

"THE LAST DAYS AND THE END OF THE AGE" (part 1)**I. Why Bible Prophecy?****A. Shows God's Sovereignty and Foreknowledge**

Bible prophecy demonstrates that God is in control of human history and the future. He already knows what is going to take place and He is accomplishing His will through the lives and wills of mankind. Regardless of the rebellion and resistance of supernatural and human evil, God will be vindicated and victorious.

B. Warning for all mankind

Bible prophecy reveals that mankind will be judged and evil destroyed. God warns the world of these future events so that all people can repent and prepare themselves for Christ's Return and God's impending judgment. Over and over again, in the book of Revelation, for example, we are told that God unleashes His wrath on the world because the people refuse to repent of their wickedness. No one has an excuse. We have been warned beforehand! God is a holy and righteous God and will punish the wicked.

C. Opportunity for faith

No one knows the future except for God alone or unless He reveals it to us. God, through the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit has done so in His Word. However, it still requires faith in His Word if we are to live by it. Bible Prophecy is no different. When we study what God says concerning the future, it is an opportunity to trust His Word and to be prepared for the future and the eventual return of Jesus Christ. It should also increase our faith as we find that already half of the prophecies in the Bible have been fulfilled.

II. Principles of Interpretation

If we are to handle accurately the Word of God, we need to know how to interpret it. Concerning God's Word, Jesus says in **Jn. 17:17**, "*Thy Word is truth.*" The writers of Holy Scripture often declare that their writings and testimony are true and from the very "mouth" of God. Therefore, true biblical interpretation involves taking the literal meaning of the words, first, unless the language used is purposely symbolic. Moreover, we are not to bring our own preconceived bias and assumptions to the text. **James 1:21** says, "*in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.*" The challenge, then, becomes to interpret those words which are symbolic in nature. Furthermore, we must not fall into the trap of reducing Scripture to mere symbolism, which many have done throughout Church history. This leads to the cop-out, "well that's how you interpret it." **2 Peter 1:20-21** states, "*But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.*" In other words, the Word of God always has one intended meaning. Most of Scripture is self-explanatory. There are portions, however, in which the correct interpretation is open to debate as far as the original intended meaning and this is most evident regarding certain End time Bible prophecies. The purpose of this study will be to highlight what we can say for sure concerning the prophetic message and discuss various interpretations in those areas where there is less clarity.

III. What Did Jesus Teach?

If we are going to understand what will precede and coincide with the Lord's Return then we need to first look at what the Lord, Himself, taught concerning His Second Coming.

A. The Olivet Discourse in the Gospels - found in the first three Gospels (**Matthew 24:1-51, 25; Mark 13:1-37, and Luke 21:5-36**). These passages include summaries of Jesus' teaching while he was on the

Mount of Olives overlooking Jerusalem. Matthew's account contains the most information so we will look at Mt. 24:1-51, in its entirety as well as the parts of Mark and Luke that are not recorded in Matthew.

Matthew 24:1-51 (*Fr. Ward's commentary is found in bold print.*)

"Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him. (*Mark 13:1 has the actual words spoken by the disciples "Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!"*) ²And He said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down." ***This is a reference to the destruction of the Jewish Temple - which occurred forty years later in 70 AD when the Roman Legions under the Roman General, Titus, ransacked Jerusalem and desecrated and destroyed the Jewish Temple. The Caesar at the time, Vespasian, even had special coins minted afterwards that depicted a Roman soldier with a raised sword over a mourning woman. It had the inscription "Judaea Conquered."***

³ As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" ***Jesus' return will coincide with the end of the age. It is important for every believer to be familiar with Bible Prophecy and how it relates to current events. Our Lord would not have spent so much time addressing this if it was not relevant and important. Mark 13:3 adds that it was Peter, John, James and Andrew to whom Jesus told these things. Jesus goes on to answer two questions: 1) when will the Temple be destroyed and 2) when will He return and the end of the age occur.***

⁴ And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you.

⁵ "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many. ***Deception and false teaching about who is the Christ will intensify before our Lord's return.***

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.

There will not just be wars and the threat of conflicts but these will be worldwide conflicts and wars and will be accompanied by famines and earthquakes. Luke 21: 11 includes that Jesus also mentioned plagues. Some believe that the first two World Wars marked the beginning of the end of human history, especially in light of the fact that Israel was reborn as a result of these two wars in 1948.

