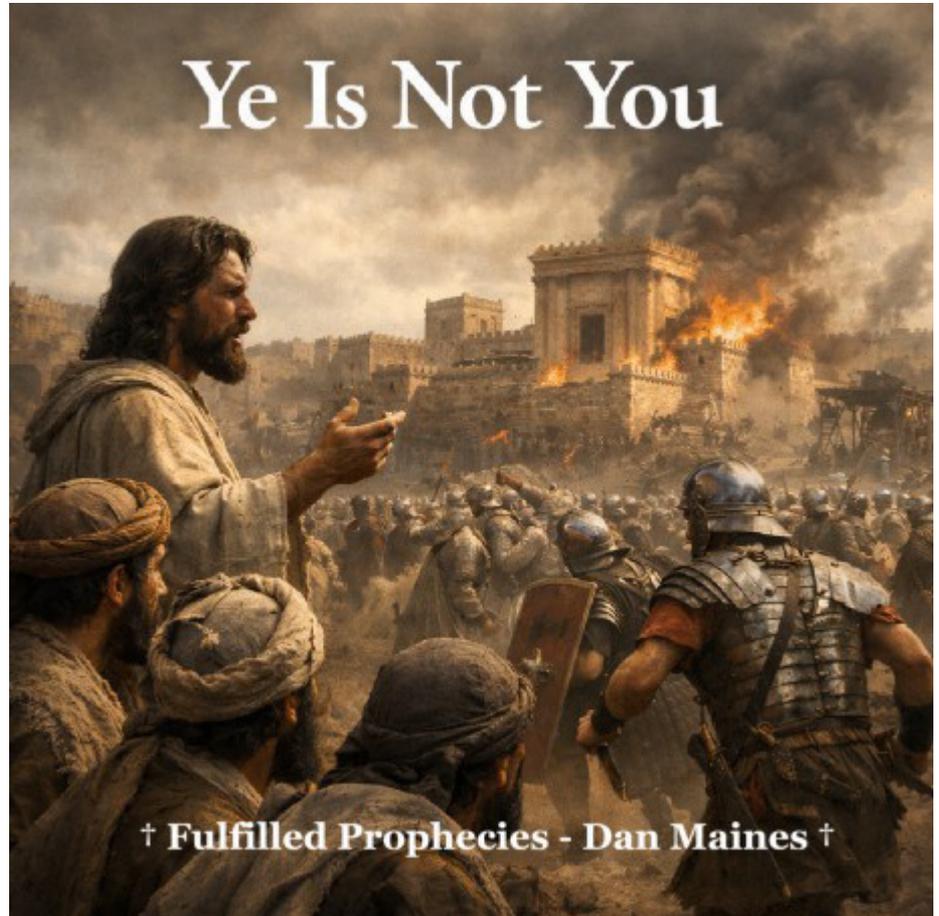


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Ye Is Not You



By Dan Maines

Ye Is Not You

Introduction

† One of the biggest mistakes people make when reading the Bible is assuming every statement is spoken directly to them personally. When we ignore the language used in the text, we can easily misunderstand who the audience actually was.

† The English language used to distinguish between singular and plural pronouns. Today modern English mostly uses the

single word you for both one person and a group, but older English translations preserved an important distinction.

† Words like thou, thee, thy referred to one individual, while ye referred to more than one person. That distinction helps us understand who Jesus was speaking to in many passages.

† When Jesus spoke about events that would happen, He often used plural language directed at the people standing in front of Him. If we erase that audience and replace them with ourselves thousands of years later, we change the meaning of the passage.

† Understanding who ye refers to becomes extremely important in passages like Matthew 24, where Jesus was answering a direct question from His disciples about the destruction of the temple.

Matthew 5:14

Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid.

† Jesus was speaking to the disciples gathered around Him during the Sermon on the Mount.

† The word ye clearly refers to the group sitting there listening to Him.

† No one reading this passage today thinks Jesus was directly addressing them personally in that moment.

† This shows how the word ye functions in scripture, it points to the audience present when the words were spoken.

Matthew 13:11

And he answered and said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

† Jesus distinguishes between two groups, His disciples and the crowds.

† The pronoun you here represents the same plural audience idea found in ye.

† The disciples standing there were the ones receiving the explanation.

† This again shows that the language of the Gospels constantly identifies the immediate audience.

Matthew 23:29-31

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we should not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye witness to yourselves, that ye are sons of them that slew the prophets.

† Jesus repeatedly used ye while speaking directly to the Pharisees standing before Him.

† The audience is obvious and immediate.

† No one assumes that Jesus was speaking to people living thousands of years later in this rebuke.

† This demonstrates that the pronoun ye identifies the people being addressed at that moment.

Matthew 26:31

Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended in me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

† Jesus said this directly to the disciples on the night of His arrest.

† The word ye refers to that group of men sitting with Him.

† The prophecy came true within hours when the disciples fled.

† This shows again that ye consistently refers to the people present when Jesus was speaking.

Luke 11:47-48

Woe unto you! for ye build the tombs of the prophets; and your fathers killed them. So ye are witnesses and consent unto the works of your fathers: for they killed them, and ye build their tombs.

† Jesus used ye again when confronting the religious leaders of His day.

† The rebuke is directed toward the leaders standing in front of Him.

† This language would make no sense if it were meant for some distant future audience.

† The word ye always anchors the statement to the people hearing it.

