

## **Chapter Twenty Four**

### *The Coming Tribulation*

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. Jesus takes time to explain about the coming Tribulation
- B. He explains it in more detail than all the prophets together
- C. He focuses more on the events of the tribulation, instead of the battle of Armageddon like the Old Testament prophets emphasized
- D. As he discusses all the future events, He warns His followers to be very careful to not be deceived or confused, or defeated by everything that was coming upon the world!

#### **II. Lesson**

##### **A. Jesus Warns of the Coming Destruction (24:1-2)**

1. The Temple was a sign of **stability**
  - a. It had been destroyed or desecrated twice so far
    - 1) By Nebuchadnezzar (586 BC) – rebuilt by Ezra (515 BC)
    - 2) The Second Temple suffered desecration by Antiochus Epiphanes in 167 BC but was rededicated under Judas Maccabaeus in 164 BCE.
    - 3) Over a century later in around 20 BC, the building was renovated by Herod the Great, and became known as Herod's Temple. When Jesus started His ministry, it had been around and was constantly being enhanced for **46** years (Jn 2:20).
    - 4) It was later destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD
  - b. It was big, and seemed so protected – like it would never fall
  - c. They showed it off to Jesus who seemed to not be impressed with it's stones and gold
2. Jesus warns that everything, including the Temple was going to be ruined and brought low!
3. This definitely gets their attention!
4. The destruction of Jerusalem occurred exactly as Jesus predicted in 70 AD

##### **B. Jesus Warns of False Christ's (24:3-10)**

1. Jesus leads his small flock out to the Mount of Olives and sits down and teaches them
2. They had asked three questions:
  - a. When shall these things be?
  - b. What shall be the sign of thy coming
  - c. And what is the signal that the end of the world is here?
  - d. These three issues are all interrelated, and answered by Jesus next.
  - e. Jesus nFIRST warns that it will be easy to be fooled by the false fears and false hopes that were coming!
3. Summary of the signs of His coming:
  - a. World-wide problems, on an unimaginable scale – **false fears!** Better fear God!
  - b. An explosion of false saviours and religions – **false hopes**
  - c. A falling away by His own followers – **false believers!**
4. False Messiahs are coming – false hope
  - a. World-wide problems will drive people to look for “saviours”
  - b. But they will reject the Only Saviour (Isa 45:22)
  - c. People who will use the name “Christ” – Messiah

- 1) Maitreya - this world teacher does not intend to build a new religion, but rather to teach humanity "the art of self-realization". Much like the serpent in the Garden of Eden, he intends to deceive millions by convincing them that they are gods themselves.
  - 2) Science is a false Saviour
  - 3) Doctors are referred to as Saviours
- d. Those false religions and false messiahs will deceive many!!!
5. World-wide disasters that are coming – false fears!
- a. These are all VERY REAL, but not to be worried about by believers (Mt 10)
  - b. Wars – world wars
    - 1) It is only going to get worse and worse
  - c. Famines – all over the world
  - d. Pestilences – new diseases, and uncontrollable diseases
  - e. Earthquakes – in diverse places – unexpected places
  - f. All over the world – not just near by Israel
  - g. These are only the beginnings of sorrows (24:8)
  - h. Nothing is getting better and better – mankind cannot stop disasters, only warn of them
6. True believers need not be **troubled** (24:6)
- a. All of this is all planned anyway
  - b. It has to happen
7. Persecuted Believers (24:9) – by the false messiahs!
- a. Afflicted – tortured
  - b. Killed
  - c. Hated of all nations – there are no "Christian" nations at that time
  - d. Persecuted just because you love and obey Jesus Christ!
  - e. Hitler was just a shadow of the real holocaust coming!
8. Offended Believers (24:10) – false believers
- a. Many will betray one another – like Judas did Jesus
  - b. Many believers will end up hating each other
  - c. All because of the world problems affecting believers!!!
  - d. This is one of the biug things happening today in Christianity (2Thes 2:3)
- C. **Jesus Warns of False Prophets** (24:11)
1. More false hope – people claiming to be able to prophesy
    - a. **Benny Hinn.**
      - 1) Orlando Christian Center, Dec. 31st, 1989. "The Spirit tells me - Fidel Castro will die - in the 90's. Oooh my! Some will try to kill him and they will not succeed. But there will come a change in his physical health, and he will not stay in power, and Cuba will be visited of God."
      - 2) Orlando Christian Center, Dec. 31st, 1989. "The Lord also tells me to tell you in the mid 90's, about '94-'95, no later than that, God will destroy the homosexual community of America. [audience applauds] But He will not destroy it - with what many minds have thought Him to be, He will destroy it with fire. And many will turn and be saved, and many will rebel and be destroyed."
    - b. **Jose Luis De Jesus Miranda.** He has a strong following in Hispanic nations, leading millions into Hell where he is going. Of course, Miranda doesn't believe in Hell. He also teaches that the Devil has been destroyed and there is no sin. Jose Luis De Jesus Miranda is a nut case who claims to be Jesus Christ incarnate in modern times.

