

## Matthew ch 24 vs 1-14

Jesus has at this point concluded His last public sermon, and rather than sharing about the love and grace, the mercy and goodness of God, He chastised and warned the religious leaders of the day about their judgment and condemnation. Yes it's the goodness of God that leads man to repentance, but for the last 3 years Jesus has expressed the Love and goodness of God to them and yet they've continually hardened their hearts towards the Lord and reject Him. and So now as a final warning, Jesus tells them of their sure condemnation lest they repent, and He exposed the folly and the foolishness of their ways.

Now Jude tells us that, "*on some have compassion, making a distinction; but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.*" and Jesus here is seeking that approach, you might say that this was more or less a last ditch effort on the part of Jesus to wake these guys up to the reality of their sin and hypocrisy. You see the Pharisees were purely external, and what I mean by that is that they did everything that they did in order to seem real spiritual and be looked on by men as religious leaders. and So they were a very prideful people, did everything just so, to gain the respect of man and be looked upon as God's elite and just a cut above the rest. But in their hearts they were full of deceit and envy, wickedness and sin. I've said it many times and will probably continue to until the day God is finished with me they drew near to God with their mouth's and honored Him with their lips, but they're hearts were far from Him. and That's what God is looking to, the heart, the motions that you go through so that you appear to be right on and a spiritually solid individual are completely irrelevant if you're aren't right with God in your heart. and You join ranks with these Pharisees and play the part of the hypocrite. It's so important (and I can't emphasize, or stress it enough) that you be open to God examining and revealing to you the position of your heart before Him. Even as the Psalmist wrote and said, "*Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.*" Because you aren't qualified to search your own heart, because your heart will deceive you, the bible says that, "*He who trusts in his own heart is a fool.*"

That's why it's important that God be the One that searches your heart, because He alone can correctly evaluate it, Jer 17:9-10 "*The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? I, the LORD, search the heart; I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.*" In other words God alone is able to search the deep recesses of your heart and see what's truly there, and in these Pharisees was found pride, arrogance, hypocrisy and wickedness. Prov 8:13 says this, "*The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate.*"

So Jesus said to them (read vs 33) and it broke His heart that these people were so hardened to the truth and love of God. and So as He wept over the city He said (read vs37) they were rejecting the very One who could shelter them from the judgment of God and didn't even know it. and Yet how many people reject Jesus Christ today, the very One who can shelter them from the judgment of God and yet they don't even know what they're doing. and If you recall, told you last week that this phrase had an interesting connection with the Passover, but for times sake I didn't get into it, but I would like to take just a minute here to explain that to you because I thought that it was interesting. In Exodus ch Ex 12:13 it says, "*And when I see the blood, I will pass over you.*"

A.W. Pink in his commentary on the book of Ex says this, (actually quoting another man himself). The term rendered Passover "pesach" does not seem to have that meaning. It is entirely different from the Hebrew verb, a-bhar, ga-bhar so frequently used in the sense of "to pass over". *Pasach* (the verb) and *Pesach* (the noun) have no connection with any other Hebrew word. They closely resemble (however) the Egyptian word, *pesh* which means "to spread the wings over, to protect." and To explain the sense in which the word is used he quotes Isa 31:5 which says, "*Like birds flying about, So will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem. Defending, He will also deliver it; Passing over, He will preserve it.*"

He goes on to say, the word has, consequently, the very meaning of the Egyptian term for "spreading the wings over" and "protecting." and "Pesach" the Lords Passover, means such sheltering and protection as is found under the outstretched wings of the Almighty. Does this not give a new fullness to those words of our Savior (Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem... last ½ of vs 37).

So I thought that that was very interesting and worth sharing with you. But after the lament of Jesus, He responded to their rejection of Him by rejecting them and said that they would see Him no more until they were ready to receive Him for who He was, in reference to His 2<sup>nd</sup> coming. Ch 24-25 are what's known as the Olivet discourse, because it's from the Mt of Olives that Jesus is sharing these things that we'll be studying from. And should just preface the study of this ch with the fact that whenever we come across prophetic portions of scripture, I believe we need to be firmly convinced of what we believe. But at the same we need to hold our position with a little bit of grace because there are usually a few different views even between right on brothers and sisters concerning what exactly is being taught. Even though we're right ☺ we still need to be understanding towards others and not contentious. We shouldn't major on minors, now if it were a salvational issue, then that would be different, but if it's not don't get all worked up over it, just be assured of what you believe and why you believe it in your own heart. If you're asked to share that then do it, if not there's no reason to be contentious.

