

# STUDIES ON MATTHEW 24

by Stephen Bohr

## #1 - SEVEN GREAT TRUTHS ABOUT MATTHEW 24

**Point #1: Vital Importance (in all the synoptic gospels, right before His passion, speaking to the disciples by themselves in private audience)**

*“The twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew is presented to me **again and again** as something that is to be brought to the attention of all. We are today living in the time when the predictions of this chapter **are fulfilling**. Let our **ministers and teachers** explain these prophecies to those whom they instruct. Let them leave out of their discourses matters of **minor consequence**, and present the truths that will decide the **destiny of souls**. Ellen G. White, Gospel Workers, p. 148*

**Point #2: Reason: Keep God’s own People from being deceived**

The purpose of this chapter is not to convince the **secular people** that **Jesus is coming soon** because they can see **certain signs** transpiring in the **political, economic, social and religious** world. The purpose is to keep God’s own people from being **overtaken by Satan’s overmastering end-time deceptions and delusions**.

They are told by Jesus that Satan is going to **deceive, discourage, persecute** and **kill** in order to make God’s people **lose their faith**. The chapter is given so that we will hang in there!

**Matthew 24:4**

*“And Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed that no one deceives you.”*

**Matthew 24:5** (notice the expression “in **My name**.” They will be **Christians**)

*“For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.”*

**Matthew 24:23-25**

*“Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe it. 24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 25 See, I have told you beforehand.”*

**Romans 8:33, 34: Who are the elect?**

*“Who shall bring a charge against God’s **elect**? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.”*

**Point #3: All Three Accounts must be studied together in order to get the full picture**

**Matthew 24:7: Earthquakes**

*“For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.”*

**Luke 21:11: Great earthquakes**

*“And there will be **great** earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.”*

**Mark 13:8: Troubles**

*“For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles.”*

**Matthew 24:15: Abomination of desolation in the holy place**

*“Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the **holy place**” (whoever reads, let him understand)”*

**Mark 13:14 (where it ought not)**

*“So when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing **where it ought not**” (let the reader understand), “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.”*

**Luke 21:20 (Jerusalem [holy place is Jerusalem], compassed with armies [abomination is the siege], desolation [desolation results from abomination] is near**

*“But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.”*

*Also compare Luke 21:24 with Revelation 11:2, 3*

**Point #4: Matthew 24 has a Two-fold Fulfillment**

**Matthew 24:1-3**

*“Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. 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.” 3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, [QUESTION # 1]: **when will these things be?** [QUESTION # 2]: **And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?**”*

*“The prophecy which He uttered was **twofold** in its meaning; while foreshadowing the destruction of Jerusalem, it **prefigured** also the terrors of the last great day. Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 25*

“From the fall of Jerusalem the thoughts of Jesus passed to a wider judgment. In the destruction of the impenitent city He saw a **symbol** of the final destruction to come upon the world.” Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, p. 743

“Jesus did not answer His disciples by taking up separately the destruction of Jerusalem and the great day of His coming. He **mingled** the description of these two events. Had He opened to His disciples future events as He beheld them, they would have been unable to endure the sight. In mercy to them He **blended** the description of the two great crises, leaving the disciples to study out the meaning for themselves. When He referred to the destruction of Jerusalem, His prophetic words reached beyond that event to the final conflagration in that day when the Lord shall rise out of His place to punish the world for their iniquity, when the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain. This **entire discourse** was given, not for the disciples only, but for those who should live in the last scenes of this earth's history.” Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, p. 628

“Christ saw in Jerusalem a **symbol** of the world hardened in unbelief and rebellion, and hastening on to meet the retributive judgments of God.” Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 22

“Jesus, looking down to the last generation, saw the world involved in a **deception similar** to that which caused the destruction of Jerusalem. The great sin of the Jews was their rejection of Christ [the embodiment of the law]; the great sin of the Christian world would be their rejection of the law of God, the foundation of His government in heaven and earth.” Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 22

“The Savior's prophecy concerning the visitation of judgments upon Jerusalem is to have **another fulfillment**, of which that terrible desolation was but a **faint shadow**. In the fate of the chosen city we may behold the doom of a world that has rejected God's mercy and trampled upon his law.” Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 36

“The whole of the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew is a prophecy concerning the events to precede this event, and the destruction of Jerusalem is used to **typify** the last great destruction of the world by fire.” Ellen G. White, Last Day Events, p. 18

“While these prophecies received a **partial fulfillment** at the destruction of Jerusalem, they have a **more direct application** to the last days.” Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, volume 5, p. 753

“The ruin of Jerusalem was a **symbol** of the final ruin that shall overwhelm the world. The prophecies that received a **partial fulfillment** in the overthrow of Jerusalem have a **more direct application** to the last days. We are now standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. A crisis is before us, such as the world has never witnessed.” Ellen G. White, Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, pp. 120, 12

“The warnings that Christ gave to Jerusalem were not to end with them. The judgments upon Jerusalem were a **symbol** of the events of Christ's coming to judgment in the last day, when before Him shall be gathered all nations. "He shall send His angels with a

*great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." TM 232*

**Point #5: The book, The Great Controversy follows the same sequence of events as Matthew 24 and therefore must be studied alongside this chapter.**

In fact, it is not a coincidence that Matthew 24 begins with the **destruction of Jerusalem** as does **The Great Controversy**. In fact, The Great Controversy encloses the two great events of Matthew 24: The destruction of **Jerusalem** and the final destruction of the **world**.

**Point #6: The Events of Matthew 24 are in Strict Chronological Order. This is denoted by the continued use of “time” expressions**

**Matthew 24:6** [the end is not yet], **8** [beginning of sorrows], **9** [then], **10** [then], **14** [then], **16** [then], **19** [those days], **21** [then], **22** [those days twice], **23** [then], **29** [immediately after], **30** [then]

**Point #7: The “you” of Matthew 24 includes all Believers from all Ages**

Matthew 24:4, 6, 9, 15, 20, 23, 25, 26, 33, 42, 44

**Matthew 28:18-20**

*“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 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.”*

**John 14:1-3**

*“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”*

**John 16:1, 2**

*“These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. 2 They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.”*

**John 17:20, 21**

*“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.”*

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## #2 - THE EAGLE'S OF BABYLON

**Exodus 19:4-6:** God makes a **covenant** with Israel. God says: "I want a covenant with Israel. **Moses relays the message** to Israel and Israel accepts the terms (**Exodus 19:8**)

*"You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. 5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. 6 And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."*

**Exodus 25:8:** God promises to **enter the sanctuary to dwell** with Israel

*"And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them."*

**Exodus 40:34, 35:** **Shekinah** enters the **sanctuary**

*"Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 35 And Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle."*

**I Kings 8:10, 11:** **Shekinah** enters the **temple**

*"And it came to pass, when the priests came out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, 11 so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD."*

**2 Chronicles 36:14-16:** A story of **unfaithfulness** and apostasy till there was **no remedy**

*"Moreover all the leaders of the priests and the people transgressed more and more, according to all the **abominations** of the nations, and defiled the house of the LORD which He had consecrated in Jerusalem. 15 And the LORD God of their fathers sent warnings to them by His **messengers**, rising up early and sending them, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. 16 But they **mocked the messengers** of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His **prophets**, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till there was **no remedy**."*

**Ezekiel 16:15, 22, 30:** Addressed to God's **professed people**, not to the pagans. **God's own people** were in apostasy. They had **forgotten** the God of their youth. They are called **harlot** and they commit **abominations**.

*"But you trusted in your own beauty, played the **harlot** because of your fame and poured out your harlotry on everyone passing by who would have it. 22 And in all your **abominations** and acts of **harlotry** you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare, struggling in your blood. 30 How degenerate is your heart!" says the Lord GOD, "seeing you do all these things, the deeds of a **brazen harlot**."*

**Ezekiel 16:2:** Israel was committing **abominations**

*"Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her **abominations**."*

**Ezekiel 1:4:** God coming to the **temple to judge**

*"Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire."*

**Ezekiel 8:16-18: Abominations chapter.** Contrast of those who worship the **sun** with those who **sigh and cry** because the sun is worshiped. This is taking place among **God's professed people**. Most are in **apostasy**, the **majority** is not with God.