⁸ "But all these things are *merely* the beginning of birth pangs. ***In other words, things are just beginning to heat up!***

⁹ "Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. ***There will be great persecution of all believers. Christians are persecuted in at least fifty nations worldwide, today. Such persecution will greatly increase during the Great Tribulation period as well as Anti-Semitism.***

¹⁰ "At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. ***There will be apostasy and betrayal among those in the Church.***

¹¹ "Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. ***For example, Islam is a deception of the greatest false prophet to date – Mohammed.***

¹² "Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. ***Hardness of heart will affect the majority of the world's population.***

¹³ "But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved. ***God will save all believers who are still alive at the end of the age.***

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. *In Mark 13:10, Jesus says, "The gospel must first be preached to all the nations." **The Gospel of Jesus Christ will be proclaimed throughout the whole world before Christ returns.***

So far, note that there are nine distinctive signs that will mark the beginning of the end of the age: 1) false teaching and spiritual deception concerning who is the Christ, 2) wars and rumors of wars, 3) famines 4) plague 5) earthquakes 6) many martyrs 7) false prophets 8) increased wickedness with love growing cold 9) worldwide preaching of the Gospel. All of these signs are found in more detail in the Book of Revelation.

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),

Christ was referencing the prophecies found in Daniel 9:24-27; 11:31; and 12:11. Historically, in 167 BC, Antiochus Epiphanes IV besieged Jerusalem with his army, ended the Temple sacrifices and desecrated the Jewish Temple by sacrificing a sow on the altar and erecting a statue of Zeus (Dan. 11:31). Antiochus' blasphemy inspired the Maccabean brothers and their priestly father, Mattathias, to lead a Jewish Revolt which eventually overthrew his dynasty. Over 230 years later, the Temple was again defiled when the Romans plundered Jerusalem and destroyed the Jewish Temple. But Daniel speaks of a time when the Temple will be defiled once more at the end of the age.

When this occurs Christ warns:

¹⁶ then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.

¹⁷ "Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house.

¹⁸ "Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak.

¹⁹ "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

²⁰ "But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath.

This admonition by Jesus is not only for Jewish believers of the first century who would witness the Roman destruction of Jerusalem but for those believers who will be in the Holy Land at the end of the age. Luke 21:20-24 adds further details that answer the question of when the Jewish Temple of Jesus' day will be destroyed and what will follow. ²⁰ "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is near. ²¹ "Then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains, and those who are in the midst of the city must leave, and those who are in the country must not enter the city; ²² because these are days of vengeance, so that all things which are written will be fulfilled. ²³ "Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days; for there will be great distress upon the land and wrath to this people; ²⁴ and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled." As noted earlier, the Jewish Temple was destroyed in 70 AD and Jerusalem and the surrounding area of Judah ravaged by the Roman legions. This prophecy was a warning by Jesus that Jerusalem would be made desolate by the Gentile nations and the Jews again scattered throughout the known world. Many early Christians, familiar with this prophecy of Jesus, fled when the Roman army began its siege of Jerusalem in 68 AD. Not until 1967, did the Jews regain all of Jerusalem. However, the Temple Mount is still in Moslem hands and most of the world does not recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital. So in a real sense, Jerusalem is still being trampled by the Gentile nations (the UN and the Moslems).

Now back to Matthew 24 and the Great Tribulation:

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. ***Here Jesus mentions the "Great Tribulation" that will be the worst period of time in human history and it is a time that precedes His Return. No one will survive unless God intervenes. While some theologians suggest this is a reference to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, far worse things have happened since that day (e.g. The Holocaust). So it is clear this is another indication that our Lord was referring to the time of the end.***

²³ "Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There *He is*,' do not believe *him*.

²⁴ "For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. ***There will be a chief false Christ (the Antichrist) and false prophet that will be Satan's counterfeit for the world. They will seek to convince the world that they hold the key to solving the world's problems and they will eventually demand worship. Revelation 13 speaks of these two "beasts."***

²⁵ "Behold, I have told you in advance. ***Another indication that this involves the future and an important reminder to be familiar with Bible Prophecy.***

²⁶ "So if they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go out, *or*, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe *them*.

²⁷ "For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be. ²⁸ "Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather. ***It will be a time of great loss of life.***

²⁹ "But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ***This description suggests disruptions in the atmosphere that will block the sun and the moon's light. The "stars" that fall could refer to asteroids or meteorites hitting the earth or falling stars in the night skies. Again the book of Revelation speaks of such things.***

³⁰ "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.

Christ's coming will be accompanied by great natural and supernatural phenomenon as a result of His power over the universe and nature. While the Antichrist and his false prophet will do great signs and wonders, they do not and will not have control over the weather and nature itself. Only God has power over the physical laws of the universe. There will be such intense natural and supernatural disturbances that all will see the coming of Christ.

³¹ "And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other. ***Christ will send His angels to gather together all believers.***

³² "Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near;

³³ so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, *right* at the door.