## Vs1

So Jesus having denounced the temple, departs from it and Matthew makes mention of the fact that He left the temple and I see this as not only a physical departure, but a symbolic departure as well. You might say, God has left the building, look at vs 38 of ch 23, Jesus said in regards to the temple (read). God has rejected Israel for rejecting His Son, and so Jesus went out, and departed from the temple. and His disciples began to comment on the stones that the temple was constructed of, because they were just massive. Several of them over 100 tons and they were so perfectly carved out, and they fit together so perfectly that they didn't even use mortar and you couldn't even fit a knife blade between them. and How exactly they carved out these massive stones so perfectly and lifted them up into position is still a mystery today and really a marvel of engineering even to the present day. So with good reason Jesus' disciples are just kind of blown away at the awe of temple and they're pointing out how amazing it seems to the Lord.

## Vs2

This prophecy of Jesus was literally fulfilled some 40 years later when Titus came into Jerusalem with the Roman soldiers and set fire to the temple, (as the story goes) it was actually against Titus' order. He was going to preserve the temple but some soldier through a torch or shot a flaming arrow into the temple and it caught fire. and Everyone who had sought refuge in the temple was cremated, and the gold that covered the dome actually melted down into the crevasses and when it cooled they literally threw down every single stone in order to retrieve the gold that had ran down through the crevasses in the walls. Until finally as Jesus says it here, not one stone was left standing on another, because they were all thrown down.

## Vs3

So Jesus having told them of the destruction of the temple, triggers in them a series of 3 questions. 2 of which He answers 1, of which He doesn't, the 1<sup>st</sup> thing that they want to know is when the temple will be destroyed, they say, "when will these things be?" Now Jesus doesn't answer that question, now He gives some clues in another gospel and speaks of the soldiers that will surround Jerusalem. But He doesn't tell them well in approximately 40yrs, a Roman by the name of Titus is going to destroy Jerusalem and with that will come the destruction of the temple.

2<sup>nd</sup>ly they want to know what the sign of His 2<sup>nd</sup> coming is going to be, when He will abolish every other form of government and establish His kingdom, and 3<sup>rd</sup>ly, the sign of the end of the age. And notice that it says that His disciples came to Him privately, this wasn't a public teaching, this was a private conversation that took place between Jesus and His disciples that Matt lets us in on. and It's also not without significance that He teaches them concerning the end of the age while sitting upon the Mt of Olives.

In Zech 14:4 we learn that when Jesus returns at the end of the age of which He is speaking now He will descend from Heaven and when His feet touch down upon the earth it will be exactly right where He is now in our text, on the Mt of olives. So Jesus teaches them concerning the end of the age from where it is that He will return at the end of the age.

Vs4

So in regards to Jesus' 2<sup>nd</sup> coming and all of these questions that the disciples ask the Lord the 1<sup>st</sup> warning that He issues them is that they need to be careful in order that no one deceives them. and That word "deceived" is the Greek word "planao" from where we get our word planet which means wandering star. and So Jesus is talking about someone who would cause you to wander from the truth, who would lead you astray or deceive you. It's very critical that you know the word of God, that you know the truth, so that you'll recognize the lie. Jesus said, *"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves."* and He said that you would recognize them by their fruits, or by the outcroppings of their lives. How will you know what fruit to be looking for, or by what means to discern unless you know what the word of God says concerning it? The bible says that, *"the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."*

God's word will give you a keen sense of discernment so that you're not deceived, but if you don't know what it says, then you can be led astray because you have nothing by which to weigh things up against. The word of God is an absolute, and if you can't find something that is being purported to you solidly backed in the word (rightly divided) then reject it. Jesus says *take heed* or *watch out*, in other words be careful that no one leads you astray, the bible is filled with warnings concerning the importance of being on your guard against those who would seek to deceive you. That's why it's important that you don't take people's word for things just because they're standing behind a pulpit, or a have come knocking on your door. Research it for yourselves see if what they are saying is true in light of the word of God when Paul and Silas went to Berea they commended them for their eagerness to receive the word and the fact that they *"searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so."* But in regards to our text, (I know I deviated there a little) but Jesus is in regards to a specific issue.

Vs 5

So again Jesus prophecies concerning things to come and this time He says that people are going to come in His name and some will even claim to be Him. Now if I told you that after I was gone that people would come around and claim to be me, you'd probably think that I was nuts. But Jesus made that claim and every since He has ascended into heaven there have been I would say it would be safe to say tens if not hundreds of people who have claimed to be the Messiah.