*"So He brought me into the inner court of the LORD's house; and there, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty-five men with their **backs toward the temple** of the LORD and their faces toward the east, and they were **worshipping the sun toward the east**. 17 Then He said to me, "Have you seen this, O son of man? Is it a trivial thing to the house of Judah to commit the **abominations** which they commit here? For they have filled the land with violence; then they have returned to provoke Me to anger. Indeed they put the branch to their nose. 18 Therefore I also will act in fury. My eye will not spare nor will I have pity; and though they cry in My ears with a loud voice, I will not hear them."*

**Jeremiah 5:31:** The **leaders** were to blame for the abominations but the people wanted it so.

**Ezekiel 7:1, 2:** The end upon the **four corners** of the land

**Ezekiel 9:1-7:** Not everyone was practicing the abominations. God's own people were committing the abominations. There were **two groups** of people in Jerusalem who **claimed to serve God**: Those who practiced the **abominations** and those who **sighed and cried** because of them. There was **people within the people**. At the end of time is there going to be a **small group who are faithful** among those who profess to serve the Lord? The sighing and crying of the people is equivalent to the loud cry in **Revelation 18**. People who **sigh and cry** because of the **abominations** which are being committed in **Babylon** (Revelation 18:2, 3). Those who are presenting the loud cry are the ones who are sealed in Revelation

*"Then He called out in my hearing with a loud voice, saying, "Let those who have charge over the city draw near, each with a deadly weapon in his hand." 2 And suddenly six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his battle-ax in his hand. One man among them was clothed with linen and had a writer's inkhorn at his side. They went in and stood beside the bronze altar. 3 Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub, where it had been, to the threshold of the temple. And He called to the man clothed with linen, who had the writer's inkhorn at his side; 4 and the LORD said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a **mark on the foreheads** of the men who **sigh and cry** over all the abominations that are done within it." 5 To the others He said in my hearing, "Go after him through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare, nor have any pity. 6 Utterly slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women; but do not come near anyone on whom is the mark; and begin at **My sanctuary**." So they began with the elders who were before the temple. 7 Then He said to them, "Defile the temple, and fill the courts with the slain. Go out!" And they went out and killed in the city."*

**Ezekiel 10:18,19:** The **Shekinah** leaves the temple

*"Then the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim. 19 And the cherubim lifted their wings and mounted up from the earth in my sight. When they went out, the wheels were beside them; and they **stood at the door** of the **east gate** of the LORD's house, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them."*

**Ezekiel 11:22, 23:** Lingers on the **Mt. of Olives** and then leaves

*"Then the cherubim lifted up their wings, with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel was high above them. 23 And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and **stood on the mountain**, which is on the east side of the city [Mt. of Olives]."*

**Lamentations** describes what happened in the city **before it was destroyed** and at the moment of its destruction. This song was **sung** as the **captives** were **taken to Babylon**. Lamentations is written in **Qinah** meter which was used for **funeral dirges**. Its tone is that of a **lamentation over the dead**.

**Jeremiah 4:13:** **Eagles** come to destroy

*"Behold, he shall come up like clouds, and his chariots like a whirlwind. His horses are swifter than eagles. Woe to us, for we are plundered!"*

**Lamentations 4:19:** **Eagles** come to destroy

*"Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles of the heavens. They pursued us on the mountains and lay in wait for us in the wilderness."*

**Habakkuk 1:8: Eagles** come to destroy

*“Their horses also are swifter than leopards and more fierce than evening wolves. Their chargers charge ahead; their cavalry comes from afar; they fly as the eagle that hastens to eat.”*

**Daniel 7:4: Eagle’s wings**

*“The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings.”*

**Jeremiah 32:24, 25: Famine, sword and pestilence** against Jerusalem (same as Matthew 24)

*“Look, the siege mounds! They have come to the city to take it; and the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans who fight against it, because of the **sword** and **famine** and **pestilence**. What You have spoken has happened; there You see it! 25 And You have said to me, O Lord GOD, “Buy the field for money, and take witnesses!”--yet the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans.”*

**2 Chronicles 36:17-21:** Those who had the **seal were spared**. Notice how **similar this terminology** is to Ezekiel **9:1-6**. Notice the key word **“desolate”** in **verse 20**. Because of the abominations, the land is **left desolate**. This is the abomination of desolation

According to **Josephus**, the book of **Lamentations** was sung and also in **A. D. 70** when Jerusalem was destroyed

*“Therefore He brought against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had **no compassion on young man or virgin, on the aged or the weak**; He gave them all into his hand. 18 And all the articles from the house of God, great and small, the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his leaders all these he took to Babylon. 19 Then they **burned** the house of God, **broke down the wall** of Jerusalem, burned all its palaces with **fire**, and **destroyed** all its precious possessions. 20 And those who **escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon**, where they became **servants** to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, 21 to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths. As long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.”*

**Jeremiah 25:3-4:** God sent true prophets to warn God’s people of the coming doom. Jeremiah also emphasizes that there were **false prophets** who tried to **counteract** the true by saying that the city **would not be destroyed** because it was **God’s city**. This is the same as what you have in **Matthew 24**

*“From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, even to this day, this is the twenty-third year in which the word of the LORD has come to me; and I have*



*spoken to you, rising early and speaking, but you have not listened. 4 And the LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear."*

**Jeremiah 25: 8, 9, 11, 18: Abominations lead to the desolation**

*"Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Because you have not heard My words, 9 behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' says the LORD, 'and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual **desolations**. 11 And this whole land shall be a **desolation** and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 18 Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, its kings and its princes, to make them a **desolation**, an astonishment, a hissing, and a curse, as it is this day."*

**Jeremiah 17:24, 25, 27: Sabbath desecration led to the destruction of the city.**

*"And it shall be, if you heed Me carefully," says the LORD, "to bring no burden through the gates of this city on the Sabbath day, but hallow the Sabbath day, to do no work in it, 25 then shall enter the gates of this city kings and princes sitting on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they and their princes, accompanied by the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city shall remain forever. 27 But if you will not heed Me to hallow the Sabbath day, such as not carrying a burden when entering the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I will kindle a fire in its gates, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched." ' ' "*

**Nehemiah 13:15-18**

*"In those days I saw people in Judah treading wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and loading donkeys with wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. And I warned them about the day on which they were selling provisions. 16 Men of Tyre dwelt there also, who brought in fish and all kinds of goods, and sold them on the Sabbath to the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. 17 Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said to them, "What evil thing is this that you do, by which you profane the Sabbath day? 18 Did not your fathers do thus, and did not our God bring all this disaster on us and on this city? Yet you bring added wrath on Israel by profaning the Sabbath."*

**Daniel 9:1, 2: The seventy years come to an end**

*"In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans-- 2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the LORD*

*through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.”*

**Daniel 9:25-27:** Jerusalem was to remain **desolate for 70** years. Daniel prays that **God will restore**. Then God tells Daniel that Jerusalem will be **rebuilt** and then it will be destroyed a second time. Again **abominations** will lead to **desolation**. This shows that the story of the fall of Jerusalem in **586** would be **repeated in 70**. Key words: Abomination and desolation

*“Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. 26 "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. 27 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**.”*

**2 Chronicles 36:22, 23:** The **rebuilding of the temple** by Haggai

*“Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying, 23 Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah. Who is among you of all His people? May the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up!”*

**Haggai 2:6-9:** Temple **rebuilt**

*"For thus says the LORD of hosts: "Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; 7 and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,' says the LORD of hosts. 8'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' says the LORD of hosts. 9 The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the LORD of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says the LORD of hosts."*

**John 1:14:** **Shekinah** comes into the temple

*“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

**Luke 19:37, 38: Shekinah** approaches by way of the **east**

*“Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, 38 saying: " 'Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD!' Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"*

**Matthew 21:12, 13: Shekinah** enters the temple for the **last time**

*“Then Jesus went into the **temple of God** and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. 13 And He said to them, "It is written, '**My house** shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'"*

**Matthew 21:18, 19: The fig tree.** The door has closed

*“Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry. 19 And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again." And immediately the fig tree withered away.”*

**Matthew 21:33-43: Parable of the vineyard** workers

*"Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. 34 Now when vintage-time drew near, he **sent his servants** to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. 35 And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. 36 Again **he sent other servants**, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. 37 Then **last of all he sent his son** to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 38 "But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' 39 "So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. 40 Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?" 41 They said to Him, "He will **destroy those wicked men miserably**, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons." 42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?" 43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be **taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.**"*

**Matthew 23:37-39: Key word is desolate** as he leaves the temple

*"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! 38 See! Your house is left to you **desolate**; 39*

*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!' "*

**Matthew 24:1-2:** Jesus **leaves the temple** after saying that it is **desolate**. Shekinah **lingers** upon the Mount of Olives and speaks about the destruction of the city