- c. **Sun Myung Moon**. He is a South Korean citizen and the founder and leader of the Unification Church, a world-wide occult organization that believes Moon to be the "Messiah" sent by God to complete the earthly mission of Jesus. His followers number in the millions.
  - d. **The Raelians**. An atheist religion led by Claude Vorilhon, who calls himself Rael - the last four letters of "Israel". The group claims a membership of at least 55,000 followers worldwide. "Raelians" believe that scientists from another planet created the human race, and that monotheism should be totally replaced by science.
  - e. **False Messiah of Islam**. The idea of the coming of a **Mahdi** (the guided) has roots in Islamic traditions, both Shia and Sunni, even though the Mahdi is not mentioned in the Qur'an. The Mahdi prepares the way for the second coming of the Prophet Isa (Jesus) and the impending end of the world. Eventually the awaited Imam will appear, and the Divine Aim will reach its fulfillment. The Qur'an explicitly declares the return of Jesus to earth. Surah Al 'Imran 55 is one of the verses indicating that Jesus will come back.
  - f. **James Warren (Jim) Jones** (1931-1978). In 1978 Jim Jones forced 913 of his followers to commit mass suicide at his enclave The Peoples Temple in Jonestown, northern Guyana. Jones developed a belief called Translation in which he and his followers would all die together, and would move to another planet for a life of bliss. Mass suicides were practiced in which his followers pretended to drink poison and fell to the ground. Jones was known as the Mad Messiah.
2. These prophets will be predicting better days ahead – days when “a” messiah would come and bring in a final, perfect new world order!
  3. **THE FALSE** Prophet will arise and pave the way for the antichrist
  4. The false prophets will be able to deceive many people again!

**D. Jesus Explains More About the Coming Great Tribulation (24:12-31)**

1. Iniquity abounding – as it did in the days of Noah (Gen 6:5, 11, 12)
2. No love at all – for family, for God, only for SELF (2Tim 3:2)
3. **“Enduring to the end”**
  - a. Not to the end of your life
  - b. But to the end of the Tribulation period
  - c. Saved – delivered
  - d. Contrast with: Romans 10:13 and Eph 2:8
4. You will need to cover all the world with the Gospel before the second coming!
  - a. Jesus already prepared His followers for the coming Tribulation (Mt 10:16-23)
  - b. Preaching the “Gospel of the kingdom” – which kingdom? Spiritual or Physical?
    - 1) He will send out 144,000 as sheep among wolves
    - 2) They will be hated and hunted, scourged and killed
    - 3) Friends and family will turn against you (10:21)
    - 4) So, just keep going, and endure – don’t die or give up!
5. The Abomination of Desolation (Dan 9:27)
  - a. It is a **PERSON** – the antichrist
  - b. It is an **ACT** – desecrating the HOLIEST of holy places on earth – in the Temple
  - c. It is **DEFINING**
    - 1) It marks the **MIDDLE** of the Tribulation – not the end
    - 2) It marks the beginning of the worst time this planet has ever experienced
    - 3) It is at this point that the entire nation of Israel will become **SAVED** (Rom 11:26)
6. The Fleeing of Israel
  - a. “Them which be in Judaea” – not in Berlin or Paris or Cork
  - b. Flee to the mountains – they head south west back into the wilderness

