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When Jesus Comes; Matt 24:29-35
GPBC
12.5.21

Introduction – so far in Matthew 24 we’ve discovered that the final age of history, known in the Bible as the last days, begins with the Fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple, which occurred in 70 AD. Then Jesus described this age as being characterized by national and natural turmoil, persecution of the church, a falling away from the faith, and a loss of neighborly love. These things will continue much like birth pains until the gospel has reached every tribe and nation, then the end will come.

Just as the destruction of the temple signified the beginning, the great tribulation will signify the ending of this age. When this period of tribulation reaches its fulfillment, the Son of Man will come. Remember from last week Jesus tells His followers they won’t have to wonder or be deceived about His coming because when He comes, everyone will know and there will be no doubt that He has arrived.

In today’s text Jesus makes clear why that is the case. His return will be unmistakable.

- I. The Heavens will Shake (v29)
 - a. When the Son of Man re-enters His creation in the heavens, the heavens will shake. The power and glory of Christ will be on full display and in full magnitude such that the cosmos itself will tremble as Christ flings open the doors of heaven.
 - b. He said in v27 His coming will be like a great lightening flash that is visible from the east to the west. Every inhabitant of the earth will be aware.
 - c. In His first coming, He came to conquer sin. In His second coming, He’s coming to conquer His enemies.
 - i. In His first coming, He was found lying in a manger. In His second coming, He will be seen riding a great white horse.
 - ii. In His first coming, the shepherds and the wise men bowed and worshipped. In His second coming, every knee will bow and every tongue confess Him as Lord.

- iii. In His first coming, you had to travel to Bethlehem to see Him. In His second coming, you need only to look up.
- iv. In His first coming, the angels sang in the sky. In His second coming, the angels will shout.
- v. In His first coming, it was silent night, holy night. In His second coming, the trumpet call will ring through the heavens.
- vi. In His first coming, the heavens held a star. In His second coming, the heavens will shake.
- d. Rev 6:12-14
- e. Then, Jesus says, will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man.
 - i. What is that sign? I believe the sign is the Savior Himself.
 - ii. Titus 2:11-14

II. The Earth will Mourn

- a. Who will mourn? All the tribes of the earth. And why are they mourning? Follow me now. Remember in v14 Jesus says the gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed as a testimony to all nations and then the end will come. For sure, every place the gospel advances, many joyfully receive the good news and embrace Jesus as Savior. But just as certain, many refuse the good news and reject the Savior.
- b. These who are mourning are those who did not believe this would ever happen and did not want this to happen. This is not the way they envisioned or hoped the world would end.
- c. All the theories of subjectivism and relativism and the absence of absolute truth will vanish in one moment. When the Son of Man appears in the heavens, those who rejected Christ and denounced the faith will mourn. The Bible was true. God does exist. He has spoken. His Son did come as Savior and now has come as Judge, and I have spent my life denying the Son and mocking the truth and rebelling against God. What I once thought was foolish and nothing more than a fable is reality. Christ is here and I'm not ready – I'm not saved.
- d. Rev 6:15-17
- e. They will mourn because they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. The day of mercy and grace and salvation will be over. The day of judgment has come.

- f. You can be among those who will mourn at His coming or you can be among those who will rejoice!
- III. The Church will be Gathered (31)
- a. Not everyone will mourn. The church, the people of God, the elect will rejoice with great joy when our Savior appears. He will descend from heaven and we will ascend from the earth. When Christ returns He will gather His people, past and present, dead and alive, to enter His kingdom and live forever.
 - b. 1 Thess 4:13-18
 - c. Encourage one another with these words.
 - i. We may not be alive when Jesus returns, but encourage one another with these words. When He returns, He will bring your spirit from heaven and unite it with a resurrected, glorified body from earth and take you home to heaven.
 - ii. We will face tribulation in this life, we may even face the great tribulation, but encourage one another with these words, we will be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air and we will always be with the Lord.
 - d. There is coming a reunion that you don't want to miss. Every believer from every age will be gathered for a great reunion with the Lord.
 - e. Rev 7:9-10
 - f. You see there will be people from every tribe and nation who will mourn, but there will also be people from every tribe and nation who will rejoice! And the difference is those who reject Christ and those who embrace Him!
 - g. Do you know Him? More importantly, does He know you? Do you associate with Him occasionally on Sunday or do you follow him as your treasure with your whole heart? Is He a spiritual Santa to you or is He your saving Lord?
- IV. Jesus' Return is Absolutely Certain (vv32-35)
- a. You may be thinking, this all sounds too fantastical Pastor. I mean sure, I'll go along with the whole Christmas thing because it comes with ribbons and bows and carols and plays and nice little nativity scenes. But all this about Jesus returning and the heavens shaking and judgment and wrath. That's just not what I choose to believe.

- b. Before you totally dismiss what Jesus says about His second coming, pay careful and close attention to what Jesus says about what He has said concerning His second coming.
- c. V32 – the lesson of the fig tree
- d. V33 – just as you know when the leaves appear, summer is coming, in the same way when you see all these things, you know that He is near, at the very gates.
 - i. What things? The tribulation Jesus has just described in vv21-28 means that vv29-31 is the next event. Jesus is at the threshold of heaven and will make His entrance at any moment.
- e. V34 – the generation that experiences the tribulation will be the last generation in history.
- f. V35 – this is Jesus' word and all that He has just said. Either Jesus is a self-deluded liar or He is Lord of heaven and earth. If He is God, He cannot lie. If He cannot lie, He's coming one day just like He said He would.
- g. We trust in a lot of things in heaven and earth. We put our hope and comfort and security in the things of this world. Some look to the stars for direction in life and those stars will fall one day. Some look to their wealth. Some look to their health. But everything in this life will pass away. Why even we pass away.
- h. But Jesus and His words will never pass away. You can reject His words, but you can't erase them. You can doubt them, but you can't stop them.

Conclusion – those who think the return of Christ is foolish today, will mourn when Jesus comes. Those who love Him and are looking for Him, will rejoice. Won't you trust Him today so that you will be ready to welcome Him on that day?