

First Century Expectations

Eschatology is the study of what happened during the last days of God's Old Testament Covenant He had with the 12 tribes of Israel. These last days were from AD 30 to AD 70.

It was during that last generation of 40 years that everything that was written was completely fulfilled. **(Luke 21:22)** Jesus answered the question that His disciples asked Him on the Mount of Olives. (Matt. 24:3-34)

Everything Jesus said would happen did happen exactly **“as”** and **“when”** he said it would, within the lifetime of His contemporaries. Everything every New Testament writer expected to happen, happened exactly **“as”** and **“when”** they expected it would, within their lifetime. They were guided into all truth and told of the things that were to come by the Holy Ghost. **(John 16:13)**

No inspired New Testament writer ever corrected their Holy Ghost guided understanding and fulfillment expectations.

Instead, they intensified their language as the **“appointed time of the end”** drew near. From many Old Testament prophets, **Daniel 12:4**, **Habakkuk 2:3**, to Jesus who said that all of these things were going to happen to **“this generation”**. **(Matthew 24:34)**

Then to Peter who said **“the end of all things is at hand”** and **“For the time is come that judgment must begin... (I Peter 4:7,17)**, and onto John, who said **“this is the last time (hour)”**. **(1 John 2:18)**

Partial fulfillment is **NOT** satisfactory. Three out of five, 7 out of 10, will not work. Partial does not pass the test of a true prophet. **(Deuteronomy 18:18-22)**

Remember, Jesus' time restricted ALL of His end-time prophecies to occur within the first century time frame of AD 30-AD 70. God is not a man that He should lie. **(Numbers 23:19)**

Faithfulness is not only doing what was promised but also doing it **WHEN** it was promised.

The first century fulfillment expectations were the correct expectations, and everything happened right on time.

There were no gaps, no gimmicks, no interruptions, no postponements, no delays, no exegetical gymnastics, and no changing the meaning of commonly used and normally understood words.

We must understand both the time and nature of the fulfillment of Scripture not the manipulation of the time factor to conform to popular futuristic delay theories.

Churches are guilty of proclaiming a half truth to the world today. There is much confusion and many voices are speaking, but there is only one voice of God. **(Psalms 103:20, Romans 3:3-4)**

What God requires of one, He requires of all. What God does in one life, if allowed, He will do in all lives.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is under attack today by the liberals and skeptics. The only Biblically consistent solution to the problem of “nonoccurrence” is occurrence”. Jesus DID what He said He was going to do and He did it WHEN He said He was going to do it. In AD 70, Jesus came to resurrect the dead, reward the righteous, and judge the wicked. **(Matthew 16:27-28)**

There are many subjects today that are being taught as things yet to take place in a futuristic setting, but what do the Scriptures say? For example, “**the man of sin**” that is found in **2 Thessalonians 2:3-8** was in existence in the AD 50s of the first century and was at that time being restrained from rising to power. In **2 Thessalonians Chapter 2**, the subject here is “**the day of the Lord and His coming.**” In **Matthew 24:3** and **2 Peter 3:10**, the coming of the Lord and the day of the Lord was the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

This too proves the man of sin was indeed around in that first century, not in our future. **In verse 8**, we find that this “**man of sin**” would be destroyed at the coming of the Lord. **Verse 4** shows us that he would be in the temple at the time of his destruction. The temple was in Jerusalem before it was leveled, proving that he met his end at the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

So, the “**man of sin**” is not someone who is going to rise up some day in our future to rule the whole world and persecute Christians everywhere.

He was a very influential leader before and during the annihilation of Jerusalem in AD 70.

In **Matthew 24:15**, Jesus referenced the Book of Daniel for us to find more information about the Abomination of Desolation. Notice the time of the prophetic fulfillment the Man of Sin and the Abomination of Desolation.

When the disciples asked Jesus in **Matthew 24:3**, in **Mark 13:4**, and in **Luke 21:7**, “*Tell us, when shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?*”

Jesus answered their question clearly and very directly. He said that when they saw the Abomination of Desolation spoken of by Daniel surrounding the city of Jerusalem, time to flee out of the city, for the desolation is nigh. (**Daniel 9:26-27, Matthew 24:15-16, Mark 13:14, Luke 21:20-21, 24**)

Daniel spoke about the destruction of the city and the temple. The Abomination of Desolation was the Roman armies which were to surround Jerusalem.

These armies did come and made Jerusalem a desolation in AD 70. Jerusalem was commonly referred to as “**the Holy City**”. In **Matthew 24:15**, the term “**holy place**” is used. The Greek word here for “place” is “**topos**” **G#5117** which means locality. The English word “**topography**” comes from this same Greek word “**topos**”.

It was the Roman Army that encamped around Jerusalem. They would take a “**stand**” or “**stand up**” against Jerusalem. This word “stand” or “stand up” denotes hostility. (**Daniel 8:23, 25, Acts 4:26**)

These references show that the word “**stand**” denotes to show authority to rebel or to fight. It was the Roman armies under the leadership of Cestius Gallus that came and compassed Jerusalem just as Jesus said.

Shortly after arrival, due to unrest and problems on another front of the Roman Empire, Gallus was ordered to return to Rome to help solve these issues. (**Josephus War of the Jews, II Chapters 15-19**)

When the Roman armies withdrew, all of the Christian believers obeyed the instructions of Jesus and fled from the City of Jerusalem at this time.

General Vespasian became the new Emperor of Rome and ordered the Roman armies back to Jerusalem under the leadership of his son, Titus. Titus was given instructions to utterly destroy Jerusalem and the Temple and to totally subdue Judea.

This happened in AD 70. **(Josephus, War of the Jews, Book III Chapters 1-3, IV, chapters 9-11)**

Conclusion

First-century expectations were fulfilled. Jesus answered the disciples by giving them the sign of the end, the siege of the Roman armies. Jesus told us and history tells us about the Roman armies coming and destroying Jerusalem and the Temple in AD 70.

These Roman armies made Jerusalem desolate. The Abomination of Desolation has already taken place 2,000 years ago. The Man of Sin was destroyed when Jerusalem was destroyed in AD 70.

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