

---

## Into Thy Word Bible Study in Revelation

---

Into Thy Word Ministries [www.intothyword.org](http://www.intothyword.org)

### Matthew 24: 29- 51 “The Olivet Discourse” Part II

This is part two of a two part study as a prelude into The Book of Revelation. It is essential we understand the events that are to come and not bow to false teachings or sensationalism, and the best way to do that is see what our Lord Jesus Christ taught on the matter.

**General Idea:** *The Coming of the Son of Man! A spectacular glimpse to things that will come!* Jesus is explaining here, symbolically, the events of the coming Tribulation (Matt. 24:29-35), and then, in the following chapters, gives us some illustrations, using parables, to help us understand these events and the importance of our being ready (Matt. 24: 36 though chap. 25). Jesus is coming back and this time it will not be a subtle event, as a baby born in a feed trough in a cave; rather, the entire creation will glow and bend to show the whole world His glory. This passage gives hope to a persecuted church, hope to people in despair, and hope that He is indeed in charge, even when we cannot see it!

This is also one of the main passages that people refer to as the *Rapture*. That is, Jesus’ return, and our being “caught up” with Him as air being lifted up in the sky. This is, of course, in great debate. Did you know that this *Rapture* is a “theory” that is only a hundred years old, and comes from people who expounded lots of false doctrine as well? Did you know that none of the most brilliant theological minds who ever lived—Augustine, Kempis, Calvin, Luther, and Spurgeon, to name a few—ever taught this?! Perhaps the information is true but we were not ready for it; perhaps it is all fantasy, allegory turned it into theology, which is a very dangerous and false practice! Wherever the truth may lie, or to whatever view you subscribe, the particulars are not important; that is why they are not given to us! What is important is to believe in Christ, hold on to Him, and be confident in Him. It is all about our faith development and our diligence in obedience—diligence in knowing He is coming; how, where, and when are irrelevant. But, when it does happen, there will be no doubt. All the theology debates will be tossed aside as His Kingdom comes to its realization and completion (2 Pet. 1:16-21)!

**Vs.29-31:** *The sun will be darkened.* This is a reference to a significant astronomical event in the form of O.T. judgment language (Psalm 18:6-19; Isa. 13:10; 24:23; 34:4; Jer. 4:20-28; Ezek. 32:7-8; Joel 3:14; Zech. 14:6). The question is not *if* or *when*, as many of us obsess over; rather, He *will* come and we had better be prepared with our attitude and mindsets!

- *Darkness* was the most frightening prediction (Ex. 9:21-23)!

- *The sign of the Son of man* refers to God bringing about the opportunity for people to repent for having caused Him grief. Then, the Kingdom of Heaven will flourish (Dan. 7:13-14; Zech. 12:10; Rev. 1:7). *Sign* refers to the first real evidence of Christ's second coming.
- *Morn.* Jesus is coming back and this time it will not be subtle; it will hurt, hurt people who do not believe and believers who have become apostate as in cause pain while still being glorious (Dan. 7:13-14; Zech. 12:10-12)!
- *Clouds* refers to spectacular numbers of angels testifying to God's glory. It could also mean an extraordinary storm of clouds.
- *Son of man* means *He is Lord and King!* (See study, Matthew 10: 16-26).
- *Trumpets* were used to announce the coming of or the succession of a king. They were used to summon people together and for a war cry to motivate troops and scare the enemy (Judg. 7:8-25; Isa. 11:12; 27. 13; Jer. 4:5, 19-21; Zeph. 1:16). Here, it is a popular prayer Jesus uses to refer to a future gathering of believers in Christ (Zech. 9:14-16; 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:13-18).
- Some have thought that this section can also refer to the coming defeat of Satan and His dominion, but there is no textual support; rather, it is about His second coming (Matt. 13:40-43; 16:27; 25:31; 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:14-17).

**Vs.32-35: Fig tree.** This is the first of seven "futures" of the Kingdom parables. Fig trees give clear signs of what they are doing so you know what comes next; they lose their leaves in the winter, then they start to produce fruit before the new leaves bud. At this time, the fig trees would be "in leaf." In Mark, Jesus uses this parable to predict the destruction of the Temple (Mark 11:12-25). By knowing Scripture, not popular reasoning, we will know for sure when the events are upon us all!

