

DISPENSATIONALISM (25)

Now in **Matthew 24:3**, it is clear that this will be a discussion about the sign that shows “the end of the age or the completion of the age.”

The disciples asked three questions: 1) When will the Temple be destroyed? 2) What will be the sign of your coming? 3) What will be the sign of the end?

Now the first question is not answered here in Matthew, but is answered in Luke 21:20-24.

So the questions the disciples are asking is what sign will specifically show we are at the end of the Messianic age. Now the age that the disciples are thinking about has nothing to do with the Church. The age they are thinking about is the end of the age that will bring to completion God’s program with Israel.

They are thinking about Daniel’s 490 years, which still had 7 years left to go (Dan. 9:26-27). The disciples want to know what sign will indicate that the completion of the program with Israel has come.

What Jesus is going to tell them is that there will be a great Tribulation that will reveal an Antichrist who will commit “the abomination of desolation” spoken by Daniel the prophet (Matt. 24:15; Dan. 9:26-27). This will be the sign that will show the age is coming to an end to complete the program with Israel.

The man of sin will stand in the Holy Place during the Tribulation and will demand that he be worshipped as God (Matt. 24:15; II Thess. 2:3-4). This Antichrist will not do this at the end of the Church Age; but as things move to the end of things as it relates to Israel.

Now an overview of these two chapters breaks down this way:

- 1) A capsule form outline of the first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation. Matt. 24:4-8
- 2) A capsule form outline of the second 3 ½ years of the Tribulation. Matt. 24:9-26
- 3) A capsule form glimpse of the second coming of Jesus Christ. Matt. 24:27-31
- 4) A capsule form glimpse of the regathering of Israel. Matt. 24:31
- 5) A series of illustrative parables concerning the coming Kingdom. Matt. 24:32-25:30
- 6) A capsule form glimpse of Israel’s judgment. Matt. 25:1-30
- 7) A capsule form glimpse of the Gentile nation’s judgment. Matt. 25:31-46

SECTION #1 – Matthew 24:4-8 - An overview of the first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation.

Now in **Matthew 24:4-8**, Jesus gives a series of beginning things that do show things are moving toward the final end and completion of things with Israel. When these things occur, this is not the end but it is moving to it. The order of things are “false Christs” (24:5); “wars and rumors of wars” (24:6-7a); “famines” (24:7b); “earthquakes” (24:7c).

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Now these very things are consistent with the first seal judgments of Revelation 6 -

Seal Judgment #1 - False Christ's Rev. 6:2

Seal Judgment #2 - Wars Rev. 6:3-4

Seal Judgment #3 - Famines Rev. 6:5-6

These three judgments will lead to many people dying, which is the next seal judgment

Seal Judgment #4 - Death. Rev. 6:7-8

One quarter of the world's population will die by these judgments that begin the Tribulation. Predator animals will also attack and kill people at this time. To put this in some perspective, at the present time there is approximately 7.5 billion people on earth. One quarter of that number is just shy of 2 billion people that are killed in the opening of the Tribulation.

Now Jesus says in Matthew 24:8 - this is just the beginning of trouble. These are just the beginning birth pangs and the worst is yet to come.

The point of this list is to show that these things do not yet constitute the end or completion of the Jewish age or program. These things are not "the sign" that the end has come for Israel's program; they are formation clouds that begin the Great Tribulation.

God is pouring out His wrath in a Christ-rejecting, God-mocking world during the first part of the Tribulation and this is not specifically that which is aimed at concluding Israel's age. However, the next series of things in Matthew 24:9-28, does have to do with Israel.

SECTION #2 – Matthew 24:9-26 - An overview of the second 3 ½ years of the Tribulation.

Notice **verse 9** begins with the adverb "then." Now things are moving toward Israel. This same adverb "then" is used in **verse 21** and again in **verse 30**. **All three "then" words are time words related to Israel.** What is described in this Olivet discourse is specific data pertaining to Israel.

Israel Reality #1 - The Jews as a nation will be hated by all nations. Matthew 24:9

This will be an unprecedented level of world-wide antisemitism. This specific hatred will be hatred due to the fact that Israel is the chosen nation of God. The entire world will hate Israel and persecute her and kill Jews.

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Israel Reality #2 - Many Jews will fall away and hate each other and betray each other.

Matthew 24:10

The Jewish people tend to stick together. They have their communities and their work places and synagogues. During the Tribulation, just prior to Christ's return, Jews will turn against each other. This will be due to the fact that the Antichrist is trying to track down and exterminate the Jews. So Jews will actually betray one another, thinking it will enable them to survive.

Israel Reality #3 - Many false prophets will arise and mislead many Jews. **24:11**

During this part of the Tribulation, many will claim they are getting prophetic messages from God. They will be able to do miraculous kinds of things (**24:24**).

Israel Reality #4 - Iniquity and lawlessness will abound that will cause "most people's" love to grow cold. **24:12**

During the Tribulation, "most people" will have no love, but coldness. There will be little interest in God or His Word even in the Tribulation. Now there is an article before "love" and there is an article before "most," so we think this refers to Israel. During the Tribulation, there will be such an increase in lawlessness to the point that most of the Jews will not even be interested in Kingdom data that pertains to them. Also during this time not only will the Jews be cold to God and His Word, but most people on earth will be cold not only toward God and His Word, but toward Israel. There will not be much love in the Tribulation from anyone.

Israel Reality #5 - In the end Israel will endure and be saved as a nation **24:13** (Rom. 11:26-27).

This is not speaking of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. The Church is not in this whatsoever.

Israel Reality #6 - The Israeli Kingdom gospel will be preached to the whole world and to all nations. **24:14**

As we have mentioned many times, the gospel of the Kingdom for Israel is not the Gospel of grace we present to sinners. Our job is to proclaim the Gospel of grace to this whole world.

During the Tribulation, 144,000 Jews (Rev. 7:1-8) will be sealed by God to preach the coming Messianic Kingdom for Israel and to all the nations. The fact that Jesus Christ will return and be King of Israel and establish His Kingdom on this earth will be proclaimed worldwide.

When this is happening, "then the end will come."