

Jesus Answered Questions About the End of the Age – Part 1

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why Jesus warned the scribes and Pharisees of coming judgment because they refused to repent. We also saw that Jesus gave a wonderful promise about the love that God will show to Israel, in the future, when the people do repent and turn to Him. In this topic, we will see that Jesus answers some questions about the end of the age.

Jesus had just spoken to the multitudes and to His disciples, in the temple, about the judgment that was soon going to come on Jerusalem because the people continued in their rebellion against God. In Matthew 24:1-2, we read, “Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. 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.’” Jesus said, at the beginning of His ministry, in John 2:19-20, “Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ Then the Jews said, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?’” It was now about three years later, so they had been building the temple for about forty-nine years and the work was not yet completed. In fact, they were still working on the rebuilding when the temple was destroyed forty years later.

However, by the time of Jesus, the temple in Jerusalem was considered one of the most beautiful buildings in the world. The temple buildings were made of white marble. Luke 21:5-6 says, “Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said, ‘These things which you see—the days will come in which not *one* stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down.’” The marble stones were very large and beautiful. Some of the stones were forty feet by twelve feet by twelve feet. Then, these white marble stones were decorated with plaques, sculptures and other decorations of gold that added to the beauty. In fact, even Herod had donated a golden vine that had large clusters of golden grapes that were nearly six feet tall. The gold on the east wall reflected the morning sun so that the temple could be seen from a great distance in the morning.

The disciples pointed to the beauty of these buildings. That was why it probably came as a shock to His disciples when Jesus said that the buildings would be torn down so that there would not even be one of those large stones sitting on top of another. Over the next few minutes, Jesus and the disciples walked east across the Kidron Valley and up onto the Mount of Olives. From this point, they had a perfect view of the temple and the city of Jerusalem. Matthew 24:3-8 says, “Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?’ And Jesus answered and said to them: ‘Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, “I am the Christ,” and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For

nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.” Here, we see that the disciples asked Jesus three questions. They did not realize it, but only the first question talked about what Jesus had just said about the temple.

Their first question was, “Tell us, when will these things be?” This question was about the time when the temple and Jerusalem would be destroyed. However, the next two questions are about the time that is still to come. The first concern of Jesus was that the disciples would not be deceived. The things mentioned in verses four through six did happen and will continue to happen. Later, John wrote, in 1 John 2:26, “These things I have written to you concerning those who *try to* deceive you.” We see that John did not want other Christians to be deceived. Earlier, John had written, in 1 John 2:18-19, “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. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but *they went out* that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.” Here, we see that there were many antichrists during the first century of the church, just as there are today.

Jesus said that there would be many who would come claiming to be the Christ. The goal of false christis is always to deceive, because they are seeking followers for themselves. Jesus also warned the disciples that they would hear of wars and rumors of wars. Jesus told the disciples not to be troubled by these rumors. Jesus said it was necessary for these things to happen. In the time of the disciples, the Romans came and completely destroyed the city of Jerusalem. Jesus warned here that when these things happened, the end was not yet. Jesus went on to talk about things that would continue to happen until the time of the latter two questions that the disciples asked Jesus.

Nations continue to rise up against one another. Such wars will continue to increase as the time gets closer to the coming of Christ to rule on the earth. It is important to keep in mind that the Rapture is not the time when Jesus will come to rule. The Rapture will happen before the seven-year tribulation on the earth. Revelation 3:10 says, “Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.” 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 talks about the Rapture. Then, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4 says, “But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, ‘Peace and safety!’ then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.” The Day of the Lord begins with The Tribulation after the church is taken to heaven. The Second Coming of Christ to rule on the earth will happen after the seven-year tribulation. His Second Coming is mentioned in Revelation 19:11-21 at the end of The Tribulation. That is important to understand so that no one will deceive us.

We also see that there will be famines, pestilences and earthquakes in various places. These things are happening and will continue to happen. In fact, they will continue to increase as we get closer

to the time of the Rapture and The Tribulation that will follow. Jesus went on to say, in Matthew 24:9-14, “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.” The word translated “deliver you up” is a phrase meaning *to deliver for punishment*. This punishment will include suffering, death or both. This kind of punishment and death has happened ever since the church began, but it continues to increase as the world gets closer to the time when the Christians will be taken to heaven in the Rapture and The Tribulation begins.

Throughout the history of the church, there have been professing believers who have not had genuine faith. This will continue to be true of many people until the time Jesus takes the believers to heaven. These people will immediately be caused to stumble when they are not taken to heaven. 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12 says, “And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” These, along with many others, will turn against those who become followers of Christ during The Tribulation. In fact, the tribulation saints will be hated by all of the nations because they have made the decision to become followers of Jesus.

As the time for the return of Christ gets closer, there will also be many false prophets who will appear. Such false prophets are already deceiving many. 2 Timothy 3:1-5 describes both the false teachers and the people who they deceive. Those verses say, “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!” False prophets will increase even more once the Christians are taken to heaven.

The phrase translated “endures to the end” means *to remain or abide in Christ even as there becomes growing opposition to Christ and His followers*. True believers can know that they will be saved, even though they see many people already being deceived by false teachers. In fact, true believers will continue to share the Gospel as opposition increases. Jesus says here that the plan of God is for the Gospel to be preached in the all the world as a witness to all of the nations. Even when the Christians are taken out of the world, God will raise up two witnesses and later one hundred and forty-four thousand Jews who will become tribulation saints and will preach the Gospel as a witness to all nations. However, most of those who will become saints during The Tribulation will be killed for their faith before Christ returns to rule. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to clearly understand and explain these things to those who are not yet Christians. The Lord wants us to have a part in spreading the Gospel to all nations until the Rapture comes. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to share this message.