Acts 1:11

Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven.

† The angels addressed the men standing there after Jesus ascended.

† The phrase ye men of Galilee clearly refers to the group physically present.

† This is another example showing how ye identifies a specific audience.

† Scripture consistently uses ye when speaking to a group standing in the scene.

Matthew 24:15

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that readeth understand)

† Jesus did not say when someone in the distant future sees it. He said when ye see it.

† Ye refers directly to the group He was speaking to, the disciples who asked the question. (Matthew 24:1-3)

† The disciples had just pointed out the temple buildings, and Jesus told them those buildings would be destroyed. (Matthew 24:2)

† The entire discussion centers on their temple and their generation.

† When Jesus said when ye see the abomination of desolation, He was speaking to the same disciples standing there listening.

Matthew 24:16

then let them that are in Judaea flee unto the mountains

† Jesus told them that when they saw these events they were to flee Judea.

† That instruction only makes sense to people living in Judea at that time.

† If the prophecy were about a distant future antichrist, the command to flee Judea would make no sense.

† The warning was meant for the people living in that region in that generation.

Luke 21:20

But when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that her desolation is at hand.

† Luke explains the same prophecy using clearer language.

† The abomination of desolation is connected with Jerusalem surrounded by armies.

† Once again Jesus says ye see, meaning the people He was speaking to would witness it.

† The Roman siege of Jerusalem fulfilled exactly what Jesus warned about.

Luke 21:21-22

Then let them that are in Judaea flee unto the mountains, and let them that are in the midst of her depart out, and let not them

that are in the country enter therein. For these are days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

† Jesus again gives instructions to those living in Judea.

† The judgment was directed toward Jerusalem and the surrounding region.

† These were days of vengeance connected with the fulfillment of prophecy.

† The destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 matched these warnings precisely.

Matthew 23:36

Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

† Jesus clearly placed the coming judgment on the generation He was speaking to.

† This statement comes directly before the prophecy of Matthew 24.

† The context never changes the audience.

† The same generation warned in Matthew 23 is the generation that would see the events of Matthew 24.

Matthew 24:34

Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all these things be accomplished.

† Jesus set a clear time limit for the prophecy.

† The generation living at that time would see the fulfillment.

† The repeated use of ye and this generation connects the prophecy directly to the first century audience.

† The destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 fulfilled these words.

Daniel 9:26

And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing, and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary

† Daniel foretold the destruction of Jerusalem and the sanctuary.

† Jesus referenced Daniel when warning about the coming desolation.

† The Roman armies were the people who destroyed the city and the temple.

† This prophecy was fulfilled when Jerusalem fell in AD 70.

Historical References

† Josephus recorded the Roman siege of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple in great detail in The Wars of the Jews.

† His writings describe famine, internal fighting, and the final burning of the temple.

† Eusebius recorded that believers fled Jerusalem before the destruction because they remembered Jesus warning.

† He explains that the Christians escaped to Pella before the Roman armies destroyed the city.

† Tacitus, the Roman historian, also recorded the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies.

How It Applies To Us Today

† Understanding the meaning of ye helps us read scripture in its proper context.

† It reminds us that many prophecies were directed toward specific audiences in history.

† Jesus words were fulfilled exactly as He said they would be.

† This strengthens our confidence in the reliability of scripture.

† When we read the Bible carefully and respect its language, the meaning becomes much clearer.

Q & A Appendix

Q What does the word ye mean in the Bible?

A Ye is a plural pronoun that refers to more than one person. It identifies the group being addressed in the conversation.

Q Why is this important for Matthew 24?

A Because Jesus told the disciples that they would see the events He described. The repeated use of ye shows the prophecy was directed toward them.

Q Did those events actually happen in their generation?

A Yes. The Roman armies destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in AD 70, fulfilling the warnings Jesus gave.

Q Does this mean the prophecy has already been fulfilled?

A The destruction of Jerusalem fulfilled the warnings Jesus gave to that generation about the coming judgment on the city.

Q Does the word ye ever refer to a single person in the Bible?

A No. In the language used by the translators, ye always refers to more than one person. When the Bible refers to one individual it uses thou, thee, thy, or thine. This distinction helps identify who is being addressed. (Matthew 5:14; Matthew 26:31)

Q Why do modern readers often miss this distinction?

A Because modern English uses the word you for both singular and plural. Older English preserved the difference, which helps us understand who the original audience was. Recognizing this difference can clarify many passages in the Gospels.

Q Does the word ye appear throughout the New Testament?

A Yes. It appears repeatedly when Jesus or others are addressing groups of people. Examples include the disciples, religious leaders, or crowds listening to a teaching. (Matthew 5:14; Luke 11:47; Acts 1:11)

Q Why does this matter for interpreting prophecy?

A Because it helps identify the intended audience. When Jesus said ye will see these things, He was speaking to the people standing there. Ignoring that audience can lead readers to move prophecies into a distant future even when the text clearly identifies who would witness the events. (Matthew 24:15, 34)

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

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Source Index

† Matthew 5:14; Matthew 13:11; Matthew 23:29-31, 36; Matthew 24:15-16, 34; Matthew 26:31; Luke 11:47-48; Luke

21:20-22; Acts 1:11; Daniel 9:26

† Josephus, The Wars of the Jews, Book 6; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 3.5; Tacitus, Histories 5.13

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