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

**Matthew 24:15:** Emphasize this is what was spoken of by **Daniel**. Explain what the **holy place** is

*"Therefore when you see the '**abomination of desolation**,' spoken of by **Daniel** the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand)."*

**Luke 21:20:** Seeing the **armies** outside the city is the abomination of **desolation**

*"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies then know that its desolation is near."*

**Luke 19:41-44:** Prophecy of **Jesus**

In the **year 70** you have a **pagan king** coming like an **eagle** [**Matthew 24:28**] to **destroy Jerusalem**. Once again there is **hunger, pestilence and bloodshed**. Once again the book of **Lamentations** is sung

*"Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, 42 saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. 43 For days will come upon you when your **enemies** will build an **embankment** around you, **surround you** and **close you in** on every side, 44 and **level you**, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one **stone upon another**, because you did not know the **time of your visitation**."*

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## #3 - THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

### **Matthew 24:5-8: Preliminary signs**

*“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.”*

### **False Christs and False Prophets**

#### **Acts 5:36, 37: Theudas and Judas of Galilee**

*“For some time ago **Theudas** rose up, claiming to be somebody. A number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was slain, and all who obeyed him were scattered and came to nothing. 37 After this man, **Judas of Galilee** rose up in the days of the census, and drew away many people after him. He also perished, and all who obeyed him were dispersed.”*

#### **Acts 8:9, 10: Simon Magus**

*“But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, 10 to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is **the great power of God.**"*

*“Many **false messiahs** will appear, claiming to work miracles, and declaring that the time of the **deliverance** of the **Jewish nation** has come. These will mislead many. Christ's words were fulfilled. Between His death and the siege of Jerusalem **many false messiahs** appeared.” Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 628*

*“Moreover, **impostors** and **deceivers** called upon the mob to follow them into the desert. For they said that they would show them unmistakable marvels and signs that would be wrought in harmony with God's design.” Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 20:5:6*

*“Deceivers and impostors under the pretense of **divine inspiration** fostering revolutionary changes, they persuaded the multitude to act like madmen, and led them out into the **desert** under the belief that God would there give them **tokens of deliverance.**”* Flavius Josephus, Wars of the Jews 2:13:4

*“In Judea matters were constantly going from bad to worse. For the country was again infested with bands of brigands and **impostors** who deceived the mob.”* Flavius Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, 20:5:5

### **Wars, Rumors of Wars and Social Unrest**

Jesus was born in a time of **unparalleled peace** in the history of the Roman Empire. The **Pax Romana** (Roman Peace) began with Augustus in **17 B. C.** and continued until the time of Nero. Nero, in **67 A. D.**, commissioned the Roman General **Vespasian** to quench the revolt of Israel which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem in **70 A. D.**

**Vespasian** destroyed **everything** in his path before he arrived in Jerusalem because it was **his strategy** “to leave nothing outside of Jerusalem behind him that might interrupt in the siege.” (Wars 4:7:3).

Thus there were **many wars** outside Jerusalem before the siege.

*“Prior to the destruction of Jerusalem, men wrestled for the supremacy. **Emperors** were murdered. Those supposed to be standing next the throne were **slain**. There were **wars** and **rumors of wars**.”* Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, p. 628

The **Jews had battles** with the Askelonians, the Samaritans, the Alexandrians and the Syrians during the period which led up to the destruction of Jerusalem.

Regarding the period **after Nero**, **Tacitus (55-117)** wrote:

*“The history on which I am entering is that of a period rich in disasters, terrible in **battles**, torn by **civil struggles**, horrible even in peace. Four emperors failed by the sword; there were **three civil wars**, more **foreign wars** and often both at the same time.”* Tacitus, Histories 1:2

**Josephus** affirmed that “all was in disorder after the death of Nero.” (Wars 1:1:2)

### **Famines and Pestilence**

#### **Acts 11:28: Agabus and the great famine**

*“Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a **great famine** throughout all the **world**, which also happened in the days of **Claudius Caesar**. “*

**Josephus** called this “*the great famine*” Antiquities of the Jews 20:5:2

**Josephus** mentioned **other famines** as well (Antiquities 20:2:6; 20:4:2; Wars 6:3:3

*“Thousands perished from **famine and pestilence**. Natural affection seemed to have been destroyed. Husbands robbed their wives, and wives their husbands. Children would be seen snatching the food from the mouths of their aged parents.” Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 32*

**Lamentations 4:10: Mothers** ate their children

*“The hands of the compassionate women have **cooked their own children**; they became food for them in the destruction of the daughter of my people.”*

**Deuteronomy 28:56, 57: Mothers** to eat children

*“The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her delicateness and sensitivity, will refuse to the husband of her bosom, and to her son and her daughter, 57 her placenta which comes out from between her feet and her children whom she bears; for **she will eat them secretly** for lack of everything in **the siege** and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.”*

*“So fierce were the pangs of hunger that men would gnaw the **leather of their belts and sandals** and the covering of their **shields**. Great numbers of the people would steal out at night to gather wild plants growing outside the city walls, though many were **seized and put to death** with cruel torture, and often those who returned in safety were **robbed** of what they had gleaned at so great peril.” Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p 31*

### **Earthquakes and Supernatural Phenomena**

**Tacitus**, in his famous Annals, describes **earthquakes** in **Crete, Rome, Apamea, Phrygia, Campania, Laodicea and Pompeii** just before the destruction of Jerusalem. Tacitus, Annals 2:47; 12:43, 58; 14:27; 15:22

**Tacitus** described a series of quakes during the reign of **Claudius**:

*“Houses were flattened by repeated earthquakes, and as terror spread, the weak were trampled to death by the panic stricken.” Tacitus, Annals 12:58*

**Seneca** says that quakes occurred in **Asia, Achaia, Syria and Macedonia** (Epistles, 91)

*“Perhaps **no period in the world’s history** has ever been so marked by these convulsions [earthquakes] as that which intervenes between the Crucifixion and the destruction of Jerusalem.” Ellicot’s Commentary, volume 6, p. 146*

During the **first phase** of the Jewish war with Rome, **Josephus** explained that

*“There broke out a prodigious storm in the night, with the utmost violence, and very strong winds, with the largest showers of rain, and continual **lightnings**, terrible **thunderings**, and amazing concussions and **bellowings** of the earth, that was in an earthquake.”* Flavius Josephus, Wars of the Jews 4:4:5

**Josephus** could read the signs of the times:

*“These things were a manifest indication that some **destruction was coming** upon men, when the system of the world was put into this disorder; and anyone would guess that these wonders foreshadowed **some grand calamities that were coming**.”* (Wars 4:4:5)

## Civil Unrest

**Mark 13:8: Troubles, riots, tumult or civil unrest.** Same word used for the tumult when Jesus was **crucified**

*“For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and **troubles**. These are the beginnings of sorrows.”*

There was a tremendous increase **messianic movement** that centered in the **Judean Wilderness**.

For example, under the **reign of Felix**, **Josephus** tells us of a succession of “deceivers and impostors” who “*fomented revolutionary changes under the pretext of divine inspiration.*”

*“Satan aroused the fiercest and most debased passions of the soul. Men did not reason; they were beyond reason--controlled by **impulse** and **blind rage**. They became **satanic** in their cruelty. In the family and **in the nation**, among the highest and the lowest classes alike, there was **suspicion, envy, hatred, strife, rebellion, murder**. There was **no safety anywhere**. Friends and kindred betrayed one another. Parents slew their children and children their parents.”* Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 28

Jesus now says: “**You haven’t seen anything yet** when these signs take place. “The end is **not yet**” and these are but “the **beginning** of sorrows.” Jesus is saying that the **worst is yet to come**. The real trial awaits God’s people as **they are blamed** for the beginning of sorrows!! There is a **hidden agenda** behind all these problems. What is the secret agenda?

