

## Matthew 23-24a Chapter Study

### INTRODUCTION

#### *Outline for Matthew*

<b>I. JESUS' EARLY YEARS</b>	<b>1-2</b>
<b>II. JESUS' GALILEAN MINISTRY</b>	<b>3-18</b>
<b>III. JESUS' JUDEAN MINISTRY</b>	<b>19-20</b>
<b>IV. JESUS' LAST WEEK</b>	<b>21-27</b>
<b>V. THE RESURRECTION</b>	<b>28</b>

---

#### **IV. JESUS' LAST WEEK 21-27**

##### ***E. Opposition By The Leaders 22-23***

We've already covered numbers 1.-5.

Jesus has presented Himself to the Nation of Israel as their long anticipated Messiah-King.

Thousands of the common people who had gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover enthusiastically welcomed Him in what we call the Triumphal Entry on Palm Sunday.

Jesus then immediately went to the temple to present Himself to the nation's leaders; the priests and religious experts, men known as the scribes.

You see, the leadership of the nation had been committed to them, and in order for Jesus to take His rightful place on the throne of David, it would require these men to turn over their office and role as leaders to Him.

They were stewards, temporary rulers whose single charge was to govern the nation until the King came.

Well, here was the King – would they now turn over the reins to Him?

It's incredibly difficult to relinquish power once you possess it.

That was the fundamental truth Tolkien was attempting to get across in his trilogy.

It's why in the end, standing at the Crack of Doom, Frodo couldn't give up the ring.

It's why Denethor, the steward of Gondor refused to yield to Aragorn, the rightful king.

Denethor was the steward, who was charged with keeping the throne for the day when the king would come.

But it's difficult to give up power, specially when the one you are being called to surrender to is someone you do not respect.

Denethor had all the trappings of power while Aragorn was a bedraggled Ranger from the wastelands of the North.

In the same way, these priests, in their religious robes who'd lived a lifetime exercising their authority over others and who'd come to define their very existence in terms of such power, were not going to recognize some upstart and ragged rabbi from the Northern backwoods, as they considered Galilee.

Over a couple day's time, Jesus allowed the priests and scribes ample opportunity to inspect & interview Him.

He knew they would ultimately reject Him, but the interview had to go one

anyway; it was all part of the plan.  
You see, while the priests thought they were inspecting Jesus, it was actually they who were being inspected.  
The judgment they thought they were passing on Him was in fact a judgment of themselves.

---

As we come now to ch. 23, the questions of the leaders are over.

Their rejection of Jesus is settled, and now they will move to kill Him.  
Jesus, knowing this, lays a word of warning on them in the same mode of speech as the ancient prophets who announced God's judgment.

## CHAPTER 23

### 6. Jesus pronounces woe on the religious leaders 23:1-36

**<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, <sup>2</sup> saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.**

Meaning Moses' *place of authority* because they read & interpret his words in the Torah.

The 'Moses seat' was an actual place in the synagogue where the person who was reading the Torah to the congregation would sit.

The idea was that as the Law was read, and then explained by the reader, their words were thought to be the very words of Moses!

**<sup>3</sup> Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, *that* observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do.**

God's word is always God's Word, no matter whose mouth it comes from, hypocrite or saint. So when the Word of God is read, we must give heed.

But just because a person quotes the scriptures, that does not automatically mean everything they do is in line with or inspired by God.

The religious experts of that day were highly knowledgeable in the law, but they simply did not practice what they preached.

Jesus says, when they are reading the Word, listen up – but don't copy their lifestyle! And here's why . . .

**<sup>4</sup> For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers.**

In their interpretations of the law, the scribes & Pharisees had manufactured all kinds of traditions and forms on **how to obey** the Law.

The Law, which had been meant as a blessing & as a pointer to life in Christ had been turned into a heavy burden that sucked the joy right out of life by paving a detour to a *false self-righteousness*.

**<sup>5</sup> But all their works they do**

Why? – to obey God and be approved by Him? Is that their motive? No!

