

times,” will say that the gospel still hasn’t been “preached in all the world.” But that is not what the Bible said, for the Holy Spirit spoke in the middle of the first century and stated how the gospel had already been “preached to every creature under heaven” (Colossians 1:23; see also Romans 16:25-26, Romans 10:17-18). So then, by the mid first century, the precondition for the end of the temple had been accomplished.

Jesus now moves to the point of describing the destruction of the temple (Matthew 24:15-28). He begins with referencing the “Abomination of Desolation” spoken by Daniel the prophet. Space fails me to go into much detail on Daniel’s prophecy, but we can still efficiently understand what Jesus is saying thanks to Luke’s account. Matthew wrote to Jews, who were familiar with Daniel’s prophecy; Luke wrote to Greeks, being unfamiliar with Daniel and the terminology of the prophecy. So, when Luke records the same statement of the Lord in Luke 21:20, Luke interprets: “*but when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.*” Oh, so that’s who the “Abomination of Desolation” is; it’s the Romans (abominable to the Jews) who would bring their armies to surround Jerusalem and cause desolation (including the temple). This desolation was accom-

plished in the year 70 of the first century. Which makes perfect sense as to the consistency of the context, because Jesus went on to say, “*this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place*” (Matthew 24:34). See verses 16-20 for further proof that this discussion is about a regional judgment in Judea, not the end of the world. So then, we see that men have mistaken the words of Jesus and invented new teachings about the end of time which are contrary to the word of God. The Bible teaches, in 2 Peter 3:10, that there are no signs of the end of the world: “*But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.*” We must not be looking out for signs but to be ready always for the coming of the Lord, for he will come in the same manner as “*a thief in the night,*” i.e. without warning. Will we be ready?

Friend, I thought you’d benefit from this. Contact me if you have any questions.

Name: _____

Phone: _____



Signs of the End

Are we living in the
Last Days?

What signs will there be
for the end of time?

The doctrine of the “End Times” is very popular today and covers a wide range of subjects, but to summarize it, this doctrine refers to: **1.** Signs that will take place before the end; **2.** The rapture of the righteous from the earth; **3.** Seven years of tribulation for the wicked on the earth; **4.** The physical return of Christ to the earth; **5.** Christ’s 1,000 year reign from the city of Jerusalem; **6.** The final judgment and end of the world. While these teachings sound fantastic and worthy of a Hollywood production, I must caution us that we should take a closer look at what the scriptures teach before putting our faith in these doctrines, after all, true faith comes only by hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17).

Difficulties with accepting “the End Time” doctrine as true begin to surface at the first look of the first aspect of the doctrine, which is the belief that there are signs that would alert the spiritually observant person that the end of time is near. The two primary places of scripture used to teach this idea are Matthew 24:1-14, and portions of the book of Revelation. Matthew 24 is a good place for us to start. The first thing to do is establish the context, which is the first thing often missed by false teachers. The context (v.1-3) reveals how the Lord’s disciples were showing Him around the temple, and His

response to them was startling: *“Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”* Later, the disciples inquired to Jesus alone, saying *“Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”* The Lord had told them about the destruction of the temple and now they ask Him when that will occur. It is evident from their inquiry that they also thought that the destruction of the temple would be apart of Christ’s coming, as well as the end of the age. So now, for us, understanding that the Lord’s response is in reference to the destruction of the temple that was present in their day, will go a long way in accurately understanding the Lord’s response.

Jesus first says, *“take heed that no one deceives you”* (v.4). This warning was necessary, because signs are deceiving. Even today, many see “signs” within their life about all kinds of things, but this is very unreliable. Jesus explains that many things will happen, that many will esteem to be signs, but none of which are true signs. He lists false Messiahs, wars, rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes (v.5-7). These things which the Lord mentioned are the very things we still hear today by those who have taken

Jesus’ words out of context and applied it to a future “end times.” But Jesus was not talking about the end of time, he was talking about the end of the temple that stood before Him and his disciples in the first part of the first century. What’s more gripping is that Jesus did not say these things were signs. He stated first that they shouldn’t be deceived into believing that false Christs, wars, diseases, and earthquakes were signs of the coming destruction of the temple. Within the text, the Lord said *“see that you are not troubled;”* for He knew of mankind’s tendency to become troubled by horrible things that happen on earth, believing them to be indicative of the end. But the Lord specifically told His disciples *“the end is not yet”* (v.6), i.e. these things are not associated with “the end,” even though some men are convinced otherwise. Again, when we hear Jesus say “the end is not yet,” we must respect the context of His words, how He is referring to the end of the temple.

In verse 14, Jesus speaks of the coming end of the temple, stating that the gospel must be preached in all the world before the temple could be destroyed. This is really the only prerequisite for the temple’s end. Many today, who take the Lord’s discussion in Matthew 24 out of context, believing it to be about the “end