You can get on the internet and with in minutes you can be looking at pictures or reading articles of people, who have claimed to be Christ, have said that they are Jesus, or have “Christ consciousness”. Maharaji who claimed to be the “Lord of the universe”, even people like Charles Manson who still claims to be Jesus Christ and even though we say this man is obviously deranged, he deceived many, David Koresh in our not to distant past in the Waco Texas incident.

What I find interesting is the fact that even though there were many Messianic promises and great expectations among the Jews, there’s no record (that I’m aware of) that so much as one person came on the scene claiming to be the Messiah until *after* Jesus came. You ever wonder why that is? I’ll tell you why; it’s for the same reason you never see anyone counterfeiting a \$15.00 bill, you see until there is a genuine article there can be no counterfeits, you can only imitate something that is real, you can only counterfeit something genuine. and Now that the Genuine Messiah has come, there have been a whole string of counterfeits. The fact that people come claiming to be Him only adds further proof that He was in fact who He said He was. How many people claim to be Buddha or ALA? It doesn’t happen, people come in the name of Christ and they claim to be Christ, which in reality only validifies or solidifies who Jesus is, why would people imitate a fraud. Jesus said that these people would come in *His* name and deceive many, and we’ve seen it happen over and over. That’s why John said, don’t believe every spirit, but test the spirits, to see whether they are of God, but you’ve got to know the litmus test to test them by which again is found in the word of God. That’s why it’s so crucial that you have an intimate working knowledge of the word of God, because if you don’t you are in danger of being deceived. Hos 4:6 “*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.*”

Vs6

So wars are going to happen, WW1 spawned a series of books claiming that the end of the world was coming, WWII did the same thing, had they read their bibles they’d of known better because Jesus said these things are going to happen, but that doesn’t signal the end. I don’t know where John Courson gets his information, so if it happens to be off, I’m telling you now that I’m quoting from him. He said that that the club of Rome published a report entitled the War Atlas, which points out that since WWII there has not been a single day of peace on this planet. There are 32million soldiers world wide on active duty with 570 million more in reserve. 50% of all scientists in the world are working on weapons and 40% of all the money that’s spent in the area of science goes towards weapons research and development. and Here’s something interesting, for every person on the face of the earth there are 40 tons of TNT. But Jesus said these kinds of thing would happen, but we’re not to be alarmed by it, it doesn’t signal the end of the world.

Vs 7

That word nation, is the Greek word “ethnos” from where we get our word “ethnic.” So it would be a more literal translation to say that ethnic group will rise against ethnic group, racial tension will be on the rise, and kingdom will rise against kingdom. (and There will be famines) in the mid to late 90’s the deserts were increasing at a rate of 14.8 million square miles per year. There are many scientists who contribute that partially to the green house effect. In 1997 (I believe is the year that I read) there was the equivalent of 5,000 soccer fields per day being removed from the Amazon jungle. Now, you take the increase in desert land times the population explosion and guess what you get? Famine, Somewhere to the tune of 220million babies are born every year, and of that 220million 190million of them will be born in 3<sup>rd</sup> world countries.

It took from the time of Noah clear up until 1857 for the population of this planet to reach 1billion people, since then the population has doubled about every 15-20 years, now we’re approaching 7 billion. In 1980 there was ½ as many people around and by 2020 we’ll be approaching 14 billion should the Lord tarry, this world is getting crowded and I’m giving you these statistics so that you can see the staggering accuracy with which the Lord prophesied all these things. And He says there will be pestilences (consider aids, cancer and all the various diseases that plague the human race) and earthquakes in various places, again you can easily find the statistics on these things that will blow your mind. Jesus said that when you see these things taking place, the end is near, and to read these things is practically like picking up the daily paper or watching the evening news. We are so close, now is not the time to be lulled to sleep, but rather watch and be ready, look up, for your redemption draws near.

Vs8-9

Now no doubt as Christians we are an unliked minority over all and as I’ve said before more people have died in the 20<sup>th</sup> century alone because of their faith in Jesus Christ than in every other century combined. But in the direct context, Jesus is speaking here (I believe) to the Jews.

