

OUR LORD'S GREAT PROHECY

AN INTRODUCTION

MATT. 24; MARK 13; LUKE 21:5-36; 17:20-37

BACKGROUND

Destruction of the temple

Matt 24:1 Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple.

2 And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down." NKJV

The background of this Great Prophecy is the destruction of the Jewish Temple.

THREE QUESTION

Matt 24:3 And when he is sitting on the mount of the Olives, the disciples came near to him by himself, saying, 'Tell us, when shall these be? and what is the sign of thy presence, and of the full end of the age?' YLT

Jesus answers all three questions.

1) when shall these be?

In other words, when will the Temple be destroyed? One application relates to the destruction of the Jewish Temple by the Roman armies]

In parts of the Lord's Great Prophecy, there are two applications, one that applies to the Jewish Harvest and the deeper meaning

that applies to the Gospel Harvest. The Luke account has a more direct focus on the Jewish Harvest, which ended with the destruction of the literal temple. More on that later...

2) what is the sign of thy presence? [Parousia]

Although Jesus provides a number of signs of his return in this Great Prophecy, he most directly answers this question in ...

Matt 24: 30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven... NKJV

We suggest that this SIGN has two applications:

- 1) Meat in Due Season - Epiphania / The sign for the Church - The resulting mourning of the tribes of the earth had its beginning with World War 1, which began with the ending of the Times of the Gentiles as taught world wide by Pastor Russell through this meat in due season.
- 2) The Revealment - Apocalypse / The Sign for the World - When Jesus Second Presence is revealed to the World of Mankind through the miraculous deliverance of Israel as delineated in Ezekiel 38 & 39.

Due to time limitations, the supporting detail for this discussion will have to wait till Part 2 of this discourse.

3) [sign of] and of the full end of the age? [Harvest is the end of the Age - Matt 13]

In the next verses Jesus provides many signs covering a brief history of the Gospel Age, to let his disciples know that it will be a long time before he returns. If there is one major sign of the end of the age it is in verse 15 which speaks of seeing the "abomination of desolation... standing in the holy place." More on this later...

Let's now review the detail of how Jesus answers this question #3 regarding the sign or signs of the end of the age.

FALSE CHRIST'S

Matt 24: 4 "And Jesus answering said to them, `Take heed that no one may lead you astray, 5 for many shall come in my name, saying, I am the Christ, and they shall lead many astray," YLT

1 John 2: 18 - "Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour." NKJV

Who was it throughout the history of the Gospel Age that said, "I am the Christ." Was it not that great Papal System?

2 Thess 2:3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. NKJV

This "Man of Sin" sits in God's temple, claiming to be God. The "Man of Sin" chapter in Volume 2 documents these claims. Verse 3 shows that there would be a falling away in the Church and that this Anti-Christ system would rise up and be revealed before Christ returns.

Rev 13: 4 ... they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"

5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. NKJV

The Papacy is the Beast of Revelation 13. In harmony with the doctrine of the Trinity, this system is the counterfeit God and Christ at the same time. There have been many false Christ's in that system since over the centuries they have had many Popes. The 42 months spoken of in Rev 13:5 are the 1260 prophetic days or literal years in which the Papacy exercised civil power from 539 AD to 1799 AD.

WARS AND RUMORS OF WARS

Matt 24:6 "You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end.

7 "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.

8 "But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs." NAS

Throughout the Gospel Age, there have been at least dozens of major wars in Europe including

- ~600-793 [Frisian-Frankish Wars](#)

These wars were mainly about control of the Rhine delta.

- 1209-1229 [Albigensian Crusade](#)

This was a 20-year military campaign initiated by the Roman Catholic Church to eliminate the Cathar heresy in Languedoc.

- 1296-1357 [Wars of Scottish Independence](#)
- 1337-1453 [Hundred Years' War](#)
- 1568–1648 [Eighty Years' War](#)
- 1652-1674 [Anglo-Dutch Wars](#)
- 1701–1713 [War of the Spanish Succession](#)
- 1740–1748 [War of the Austrian Succession](#)

and on... and on

Verse 6 indicates that "the end is not yet." More is yet to happen.

FAMINES

Matt 24:7 "... in various places there will be famines and earthquakes." KJV

Amos 8:11 "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord GOD, "When I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, But rather for hearing the words of the LORD." NAS95

The 1260 years of Papal supremacy. Began 539 AD, when ecclesiastical power attained persecuting ability, and ended 1799 AD, as its persecutions came to an end.

This FAMINE is typified by the 3 1/2-year drought in the days of Elijah. (1Kings 18,19) and is also prophetically shown in ...

