

## Jesus Answered Questions About the End of the Age – Part 2

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain what Christ taught His disciples about the end of the age. In the part that we will be studying today, we are going to see that Jesus explained to the disciples what will happen during The Tribulation, after the Christians are taken to heaven at the Rapture.

Christians will be taken to heaven in the Rapture before the antichrist is revealed. In 2 Thessalonians 2:7-9, we read, “For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains *will do so* until He is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders.” Here, we see that the mystery of lawlessness was already present at the time that the New Testament was written. The One who restrains the lawless one is the Holy Spirit who lives in each Christian. Here, we see that the Holy Spirit living in all Christians has to be taken out of the way before the lawless one can be revealed. As a result, the antichrist will not be revealed until the Christians are taken to heaven at the Rapture.

After that happens, Matthew 24:15-20 tells us what the antichrist will do once he has gained world power. Those verses say, “Therefore when you see the “abomination of desolation,” spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.” Here, we see that Daniel wrote about the future antichrist.

Daniel 9:26-27 says, “And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it *shall be* with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined. 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.” Here, we see that Daniel said that there would be seventy weeks of years until the Messiah would reign. Verses 24 and 25 said that after the seven weeks and sixty-two weeks (a total of sixty-nine weeks or four hundred and eighty-three years) the Messiah would be cut off. That was the very time Jesus was crucified. This promise, in Daniel, was why the Jews were looking for the Messiah to come; however, the multitudes did not understand that Jesus would be put to death. They expected Jesus to set up the kingdom immediately.

The church was not revealed in the Old Testament. It was first revealed when Jesus told the

disciples, in Matthew 16:18, “‘And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.’” However, once the church is taken to heaven, at the Rapture, this final week of years (seven years) can begin. Matthew 24:15 says that in the middle of this week the “abomination of desolation”, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, will be set up. By this time, a new temple will have been built in Jerusalem where the antichrist can set up this image of himself (the abomination of desolation) which he will then command all of the people on the earth to worship. The Jews who are living in the area of Judea at that time will have to flee immediately or they will be killed by the antichrist once he has set up his image. If they are on their housetop they will not even have time to go into their house to gather anything to take with them. If they are out in the field, they will not have time to return to their house to get clothes. It will be worse for those who are pregnant or nursing a child during that time. It will be difficult to escape, so Jesus said that the people in Judea, during The Tribulation, are to pray this will not happen in the winter or on the Sabbath.

We go on to read, in Matthew 24:21-22, “‘For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.’” This period will be such a great tribulation that it will be greater than the world has ever seen before or will see in the future. We see that the Lord is going to limit this period known as the great tribulation to just three and a half years. Otherwise, no one would survive. In addition, Revelation 8:12 says, “‘Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night.’” This suggests the possibility that God may supernaturally change the length of the days and nights, which would make the days shorter.

Then, Jesus explained why the days will be kept short. Otherwise, Jesus said, no one would survive. However, Jesus said that those days would be kept short for the sake of the elect. The “elect” in this verse speaks about the tribulation saints who will hear the message of the death and resurrection of Christ, during The Tribulation, and turn to Christ in repentance and faith. Revelation 7:9-10 says, “‘After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation *belongs* to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’” Then, Revelation 7:14 adds, “‘And I said to him, ‘Sir, you know.’ So he said to me, ‘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.’” These would suffer more than they could take if the time was not shortened.

We also see that, during this time, there will be many false teachers who will try to deceive these tribulation saints. Matthew 24:23-28 says, “‘Then if anyone says to you, “Look, here *is* the Christ!” or “There!” do not believe *it*. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand. Therefore if they say to you, “Look, He is in the desert!” do not go out; *or* “Look, *He is* in the inner rooms!” do not believe *it*. For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered

together.”

Jesus gives a warning here for the time when those tribulation saints will be on the earth. He tells them to expect false christs and false prophets and not to believe them. John 10:27-29 says, “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of My Father’s hand.” Tribulation saints do not need to be fearful, just as we do not need to fear false christs or false prophets, because Jesus said that no one is able to take His sheep out of His hand. Jesus gave this warning in advance, so that all who become saints during The Tribulation can know in advance that the statements of these false christs and prophets are not true.

Then, Jesus illustrated some of the things that these false christs and prophets will say in their attempts to try and deceive the tribulation saints. They will say that Christ is already out in the desert and try to encourage the saints to go out to the desert to see Him. Others will say that Jesus is in the inner rooms. The word translated “inner rooms” means *secret rooms or storerooms where things are stored*. Jesus spoke in advance to tell the tribulation saints not to believe such lies. Jesus told the religious leaders in His day, in John 8:44, “You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it.” These false teachers, during The Tribulation, are also followers of Satan who will try to deceive the saints.

Then, Jesus went on to describe the things that will happen when He returns at the end of The Tribulation. His coming will be like the lightening that comes from the east and flashes across the sky to the west. It will be very sudden. In addition, we see that the eagles will be gathered where the carcass is. Zechariah 14:2-4 says, “For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, *making* a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south.” At the very moment that the antichrist and his armies are gathered together to completely destroy Jerusalem, Jesus will return from heaven and provide a way of escape for His saints. Revelation 1:7 says, “Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.” The tribulation saints and all others will see Jesus at His Second Coming.

We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to clearly explain the difference between the Rapture, when Christ meets the church in the air, and His Second Coming, seven years later, when Jesus comes to rule on the earth. Every eye will see Him when He comes to judge the nations and rule on the earth for a thousand years. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