Who have probably been the single most persecuted people in the history of the world. How easily we can recall WWII during which an estimated 6million Jews were killed between 1933-45 in concentration camps. Satan hates the Jewish race and has tried to destroy God’s chosen nation for thousands of years, why? Why is there so much hatred and animosity toward the Jewish people, because it’s through the Jews that the Savior of the world has been brought, so Satan wants to wipe them out. and So anti-Semitism at it’s roots is Satanic, Jesus says that they will be hated by all nations, why, because of Him.

Remember that when you experience hatred and animosity as a believer, Jesus said, *“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.”* The world is still rejecting Jesus Christ today and so if Jesus Christ is abiding in you then they will hate you as well.

Vs10

Those who you feel are closest to you will turn on you.

Vs11

Again Jesus issues another warning against deception and believe me when I tell you that Jesus doesn't talk just to hear His head rattle. He's placing emphasis on the fact that unless your head is in the game you are open to deception. Again you remember those people that were involved with that heavens gate cult, and they all took their lives believing that aliens were following the hale-bop comet because they trusted their leader. I can't recall his name but the point is that he deceived them. and The disciples echoed this, as I said the bible is filled with warnings against falling for these guys who seek to deceive you.

Peter said, *“But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.”* 2 Peter 2:1  
 One of the main reasons that John wrote his 1<sup>st</sup> epistle was to warn against deceivers. *“These things I have written to you concerning those who try to deceive you.”* 1 John 2:26  
 In Jude vs 4 Jude writes, *For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

You see it's nothing new, and Jesus warns us that these guys are on the seen, but don't be deceived, Jesus said that I'm the way, the truth and the Life and that no one gets to the Father but by Me. These counterfeits rise up and they try to deceive you and draw men unto themselves and make disciples of themselves rather than pointing people to Jesus and making disciples of Him.

Vs12

Again this could be the headlines of any given news report today, lawlessness abounds, and love has grown cold. As wickedness makes an incline, and lawlessness is in an upsurge, love cools off, and makes the decline; it's cause and effect. Paul the apostle said this, *“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power.”*

It's impossible to read that and draw any other conclusion than the fact that we're in the last days, that's why we need to hold so tight to this next vs as Jesus is warning of what's to come, He gives a word of encouragement.

### Vs13

The one who remains faithful to God in the midst of persecution, lawlessness, and stands firm against false prophets not being sucked into their schemes of deceptions and continues to love others in the midst of a wicked generation, in which evil is continually spreading will be saved. That word "endure" means to bear up courageously under suffering. You might say that suffering separates the men from the boys, those who are true to God and those who have a surface relationship, and those who remain true to Jesus Christ will be saved. So hang in there, because believe me when I tell you that any suffering that you might endure in the here and now isn't even worthy to be compared to the glory that will be revealed in us. and By the same token if you give into persecution and deny the Lord who bought you and join ranks with the persecutors. Believe me when I tell you that your moment of release from that persecution won't even start to stack up to the suffering that you'll be forced to endure through out eternity as you leave the planet with out Jesus Christ

Paul told Timothy, to "*be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*" That's what the Lord is saying here, hang in there, it'll be rough, but stick it out, it'll pay off big. And besides where else are you going to go, Jesus alone has the words of everlasting life.

### Vs14

Now this doesn't mean that every single tribe in the jungles of Africa has to be evangelized by the church before Jesus Christ can come. Again Paul the apostle in his day in writing to the Colossians in regards to the gospel which, he said, "*has come to you, as it has also in all the world.*" So as far as he was concerned even in his day the gospel had gone out into all the world. Now there are still some small sects of people here and there who have no doubt never heard the gospel, but every major national group of people. Now it's been rejected by many and even been outlawed in some countries, but it's gone nonetheless. However Jesus is simply saying that the gospel will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations before the end comes, He doesn't say that the church is going to be the instrument necessarily that will preach it or declare it, to all the world. Now there are missions organizations that take this as their personal responsibility, to get the gospel out to all the world so that Jesus Christ can return, and I believe that it's urgent to get the gospel out.

However turn with me to Rev ch 6 (and we'll conclude here) vs 6-12

So the Gospel will be preached to every tribe, tongue and nation of the earth before Jesus Christ returns but it won't be by the church. At this point in the book of Rev the church is gone, it will be carried throughout the earth by the 144,000 Jews that God sealed for that purpose and the very angels of God. So don't think that God has left the fate of the world into the hands of man, He's got a plan, and every tribe and tongue and people and nation will hear the gospel before Jesus Christ comes in judgment. Just as you've heard it today and you have now a choice to receive it, or reject it.