## “Then” God’s People Blamed

**Matthew 24:9: Persecution.** God’s people **blamed** for what is in **verses 6-8**.

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



**Acts 5:41: Peter and John** beaten for the sake of the name of Jesus

*“And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame **for his name.**”*

**Acts 8:1: Great persecution in Jerusalem** for the sake of the name of Jesus

*“Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time **a great persecution** arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.”*

Acts 7:59 **Stephen** killed for the sake of the name of Jesus

*“And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, **“Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”**”*

Acts 9:4: **Saul persecuted** Jesus in the person of His witnesses

*“Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, **“Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?”**”*

**John 16:1, 2: They shall kill you**

*“These things I have spoken to you that you should not be made to stumble. **2** They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.”*

*“First, Nero had self-acknowledged Christians arrested. Then, on their information, **large numbers of others** were condemned.” Tacitus (Annals 15)*

Peter was crucified and Paul was beheaded. Caiaphas expressed it well:

**Appearing before Rulers and Kings**

**Mark 13:9: Councils synagogues, rulers and kings**

*“But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them.”*

**Acts 24:24, 25: Paul before Felix**

*“And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. **25** Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, **“Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you.”**”*

### **Acts 26:1-3: Paul before Agrippa**

*“Then Agrippa said to Paul, “You are permitted to speak for yourself.” So Paul stretched out his hand and answered for himself: 2 I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because today I shall answer for myself before you concerning all the things of which I am accused by the Jews, 3 especially because you are expert in all customs and questions which have to do with the Jews. Therefore I beg you to hear me patiently.”*

Ellen White adds that **Paul** also witnessed before **Nero** (AA 492-497)

### **Aided by the Holy Spirit**

#### **Mark 13:11: The aid of the Holy Spirit in witnessing**

*“But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the **Holy Spirit**.”*

#### **Luke 21:14, 15: God gives wisdom which enemies shall not be able to contradict**

*“Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; 15 for I will give you **a mouth and wisdom** which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist.”*

### **Hated and Forsaken even by Friends and Relatives**

#### **Mark 13:12: Betrayed by your own kin**

*“Now brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death”.*

#### **Luke 21:16: Betrayed by own kin**

*“You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death.”*

#### **Matthew 10:34-36: Hated by own kin**

*“Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. 35 For I have come to ‘set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’; 36 and ‘a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.’*

*“**Fathers and mothers** betrayed their children. **Children** betrayed their parents. **Friends delivered their friends** up to the Sanhedrin. The persecutors wrought out their purpose by killing Stephen, James, and other Christians.” Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, p. 629*

### **Many Offended (a shaking out among God’s people)**

**Matthew 24:10:** Many **fall away** under the **pressure**

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

The context indicates that they are offended or fall away **because of persecution**

**2 Timothy 4:10: Demas**

*“. . . for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica. . .”*

**2 Timothy 4:16: No one with Paul**

*“At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them.”*

**I John 2:19:** Many left who were **not of us**

*“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.”*

**False Prophets**

**Matthew 24:11: False prophets**

*“Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.”*

**False prophets** (in line with the false prophets who prophesied **“peace, peace”** at the **first destruction** of Jerusalem), would preach peace, peace and that Jerusalem would **not fall**.

*“**False prophets** did rise, deceiving the people, and leading great numbers into the desert. **Magicians** and **sorcerers**, claiming miraculous power, drew the people after them into the mountain solitudes.” Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 631*

The **religious leaders** *“bribed **false prophets** to proclaim, even while Roman legions were besieging the temple, that the people were to **wait for deliverance** from God.”* Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 29

*“Now it came to pass, while Fadus was procurator in Judea, that a certain magician, whose name was Theudas, persuaded a great part of the people to take their effects with them, and follow him to the river Jordan; for he told them he was **a prophet**, and that he would, by his own command, divide the river, and afford them passage over it; and many were deluded by his words.” Flavius Josephus, *Wars of the Jews* 6:5:2*

Acts 13:6: **Bar-Jesus**

*“Now when they had gone through the island to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus”*

**II Peter 2:1: False prophets and teachers**

*“But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.”*

**I John 4:1: Many false prophets in the world**

*“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”*

**Matthew 24:12: Lawlessness.**

Emphasize the meaning of *anomias*. Connect with **Matthew 7:21-23**. They must have had hot *agape* at one time. They must have rejoiced in the truth and **turned away** from it.

*“And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.”*

**Matthew 24:13: A call for endurance**

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

The **context** is important here. There are **three things** in the previous context which would **eliminate endurance**: **Persecution** by kindred (24:9, 10), **deception** by false prophets (24:11), and **love growing cold** (24:12). Those who persevere till the end and do **not fall** because of persecution and false prophets and love growing cold will be saved.

**Luke 21:19: Patience**

*“By your patience possess your souls.”* (see also **James 1:3** where we are told that the trying of our faith works patience)

**Preaching the Gospel to the World**

**Matthew 24:14**: The preaching of the **gospel**. The word “world” here is *oikoumene* which refers to the **inhabited Roman world**. The same word as in **Luke 2:1** where Cesar Augustus gave a decree that the whole world should be taxed (see also, Acts 24:5). In Revelation this word is translated **“those who dwell on the earth.”**

*“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.”*

**Colossians 1:23:** Gospel to the **whole world**

*“. . . if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.”*

**Romans 1:8:** Faith heard in the **whole world**

*“First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.”*

**The Abomination of Desolation**

**Matthew 24:15:** Where in Daniel do we find a reference to these two key words: **Abomination** and **desolation**? The abomination of desolation is something you can **see**, it is **not the destruction itself** because if it was the destruction, how could you flee? There is something which those who are inside the holy city **can see** and which **becomes a sign** to flee.

*"Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the **holy place**" (whoever reads, let him understand)."*

**Daniel 9:26, 27** (we must go **back to Daniel** to see what the abomination of desolation is, so let's go back). God gives the Jewish nation 490 years to repent.

*"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. 27 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**."*

Remember **Matthew 23:38, 39**

**Mark 13:14**

*"So when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where **it ought not**" (let the reader understand), "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains."*

**Luke 21:20:**

*"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by **armies**, then know that its **desolation** is near."*

Notice that the abomination is the **surrounding of the city** by the armies. Thus the holy place would have to be **outside the city** rather than being the temple or the city itself. Furthermore, God's people were told by Jesus **to flee** when they **saw the Roman eagles**. They would not be able to flee if the city was then **being destroyed!** Thus the eagle standards were the **harbinger or omen** of the destruction of the city.

**Josephus** explains that **Titus** actually built *"a wall round about the whole city."* (Wars 5:12:1)

Luke 19:41-44 (**National apostasy** would lead to **national ruin**).

*"Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, 42 saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, **the things that make for your peace!** But now they are hidden from your eyes. 43 **For days will come** upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, 44 and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."*

*"When the **idolatrous standards of the Romans** should be set up in the **holy ground**, which extended some furlongs outside the city walls, then the followers of Christ were to find safety in flight. When the warning sign should be seen, those who would **escape must make no delay.**" Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 26*

*"It [the gospel] penetrated into regions that were inaccessible even to the **eagles of Rome.**" Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 41*

The official standard of the **Roman legions** when Jerusalem was surrounded was the **eagle**.

Until the **year 104** various animals had been on the standards including the **bull**, the **snake**, the **lion** and the **vulture**.

In the **year 63** these standards were **deified** by the Roman general **Pompeii**. The eagle standard was in honor of the **sun-god Mithra**, a god whom Pompeii adopted during a military campaign in **Asia Minor**.

This was the god whom **Constantine** the Great worshipped as well. Constantine called this god **Deus Sol Invictus**. The eagle standard became a symbol of the **invincibility of Rome**. As the sun **defeated darkness**, so Rome defeated their enemies.

The eagle had its head **facing right**, **wings outstretched**, **golden wreath** surrounding it (representing the **orb of the sun**) and **arrows** in its talons (Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, volume 1, p. 347).

Josephus tells us that when the Romans surrounded Jerusalem they **offered sacrifices** to and **worshiped** their eagle/sun standards.

*“Then came the ensigns encompassing the eagle, which is at the **head of every Roman legion**, the king, and the strongest of all birds, which seems to them a signal of dominion, and an omen that they **shall conquer all** against whom they march.” Flavius Josephus, Wars of the Jews 3:6:2*

**I Peter 5:13: Rome is called Babylon.** So it was the **new Babylon** which destroyed Jerusalem in **A. D. 70** just as Babylon had destroyed Jerusalem in **B. C. 586**. The **eagles were gathered in both destructions**

**Matthew 24:28:** Where the **carcass** is, there will the **eagles** be gathered together  
*“She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you; and so does Mark my son.”*

**A temporary retreat:**

*“After the Romans under Cestius had surrounded the city, they unexpectedly abandoned the siege when everything seemed favorable for an immediate attack. The besieged, despairing of successful resistance, were on the point of surrender, when the Roman general withdrew his forces, without the least apparent reason.” Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 30*

**Ellen White** concurred with what was stated by Josephus:

*“. . . without having received any disgrace, he [Cestius] retired from the city, without any reason in the world.” Flavius Josephus, Wars of the Jews 2:19:7*

They were then **pursued by the Jews** who thought that God had **miraculously intervened**. The **Roman army suffered many losses**. The **false prophets** were now telling the people “we told you that God would deliver us from our enemies.” But then the Roman armies **came back** and **destroyed the city** and more than one million Jews perished.

