

"THE TIME OF THE END"

I. INTRODUCTION.

- A. In *Matthew 24; Mark 13 and Luke 21*, Jesus Christ Uses The Terminology, "The End." (Cf. *Matt. 24:6, 14; Mark 13:7, 13; Luke 21:9*) These Statements By The Lord Were In Answer To The Questions Asked Him By His Disciples. (Cf. *Matt. 24:1-3*)
1. The question logically follows, "THE END OF WHAT?"
 2. If we can determine through proper exegesis the meaning of this prophecy from our Lord, we will be able to expose some of the errors of millennialism, clear up some misconceived ideas regarding the second coming of Christ, and, as always, have a better appreciation of the Word of God.
- B. In Order For A Proper Understanding Of THE TIME OF THE END, We Must Understand Its Usage In The Old Testament, Principally In The Book Of *Daniel*. Then We Will Make A Comparative Study In The New Testament of Jesus' Interpretation Of What Was Revealed to Daniel In Visions.

II. AIM.

- A. To Examine The Prophetic Statement "The Time Of The End" In The Book Of *Daniel* And To See The Fulfillment Of The Prophecy Interpreted By Christ In The Books Of *Matthew, Mark and Luke*.
- B. To Show The Error Of Using These Sections Of Scripture In Trying To Determine The End Of The World And The Second Coming Of Christ.
- C. To Encourage Serious And Thorough Bible Study By All Who Uphold The Bible As Their AUTHORITATIVE GUIDE IN ALL RELIGIOUS MATTERS.

III. OUTLINE.

- A. THE TIME OF THE END AS REVEALED IN THE BOOK OF *DANIEL*.
(*Dan. 8:1 - 12:13*)

1. The first usage in the book of *Daniel* is 8:17. Here it refers to the treading down of the sanctuary in the latter time of indignation during the time of the Grecian Empire (probably referring to the desecration of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes) and before the Roman rule. (Cf. 8:13-14, 19-21, 23)
2. The usage of "seventy weeks." (*Dan.* 9:24-27)
 - a. The vision concerns the Jews and the holy city (Jerusalem). (*vs.* 24-25)
 - b. The results of the vision. (*ver.* 24)
 - c. The events to take place in the seventieth week. (*vs.* 26-27)
 - 1) "The anointed one cut off." (The death of Christ - *cf.* *Isa.* 53:8)
 - 2) "The city and the sanctuary destroyed." (A full end this time.)
 - 3) A new covenant established and Old Testament ritual abolished.

NOTE: "The abomination that makes desolate"; "the end thereof shall be with a flood"; "even unto the end"; "even unto a full end."
 - d. Time will not be used in this study to try and determine the exact chronological fulfillment of the seventy weeks.
3. When shall the time of the end come?
 - a. In *chapters 10 and 11*, there is additional history concerning the Persian and Grecian Empires with notations showing that the time of the end is not yet come. (*Cf.* 11: 27, 35)
 - b. 11:40 is understood by this writer to be the end of the rule of the Ptolemy Kingdom, with the king of the north referring to the Roman Empire.
 - c. 12:1 is during the time of the Roman rule over the Jewish nation. Keep in mind that

the vision has to do with the things that would happen to Daniel's people (Jews) in the latter days.

- 1) Explicit is the climax of the TIME OF THE END in chapter 12.
- 2) "...at that time..." (*vs. 1-3*) (*Cf. Matt. 24:21, 31; Mark 13:19*)
- 3) The time is not yet. (*ver. 4*)
- 4) How long shall it be to the end of these wonders in *vs. 1-3*? *Ver. 7* - "...when they have made an end of breaking in pieces the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished."
- 5) The important question is: "When was the power of the holy people (the Jewish nation) broken into peices?" (*Cf. Matt. 24:15*)

d. Conclusion.

- 1) Notice Daniel's last question. (*ver. 8*)
- 2) The answer that was given him. (*vs. 9-13*)
- 3) Give special attention to *ver. 10*. (*Cf. Matt. 24:15*)
- 4) With this abbreviated background, we are ready to study the New Testament concerning the time of the end which would not come in Daniel's time.

B. THE TIME OF THE END AS REVEALED BY JESUS CHRIST.
(*Matt. 23:29 - 24:51; Mark 13:1ff; Luke 17:22-37; 21:5-36*)

1. Consider first of all two key statements spoken by Jesus.
 - a. "...and then shall the end come." (*Matt. 24:14*)
 - b. "...when therefore ye see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet." (*Matt. 24:15*)

2. In our study of *Matt. 24, Mark 13 and Luke 17 & 21*, we will begin with Luke's account. The reason for studying Luke's parallel account first:

- a. He traces things and records them in their order. (*Luke 1:1-3*)
- b. His writings are from the Gentile point of view unto a Gentile.
- c. We, being Gentiles, will better understand hearing from *Luke* first of all.