³⁴ "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

While this parable means that just as when you see the leaves and figs on a fig tree in the Holy Land (March) you know that summer is near, so too when you see these signs, you know that the Lord's Return is near. However, a case also can be made that the fig tree represents Israel (cf. Jer.24:1-8; Mt. 21:18-22 - the cursed fig tree likened to the spiritual desolation of Israel in their rejection of the Messiah) so that when most of the people of Israel recognize Jesus as their Messiah, then His Return is imminent. "Generation," in this passage is sometimes thought to mean 20, 40, or even 70 years. However, since a human life can be upwards to 120 years, a case can be made for such a time frame. Still, it may simply mean that when people see such clear indicators of fulfilled Bible Prophecy (ie. the Great Tribulation and revival in Israel) Christ's Return will be imminent.

³⁵ "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

God's Word is more certain and firm than the very existence of life, the earth and the universe itself! Moreover, this statement by Jesus affirms His Deity, that He, in fact, is God as the Second Person of the Trinity.

³⁶ "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

The Son did not know the day or the hour in His flesh. He certainly knows the day and hour as the glorified Son of God. Otherwise, He would not have told the Apostle John "all the things that shortly have to take place" in the Book of Revelation. But we, on the other hand, cannot know such things. Consequently, we are not to be in the habit of date setting or listening to others who are, concerning the time of the Lord's Return. We are to live, however, as if the Return can come at any moment.

³⁷ "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah.

³⁸ "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

³⁹ and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

The time of Christ's Return will be like the time of Noah in that it will catch the nonbeliever unawares because he or she will not listen or understand the signs. However, for believers, Christ's Return should not take us by surprise.

⁴⁰ "Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left.

⁴¹ "Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left.

⁴² "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.

The believer will know the season but not the day of Christ's Return. Therefore we must be alert and ready. Some believe that the above verses refer to the Rapture of the Church before the Tribulation Period.

⁴³ "But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into.

⁴⁴ "For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will. *This is an admonition for believers and can refer to two things: A) The Rapture or B) the fact that we will not know exactly when He is coming back for us during the Tribulation period.*

⁴⁵ "Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time?

⁴⁶ "Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes.

⁴⁷ "Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

⁴⁸ "But if that evil slave says in his heart, 'My master is not coming for a long time,'

⁴⁹ and begins to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkards;

⁵⁰ the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect *him* and at an hour which he does not know,

⁵¹ and will cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The above passage is a call to readiness and also to the greater reality that we are all stewards and though we cannot see the Lord now, what we do when the Lord is "away" we will be held accountable. Luke 21:34-36 includes a further admonition by Jesus: ³⁴ "Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap;³⁵ for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth.³⁶ "But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.

B. Revelation (various passages in the coming weeks will be looked at as they relate to the subjects of our study)

Note the beginning of Revelation, how its purpose and authenticity is declared: **Rev. 1:1-3:** *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, ²who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. ³Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.*

IV. Endtime Bible Prophecy in the NT Epistles (Major Passages for Our Study)

- A. Romans 11:11-12, 22-24, 25-27 (God is not done with Israel)
- B. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:1-11 (Resurrection/Rapture); (Day of the Lord)
- C. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 (Man of lawlessness)
- D. 2 Timothy 3:1-9 (Coming apostasy)
- E. 2 Peter 3:1-18 (Day of the Lord and coming destruction of the earth)
- F. 1 John 4:1-3 (The Spirit of Christ vs. the spirit of the antichrist who is coming)

V. Endtime Bible Prophecy in the Old Testament (Major Passages for Our Study)

- A. Daniel 2:31-45 (the great statue); ch. 7 (the great beasts) ch. 9 (the 70 weeks, the Great Prince, the abomination of desolation) ch. 11 (final conflict) 12 (tribulation and final judgment)
 - B. Ezekiel 37-39 (Rebirth of Israel and invasion of Israel by Gog and Magog)
 - C. Zechariah 12-14 (Invasion of Judah and attack on Jerusalem; Return of Christ)
- Note: There is much more concerning the restoration of Israel, the Coming of Christ (first and second comings) and the Millennial Reign in the books of Jeremiah, Isaiah, the Minor Prophets and the Psalms.

Matthew 24:1 Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him.

² And He said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down."

³ As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

⁴ And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you.

⁵ "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many.

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.

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

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.

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),

¹⁶ then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.

¹⁷ "Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house.

¹⁸ "Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak.

¹⁹ "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

²⁰ "But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath.

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.

²³ "Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There *He is*,' do not believe *him*.

²⁴ "For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.

²⁵ "Behold, I have told you in advance.

