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"THE END OF THE AGE"

"As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us, they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" **Matthew 24:3**

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Amen. Matt. 28:19-20

Part 1: Introduction

The end of the age, some versions (KJV) use the end of the world, refers to the end of this present era and the commencement of the next dispensation. It is the period that precedes the second coming of the Son of Man as the Righteous Judge. The end of the age includes **the rapture**, **the tribulation**, the second coming, and the judgment of the nations, all of which help usher in the age to come.

Jesus refers to "the end of the age" a couple times in Matthew 13, as He explains the meaning of some parables. In the parable of the wheat and the tares, Jesus warns of a judgment to come in which "the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire" (Matthew 13:40). This will happen, Jesus says, "at the end of the age" (verses 39–40). Later, Jesus likens the kingdom of heaven to a dragnet that brings up all sorts of fish. Then the sorting comes: "They sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. This is how it will be at the end of the age" (verses 48–49). In both parables, the end of the age is associated with a separation, a sorting, and a burning fire (verses 40 and 50). Jesus used the phrase the end of the age to refer to that time in the future when the kingdom of God is established, true justice reigns, and the wicked are judged.

In Matthew 24, Jesus' disciples come to Him with a question about the end of the age: "What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" (Matthew 24:3). What follows is the Olivet Discourse, Jesus' summary of end times' events as they relate to Israel. **The disciples thus understood the end of the age to mean "the final judgment that accompanies Jesus' second coming."** The end of the age will be a great calamity for those who persist in their rejection of Christ. Judgment will fall swiftly and with finality. For the children of God alive during that time, the end of the age will be a time of salvation and fulfilled hope.

One "age" or era leads to another. Jesus spoke of both "this age" and "the age to come" (Matthew 12:32). The current age, the one in which we live, **is the age of grace,** which we also call the **church age.** In this dispensation, all mankind is called to repent of their sin and turn to Christ for salvation.

This age has lasted for 2,000+ years because God “is patient with all, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). But this age must eventually come to an end. At the end of the age, the age of grace will be complete, and a far more glorious age will be ushered in. Until then, **“now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation”** (2 Corinthians 6:2)—repentance should not be delayed.

Christians have the Lord’s promise that He will never forsake us in this world, no matter what happens: **“Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:20).**

(From article: What does the Bible mean when it refers to the end of the age? gotquestions.org)

Part 2

Jesus Speaks about the Future – Matthew 24:1-44

24 As Jesus was leaving the Temple grounds, his disciples pointed out to him the various Temple buildings. 2 But he responded, “Do you see all these buildings? I tell you the truth, they will be completely demolished. Not one stone will be left on top of another!”

3 Later, Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives. His disciples came to him privately and said, “Tell us, when will all this happen? What sign will signal your return and the end of the world?”

4 Jesus told them, “Don’t let anyone mislead you, 5 for many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Messiah.’ They will deceive many. 6 And you will hear of wars and threats of wars, but don’t panic. Yes, these things must take place, but the end won’t follow immediately. 7 Nation will go to war against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in many parts of the world. 8 But all this is only the first of the birth pains, with more to come.

9 “Then you will be arrested, persecuted, and killed. You will be hated all over the world because you are my followers. 10 And many will turn away from me and betray and hate each other. 11 And many false prophets will appear and will deceive many people. 12 Sin will be rampant everywhere, and the love of many will grow cold. 13 But the one who endures to the end will be saved. 14 And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come.

15 “The day is coming when you will see what Daniel the prophet spoke about—the sacrilegious object that causes desecration standing in the Holy Place.” (Reader, pay attention!) 16 “Then those in Judea must flee to the hills. 17 A person out on the deck of a roof must not go down into the house to pack. 18 A person out in the field must not return even to get a coat. 19 How terrible it will be for pregnant women and for nursing mothers in those days. 20 And pray that your flight will not be in winter or on the Sabbath. 21 For there will be greater anguish than at any time since the world began. And it will never be so great again. 22 In fact, unless that time of calamity is shortened, not a single person will survive. But it will be shortened for the sake of God’s chosen ones.

23 “Then if anyone tells you, ‘Look, here is the Messiah,’ or ‘There he is,’ don’t believe it. 24 For false messiahs and false prophets will rise up and perform great signs and wonders so as to deceive, if possible, even God’s chosen ones. 25 See, I have warned you about this ahead of time.

26 “So if someone tells you, ‘Look, the Messiah is out in the desert,’ don’t bother to go and look. Or, ‘Look, he is hiding here,’ don’t believe it! 27 For as the lightning flashes in the east and shines to the west, so it will be when the Son of Man comes. 28 Just as the gathering of vultures shows there is a carcass nearby, so these signs indicate that the end is near.

29 “Immediately after the anguish of those days, the sun will be darkened, the moon will give no light, the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

30 And then at last, the sign that the Son of Man is coming will appear in the heavens, and there will be deep mourning among all the peoples of the earth. And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And he will send out his angels with the mighty blast of a trumpet, and they will gather his chosen ones from all over the world—from the farthest ends of the earth and heaven.

32 “Now learn a lesson from the fig tree. When its branches bud and its leaves begin to sprout, you know that summer is near. 33 In the same way, when you see all these things, you can know his return is very near, right at the door. 34 I tell you the truth, this generation will not pass from the scene until all these things take place. 35 Heaven and earth will disappear, but my words will never disappear.