3. Exposition of *Luke 21:5-36*.

- a. The disciples of Christ call His attention to the temple and He prophesies of its forth coming destruction. (*vs. 5-6 cf. 19:41-44*)
- b. The disciples ask Him two questions concerning His prophecy. (*ver. 7*)
 - 1) A time question. "When shall these things be?"
 - 2) A sign question. "What shall be the sign when these things are about to come to pass?"
- c. Jesus answers the sign question first.
 - 1) What it is not. (*vs. 8-19*)
 - a) False Christs. (*ver. 8*)
 - b) Wars and rumors of wars. (*ver. 9*)
 - c) National conflict. (*ver. 10*)
 - d) Natural disasters. (*ver. 11*)
 - e) Persecution. (*vs. 12-19*)
 - 2) What it is. (*ver. 20-36*)
 - a) Jerusalem surrounded and beseiged by armies. (*vs. 20-24*) Notice "...when you see..." answers the sign question.

- (1) Why are these things happening? To fulfill prophecy. (vs. 21-22)
 - (2) Who are these things happening to? The Jews. Remember the words of *Daniel* 12:7-8; 9:24.
- b) Jesus uses prophetic language to describe this physical judgment upon Jerusalem. (vs. 25-28 cf. *Isa.* 34:1-7; *Joel* 2) When judgments come, they come from God. (Cf. *Dan.* 4) God wants Jerusalem destroyed. When this destruction comes, it will be the salvation of the faithful Jew. (ver. 28) "Lift up, look up."
- c) The parable of the fig tree and the sign it helps to explain. (vs. 29-33)
- (1) From nature we learn to interpret the different seasons of the year.
 - (2) "These things" in ver. 31, refer to armies surrounding the city of Jerusalem.
 - (3) The power of God is demonstrated in the Roman army, i.e. "the kingdom of God is nigh." (ver. 31)
- d) This prophesied judgment upon the city and people of Jerusalem would take place within the generation of people to whom He spoke about 40 years later. This generation is a general answer to the time question.
- e) That this coming judgment is certain is seen in vs. 32-33.
- f. Knowing then that the judgment is surely coming there is then an admonition to "WATCH." Watch for what? The second coming of Christ or the Roman armies? (Cf. ver. 20; ver. 34-36)
- g. Summary of *Luke* 21.

- 1) Two questions. (*vs.* 5-7)
- 2) What the sign is not. (*vs.* 8-19)
- 3) What the sign is, and this settles the sign question. (*vs.* 20-24)
- 4) What the time is, and this settles the time question. (*vs.* 25-33) (In this generation.)
- 5) Warning to watch for the sign. (*vs.* 35-36)
- 6) When the Jewish temple fell, it was judgment upon every Jew, because there was no fellowship with God without the temple. However, today, all Jews may have fellowship with God in His church.

4. Comments on *Mark* 13.

- a. Look at *Mark* 12:41-44 and it will be obvious that it is the same context as that of *Luke* 21. Jesus is on the Mt. of Olivet, a very short distance from the temple, when He begins to answer the questions concerning the destruction of the temple. (*ver.* 3)
- b. The only real difference between *Mark's* and *Luke's* account.
 - 1) *Mark* adds "And the gospel must first be preached unto all the nations." (*ver.* 10)
 - 2) The armies of *Luke* 21:20, are described in *Mark* 13:14, as the "abomination of desolation."
 - 3) *Mark* adds that one cannot know the day nor the hour when this destruction will come. (*ver.* 32)
- c. Summary of *Mark*.
 - 1) Two questions. (*vs.* 1-4)
 - 2) What the sign is not. (*vs.* 5-13)
 - 3) The time questioned is settled. (*vs.* 14-23)

- 4) The time question is settled generically and specifically. (*vs.* 24-32)
- 5) Admonition to watch for the sign. (*vs.* 33-37)

5. Exposition of *Matthew* 24.

a. The discussion actually begins in 23:29ff.

- 1) The iniquity of the Jewish leaders is overflowing and judgment is certain. (23:29-32)
- 2) When? (*ver.* 36)
- 3) Who? (*ver.* 37)
- 4) Jesus the Lord will come as the judge. (23:39)

b. The destruction of the temple foretold. (24:1-2)

c. The disciples question. (*ver.* 3)

- 1) "When shall these things be?"
- 2) "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and the end of the world?" (The end of the world means the CONSUMATION OF THE AGE!)

NOTE: Those who attempt to justify their position on the SECOND COMING of Christ from this section of scripture, say that the disciples asked three questions instead of two. The consumation of the age being the third question.

- a) If so, why did *Mark* and *Luke* omit such an important issue, especially when writing to the Gentiles.
- b) If so, why did *Matthew*, writing to the Jewish mind, bring up this subject to them who did not even believe in the first coming of Christ, much less His SECOND COMING????????

c) Notice that the question concerning a sign is singular, not plural.
"WHAT IS THE SIGN OF THY COMING?"

(1) Jesus gave only one answer to the sign question.

(2) It is important to note that if two answers are involved in the singular sign both "HIS COMING AND THE END OF THE WORLD HAPPENED AT THE SAME TIME!!!!!"

d. What the sign is not. (*vs. 4-14*) The same as in *Luke and Mark* with but little variation.