**<sup>5</sup> But all their works they do → to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments.**

Deut. 6:6-9 says,

**<sup>6</sup> "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. <sup>7</sup> You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the**

**way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. <sup>8</sup> You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. <sup>9</sup> You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.**

A phylactery was a little box that contained the scriptures.

They would tie this box to their foreheads & the backs of their hands in literal obedience to this.

The Pharisees competed with each other in signs of public holiness, so they began making the boxes & straps that held them wider & wider – drawing more attention to themselves.

Orthodox Jews still wear these phylacteries in the synagogue and at the Western Wall in Jerusalem.

God also instructed the people to put a colored hem with tassels on their garments as a reminder that they were a special people to Him and they had entered into covenant with Him.

This hem was in many ways similar to the wedding ring that we wear today.

The ring is a piece of jewelry and pretty, but it marks a person as being in covenant with another.

The hem of the Jewish outer garment was to be a ring signaling their covenant standing with God – a daily reminder they were to be a holy people.

But the Pharisees had turned it into just one more means of outdoing each other in acts of public piety but making the hem wider and more colorful.

**<sup>6</sup> They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, <sup>7</sup> greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, ‘Rabbi, Rabbi.’ <sup>8</sup> But you, do not be called ‘Rabbi’; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. <sup>9</sup> Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. <sup>10</sup> And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ.**

Jesus is speaking here about authority & who we look to as THE definer of holiness; Who reveals righteousness.

He’s simply saying we are not to look to *any human authority* for these things, but to God alone.

When Jesus says we are to call no one ‘father’ He doesn’t mean in aren’t to use the word as it applies to our earthly male parent.

He means we’re not to set up any man in the role of being our *spiritual parent* so that we show loyalty to God *through* allegiance to some man!

This is one of the great errors the cults make – they demand obedience to the cult leadership as *equal* to obedience to God. Jesus forbids that kind of thing.

If you know someone who’s in the *International Church of Christ*, show them this passage & challenge them to get out because this is precisely what they do. They avoid an obvious conflict with this passage by not *calling* people with the actual title ‘father’ – but there’s complete domination of the members lives by inserting men between them & God.

You can probably think of some other large denominations which practice this same error of placing another person, albeit a man or woman, between

someone and God.

When the curtain in the temple was torn from top to bottom at the moment of Christ's death, it was God's way of saying that there is now just One Mediator between God & Man, Jesus Christ, and all can come on equal basis before Him through Jesus and no other.

---

Over the years, some have been troubled by this passage because they think it prohibits them from calling a parent 'father' or by showing respect & honor to a meaningful spiritual mentor by referring to him or her as 'teacher.'

That is not at all what Jesus means here. He's referring to improperly positioned *authority*, to placing a human in the role that God alone must occupy.

Really, Jesus is saying here that ultimately, each of us is directly responsible & accountable to God.

**11 But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. 12 And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.**

This was totally contrary to the example & aspirations of the Pharisees who were all in to position & status – each was seeking to exalt himself over the others.

---

Now Jesus really launches on the Pharisees and scribes. This is it – Showdown Time! He announces 8 rounds of *Woe* upon them.

These 8 announcements of divine judgment stand in contrast to the 8 announcements of God's blessing we find in the Beatitudes.

**13 "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!**

The word 'hypocrite' means 'actor' and that's just what the scribes & Pharisees were – fakers, frauds; guys who were playing a religious game.

**For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.**

They kept people from the kingdom by obscuring God's Word with human traditions, *and more importantly* - by denying Jesus.

Empty religion & legalism do the same thing today. <sup>[1]</sup>

**14 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.**

Long public prayers made them *appear* godly, but when it came to their financial practices, they were using the letter of the law to swindle poor widows out of their meager income & possessions.

True godliness would have moved them to mercy & charity.

**15 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.**

No one is a more eager & determined believer than a *convert*.