36 **“However, no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows.**

37 “When the Son of Man returns, it will be like it was in Noah’s day. 38 In those days before the flood, the people were enjoying banquets and parties and weddings right up to the time Noah entered his boat. 39 People didn’t realize what was going to happen until the flood came and swept them all away. That is the way it will be when the Son of Man comes.

40 “Two men will be working together in the field; one will be taken, the other left. 41 Two women will be grinding flour at the mill; one will be taken, the other left.

42 “So you, too, must keep watch! For you don’t know what day your Lord is coming. 43 Understand this: If a homeowner knew exactly when a burglar was coming, he would keep watch and not permit his house to be broken into. 44 You also must be ready all the time, for the Son of Man will come when least expected.

Part 3 - Questions

1. **What does Jesus say will happen to the Temple?**

2. **Bishop Lewter has taught that the Temple was destroyed completely in the year?**

3. **Where does Jesus go to begin His teachings to the disciples?**

4. **In verses 4-7, Jesus tells the disciples not to be misled by what they will see – list the events He tells them to be aware of?**

5. **What does He identify in verses 10-12?**

6. **Verse 13 gives the believer hope – what does Jesus say is their outcome?**

7. **Verse 14 says that before the end comes what will happen?**

8. **Who does Jesus identify as the prophet who wrote of the desecration of the Temple?**

9. **Jesus speaks about much calamity and distress,** "For there will be greater anguish than at any time since the world began. And it will never be so great again." **What will be the relief?**

10. **What does He warn the disciples will happen in verses 23-25?**

11. **The writer then tells us that when we see these things taking place, the great anguish of all time, and the shaking of the heavens, know that what is soon to happen?**

12. **What important lesson do we see in verse 36, that we need to be mindful of even in this day?**

13. **When we read verses 37-39, Jesus likens these times to the days of whom?**

14. **What is the attitude of the people portrayed in these verses?**

15. **In the final verses of Matthew 24, Jesus gives these words of warning: He says to**

_____ and be _____

For the Son of Man will come _____

Section 2

October 2026

Part 4

The Hope of the Resurrection 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:1-6

13 And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died[f] so you will not grieve like people who have no hope. 14 For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died.

15 We tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet him ahead of those who have died.[g] 16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the believers who have died[h] will rise from their graves. 17 Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. 18 So encourage each other with these words.

Chapter 5

Now concerning how and when all this will happen, dear brothers and sisters,[a] we don't really need to write you. **2** For you know quite well that the day of the Lord's return will come unexpectedly, like a thief in the night. **3** When people are saying, "Everything is peaceful and secure," then disaster will fall on them as suddenly as a pregnant woman's labor pains begin. And there will be no escape.

4 But you aren't in the dark about these things, dear brothers and sisters, and you won't be surprised when the day of the Lord comes like a thief.[b] **5** For you are all children of the light and of the day; we don't belong to darkness and night. **6** So be on your guard, not asleep like the others. Stay alert and be clearheaded.

Part 5 – Questions

1. **Who is identified as the writer of these verses?**

2. **What important message does verses 13-14 offer to believers?**

3. **Because we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and will return, we can believe that?**

4. **The writer also uses the term _____ to identify those who have died.**

5. **Verse 15 says to us that all believers, whether alive or those that have died will have the opportunity to do what?**

6. **List the events that will occur in verses 16 and 17 upon Jesus' return?**

7. **What's the promise the writer gives the readers in the latter portion of verse 17?**

8. **In verse 18 what does the writer give as the reason for sharing this message for believers then and now?**

9. **Read chapter 5:2 – what does the verse say that is similar to verse Matt. 24:36?**

10. **Chapter 5:6 tell us not to sleep but to be _____ and _____.**

11. **What are the two pieces of armor listed by the writer in chapter 5:8?**

12. **These future events of Christ' return are classified as the _____?**

The events of Christ' Return:

1: Christ will return_____, with a loud _____.

2: There will be an unmistakable cry from _____.

3: There will be a _____fanfare such as has never been heard.

4: Believers in Christ who are dead will _____ from

their _____.

5: Believers who are alive will be _____ in the

_____ to meet Christ.

Part 6

The Revelation

Chapter 1

This is a revelation from[a] Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants the events that must soon[b] take place. He sent an angel to present this revelation to his servant John, 2 who faithfully reported everything he saw.

Chapter 22

Then the angel showed me a river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2 It flowed down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit,[a] with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations.

3 No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him. 4 And they will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. 5 And there will be no night there—no need for lamps or sun—for the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever and ever.

12 Look, I am coming soon, bringing my reward with me to repay all people according to their deeds.

Part 7 – Questions

1. **Who is the writer of the book of Revelation?**

2. **How were the messages given to the writer?**

3. **The purposes of the message revealed to the writer were?**

4. **The end of the book provides what for believers who endure or stand firm?**

5. **What is the great promise that the book end with for all believers that will take place?**

6. **In the book the writer reminds the readers what will take place?**

7. **And bringing what with Him?**

The book of Revelation is a book about the future and present events. It offers future hope to all believers, by proclaiming Christ' final victory over evil and the reality of eternal life with Him. The book unveils Jesus' full identity and GOD' plan for the end of the world, and it focuses on Christ' second coming, His victory over evil and the establishment of His kingdom. The main message we should seek to discover in reading, is about **the infinite love, power and justice of the LORD Jesus Christ** – and not so much on the timetable of events, or the details of John's writings/ images.
(Bible Commentary – Bible Gateway)