



The Life of Jesus (82)

The Signs of The Last Day

Matthew 24:1-14



#1 Jesus' Prophecy about the Destruction of the Temple

One day, Jesus left the temple, heading somewhere. Then, His disciples came to Him and called His attention to the temple's building.

“Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings” (Mt 24:1)

The disciples were likely amazed by the beauty and magnificence of the appearance of the temple and wanted to share their feeling with Jesus.

There had been three temples in Jerusalem.

The first temple was designed by King David and constructed by his son, King Solomon, during his reign. It was completed in 957 B.C.



It was very beautiful but it was eventually destroyed by the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, during the captivity era around 586 B.C..

#2 Jesus' Prophecy about the Destruction of the Temple

During the return era, a Persian king named Cyrus issued an order allowing Jews in his land to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple.

So, many Jews returned to Jerusalem under the authority of an appointed governor named Zerubbabel and started to rebuild the temple. The second temple was completed around 520 B.C. and it's also called Zerubbabel's temple.

This second temple was unattractive compared to the first temple built by Solomon because there were not many resources they could use to rebuild it.

After 500 years, the temple was rebuilt and expanded by Herod the Great, who was the king of Judea. Herod did it to gain the Jews' favor and he did a great job. Construction began in 20 B.C. and lasted 46 years.

During this period the Temple was raised, enlarged, and faced with white stone. This third temple is called the Herodian Temple.



#3 Jesus' Prophecy about the Destruction of the Temple

This was the temple that the disciples saw. It had been completed only a few years before. The building looked great in their eyes. So they tried to call Jesus' attention to the buildings of the temple.

But what Jesus saw was completely different. He didn't see the outward beauty of the temple, but what would happen to it soon.

“Do you see all these things? Truly I tell you, **not one stone here will be left on another**; every one will be thrown down” (Mt 24:2)

This answer likely surprised the disciples. So they asked Jesus,

“Tell us. When will this happen, and **what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?**” (Mt 24:3)

#4 Jesus' Prophecy about the Destruction of the Temple

Here, the disciples asked Jesus two questions. The first question was about when the temple would be destroyed. And the second question was about the signs of Jesus' return and the end of the age.

They understood the destruction of the temple as the end of the world. And they also knew that Jesus would come back on the last day.

However, that doesn't necessarily mean that the destruction of the temple and Jesus' return at the end of the age would happen at the same time.

The destruction of the temple already occurred in A.D. 70 when the Roman general Titus destroyed both Jerusalem and the temple in it during the first Jewish-Roman war, also known as the Great Jewish Revolt. But, Jesus' return to the world at the end of the age hasn't yet happened.

Jesus was talking about the destruction of the temple and the signs of the end of the age at the same time even though they would happen separately. We call this point of view a “**double fulfillment.**”

#5 A Christian Worldview

A worldview can be defined as ‘the conceptual lens through which we see, understand, and interpret the world.’

A worldview is like a window through which we see the world. And it's very important to have the right worldview because it has significant impacts on our lives.



A worldview tries to answer fundamental questions about the beginning of the world, the purpose of human life, the problem of the world we face now, and the end of the world. And only the Bible gives clear answers to all those questions.

The Bible says that the world was created by God. All human beings were created by God in His image out of His love in order to share that love with God, with others, and with other creatures. That's the purpose of life that the Bible explains.

#6 A Christian Worldview

But every relationship was broken when sin entered the world through disobedience. That's where all the problems we have in this world come from. Every problem is rooted in sin. That's the very problem Jesus came to the world to solve.

And the Bible also discusses how this world will come to an end when Jesus comes back. As Christians, we believe that the world we're living in now is temporary and that the eternal world will come when our King, Jesus, returns.

Those who really believe this as truth and whose lives are grounded on it, in other words, those who have the right biblical worldview, will live for the kingdom to come, not for the temporary worldly things they may have in this world.

So, we need to keep reading what Jesus says about the end of the age and its signs. That not only gives us the right point of view through which we interpret this world but also allows us to live in accordance with God's will for us.

#7 The Signs of the End of the Age

Then, what are some signs that Jesus mentioned?

“Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Messiah,’ and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains” (Mt 24:4-8)

These are the signs that Jesus taught would happen before the end of the world comes. And we see all these right now. When we see all these things happening, we may be terrified by them. Wars and natural disasters may produce an atmosphere of the end of the age. But what we must keep in mind is that these are only ‘signs.’ They themselves don’t represent the end. So we shouldn’t be surprised or terrified when we see those signs.

#8 The Signs of the End of the Age

The signs are not irrelevant to the end of the world. In fact, we'll continue to see those signs before the end comes just as mothers continue to suffer from birth pains until they give birth.

But we shouldn't be afraid of them because they also remind us of the truth that **we're getting closer to the day when Jesus comes back and makes everything new.** That's the perspective that the biblical worldview gives us.

Memory Verses

“You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come” (Mt 24:6)

Reflection Questions

- 1) Why do you think it's important to know about the signs of the end of the age as Christians? How do you think this knowledge is related to your life?
- 2) Where do you see the signs nowadays, and what do you feel when you see them happening?