I've found that the most vehement & vocal opponents to Mormonism are ex-Mormons. The same can be said for JW's & often times Roman Catholics. Jesus identifies this same phenomenon with the scribes & Pharisees – they'd argue with their opponents among the common people & the Sadducees, & when

they made a convert, they would indoctrinate him into the ways of Phariseeism so that they were like raving animals!

---

The Mormon's and JW's are extremely diligent in proselytizing. But that does not equal true godliness.

Mormon young people are virtually *required* to go on a two-year mission.

JW's *are* required to go door to door to propagate their errant views.

Because these cults teach a works-based righteousness, such forms of proselytizing are seen as a means of securing salvation.

Christian – do not *envy* the cultist for his/her diligence to go door to door.

Rather, *pity* them for the fear that drives them. Then love them enough to share with them the confidence you have because of Christ.

**16 “Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.’**

**17 Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold? 18 And, ‘Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged to perform it.’**

**19 Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? 20 Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it. 21 He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it. 22 And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it.**

The whole point of taking a vow is to secure your promise to perform a thing.

The Pharisees & scribes had developed an elaborate system of vows that actually made *loopholes* so that if you were clever, you could swindle someone.

Jesus points out the utter foolishness of such thinking!

One's word ought to be enough. Integrity is not something one should trifle with.

Jesus says that since they're supposed to be the covenant-keeping people of God, *any* word that comes from their mouths *must be truth*, not a mask for deception.

---

In vs. 17 & 19, Jesus lays 2 labels on them that were calculated to really tweak their proud noses – He called them ‘Fools & Blind!’

What they absolutely prided themselves on was their wisdom & clear-sightedness.

They felt themselves to be the spiritual & philosophical heirs to Solomon.

Jesus calls them “fools & blind”. This would have the same impact on them as calling Joseph McCarthy a Communist, or Rush Limbaugh a liberal.

**23 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. 24 Blind guides, who**

### **strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!**

These guys were so focused on the external marks of piety, they'd totally neglected the far more important issues of a *holy character*.

**25 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. 26 Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.**

**27 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness. 28 Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.**

Jesus nails them on their solitary preoccupation with outward appearance while neglecting the far more important reality of the inner person.

It wasn't just Jesus who taught that God looks at the heart.

One of the premier OT stories was the anointing of David by Samuel – in which God says to Samuel – “Man looks at the outward appearance, but I look at the heart.” [1 Sam. 16:7]

The religiosity of the Pharisees & scribes was all carried on with the single motive of rising above one another in shows of religious devotion, not in God's eyes, but in man's esteem.

They would spend hours sewing new tassels on the hem of their outer garment, but they never attended to attaching virtue to their hearts.

**29 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, 30 and say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.’ 31**

**“Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. 32 Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers’ *guilt*.**

These guys thought themselves *superior* to their ancestors who'd rejected, persecuted, & killed the prophets of God.

Yet those prophets had foretold the coming of the Messiah & Jesus had fulfilled their entire ministry & word.

Yet these guys were rejecting Him, would soon be persecuting Him, & like their ancestors, would eventually kill Him.

So while they thought they were better than their ancestors, they were in fact, far worse!

**33 Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? 34 Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, 35 that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of**

**Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. <sup>36</sup>  
Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this  
generation.**

Jesus now speaks as the God of Eternity. He isn't just looking into the future here, He's looking at all of history and how it has been a part of His plan to send His messengers to His chosen people – but how they will not receive them. God's plan for *that* dispensation of the nation of Israel was about over. It would end in 40 years, in 70 AD with the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of the Romans which Jesus foretells here.

And though Jesus sounds like an angry & wrath-filled judge in vs. 13-36, we see His *real* heart in vs. 37-39

#### **7. Jesus' lament for Jerusalem 23:37-39**

**<sup>37</sup> “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! <sup>38</sup> See! Your house is left to you desolate; <sup>39</sup> for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’ ”**

Jesus had come to Jerusalem the previous day, on Palm Sunday, to the wild acclaim of the people.

The leaders of the nation were the only ones who failed to join the throng affirming Him as Messiah.

So Jesus had come to the temple to confront them with His true identity and to address their questions and doubts.