- *This generation* normally refers to "you people," as in race and mentality; it can also refer to who is there, and in being stubborn (Lev. 26:18-20; Judg. 2:19). This is not about time; it is about the mentality and the people, such as the race of Jews. Some have said this meant only the people then; the destruction of the Temple and the reign of Nero comprised the Tribulation ("Preterism" means fulfilled *eschatology*). Also, that in 70 A.D., all that Jesus spoke of in Matthew, chapter 24, was fulfilled and now we are in the age of Jesus' reign. I guess they have not looked out a window lately! Yes, some of it was fulfilled, but not all; so, "this generation" did see some of what is to come, in fact, most or all of it except for His Second Coming!
- The Dead Sea scrolls predicted a 40 year tribulation versus the seven year one in Revelation!
- *My words.* These are words only God would proclaim; no O.T. Prophet would dare to say these things in this way. Their words were given to them by God; Jesus spoke as God (Jer. 31:35-37; Zech. 1:5-6). For the Jews, to whom Matthew is written, this meant the authority of the O.T. Scriptures.
- Jesus does not give us an exact timeline of when and how these events will take place; even Revelation and Daniel do not! This gives birth to needless

speculation and obsession, because we fail to see His main point—being prepared, and being encouraged that things will get better after they get worse!

**Vs.36-50:** *No one knows...angels, or the Son...* Why did Jesus not know, when He is the omnipresence God? God keeps most of His plans secret for good reason (Deut. 29:29; Zech. 14:6-9). We would become preoccupied with them and miss our purpose for being here on earth. Just look at some Catholics and how they are overzealous with artifacts; in fact there are enough so-called pieces of the cross of Christ in European Cathedrals to build a large church! There is also the obsession for the Holy Grail (the cup of Christ in His last supper). They look to “stuff” and not to substance!

- This is one of the “hard saying of Jesus.” Scholars debate whether Jesus, being also fully man, could not predict His second coming because either He did not know, or the time was not yet set up. These two views seem to nullify His omniscience. According to Catholics, and some Protestants, the knowledge was too high for Jesus to communicate to mere humans (St. Thomas Aquinas). Luther said the divine nature was unable to communicate this to the human nature. The Reformed view is that there is no distinction or confusion between the divine and human natures, as Jesus was fully God and fully man. Jesus had *all* knowledge, but when He was in human form, only the Father had this knowledge. In addition, the Father has knowledge that the other members of the Trinity do not have.
- Even the Holy Spirit did not have this knowledge. So, if someone says, “the Holy Spirit told me the day and time,” they are either being dishonest or are deluded—to which this passage attests!
- *Son* refers to Jesus the Divine Person, a part of the Godhead of the Trinity—one God, three manifestations. The Son is the manifestation that lives on behalf of us and redeems us before the Father. The Spirit convicts the unbeliever to know God and paves the way for Christ’s work (see doctrine channel and article on the Trinity).
- *Days of the flood* refers to people carrying on their daily lives, unconcerned with God—only focused on self. This also refers to the evil, sinful nature of people!
- *Taken* refers to being taken to Judgment (Jer. 6:10-12)! Most people think this is the rapture, but, it is never explicitly taught or illustrated, although the text does “allow” for such as view. (What is my view? I do not have one. After 20 years of carefully studying the books of Revelation and Daniel, I am not ready to publicly form one; I still need more study!)
- Israel, as a nation, had rejected their Messiah and thus would be forced, by their own will, to go through a great tribulation.
- *Thief will come* literally means to “break in,” as to dig into the clay and brick sides to get inside the home. This could only happen if the people were not there—as in *not ready* (Ex. 22:2-3).

- *Watch...be ready* refers to being active, in faith and practice, and not be waiting, sitting and doing nothing. Do not be distracted from that which Christ has called you! Do not waste your time in the particulars of *eschatology*; it really is not that important for us to know or to teach!
- *Servant*. Wealthy people had servants whose job it was to watch for their return, as they had many homes for winter and for summer. The servants were to be ready, so food, provisions, and the chores needed to have been done. Those who failed, who were lazy or took advantage of others and their master's things, were fired or imprisoned. Thus, they could only be abusive if the master was not present. Our Master is always present!