**Matthew 24:16-18:** God’s people were now **able to flee unhindered** by the Jews or the Romans

*“. . . **then** let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17 Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. 18 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.”*

*“But God’s merciful providence was directing events for the good of His own people. The promised sign had been given to the waiting Christians, and now an opportunity was offered for all who would, to obey the Savior’s warning.” Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 30*

**Later Vespasian and then Titus** returned to Jerusalem and there was **no retreat**. God's people **had seen the eagles** of Rome surround the city and they **escaped**. Thus the **final test** was what was done when the **sign was seen**. The seeing of the abomination of the desolation was the final test that **separated the righteous from the unrighteous**. At the end the sign will be **Sunday**, imposed by the power who set up the abomination of desolation **during the middle Ages** by changing God's holy law. When God's people see it, they **will flee** and the whole world will be divided into **two groups**. Notice that **most of those who claimed to follow God** were deceived and ended up on the wrong side.

Immediately after God's **people escape**, there is a terrible time of **tribulation** in Matthew 24.

Josephus explains that **1.1 million Jews** perished in the destruction of Jerusalem (Wars 6:9:3) and yet **not one Christian** perished!!

*"Not one Christian perished in the destruction of Jerusalem." Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 30*

There was a **faithful remnant** just as in the days of **Ezekiel**, who were preserved. Most Jews were **oblivious to the sign** because they paid no heed to Jesus. They were not watching the **signs of the times**. Those who paid heed to Jesus saw the sign and fled and saved their lives.

Josephus about the destruction and desolation of Jerusalem:

*"The misfortunes of all men, **from the beginning** of the world, if they be compared to these of the Jews, are not considerable as they were." (Wars, Preface, 4).*

Notice the expression "from the beginning of the world" which Jesus uses in Matthew 24.

**Matthew 24:20:** Those who saw the sign and fled were **observers of the Sabbath**.

*"And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the **Sabbath**."*

**National apostasy** led to **national ruin**. They thought that by **getting rid of Jesus and His followers** they would save Jerusalem but instead by slaying Jesus and his followers they brought **destruction upon Jerusalem**.

**John 11:48-51**

*"If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation." 49 And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, 50 nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish."*



# STUDIES ON MATTHEW 24

by Stephen Bohr

## #4 - THE EAGLE'S OMEN

Review **sequence** of events in **Matthew 24:5-20**: False christs

- False **christs** and prophets, many **deceived** (deception)
- **Disasters** (plan to blame God's people he couldn't deceive)
- **Persecution** (little time of trouble)
- Standing before **magistrates**
- Power of the **Holy Spirit** (latter rain)
- Powerful message (**loud cry**)
- **Shaking** (many **offended**)
- **Families** turn of families
- **False prophets**
- **Love** waxing cold (delay leads to give up)
- **Patience** needed
- **Preaching** of the gospel to the world
- **Abomination of desolation**
- **Tribulation**

This **same sequence** of events is presented by Ellen White as taking place in the **end-time** with God's **spiritual Israel** who are in **spiritual Jerusalem** and are found in every corner of the earth. Notice how she portrays the **identical sequence** of events as we studied in **Matthew 24:5-20**

### False Christ's (preliminary)

*"False prophets did rise, deceiving the people, and leading great numbers into the desert. Magicians and sorcerers, claiming miraculous power, drew the people after them into the mountain solitudes. But this prophecy was spoken **also for the last days.**" Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 631*

- **David Koresh**
- **Jim Jones**
- **Jose Luis de Jesus Miranda** (Puerto Rican with headquarters in Miami. His pulpit has **SSS** which is the number 666. He has told his followers to wear the number **666**.)

## **Wars, pestilence, earthquakes, hunger**

*“In the last scenes of this earth's history **war** will rage. There will be **pestilence, plague and famine**. The waters of the deep will overflow their boundaries. Property and life will be destroyed by **fire and flood**.” Ellen G. White, Last Day Events, p. 24*

*“It is his object to incite the **nations to war** against one another, for he can thus divert the minds of the people from the work of preparation to stand in the day of God. . . While appearing to the children of men as a great physician who can heal all their maladies, he will bring **disease** and disaster, until populous cities are reduced to ruin and desolation. Even now he is at work. In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great **conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes**, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the ripening harvest, and **famine** and distress follow. He imparts to the air a deadly taint, and thousands perish by the **pestilence**. These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous.” Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 589*

## **God's people blamed as in Elijah's day**

*“And **then** the great deceiver will persuade men that **those who serve God** are causing these evils. The class that has provoked the displeasure of Heaven will charge all their troubles upon those whose **obedience to God's commandments** is a perpetual reproof to transgressors.” Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 590*

*“Satan puts his interpretation upon events, and they think, as he would have them, that the calamities which fill the land are a result of **Sunday-breaking**. Thinking to appease the wrath of God these influential men make laws enforcing Sunday observance.” Last Day Events, p. 129*

We will then have to stand before rulers and kings

## **Standing before rulers and magistrates**

*“We shall have to stand before **magistrates** to answer for our allegiance to the law of God, to make known the reasons of our faith. And the youth should understand these things.” Testimonies for the Church, volume 6, pp. 128, 129*

*“Many will have to stand in the **legislative courts**; some will have to stand before **kings** and before the **learned** of the earth, to answer for their faith. Those who have only a superficial understanding of truth will not be able clearly to expound the Scriptures, and give definite reasons for their faith.” Ellen G. White, Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 217*

*“It does not seem possible to us now that any should have to stand alone, but if God has ever spoken by me, the time will come when we shall be brought before **councils** and before thousands for His name's sake, and each one will have to give the reason of his faith. Then will come the **severest criticism** upon every position that has been taken for the truth. We need, then, to study the Word of God, that we may **know why we believe the doctrines** we advocate.” Last Day Events, p. 209*

### **Aid of the Holy Spirit to speak**

*“Those who receive Christ as a personal Savior will stand the test of trial in **these last days**. . . The Lord Jesus will give the disciples a **tongue and wisdom** that their adversaries can neither **gainsay nor resist**. Those who could not by reasoning overcome Satanic delusions, will bear an affirmative testimony that will baffle supposedly learned men. Words will come from the lips of the unlearned with such **convincing power and wisdom** that conversions will be made to the truth. Thousands will be converted under their testimony. Ellen G. White, Manuscript Releases, volume 8, p. 187*

### **Many Offended (the shaking)**

Many will be **offended**. The word offended means that they will **forsake the faith** they once embraced. This is the consistent use in the Gospels (Matthew 13:21; 26:31; John 16:1, 2).

*“As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, **abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition**. . . Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the **most bitter** enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbath keepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them.” Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 608*

### **Betrayed by friends and relatives**

*“**Friends** will prove treacherous and will **betray us**. **Relatives**, deceived by the enemy, will think they do God service in opposing us and putting forth the utmost efforts to bring us into hard places, hoping we will deny our faith.” Last Day Events, p. 150, 151*

*“Those who are true to God will be menaced, denounced, proscribed. They will be **“betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends,” even unto death.**” Luke 21:16.” Prophets and Kings, p. 588*

*“Family connections, church relations, are powerless to stay them now. Truth is more precious than all besides. Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, a large number take their stand upon the Lord's side.” Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 612*

**Iniquity causes the love of many to wax cold. They are swept away by the wickedness of the world**

*“There will be a **shaking** of the sieve. The **chaff must in time be separated** from the wheat. Because iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold. It is the very time when the genuine will be the strongest.” Last Day Events, p. 173*

*“I was shown that the Spirit of the Lord is being withdrawn from the earth. God's keeping power will soon be refused to all who continue to disregard His commandments. The reports of fraudulent transactions, murders and crimes of every kind are coming to us daily. **Iniquity is becoming so common a thing** that it no longer shocks the senses as it once did.” Last Day Events, p. 27*

*“The Lord Jesus, on the Mount of Olives, plainly stated that “because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.” He speaks of a class who have **fallen from a high state of spirituality**. Let such utterances as these come home with solemn, searching power to our hearts. Where is the fervor, the devotion to God that corresponds to the greatness of the truth which we claim to believe? The love of the **world**, the love of some **darling sin**, has weaned the heart from the love of prayer and of meditation on sacred things. A **formal round of religious services** is kept up; but where is the love of Jesus? **Spirituality is dying.**” Lift Him Up, p. 310*