His whole aim was to prove Himself to them & see them moved to faith.

If they would not be moved by demonstrations of His authority & power, if they would not be swayed by proof of His surpassing wisdom & knowledge, then all that was left was to warn them with the sternest words of judgment.

But not even that swayed them; they were resolute in their hatred of & opposition toward Him.

Having rejected Him, Jesus makes it clear – the Kingdom, which has come so close to them in His person, will be taken away, and the nation they had hoped to keep to themselves would be violently ripped from their jealous grasp.

Jesus told them – He would not come to the Nation of Israel again, as her Messiah, until the leaders, together with the people cry out, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord !”

This won't happen until the very end of the Tribulation when Israel will have fled to her wilderness refuge & the forces of antichrist are pressing against her to wipe her out.

Then they will cry out for their Messiah with these words, and Jesus will split the skies, touch down on the Mt. of Olives, deal with the antichrist & false prophet, and end the dominion of fallen man by establishing the Kingdom of God.

## **CHAPTER 24**

## **F. The Olivet Discourse 24-25**

### **1. Jesus foretells the temple's destruction 24:1-2**

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

Unless we're keen to what's happening here, this could appear as a simple report of Jesus' movements. But that's not the way Matthew intends it.

Jesus is leaving the temple for good! The rejection by the leaders is final, and the temple, which had originally been intended by God to be the place of Christ's coronation, He now turns His back on.

In light of the hideous future that awaits the City and the temple in particular, Jesus is filled with sorrow, as the verses we've just read make clear.

The disciples, seeing His anguish, and probably thinking that He's feeling sad at the rejection by the leaders, try to cheer Him up by giving a little tour of the temple grounds and pointing out its stunning beauty.

Truly, the temple was a marvelous and amazing place.

It was a common saying at that time that one has not seen beauty until one has seen the temple.

This was actually the 2<sup>nd</sup> temple – rebuilt by Zerubbabel & Ezra after the return of the exiles from Babylon.

The 1st temple, designed by David & built by Solomon on the model of the tabernacle of Moses, had been destroyed by the Babylonians in their conquest of Jerusalem.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> temple was a modest affair compared to the first and it long bothered the Jews that their temple was not more elegant.

Herod the Great, ever eager to enhance his standing among his Jewish subjects, saw an opening and began a massive project to expand the temple.

He had the temple mount excavated and expanded, making the courtyard 500 yards long & 400 yards wide.

The project took over 80 years to complete and only 7 years after completion, it was destroyed.

The basic core of the 2<sup>nd</sup> temple built by the returning exiles from Babylon was kept, but both the interior and exterior of the building were greatly remodeled.

The Jewish historian Josephus says that the temple was covered on the outside with gold plates that were so brilliant that when the sun shone on them, it was blinding to look at.

Where there was no gold, there were blocks of marble so white that from a distance, people thought there was snow on the temple. <sup>[2]</sup>

---

As they're walking through the temple courts on their way out, the disciples remark on the beauty of the place.

#### **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.”**

That may not seem like such a big deal to us if by *stones* we think in terms of *bricks* or the *construction block* modern walls are made of.



That was not what the temple was made of. The temple was constructed of massive limestone blocks measuring between 20 & 40 ft. long. They weighed up to 100 tons each!

To this day, engineers are stumped over how the stones were carried to the site from their quarry.

The thought that these stone walls would be thrown down was mind-bending.

Even more than who *could* dismantle the walls was the question, *why would* they be thrown down?

40 years after Jesus said this, the Jews revolted against the Romans & attacked their outposts throughout Israel.

The Jewish armies had several early victories and it looked like they might fully regain their independence.

But Rome wasn't in the habit of allowing rebellions to go unpunished, and sailed with a huge force to crush the rebels.

The war began in 68 AD and Galilee quickly fell, although the casualties on both sides were extremely high.

Knowing the key to victory was taking the capital of Jerusalem, the Roman general Titus marched south and laid siege to the City.

Jerusalem's walls were formidable, but the City had always been vulnerable from the North where the walls were most accessible across level ground.