- c. Don't take the time to pack - the antichrist will already have his armies out gathering up all "dissidents"
  - d. It will be terrible journey
  - e. It will happen unexpectedly – Jesus is not giving any way of knowing exactly when (24:19,20)
  - f. But it will not be the end – they will be fed and supplied miraculously for the next 3 ½ years (Rev 12:6)
7. This last half of the Tribulation is called "the **Great** Tribulation"
- a. This is the pinnacle of God's wrath mixing with Satan's wrath
  - b. It has never been as bad as it will be then
  - c. It never will be that bad ever again either
8. If it weren't short (3 ½ years) no one would be able to survive, not even the **elect** (24:22)
- a. The **Jews** (Rom 11:25-31)
  - b. Gentiles get grafted in, but the elect are the nation of Israel (2Tim 2:10)
9. Do let anybody fool you (24:23-28)
- a. Satan appears as an angel of light in the form of the antichrist
  - b. "christs" will be everywhere
  - c. They will be people who can do miracles, and prophesy (23:24)
  - d. They will be secretive and hiding
  - e. But Jesus will appear openly and plainly in the sky (Rev 19)
  - f. Travelling EAST to WEST – just as the SUN does!
10. The Battle of Armageddon (24:28)
- a. Jesus is heading to the valley of Meggido
  - b. THERE will be nothing but carcasses and eagles and vultures where Jesus wins His final victory
11. Jesus Summarizes the last three and a half years of the Tribulation (24:29-31). Immediately after the abomination of desolation...
- a. The sun shall be darkened
  - b. The moon shall not give her light
  - c. The stars shall fall from heaven
  - d. The powers of the heavens shall be shaken
  - e. Major hurricanes and storms at sea (Luke 21:25)
  - f. Jesus will then return
  - g. Gathering all the survivors (24:31)
12. Luke includes a few more details about the last part of the tribulation (Luke 21:20-23)
- a. Israel will be encompassed by armies, because they will have walked right into a trap by the antichrist
  - b. THEN the antichrist will set himself up as God in the Temple
- E. **The Time of the Second Coming** (24:32-44)
1. Parable of the **Fig Tree**.
    - a. Leaves on a fig tree indicate summer is near
    - b. So, when these things just begin to happen, know it is all coming rapidly soon
  2. "**THIS generation**" – the generation to see the beginning of these things will live to see their end – it won't take hundreds of years to take place, but just 3 ½ years (24:34)
  3. Even into the Tribulation, JESUS' very **words** will remain – THANK GOD!
    - a. It will be JESUS' words in the Bible that the Jews will turn to

- b. It will also be Jesus' words from heaven that will direct them to protection from the armies of the antichrist – just as He spoke in Acts 9 to Saul of Tarsus
4. The very day and hour of the following events are NOT known:
    - a. Of His Rapture
    - b. Of the abomination of desolation
    - c. Of the Second Coming
  5. We do know the following facts:
    - a. All believers are to live as if Jesus is coming in their lifetime
    - b. Once the rapture occurs, there will only be about 7 years before “the end”
    - c. The length of time the two witnesses will testify against the world will be 1,260 days – during the first 3 ½ years (42 months)
    - d. The length of time the Jews will have to hide from the antichrist will also be 1,260 days – during the last 3 ½ years
    - e. The antichrist will have power for 42 months (Rev 13:5)
  6. It will be like it was in the days of Noah (24:37-41)
    - a. People will just go right on eating, drinking, marrying
    - b. No one will notice all the signs until the last moment
    - c. In a moment, an END of TRIBULATION a rapture will occur:
      - 1) Just as God's judgment “took them all away”... (24:39)
      - 2) One taken to Armageddon, and other left alone
      - 3) This is NOT the soon rapture of believers of today
  7. So WATCH – be very aware (24:42)
    - a. Like a home-owner is ready for thieves
    - b. So ought the **Jews** to be ready for Christ's Second Coming
- F. The Faithful Servant (24:45-51)**
1. The context is the Second Coming “**when he cometh**” (24:46) – NOT the Rapture
  2. The faithful and wise “servant” is a **JEW**. They are in charge of the things of God (Rom 9:1-5)
  3. If a JEW believes the words of Jesus, and is enduring to the end of the Tribulation, to him Jesus will make him ruler over all His realm – just as Pharaoh did Joseph
  4. BUT... if the Jew is evil, and ignores the warnings and signs, and thinks that Jesus is delaying his coming
    - a. He will end up fighting his fellow bretheren
    - b. He will end up drunken and living with the drunks
    - c. And Jesus will destroy even that JEW
  5. This CANNOT apply to a New Testament, Dispensation of Grace believer because...
    - a. John 10:28-30 “they shall never perish”
    - b. The believer today is the BRIDE, the Jew is the FRIEND of the Groom
    - c. You must RIGHTLY divide the Scriptures
    - d. It can be taken spiritually, devotionally for a Christian, but not literally