*“And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.” The very atmosphere is polluted with sin. Soon God's people will be tested by fiery trials, and the **great proportion of those who now appear to be genuine and true** will prove to be base metal. Instead of being strengthened and confirmed by opposition, threats, and abuse, they will **cowardly** take the side of the opposers. . . . To stand in the defense of truth and righteousness when the **majority forsake us**, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few--this will be our test. At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason.” Sons and Daughters of God, p. 201*

**Patience (endurance because of (1) deception, (2) persecution and (3) love waxing cold)**

## Revelation 14:12

*“Here is the **patience** of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.”*

The story of the widow in **Luke 18:1-8**

## The Final Preaching of the Gospel

**Matthew 24:14; Revelation 14:6:** Both have the **gospel** to **all** and then the **end** comes. But Revelation 14 continues with additional truth in verses 7-12

*“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.”*

*“Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting **gospel** to preach to those who dwell on the earth--to every **nation**, tribe, tongue, and people-- 7 saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”*

*“In the prophecy of Jerusalem's destruction Christ said, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." **This prophecy will again be fulfilled. The abounding iniquity of that day finds its counterpart in this generation. So with the prediction in regard to the preaching of the gospel. Before the fall of Jerusalem, Paul, writing by the Holy Spirit, declared that the gospel was preached to "every creature which is under heaven." Col. 1:23. So now, before the coming of the Son of man, the everlasting gospel is to be preached "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." Rev. 14:6, 14.** DA 633*

## The Sun and the Eagle

Review eagles of Rome: eagle **facing right, golden wreath, arrows** in its talons representing the **sun god** Mythra. The sun and the wings of an eagle are linked even in the Bible (**Malachi 4:1**)

## The abomination of desolation in prophecy: the eagle of the United States

- Study the one **dollar bill**
- The **Great Seal** or **State of Arms** is the **official emblem** of the United States. All **judicial, legislative and executive** proclamations bear this seal. It **certifies** and **authenticates** all **official acts** of the Federal government. It must appear on all its authoritative **laws and statutes** (Quaife, Weig and Appleman, The History of the United States Flag, p. 115)

- **On July 4, 1776** a **Great Seal Committee** composed of Benjamin **Franklin**, Thomas **Jefferson** and John **Adams** was formed to adopt a **national seal**. Being a peace loving guy Franklin wanted a **turkey**.
- The proceedings were **tabled** after a lengthy discussion.
- **Three** additional committees convened and the present seal was finally adopted on **June 28, 1872**.
- Thus the Great Seal is not a **recent innovation** but goes back to the very **roots** of the republic

### The Obverse Side of the Seal

- The **contents**: on the **obverse side** (front side) we have an **eagle** with **outstretched wings**, a **sun burst** breaking through the clouds above its head. It has 13 **arrows** in its talons (**muskets** were used at this time, not bows and arrows)
- *“In a large number of lands the sun is associated no so much with independence but with the promises it brings in the ‘dawn of a new day.’” (Whitney Smith, Flags, p. 314)*
- At the end of the **Constitutional Convention in 1787** in **Philadelphia** a **special chair** was prepared for George Washington to sit in. It was called **“the rising sun chair.”** On the **backrest** is a beautifully **carved** rising sun. **Benjamin Franklin** made a very interesting comment about the chair at the conclusion of the convention: *“I have often. . . looked at that (sun) behind the president without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting; but now at length I have the happiness to know that it is a rising and not a setting sun.”*
- In other words, the rising sun represented **dawn of a new era of peace and prosperity** for the newborn nation.
- At the end, **Ellen White** says that the imposition of the **day of the sun** will be understood as the secret to return to the **peace and prosperity** that the United States once enjoyed when it was founded (GC 588-589)
- Some might think that the **similarities** between the **ancient pagan Roman standards** and the Great Seal are merely **coincidental**. After all, the two countries differ so much in **time, culture, language and religion**.
- But the (1) **two-fold application** of Matthew 24 to Rome and the end of time, (2) the **testimony of the United States** itself that it got these emblems from Rome and the (3) testimony of **Ellen White** all show that the connection is **not accidental**.
- *“The neo-classical spirit of America at the end of the eighteenth century looked to the **ancient Roman Republic** for many symbols, including the name of the **Upper Chamber** of Congress (the Senate). In Rome the **eagle** began as a republican symbol; hence Americans chose their native bald eagle for the National Arms in 1782.” (Whitney Smith, Flags through the Ages and Across the World, p. 314)*

## The Reverse Side of the Seal

- On the reverse side is an unfinished **ziggurat** and above it is the **all seeing eye of providence** with **sun rays** bursting from it. The **unfinished pyramid** has **thirteen strata**, a definite occult number. The **eye of providence** is a **Masonic symbol** (who claim to go back to the **masons of Solomon's Temple**) of Lucifer, the **great architect** of the universe.
- Tell about the Masonic Temple in **Haverstraw**, New York.
- **Henry Wallace**, a **32<sup>nd</sup> degree** mason and **vice-president under Roosevelt** suggested that the Great Seal be placed **on a coin**. Instead, the Great Seal was placed on the **one dollar bill** by President **Franklin Delano Roosevelt**, a **32<sup>nd</sup> degree** mason in **1935**. Tell also about the same emblem in the **cathedral at Worms**.
- The inscriptions are interesting. All three of them are in **Latin** (*Novus Ordo Seclorum, Annuit Coeptis, e Pluribus Unum*), the language of ancient Rome.
- The year **1776** is in **Roman numerals** at the **base** of the pyramid
- The **architecture** in Washington D. C. is Roman
- The city is filled to **monuments** to its **heroes** and institutions as was ancient Rome
- The **inscriptions** and **dates** on the buildings and monuments is usually in **Latin**
- The **Upper Chamber** of Congress is called the **Senate** and its leaders are called **Senators**.
- In the **wars of independence** the troops of the United States were not called armies but rather **legions**. We still talk about the American Legion.
- **General Knox** suggested that a **super flag** with a **life sized eagle** be made which would be called "**the Standard of the Legion**." Though the flag was never made, it shows the fascination of the early republic with Rome.
- A similar flag was made in **1791** which was called "**The Standard of the Eagle**". It has an eagle **facing right** with **arrows** in the talons, **wings outspread**, and a **huge sun burst** flashing forth from its body.
- There are **dozens of flags** in early **constitutional America** with eagles and sun bursts.

- Someone might say: **What right** do you have to connect the **Roman Eagle with the Eagle of the United States?** They are so **separated in time and place**.
- Wouldn't we have to connect the **English lion** with the Babylonian lion, the **Russian bear** with the Medo-Persian Bear, the **Chinese dragon** with the Roman dragon, etc.?

#### Wrong on several counts:

1. England and Russia **don't claim** to have gotten their **symbols** from Babylon and Medo-persia
2. There is **no historical connection** between the **religion** of ancient **Babylon and England**, the religion of **Russia and ancient Medo-persia** and the religion of **Rome and China**.
3. Matthew 24 makes it clear that there is a **double application**. So if in Rome we have an **eagle and a sun** as the abomination that led to desolation, we would expect the **same at the end** because the prophecy demands it.

#### The Process of Transmission

- There is a direct **chain of transmission** of the sun god from **Babylon**
- **Pergamum** in Asia Minor
- **Pompeii** the Roman general who was on a **military expedition** in the year **63 B. C.**
- The **early church Fathers** began to celebrate Sunday in honor of the **resurrection** early in the second century.
- **Constantine** who worshiped the sun god as *Deus Sol Invictus* merged the worship of the **sun god** with the observance of Sunday in honor of the resurrection. He worshiped **the sun** and Christians worshiped on the **day of the sun**. He, being a **shrewd politician** and an **opportunist** saw that he could **merge** the two for the **unity of the empire**. So Sunday, which was already being kept in **honor of the resurrection** of Jesus, became a point of **common ground**. He gave the **first Sunday law** (in **321**) which was **civil** but then in **Constantinople** in **381** it became **religious**.
- **Papal Rome** (claims **Sunday worship** is her creation and has **sun-bursts** everywhere the eye turns)



- Protestantism who also honors Sunday because of the resurrection. This was transferred via the **Puritans from Europe** to the United States. It was strictly enforced in **Colonial America with Blue Laws**. They did exactly what they had learned from the Roman Catholic Church in Europe—use the state to enforce religious observances.
- Thus the pagan Sunday has been **transmitted in unbroken succession** from Babylon to the end-time Babylon.
- Interesting that **Rome was called Babylon** (I Peter 5:13) and the **end time apostate power** is also called Babylon. This shows that all was transmitted from ancient **Babylon to modern Babylon**.
- The United States will **repudiate its Constitution** and go back to enforcing **Sunday by law** as happened in the **colonial period**. You say: “This could never happen.” If you don’t think so don’t miss the **next lecture**.
- The United States will **get its mandate** to enforce Sunday from the Roman Catholic Church (they will make an **image of and to** the beast and will enforce the **mark of the beast** in its presence according to Revelation 13) The process is contemplated in Revelation 13:2.
- The **dragon** (who got the day of the sun from Babylon via **Pergamum**) gave its throne, power and authority (via **Pergamum**) to the **beast** and then the **false prophet** makes an image to the beast.
- The Sunday law will be sealed with the **Great Seal of the United States—a Roman symbol**.
- Is it **the same** to worship the sun as it is to worship on the Sunday?

