

144. Jesus Tells About the End (Matthew 24:1-35)

Prayer: Dear Lord, we often have so many questions and no answers. Sometimes we wonder about the end of the world and how that will happen. Help us today to study and learn what You want us to know. Help us to understand that You don't want us to know everything, but You want us to trust that You will continue taking care of us. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.

Matthew 24:1-3. Jesus left the temple. His disciples came and told Him about the beautiful buildings. Jesus asked, "You see the buildings? I tell you the truth, every building will get destroyed. Not one stone will be on another stone." Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives. The disciples came and asked, "When will this happen? How will we know when You are coming and the world will end?"

- What impressed the disciples? Was Jesus impressed?

Matthew 24:4-8. Jesus said, "Make sure no one fools you. Many people will name themselves 'Christ.' They will fool many people. You will hear about wars and rumors about wars. But don't become afraid. Those things must happen, but the end is still coming. Nations will fight, and kingdoms will fight. Famines and earthquakes will happen in different places. Those are the 'birth pains,' the beginning of the end."

- Jesus named four things (or five, depending on how you count) that will happen before the end. What are they?
- When do those things happen? Have they happened in the past? Now? Will they happen in the future? What point is Jesus making?

Matthew 24:9-14. Jesus said, "People will arrest you, persecute and kill you. All nations will hate you because you follow Me. At that time, many people will stop believing. They will betray and hate each other. Many false prophets will come and fool people. Evil actions will increase. People will stop loving. But the person who continues strong until the end is saved. This good news about God's kingdom will get preached to all the world. Then the end will happen."

- What bad things will happen before the end of the world? Do these things happen now?
- What good things will happen before the end of the world? Do these things happen now?

Matthew 24:15-22. Jesus said, “You will see what the prophet Daniel told about, the terrible thing that causes destruction, you will see that in a holy place. Understand carefully! When you see that, escape to the hills. If you are on the roof, don’t go into your house and get your things. If you are in the field, don’t go back to get your coat. That time will be terrible for pregnant women, or women nursing babies. Pray that day doesn’t happen during winter or on a Sabbath rest day. That time will be full of much trouble. Since the beginning of the world, the world has not seen that much trouble, and will never again see that much trouble. Unless that time was short, no one would continue saved. But God has mercy on His chosen people, and that terrible time will be short.”

- Some people have different interpretations about what Daniel was talking about. Basically, it is a terrible thing in God’s house that shames God and His church. When that happens, how bad will it be?
- Why will God make that time of trouble short?

Matthew 24:23-28. Jesus said, “Suppose someone tells you, ‘Look! Here is the Christ!’ or ‘There He is!’ Don’t believe that, because many false christs and false prophets will come. They will do great miracles and amazing things. If possible, they would also fool God’s chosen people. I told you these things before they happen. When someone tells you, ‘The Christ is in the desert,’ don’t go there. Or if someone says, ‘The Christ is here, inside these rooms,’ don’t believe them. Lightning in the East shines all the way to the West. The Son of Man coming will be like that. The place there is a dead body, the vultures will gather there.”

- Jesus said people will come and name themselves “Christ,” or the Savior. They will fool many people. Can they really fool a true believer in Jesus?

- Some people say Christ will come secretly. Only a few people will know about it. What did Jesus say about His coming?

Matthew 24:29-31. Jesus said, “After those painful days, the sun will become dark. The moon will not shine. The stars will fall. Everything in the sky will shake. At that time, the Son of Man will appear in the sky. All the nations on earth will mourn. They will all see the Son of Man coming on clouds with power and great glory. His loud trumpet will send His angels. They will gather His chosen people from all the earth.”

- When Jesus comes again, what will end? Will only people’s lives end? Or will the whole universe end?
- “All the nations” means people who don’t believe in Jesus. What will they do when they see Jesus coming? What will happen to God’s chosen people?

Matthew 24:32-35. Jesus said, “Learn from the fig tree. When the branches are soft and the leaves begin growing, you know summer is near. The same, when you see these things happening, you know the end is near. I tell you the truth, this generation will not die until all these things happened. Heaven and earth will disappear, but My words will never disappear.”

- How do you know when spring is here? What things happen outside during spring? How will you know when Jesus is coming? What things will happen?
- How faithful is Jesus to do what He says? If He says He will come back, can we trust that He will come?