1) Notice that the gospel must be preached unto all nations before the fulfillment of the destruction of the Jewish temple. (*ver. 14*) It was! (*Col. 1:23*)

2) "THEN SHALL THE END COME." (*ver. 14*) It did in A.D. 70 when Titus, the Roman general, brought his armies and laid seige to the city of Jerusalem and destroyed it and the temple.

e. What the sign is. (*vs. 15-28*)

1) "When ye see (a sign is something you can see) THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION ..." (Note that it is standing in the holy place.) (*ver. 15*) *Luke* says "where he ought not." This was spoken through Daniel the prophet. (*Cf. Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11*)

2) Those who believe and understand the sign will obey the commands of Jesus and flee to safety. Those who do not will seek safety in the walled city and their own physical defenses and will lose their lives. (*vs. 16-22*)

3) There will be false prophets and Christs at this time also who are not to be listened to. (*vs. 24-26*)

4) The Lord will come and He will be seen in THE SIGN, i.e. the defeating army. The nation will be dead, signified by the vultures and dead carcasses. (*vs. 27-28*)

- f. "But immediately after the tribulation of those days..." (*vs. 29-31*)
- 1) After the seige of the city, then would the destruction come. (*ver. 29*)
- NOTE:* The Old Testament language descriptive of judgment. (*Cf. Isa. 13:6-13; Zeph. 1*)
- 2) "...and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven..." (*Cf. Matt. 26:64*)
 - a) The sign of His coming is Jerusalem compassed about with armies.
 - b) All the tribes of Israel will mourn.
 - c) The reason being that the holy city and the beloved temple have been destroyed.
 - 3) The elect gathered at this time. (*vs. 31, 33 cf. Isa. 63:1-6*)
- g. The parable of the fig tree. (*vs. 32-35*)
- 1) Notice that "all these things" shall take place in that generation. (*ver. 34*)
 - 2) The sign in all three accounts which we have observed (*Matt., Mark and Luke*), had to do with the city of Jerusalem and the temple.
 - 3) Could this possibly have anything to do with His second coming???? No!
- h. The time question is answered in *ver. 36*.
- i. Watchfulness is urged with an admonition given to remember the days of Noah. (*Vs. 37-51*)
- 1) Notice that as in the days of Noah "SO SHALL IT BE IN THE DAYS OF THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN." (*ver. 37*) How was it in Noah's days?
 - 2) "They" (the wicked) are contrasted with Noah. THEY are the ones taken away by

the flood. If this is applied to the second coming of Christ, we would have the wicked ones being taken and the righteous ones being left behind. (Cf. 1 Thess. 4:13-18)

- 3) The majority of the Jews will not heed the warning of the sign, just like it was in the days of Noah. They will bear the fruit of their unbelief - destruction.
 - 4) Therefore, the admonition to watch and not be slothful. (vs. 45-51) Watch for what? His second coming? No, the army of desolation, that they might flee to safety!
- j. Summary of *Matt. 24*.
- 1) Two questions. (vs. 1-4)
 - 2) What the sign is not. (vs. 5-14)
 - 3) What the sign is, settles the sign question. (vs. 15-28)
 - 4) When is the time, settles the time question. (vs. 29-44)
 - 5) Watch for the sign. (vs. 45-51)

NOTE: The harmony of the exegesis indicates its truthfulness!

C. A PARALLEL OF MATTHEW 24:1-51 WITH LUKE 17:22-37.

1. The traditional interpretation of *Matt. 24*.
 - a. Destruction of Jerusalem. (vs. 1-34)
 - b. Second coming of Christ. (vs. 35-51)
2. A parallel study will show the incorrectness of the above position.
3. In *Matt. 24:1-51* the letter "A" will be used to identify the destruction of Jerusalem section (vs. 1-34), and "B" will represent the assumed second coming of Christ. (vs. 35-51)

Luke 17:22-25 parallels with *Matt. 24:27* = "A"
Luke 17:26-30 parallels with *Matt. 24:37-39* = "B"
Luke 17:31-33 parallels with *Matt. 24:17-18* = "A"
Luke 17:34-36 parallels with *Matt. 24:40-42* = "B"
Luke 17:37 parallels with *Matt. 24:28* = "A"

4. Notice that in Luke's account, we find things that are supposed to belong to the second coming from Matthew's account. Did Luke make a mistake? Did Matthew? Is all of *Matt. 24* discussing the second coming of Christ or the destruction of Jerusalem? Logically and scripturally, in this writer's mind, it cannot be both. The destruction of Jerusalem is the discussion.

IV. CONCLUSION.

- A. The Time Of The End Was A Very Significant Prophecy To The Jewish Nation, For In Its Fulfillment Would Be The Destruction Of The Nation Of Israel As God's Chosen People. The Destruction Of The Temple Would End The Old Testament Sacrificial System And In Reality The Aaronic Priesthood.
- B. In Our Next Lesson We Will Discuss The Question, "WHEN SHALL CHRIST RETURN?" This, To Us, Is Just As Significant As Was The Time Of The End To The Jews.
- C. May You Be Encouraged To Be Waiting And Watching For The Day When Our Lord Shall Come In Judgment, Which Will Be To The Present Nations What The TIME OF THE END Was To The Jewish Nation, Destruction And Salvation.