*Rev 12; 5 She [the True Church] bore a male Child [the Papacy or Antichrist system] who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child [Papacy] was caught up to God and His throne. [the counterfeit God and Throne of Papal authority]
6 Then the woman [True Church] fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days. NKJV*

Even under these famine conditions, the True Church (like Elijah) would be fed sufficient morsels to spiritually survive the drought.

We find more on this famine in....

***Rev 6:5** When He broke the **third seal**, I heard the third living creature saying, "Come." I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. NAS95*

Pergamos = (312 - 800 AD)

"Pair of balances in his hand" - Signifies a rationing by weight.

The Anti-Christ is now in the position to ration out truth. During this period the Mass is set up and there is a growing starvation for truth.

***Rev 6:6** And I heard something like a voice in the center of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not damage the oil and the wine." NAS95*

"A quart of wheat for a denarius": A denarius was a days wages, which under normal conditions could purchase 8 quarts of wheat; but under these famine like conditions, the Truth could only be found with great effort.

"three quarts of barley for a denarius" showed that milkier or inferior Truths, though costly, were more easily obtained.

Yet even so, the oil and wine were not to be damaged, meaning that the Holy Spirit and Truth would be preserved, even though True Church were only to receive small morsels as Elijah was fed from the ravens.

***Rev 6:7** And when he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, Come.*

8 And I saw, and behold, a pale horse: and he that sat upon him, his name was Death; and Hades followed with him. And there was given unto them authority over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the wild beasts of the earth. ASV

Thyatira = (800 - 1371 AD)

fourth part of earth = continent of Europe - Grecian empire divided into four sections

Sword = error (counterfeit truth)

Death = excommunication - when a person was excommunicated,

Famine = Famine for the Truth / word of God - spiritual starvation

"with the beasts of the earth" - in consort with the earth's governments.

EARTHQUAKES (REVOLUTIONS)

[Matt 24:7](#) "... there will be famines and [earthquakes](#)."

We counted over 100 revolutions occurring during the Gospel Age up till the time of Jesus return in 1874 AD.

AD 66–70: The **Great Jewish Revolt**, the first of three Jewish-Roman wars that took place in Judaea against the Roman Empire.

The **Bar Kokhba revolt** (132–136) against the Roman Empire was the third major rebellion by the Jews of Judaea and the last of the Jewish-Roman Wars. Simon bar Kokhba, the commander of the revolt, was acclaimed as a Messiah, a heroic figure who could restore Israel. The revolt established a Jewish state over parts of Judea for over two years, but a Roman army of 12 legions with auxiliaries finally crushed it. The Romans then barred Jews from Jerusalem.

Jewish Christians hailed Jesus as the Messiah and did not support Bar Kokhba. The war and its aftermath helped differentiate Christianity as a religion distinct from Judaism

- * Protestant Reformation (16th and 17th centuries)
- * the American Revolution (1776 - 1783)
- * the French Revolution (1789–1799)
- * the Russian Revolution of 1917

Then verse 8 indicates that this is all the beginning of labor pains. In other words, a lot would have to happen before we would reach the end of the Age, the Gospel Harvest.

PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH

Matt 24: 9 *"Then they will deliver you to **tribulation**, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name.*

10 *"At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another.*

11 *"Many **false prophets** will arise and will mislead many.*

12 *"Because **lawlessness** is increased, most people's love will grow cold.*

13 *"But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved. NAS95*

This is a time of the persecution and martyrdom of many of the Saints throughout the Gospel Age and particularly during the Dark Ages. Even friends and families would turn against each other in their loyalty to Babylon.

"lawlessness" = not following God's Laws. Following man's Traditions

Hell, Trinity, Immortality of the Soul, the Mass the sacraments, etc. These errors of the denominations can be considered "lawlessness" since they go against the teachings of the Bible.

False Prophets are the Protestant Church Systems, at first reforming the errors of the Catholic Church, then later imitating the errors of their Mother Church, Babylon, the mother of Harlots.

In Rev 13:15 they are described as the "image of the beast" and in Re 16:13 they are called "the false prophet."

GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM

Matt 24:14 *"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come. NASV95*

Verse 14 does not say world will be converted before the end comes, but that the gospel will be preached as a witness or testimony.

It does not say the Gospel will be preached to each individual, but to all the nations.

In 1861 the reports of the Bible Societies showed that the Gospel had been published in every language of earth... and verse 14 closes with "then the end will come."

ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

Matt 24:15 *"Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), NASV95*

Dan 12:9 - *And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.*

10 *"Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.*

11 *"And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. NKJV*

539 AD to 1829 AD = 1290 prophetic days = 1290 literal years
= from setting up to the Mass to the start of the Miller Movement, when the "wise" would for the first time begin to "understand" the prophecies of Daniel. The understanding of the 1260 days at this time help to clearly identify the Papacy as the Anti-Christ System

Dan 9:27: *Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate." (NKJ)*

D572:2 - *"Looking back we see in this another parallelism between the end of the Jewish harvest and the end of the Gospel harvest. Fleshly Israel's rejection of the true sacrifice for sins, and their retention of the typical sacrifices which were no longer acceptable to God, but abominations, was an important incident in connection with their national and ecclesiastical fall. So here, the rejection of the doctrine of the ransom and*

the acceptance of either masses or good works or penances instead, is abomination in God's sight and is an important incident in connection with the fall of Christendom, civil and ecclesiastical."

The identification of the masses, good works or penances as replacing the Ransom is the "Abomination of Desolation" that the Lord's people see when they flee Babylon.

In its parallel application to the Jewish Harvest, Jesus is indirectly answering the question regarding the destruction of the Temple, which with its typical sacrifices was an Abomination to God since the Jews had rejected Jesus, the true antitypical sacrifice.

Jesus indirectly completes the answer regarding the destruction of the temple in the Luke account.

The Trouble in the End of the Jewish Age

Luke's account of the trouble upon fleshly Israel which culminated A.D. 70, is the clearest...

Luke 21:20 *"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its **desolation** is near.*

21 "Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her.

22 "For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

23 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people.

24 "And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."
Luke 21:20-24 NKJV

[D570] "This portion of our Lord's prophecy evidently related to events upon fleshly Israel; and history tells us that it was accurately fulfilled in every particular in the troublous scenes wherewith the Jewish age and polity came to an end. "These be the days of vengeance upon this nation, that all things written in the law and the prophets concerning them might be fulfilled."

But our Lord's words quoted by Matthew and Mark differ from the foregoing, and evidently apply to the trouble upon spiritual Israel in the end of the Gospel age..."

Certainly when the Roman Armies attacked Jerusalem it would have been safer to flee to the mountains to hide and it would have been awful for pregnant and nursing women.

But let's jump back to the Matthew account where Jesus is not talking about the literal troubles during the Jewish Harvest, but He is discussing the more important parallel applications in the Gospel Harvest.

NOMINAL SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

Matt 24:16 *then those who are in **Judea** must flee to the **mountains**.* NASV95

Judea = Christendom or Babylon

Psa 125: 2 *Jerusalem! mountains are round about her, And Jehovah is round about His people....* YLT

Mountains = Is being close to God in heart and mind with an elevated spiritual understanding. God's Kingdom which is

represented on earth through his saints associated together and feasting on meat in due season.

[Matt 24:17](#) *"Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house. NASV95*

"housetop" -- Those on the housetop have figuratively risen above their nominal denomination into a justified faith relationship with Jesus Christ.

"not go down to get the things out" -- Once we have left, we are not to go back into the nominal church for its Titles, dignities, respect, flatteries and commendations.

[Matt 24:18](#) *"Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. NASV95*

"In the field" -- In the world, not a nominal church member.

"turn back" -- Join the nominal church.

"to get his cloak" -- to receive earthly praise, honors and flatteries.

[Matt 24:19](#) *"But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! NASV95*

In Galatians 4, notice how the Apostle Paul describes his interest in gospel work as that of a mother travailing with child. He says,

[Gal 4:19](#) *"My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you," NKJV*

Similarly all faithful servants of Christ are such as are described in this text as being "with child." Spiritual child-bearing after the apostolic example is a most honorable service, and engages the attention of some of God's most devoted children.

However, milk is used to nurse babies and the milk of the word mixed in with the errors of Babylon is not the right formula to produce spiritual growth and maturity. So the Lord's people are admonished to leave these systems to associate with and grow together with the true wheat.

APPLY TO 2ND ADVENT???

Some believe that these verses do not have a parallel application to the second Gospel Harvest, but that these only apply to the Jewish Harvest time frame. Yet we find similar references in Luke 17 which is a chapter strictly speaking about the manner of the Lord's 2nd Advent.

Luke 17:30 *"Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.
31 "In that day, he who is on the **housetop**, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the **field**, let him not turn back.*

So just as we read about the housetop and field in the Matthew account, as in Luke 17, they have an application to the time of Jesus second advent.

WINTER FLIGHT

[Matt 24:20](#) *"But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath."*
NASV95

When the summer time of Harvest ends, the Winter Time of Great Tribulation begins and culminates with the burning of the tares. Just before this Winter time begins, the door is shut and yet the Great Company remain.

[Jer 8:20](#) *"The harvest is past, the summer has ended, and we are not saved."* NKJV

This time is also called a Sabbath, because the Sabbath is a time of rest. Since the Church is complete and they have all "rested from their labors." Rev 14

[Rev 14:13](#) *Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: `Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."*

14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. NKJV

By the time this Winter time begins, the last members of the Church have already entered into their rest. After that the tare that have been bound in bundles will be burned.