The main point of this passage is to tell us not to be discouraged, but remain faithful and vigilant. We are to live our lives as if Christ would be coming tomorrow, or preparing and planning as if He were coming a thousand years from now. We are not to be preoccupied with the details and trivialities. That is why Jesus did not give them to us. Rather, our faith development and steadfastness are far more impacting and real on ourselves and others around us! Isn't it strange that people on TV can predict the day and hour of Christ's return when Jesus Himself did not? I remember a popular book, *88 Reasons why Jesus Is Coming Back In 1988!* Most of the TV preachers were expounding this; I knew people who gave away their homes and cars, and when He did not come back, they were so disillusioned that many of them are not part of any church today! There may be a rapture, there may not be one; Jesus may come in the beginning, or the middle of, or at the end of the tribulation. He is God and He is not confined to our wishful thinking or ideas! I will still buy cars with sunroofs (get out easier) and keep watchful, but this will not consume me as it has others. Do not be distracted from that to which Christ has called you! Do not waste your time in the particulars of *eschatology*; it really is not important. Christ commands us to know Him and make Him known, to grow in Him and help others grow, to worship Him and help others worship Him, too. If we spend our time in the debate of *eschatology*, we will ignore His more vital calls, such as evangelism, discipleship, and our own growth in Him!

### **Questions:**

1. What if Jesus had returned yesterday afternoon? What were you doing? Does your life and attitude shown that you were prepared?
2. If someone asked you to describe the "second coming," what would you say?
3. How does this passage give hope to a persecuted church, people in despair, and to you?
4. Knowing that all of the most brilliant theological minds who ever lived never taught, in nineteen hundred years, that the Rapture was to take people up

into the sky, that this is a theory—possible as it may be—that is new, how do you now feel about it? Do you feel the rapture is as important as some people make it out to be?

5. Why do you suppose people are so preoccupied by the various theories of the “last days?”
6. What do you think Jesus’ point was in this passage? What is important what is not?
7. God brings about the opportunity for people to repent for having caused Him *grief*. What do you think causes God *grief*? So, what are you doing that may be causing God *grief*?
8. Can you picture what Jesus’ *second coming* may be like? Perhaps no mere human’s imagination can!
9. Why do you suppose Jesus uses the image of the fig tree so often?
10. Why is it important to know Scripture over popular reasoning? What happens when we place our trust in theories and not in Christ?
11. How does this passage strengthen your faith in Christ as LORD?
12. Why do you suppose Jesus does not give us an exact timeline of when and how these events will take place? What would you do in your Christian life if you knew, in detail, what was to happen to you in life and the end times to come?
13. God keeps most of His plans secret for good reason. What are some reasons that you can come up with?
14. Why do many Christians become preoccupied with artifacts such as the Holy Grail? How does this deter them and others away from God’s call and precepts?
15. What if someone says to you, *the Holy Spirit told me the day and time of Jesus’ second coming*. What would you say to them?
16. Jesus calls us to “be ready;” what does this mean for you?
17. What does this passage teach you about time management? How can you be active in your faith and practice while not wasting time, as in sitting, doing nothing?

18. What can you do to make sure you are not distracted by theological trivialities that may seem fun to learn and investigate (and they are), but deter you from what Christ has called you to do?
19. The study of *eschatology* is important, but, compared to issues such as prayer, Bible study, who Christ is, basic doctrine, faith development, living in the Spirit, and growing in character and service to our neighbors and people in need, it really is not that important for us to know or to teach! Do you agree or disagree, and why? (It is OK to disagree with non essential doctrine, as long as we do not divide over it!)
20. What does *being prepared* mean to you? What are you going to do to be prepared? What can you do so you will not be discouraged but remain faithful and vigilant?

© 2004, 2005 R. J. Krejcir Ph.D. *Into Thy Word Ministries* [www.intothyword.org](http://www.intothyword.org)