#### **Revelation has the same sequence of events as Matthew 24**

1. All sealed or marked with the mark of the beast (Revelation 13-14)
2. The close of probation (Revelation 15:5-8)
3. The great tribulation (Revelation 16-18)
4. The second coming of Jesus (Revelation 19:11-21)

*“When **the land** which the Lord provided as an asylum for His people, that they might worship Him according to the dictates of their own consciences, **the land** over which for long years the **shield of Omnipotence** has been spread, **the land** which God has favored by making it the **depository** of the pure religion of Christ--when **that land** shall, through its legislators, abjure the principles of Protestantism, and give countenance to **Romish apostasy** in tampering with God's law--it is then that the final work of the man of sin will*

be revealed. Protestants will throw their whole influence and strength on the side of the Papacy; by a **national act** enforcing the false sabbath, they will **give life and vigor** to the **corrupt faith of Rome**, **reviving** her tyranny and oppression of conscience. Then it will be time for God to work in mighty power for the vindication of His truth.” Maranatha, p. 179

“By the decree enforcing the institution of the papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation will **disconnect herself fully** [like ancient Israel] from righteousness. When **Protestantism** shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the **Roman power**, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall **repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and republican government**, and shall make provision for the propagation of **papal falsehoods** and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near.

“As the approach of the **Roman armies** was a **sign** to the disciples of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, so may **this apostasy** be a **sign** to us that the limit of God's forbearance is reached, that the measure of our nation's iniquity is full, and that the **angel of mercy** is about to take her flight, never to return [like with Israel before Jerusalem was destroyed]. The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of **affliction and distress** which prophets have described as the **time of Jacob's trouble**. The cries of the faithful, persecuted ones ascend to heaven. And as the blood of Abel cried from the ground, there are voices also crying to God from martyrs' graves, from the sepulchers of the sea, from mountain caverns, from convent vaults: "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Testimonies for the Church, volume 5, p. 451

“The time is not far distant, when, like the early disciples, we shall be forced to seek a refuge in desolate and solitary places. **As the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman armies was the signal for flight to the Judean Christians**, so the assumption of power on the part of our nation in the decree enforcing the papal sabbath will be a warning to us. It will then be time to leave the large cities, preparatory to leaving the smaller ones for retired homes in **secluded places among the mountains**. And now, instead of seeking expensive dwellings here, we should be preparing to move to a better country, even a heavenly. Instead of spending our means in self-gratification, we should be studying to economize.” Testimonies for the Church, volume 5, pp. 464, 465

“The people of the United States have been a favored people, but when they restrict religious liberty, surrender Protestantism, and give countenance to popery, the measure of their guilt will be full, and "**national apostasy**" will be registered in the books of heaven.” Last Day Events, p. 133

*“When our nation, in its legislative councils, shall enact laws to bind the consciences of men in regard to their religious privileges, enforcing Sunday observance, and bringing oppressive power to bear against those who keep the seventh-day Sabbath, the law of God will, to all intents and purposes, be made void in our land, and **national apostasy** [abomination] will be followed by **national ruin** [desolation].” Last Day Events, pp. 133, 134*

Matthew 24:20: Those who **flee** are **Sabbath keepers**

This nation, like Israel, has been **chosen by the providence** of God to fulfill a special plan in the protection and proliferation of truth. It has **worldwide influence** so that the truth could be preached to **every nation** upon the earth. It has a **Constitution** which guarantees **religious and civil liberty** to perform the task of **preaching**. But when this nation repudiates its constitution and commits the greatest abomination, which is the **observance of Sunday by law** [like they were worshipping the sun in Ezekiel], then God will write “**national apostasy**” in the ledger of heaven and this will be followed by **national ruin**.

Matthew 24:17: Flight is picked up in **Luke 17:31, 32** and applied to the end time. Remember Lot’s wife. She loved Sodom more than she loved the Lord

Comparison of Jerusalem and the world **after probation closes**.

*“When He leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor. The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and **Satan has entire control** of the finally impenitent. God's long-suffering has ended. The world has rejected His mercy, despised His love, and trampled upon His law. The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation; the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn. **Unsheltered by divine grace**, they have no protection from the wicked one. Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final **trouble**. As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, **all the elements of strife will be let loose**. The whole world will be involved in **ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old**.” The Great Controversy, p. 614*



# STUDIES ON MATTHEW 24

by Stephen Bohr

## #5 - HARBINGER OF THE FUTURE

Tell the story of the **first siege** of Jerusalem and how **Cestius Gallus** retreated and this was the signal that God's people had a **period of respite** to get out of the doomed city and how later **Titus came back** and now there was no retreat.

### Sources for our study:

- **5T 711-718** (on the National Reform Movement)
- **GC**: Chapter titled "**The Impending Conflict**"
- **Civil Government and Religion** by A. T. Jones
- **Views of National Reform** (Essays written by Jones and Waggoner)
- **The National Sunday Law** (the minutes of the actual hearing of A. T. Jones before the United States Senate **Education Committee**. This is a powerful book which provides the **arguments of A. T. Jones**. He was **interrupted repeatedly** by Senator Blair. We must study this book carefully because **the arguments** which Jones used we will have to use **again**)

### Origin of the National Reform Movement

National Reform Association organized in **1864**

Its objective was to first of all bring the idea into the **Constitution** that this is a **Christian Nation**. A kindred idea was to **change the Constitution** of the United States and secure a **national Sunday law**.

The **First National Convention** of the National Reform Association was held in **Allegheny, Pennsylvania** on **January 27, 28, 1864**

The Association had **120 vice-presidents** [interesting in the light of the **120 satraps** in the kingdom of Medo-Persia before Daniel was thrown into the lion's den, **Daniel 6:1**]

**The Christian Statesman** [the official publication of the Association] for **December 24, 1885** said that among the 120 were **fifteen college professors, sixteen college presidents, three ex-governors, seven justices** of Supreme Courts, **five judges** of superior courts, **two judges** of the United States district court, **one judge** of the United States circuit court with such a number of **your honors, reverends and doctors of divinity** that they we could not attempt to count them

By **1888** the objective seemed imminent.

On **May 25, 1888** Senator **Henry W. Blair** of **New Hampshire** introduced bill # **2983** into Congress. In it was legislation which would require a **national Sunday law** (the bill in its entirety can be read in Civil Government and Religion, pp. 65-67).

In that year at **Minneapolis** was presented the message that would bring the **latter rain** and the **loud cry** of the third angel. The **battle lines** were being drawn.

In **1889** the **National Catholic Congress**, meeting in **Baltimore**, resolved to **unite with Protestants** to secure proper Sunday observance.

In **1892** the United States **Supreme Court** declared “**This is a Christian nation.**” This is not a Christian Nation. It is a **nation of Christians**. It was founded on **two Christian principles: Republicanism and Protestantism**. **Civil** and **religious** liberty were the two basic principles. Give to **Caesar** what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s. The idea was a church without a **pope** and a state without a **king**.

On **December 13, 1888** A. T. Jones was invited to testify before the **Education and Labor Committee** of the **50<sup>th</sup>** United States Congress. His testimony is found in the book **National Sunday Law**.