That's where the Romans brought their collective might to bear.

After a long siege, they finally broke through and the fighting in the streets was vicious & brutal.

Because of the heavy casualties the Romans had endured, they showed no mercy and put everything to the sword.

When the City walls were breached, many of the Jewish zealots fled to the temple grounds because the temple was designed like a fortress.

They thought its massive stone walls would protect them. What they didn't count on was fire.

The Romans surrounded the temple, and one drunken soldier threw a torch that kindled an inferno.

The gold plating that was on the roof melted and streamed down into the seams between the stones of the temple.

To retrieve the gold, the Roman commander ordered that the temple be dismantled stone by stone.

The destruction was so complete that today they have true difficulty learning exactly where the temple was.

When Jesus said not one stone would be left upon another, and we see that He was speaking *literally* because of the historical fulfillment literally – we understand that *the rest* of what Jesus says in this chapter about the future is to be understood in the same way.

## **2. The sign of the end 24:3-31**

**<sup>3</sup> 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?"**

Leaving the temple grounds, Jesus led the disciples the few hundred years across

the Kidron valley and up on to the slopes of the Mt. of Olives. [exp]  
From this vantage point, they would be looking back toward the temple mount  
and the temple gleaming in the sun.

His words about the destruction of the temple and the earlier ones He said to the  
leaders about not coming again until they invited Him, move them to ask 2  
questions –

1) When will these things be?

Meaning – When will the temple be destroyed?

2) What will be the sign of Your coming & the end of the age?

By ‘age’ they mean the rule of man. What they were asking in this second  
question was, what sign were they to look for that would tell them Jesus  
was coming to end the age of the kingdoms of man with the setting up  
of the Kingdom of God.

Matthew doesn’t record Jesus’ answer to the first question. Luke does in 21:20-24.

Matthew concentrates instead on Jesus’ wider teaching & His answer to the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
question.

As we’ll see, Jesus makes many predictions about the future & end times.

*Interpreting* these predictions has been the source of great debate among  
Christians for many generations.

As is always the case, it takes the passage of time & the actual outworking of  
historical events to give the clearest understanding of what the prophetic  
words means.

Today, we have a much better understanding of these things than previous  
generations simply because we’ve been able to watch history unfold and  
bring to pass the very things Jesus spoke of here.

**4 And Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed that no one  
deceives you. 5 For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the  
Christ,’ and will deceive many. 6 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. 7 For nation will rise  
against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be  
famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. 8 All  
these are the beginning of sorrows.**

Be careful to note that Jesus names several things that will take place throughout  
the course of history that are **NOT** signs of His return. That’s His point here.  
You see, whenever there’s some great catastrophe or challenge, people start  
thinking the end of the world is near.

So when there’s an earthquake or a famine, or a war – they start getting all  
apocalyptic!

When the first Gulf War broke out – our church was packed out in just a 2  
week’s time.

But Jesus made it clear, these things, as isolated events, are no sign of the end  
times.

So, we can expect religious deception & people who will claim to be God’s  
prophet, even claiming to be Christ Himself. These charlatans will have

successful careers and lead many astray.  
History will see wars, and lots of talk of the threat of war.  
Then, as time moves on, the globe will align under clearly defined nations and borders, and these will vie with one another for dominance in wars that are world-embracing in scope – and so we had WWI & II.  
Famines and plagues will kill millions. And earthquakes will shake the land leveling buildings by the score.  
None of these, in & of themselves constitute a sign of the end.  
But v. 8 turns a corner & says what *is* a sign is all of them taken together.  
That phrase “beginning of sorrows” refers to *labor pains*.  
Anyone whose been through labor knows how it goes; the pains are intense, but at first, are erratic and irregular.  
As the labor progresses, the pains become more intense and more rhythmic.  
With the passing of still more time, the rhythm picks up and the interval between contractions shortens as the pain increases.  
It’s all consummated in the birth of a child.  
Jesus used that analogy here because it fits the emergency of His Kingdom perfectly.  
As history rolls along, it will know the results & effects of the Fall.  
But as the emergence of His Kingdom *nears*, this age will see an increase in both the intensity & frequency of distress.  
Religious deception will mushroom.  
War will kill, not thousands--but multiplied millions.  
Famine & pestilence will reach global proportions.  
And then to cap it off, earthquakes will rock the planet in various places – meaning places that weren’t thought to be earthquake prone.  
It isn’t any of these things in isolation that constitutes a sign of the end – but all of them taken together – when they are regular & their intensity effects people on a global basis.  
I know I don’t have to give a review now on how all these things are coming to pass. You read the paper and listen to the news – you already know.  
In just one example – there has been more war and more loss of life due to war in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century than in all previous centuries of history combined.

