temple, but Jesus prophesied its destruction.

† This was fulfilled in AD 70 when Rome leveled the temple, leaving not one stone on another.

† Josephus described the destruction in detail (Wars 6.4.5), confirming Jesus' prophecy.

Matthew 24:3

And 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?"

† The disciples connected the temple's fall with Christ's coming and the end of the age.

† The age in question was the Old Covenant age, not the world itself.

† This set the stage for the Olivet Discourse, fulfilled within that generation.

Matthew 24:4-14

And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will mislead many people. And 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. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pains. Then they will hand you over to tribulation, and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. And at that time many will fall away, and they will betray one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will rise up and mislead many people. And because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will become cold. But the one who endures to the end is the one who will be saved. 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."

† False messiahs, wars, famines, and earthquakes were signs that preceded the destruction of Jerusalem. Josephus and Tacitus confirm these events in the years leading to AD 70.

† Persecution of believers, betrayal, and apostasy marked the last days of that generation.

† The gospel was preached throughout the known world (Colossians 1:23), fulfilling Jesus' word before the end of the Old Covenant age.

Matthew 24:15-22

"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), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get things out of his house. And whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those women who are pregnant, and to those who are nursing babies in those days! Moreover, pray that when you flee, it will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath. 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. 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."

† The abomination of desolation referred to the Roman armies and their profanation of the temple.

† Jesus warned His disciples to flee Jerusalem, which they did, according to Eusebius, escaping to Pella before the final siege.

† Josephus described the horrors of the siege as the greatest tribulation Israel ever faced (Wars 6.9.3).

Matthew 24:23-28

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

wilderness,' do not go out; or, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe them. 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. Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather."

† False deliverers abounded in the days before Jerusalem's fall.

† Jesus warned His coming would not be hidden or local, but visible in judgment.

† The vultures symbolized Rome's legions surrounding the corpse of Israel.

Matthew 24:29-31

"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. 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. 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."

† Cosmic language was covenantal, describing the fall of nations and rulers (Isaiah 13, Ezekiel 32).

† Jesus came in judgment against Jerusalem, vindicating His reign.

† The elect were gathered into the New Covenant community as promised.

Matthew 24:32-35

"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; so you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door. Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not

pass away."

† Jesus confirmed the timing: all these things would happen within that generation.

† Heaven and earth symbolized the Old Covenant order, which would pass away.

† His words remain certain, fulfilled in AD 70.

Matthew 24:36-44

"But about that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. 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, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. At that time there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left. Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. 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. 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."

† The day and hour of the siege could not be predicted precisely, but the signs revealed its nearness.

† Just as in Noah's day, judgment came suddenly on the unprepared.

† Being "taken" referred to judgment, while the spared were those left to enter the new kingdom order.

Matthew 24:45-51

"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? Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so

doing when he comes. Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But if that evil slave says in his heart, 'My master is not coming for a long time,' and he begins to beat his fellow slaves, and he eats and drinks with those who are habitually drunk; 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, 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."

† The faithful servant symbolized disciples who remained vigilant.

† The evil servant symbolized corrupt leaders who believed judgment was far off.

† Their destruction came suddenly in AD 70, just as Jesus foretold.

How it applies to us today:

† Matthew 24 is the heart of Jesus' prophecy about the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the Old Covenant age. The fulfilled perspective shows us that Christ's words came true in that generation. For us today, it means we live in the New Covenant kingdom, secure in the promises already fulfilled. We are called to faithfulness, knowing that God has vindicated His Son and established His everlasting kingdom.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

Source Index

† Josephus, Wars 6.4.5; 6.9.3

† Tacitus, Histories 5.13

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 3.5

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies 5.25.4

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