²⁶ "So if they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go out, *or*, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe *them*.

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³⁰ "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.

³¹ "And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

³² "Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near;

³³ so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, *right* at the door.

³⁴ "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

³⁵ "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

³⁶ "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

³⁷ "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah.

³⁸ "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

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⁴⁰ "Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left.

⁴¹ "Two women *will be* grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left.

⁴² "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.

⁴³ "But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into.

⁴⁴ "For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think *He will*.

⁴⁵ "Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time?

⁴⁶ "Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes.

⁴⁷ "Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

⁴⁸ "But if that evil slave says in his heart, 'My master is not coming for a long time,'

⁴⁹ and begins to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkards;

⁵⁰ the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect *him* and at an hour which he does not know,

⁵¹ and will cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Mark 13:1 As He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!"

² And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down."

³ As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew were questioning Him privately,

⁴ "Tell us, when will these things be, and what *will be* the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?"

⁵ And Jesus began to say to them, "See to it that no one misleads you.

⁶ "Many will come in My name, saying, 'I am *He!*' and will mislead many.

⁷ "When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be frightened; *those things* must take place; but *that is* not yet the end.

⁸ "For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will *also* be famines. These things are *merely* the beginning of birth pangs.

⁹ "But be on your guard; for they will deliver you to *the* courts, and you will be flogged in *the* synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them.

¹⁰ "The gospel must first be preached to all the nations.

¹¹ "When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but *it is* the Holy Spirit.

¹² "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death.

¹³ "You will be hated by all because of My name, but the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.

¹⁴ "But when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.

¹⁵ "The one who is on the housetop must not go down, or go in to get anything out of his house;

¹⁶ and the one who is in the field must not turn back to get his coat.

¹⁷ "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

¹⁸ "But pray that it may not happen in the winter.

¹⁹ "For those days will be a *time of* tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never will.

²⁰ "Unless the Lord had shortened *those* days, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom He chose, He shortened the days.

²¹ "And then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ'; or, 'Behold, *He is* there'; do not believe *him*;

²² for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order to lead astray, if possible, the elect.

²³ "But take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance.

²⁴ "But in those days, after that tribulation, THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT,

²⁵ AND THE STARS WILL BE FALLING from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken.

²⁶ "Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN CLOUDS with great power and glory.

²⁷ "And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven.

²⁸ "Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near.

²⁹ "Even so, you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that He is near, *right* at the door.

³⁰ "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

³¹ "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

³² "But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father *alone*.

³³ "Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the *appointed* time will come.

³⁴ "*It is* like a man away on a journey, *who* upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, *assigning* to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert.

³⁵ "Therefore, be on the alert-- for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning--

³⁶ in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep.

³⁷ "What I say to you I say to all, 'Be on the alert!'"

(Mark 13:1-37 NASB)

Luke 21:

⁵ And while some were talking about the temple, that it was adorned with beautiful stones and votive gifts, He said,

⁶ "*As for* these things which you are looking at, the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another which will not be torn down."

⁷ They questioned Him, saying, "Teacher, when therefore will these things happen? And what *will be* the sign when these things are about to take place?"

⁸ And He said, "See to it that you are not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, 'I am *He*,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not go after them.

⁹ "When you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end *does not follow* immediately."

¹⁰ Then He continued by saying to them, "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom,

¹¹ and there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven.

¹² "But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name's sake.

¹³ "It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony.

¹⁴ "So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves;

¹⁵ for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute.

¹⁶ "But you will be betrayed even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put *some* of you to death,

¹⁷ and you will be hated by all because of My name.

¹⁸ "Yet not a hair of your head will perish.

¹⁹ "By your endurance you will gain your lives.

²⁰ "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is near.

²¹ "Then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains, and those who are in the midst of the city must leave, and those who are in the country must not enter the city;

²² because these are days of vengeance, so that all things which are written will be fulfilled.

²³ "Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days; for there will be great distress upon the land and wrath to this people;

²⁴ and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

²⁵ "There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves,

²⁶ men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

²⁷ "Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory.

²⁸ "But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

²⁹ Then He told them a parable: "Behold the fig tree and all the trees;

³⁰ as soon as they put forth *leaves*, you see it and know for yourselves that summer is now near.

³¹ "So you also, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near.

³² "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all things take place.

³³ "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

³⁴ "Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap;

³⁵ for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth.

³⁶ "But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.

"Now during the day He was teaching in the temple, but at evening He would go out and spend the night on the mount that is called Olivet.

³⁸ And all the people would get up early in the morning *to come* to Him in the temple to listen to Him.

(Luke 21:1-38 NASB)