Isa 66:7 *"Before she was in labor, she gave birth; Before her pain came, She delivered a male child. NASV*

Before her labor pains -- Before the nominal systems are destroyed (burning of chaff in winter time of trouble)

She delivered a man child -- The Christ, Head and Body.

Perhaps the final members of the Church will complete their course with a Final Elijah or John the Baptist message objecting to the illicit future cooperation between Church and State, reminding the people that it is Christ who will usher in his Kingdom, not the Nominal Church Systems.

Isa 67:8 *Who, hath heard the like of this? Who, hath seen the like of these things? Can, a land, be made to bring forth, in one day? Or, a nation, be born, at one time? As soon as she travaileth, Zion hath also given birth to her children. Rotherham*

"A Nation born at one time" is the Holy Nation, the Royal Priesthood.

When Babylon travails (winter time of trouble & burning of the chaff) her children are born, that is when the Great Company are delivered to their heavenly home.

Rachel died in giving birth to Benjamin (son of my pain); type of the Great Company.

Nominal Zion will die in her labor pains, and. in dying, bring forth the Great Company.

Of the Great Company we are told in:

Rev 7: 14 ..."These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. NKJV

Perhaps the Great Company will give an Elisha message, warning the Nominal Systems and Nations not to go against Israel to battle. Through this message they will receive great persecution and through this winter time of trouble be delivered to their heavenly reward.

GREAT TRIBULATION

***Matt 24:21** "For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.*

22 "Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. NASV95

The Tribulation of the Gospel Age prior to 1874 cannot be compared with our modern world, since technology amplifies the dangers and delivers on a Global scale.

Never in history before the development of the atomic bomb have we lived a time where all live on earth could be wiped out through the use of weapons of mass destruction.

Never before the twentieth century were there ever world wars.

Let me share some statistics brethren.

In twentieth century: Wars have produced at least 150 million deaths, including civilian casualties and genocide

over 50 million died from famine

over 22 million died from aids

In 2003, National Geographic said that "At least 35 million people in the world...have been forced to run for their lives, and are either temporarily or permanently exiled from their homes. Half of them are women and children."

In the Asian, African and Latin American countries, well over 500 million people are living in what the World Bank has called "absolute poverty"

Nearly one in four people, 1.3 billion live on less than \$1 per day

3 billion people in the world today struggle to survive on \$2/day.

US Debt has grown from 1 trillion in 1980 to nearly 12 trillion today.

In 1998, Illegal drug trafficking was 8% of total international trade and The **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime** estimated that around 4% of the world's adults use illegal drugs in a year.

No doubt, the troubles will only get worse until the present heavens and earth (society and governments) pass away and are replaced by the kingdom of blessing.

But we are assured in verse 22, that God will "cut short" the days and prevent the annihilation of humanity.

Daniel 12:1-4 ties this Great Tribulation with deliverance of Israel and the increase in knowledge and travel. These signs affirm to us that we have in fact been living in this Great Time of Trouble since Michael stood up in 1874.

DECEIVE THE ELECT?

Matt 24:23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it.

24 "For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect." NKJV

As before in verses 5 & 11, the false christs and false prophets are that great Anti-Christ system and the protestant churches. This verse let's us know that at the time of Jesus second presence, these systems still exist and are still attempting to deceive the elect. And brethren, many have been deceived. For these systems show great signs and wonders. They have great TV and radio programs reaching millions. They influence politics for family values. They promote social programs to help the homeless and the drug addicted. They promote a pro-life platform. They try to help to eliminate world hunger.

And many have been deceived by this. They look at Bible Students and ask the question, what are you doing to make the

world a better place? Why aren't you doing these great works too?

Brethren, the answer is that we are doing the Lord's will. The Apostles and the Early Church never engaged in programs to fix the world's problems. They understood that this world is passing away and that their time would come under the government of the New Heavens and New Earth wherein dwells righteousness. According to the scriptures, the true Church has had two basic missions:

- 1) to preach the Gospel
- 2) to be a part of the body of Christ and to edify and build up the other members

Everything we do falls under those two categories.

We are all troubled by the problems and evil in the world and in our hearts we want to do something about it today. It's hard for us to hold back and not take action. So why do we hold back. Why don't we run for political office to make the world better. Why don't we participate in social programs to make the world a better place?

Why did not Jesus and the Apostles engage in these efforts.

As Jesus said, "not my will, but thine be done"

God has a plan. He has a program. We are not to run ahead of him and to do our own thing. We are to submit to Him, to be obedient and to do things his way. And in due time, the new Kings and Priests will finally solve the worlds many problems under the government of the New Heavens and New Earth.