Now Jesus tells the disciples what they are to expect from the world as they follow Him.

**9 “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake.**

Jesus’ words here are crucial for us! There needed because they remind us trying to win the world’s approval is a waste of time.

The word **HATES** God & opposes Christ! Anyone who would be faithful to the Lord is going to know something of that hatred and opposition.

If we want to curry the world’s favor, then we must needs compromise our convictions and deny Christ.

Jesus warns us here that following Him means having the wind in our face.

**10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.**

Jesus says some will tire of the opposition, hostility will wear them down; they will fold & fall away, even betraying other Christians in order to secure their own place in the world.

**11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.**

False teachers will arise who will teach a watered-down form of faith that makes compromises with the world so that Jesus' followers can blend in & avoid persecution.

These false prophets will be able to deceive many because it's a message people will want to hear.

They will say – "You have to go along to get along."

This spirit of compromise with the world will lead to a lack of concern for holiness, which will in turn produce a morally lazy & careless lifestyle.

And pretty soon, all that will be left is a Church that was just like the wretched thing Jesus had just condemned in the temple among the priests; light but no heat – dead, empty religion.

**13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved.**

Even while the formal Church will be a dead & empty religious form, there will be individuals who are hot for God's glory & passionately in love with Him.

**14 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.**

Jesus makes it clear in vs. 9-13 that until His Kingdom comes, believers will face the hostility and opposition of this world.

Here He lets them know that even in the face of such difficulty, they will be successful in their mission of taking the gospel to every nation.

No matter how far a-field the formal Church goes from the heart of God, a faithful remnant will remain true and finish the task Jesus gives them.

In fact, the end will not come until they've successfully finished the task of global evangelism.

---

Now, what Jesus says here settles the issue of whether or not He's coming back before or after the Millennium.

There are three views regarding the Millennium and when Jesus returns.

- 1) Amillennialism – No-millennium. History goes on & on for a long time, until eventually Jesus comes back & the physical universe is done away with.
- 2) Postmillennialism – Jesus comes back *after* a long period (not a literal 1000 years) in which the Church has effectively 'Christianized' the world and co-opted the reins of civil government, installing Biblical law in the rule of nations.
- 3) Premillennialism – Jesus comes back visibly to inaugurate & begin a literal period of 1000 year reign which sees a renewal of the sin-cursed creation to its condition before the Fall.

Regarding how to interpret prophecy regarding the end times,

- 1) Amillennialism – everything is purely spiritual & symbolic & not to be taken in any literal way.
- 2) Postmillennialism – all prophecy except that dealing with the last

resurrection & judgment is to be understood as primarily symbolic and/or spiritual and as having been fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

3) Premillennialism – prophecy is to be taken as literally as the context permits and seen as applying to specific events which will be seen in history.

Now, in vs. 9-13, Jesus makes it clear that from that point until the end, His followers will face the hostility and hatred of the world. This is hardly the scenario presented in *postmillennialism*.

And in the rest of the chapter, Jesus gives many specific *signs* of **things** to *look* for as markers of the end & His return. So that denies the premise of *Amillennialism*.

Premillennialism is the only model that fits what we find here.

---

---

[1] *Guzik, David, On-Line Commentary*

[2] *Guzik, David, On-Line Commentary*