### **Catholics behind Amendment**

In an **Encyclical Letter** in **1885** Pope **Leo XIII** had said:

*“All Catholics should do all in their power to cause the **constitutions** of States, and **legislation to be modeled** on the principles of the true church, and all Catholic writers and journalists should never lose sight, for an instant, from the view of the above prescription.”*

Words of **Cardinal James Gibbons**:

*“I am most happy to add my name to those of the millions of others who are laudably contending against the violation of the Christian Sabbath by unnecessary labor, and who are endeavoring to promote its decent and proper observance **by judicious legislation.**”*  
Civil Government and Religion, p. 75

### **Union of Church and State**

**Jonathan Edwards**, D. D., at the **New York City** Convention held **February 26, 27, 1873** said:

*“We want **State and religion**, and we are going to have it. . . The Christian oath and Christian morality shall have in this land ‘an **undeniable legal basis.**’ We use this word*

*religion in its proper sense, as meaning a man's personal relation of faith and obedience to God."*

Reverend **M. A. Gault**:

*"Our remedy for all these malefic influences [liquor, immorality, consumerism, Civil War] is to have the **Government** simply set up the moral law, and recognize God's authority behind it, and lay its hand on **any religion** that does not conform to it."* Christian Statesman, January 13, 1887

In the Elgin convention, **Dr. Mandeville** affirmed about **church and state**:

*"When the **church** of God awakes and does its duty on one side, and the **State** on the other, we shall have not further trouble in this matter."* Civil Government and Religion, p. 10

**Sam Small**, secretary of the **national Prohibition convention** held in **Indianapolis in 1888** preached a sermon in **Kansas City in January of 1888**:

*"I want see the day come when **the church** shall be the **arbiter of all legislation**, State, national, and municipal; when the great churches of the country can **come together harmoniously**, and issue their edict, and the **legislative powers will respect it, and enact it into laws.**"* Civil Government and Religion, p. 63

Regarding the **duties of the State**, **Reverend J. M. Foster** included:

*"That a **constitutional provision** be made for recognizing **God as King of nations**, that a constitutional recognition be made that the **State is the divinely appointed keeper of the moral law**, that a constitutional provision be made detailing the **moral and religious qualifications of those who would occupy an office of trust**, that the nation needed to make a **covenant with God**, that the nation must **guard and protect the church** "by suppressing all public violation of the moral law; by maintaining a system of public schools, indoctrinating their youth in morality and virtue; by exempting church property from taxation; and by providing her funds out of the public treasury for carrying on her aggressive work at home and in the foreign field." Christian Statesman, February 21, 1884*

At the **Cleveland National Convention** the following resolution was adopted:

*"Resolved, That we re-affirm that this Religious Amendment, instead of infringing on any individual's right of conscience, or tending in the **least degree to a union of Church and State**, will afford the fullest security against a corrupting church establishment, and form the strongest safeguard of both the civil and religious liberties of all citizens." Views of National Reform, p. 33*

**Dr. McAllister's** words at **Lakeside, Ohio in July of 1887** about a **National Sunday Law**:

*“Let a man be what he may,--Jew, seventh-day observer of some other denomination, or those who do not believe in the **Christian Sabbath**,--let the law apply to every one, that there shall be **no public desecration** of the first day of the week, the **Christian Sabbath**, the day of **rest for the nation**. They may hold any other day of the week as sacred, and observe it; but that day which is the one day in seven for **the nation at large**, let that not be publicly desecrated by any one, by officer in the Government, or by private citizen, high or low, rich or poor.”* Civil Government and Religion, p. 100.

In the **Elgin Sunday Law Convention**, **Dr. Mandeville of Chicago**, said using **Nehemiah**:

*“The merchants of Tyre insisted upon selling goods near the temple on the Sabbath, and Nehemiah compelled the officers of the law to do their duty, and stop it. **So we can compel the officers of the law to do their duty.**”* Civil Government and Religion, p. 103

In a **Sunday Law** mass meeting held in **Hamilton Hall, Oakland, California** in **January of 1887**, Reverend **Doctor Briggs of Napa, California** **spanked** the political leaders:

*“You relegate moral instruction to the church, and then let all go as they please on Sunday, so that we cannot get at them.”* Civil Government and Religion, p. 96

They wanted the state to **corral** all the people on Sunday so that the **preachers can get at them**. Since when should the **state force people** to go to church so that preachers can get at them? People should go to church because **they want to not because they are compelled to**. Tell about several years ago when they wanted to implement a Sunday law in **Puerto Rico** to stay buying and selling.

### **Reasons for a National Sunday Law**

After saying that the **Sunday papers** are full of **crime, scandal, gossip, news and politics**, **Dr. Briggs** affirmed:

*“What a mélange! What a dish to set down before a man before breakfast and after breakfast, to prepare him for hearing the word of God! It makes it twice as hard to reach those who go to the sanctuary, and keeps many away from the house of worship altogether. They read the paper; the time comes to go to church; but it is said, ‘Here is something interesting; I will read it, and not go to church today.’”* Civil Government and Religion, p. 97



On the demand that the **Sunday paper be abolished:**

*“The laboring class are apt to rise late on Sunday morning, read the Sunday papers, and allow the hour of worship to go by unheeded.” Civil Government and Religion, p. 96*

At the **Elgin Convention, Dr. Everts** said about the **Sunday train:**

*“The **Sunday train** is another great evil. They cannot afford to run a train unless they get a great many passengers, and so **break up** a great many congregations. The Sunday railroad trains are hurrying their passengers fast on to perdition. What an outrage that the railroad, that great civilizer, should destroy the **Christian Sabbath!**” Civil Government and Religion, p. 97*

There is **nothing Christian** about this Sabbath

Words of **Reverend M. A. Gault** of the National Reform Association, published in **Christian Statesman, September 25, 1884** about the railroad:

*“This **railroad** [the Chicago and Rock Island] has been running excursion trains from Des Moines to Colfax Springs on the Sabbath for some time, and the **ministers complain** that their members go on these excursions.”*

In the **Boston Monday Lectures in 1887 Dr. Joseph Cook** affirmed that they did not want a **civil Sabbath:**

*“The experience of centuries shows, however, that you will in vain endeavor to preserve Sunday as **a day of rest**, unless you preserve it as **a day of worship**. Unless Sabbath observance be founded upon **religious reasons**, you will not long maintain it at a high standard on the basis of economic and physiological and political considerations only.” Civil Government and Religion, p. 73*

**Resolution** at the **Elgin Convention** Sunday as **natural, Biblical, civil** and **American:**

*“Resolved, that we recognize the Sabbath as an institution of God, revealed in **nature** and the **Bible**, and of **perpetual obligation on all men**; and also as a **civil and American** institution, bound up in **vital and historical connection** with the **origin and foundation** of our Government, the growth of our polity, and necessary to be maintained in order for the **preservation and integrity of our national system**, and therefore as having a sacred claim on all **patriotic** American citizens.” Civil Government and Religion, p. 94*

Resolution at the **Elgin Convention** against **purchasing, business and travel:**

*“That we look with shame and sorrow on the non-observance of the **Sabbath** by many Christian people, in that the custom prevails with them of purchasing Sabbath newspapers, engaging in and patronizing Sabbath business and travel, and in many instances giving themselves to pleasure and self-indulgence, setting aside by neglect and*

*indifference the great duties and privileges which God's day brings them.” Civil Government and Religion, p. 95*

### **The Idea of a Christian Nation**

*“The Women’s Christian Temperance Union, local, State, national, and world-wide, has one vital, organic thought, one all-absorbing purpose, one undying enthusiasm, and that is that Christ shall be this world’s king—yea, verily, **THIS WORLD’S KING** in its realm of cause and effect,—king of its courts, its camp, its commerce,—king of its colleges and cloisters,—king of its customs and constitutions. . . The kingdom of Christ must enter the realm of law through the **gate-way of politics.**” W. T. C. U., National Convention, 1887 in A. T. Jones, Civil Government and Religion, p. 60*

*“Give all men to understand that this is a **Christian nation**; and that, believing that **without Christianity we perish**, we must maintain by all right means our Christian character. **Inscribe this character on our Constitution.** . . **Enforce upon all that come among us the laws of Christian morality.**” Christian Statesman, October 2, 1884*

*“What the Statesman designates as ‘**political atheism**,’ is nothing more nor less than the present form of Government, and the present Constitution of the United States. To oppose National Reform is to them **sheer atheism**; and to oppose the kind of Government which they indorse is **political atheism**. That no religious test shall be required of a civil ruler, is declared by Reverend M. A. Gault to be ‘**the infidel theory of Government.**’” Christian Statesman, December 24, 1885.*

### **Voter Guides**

**Third resolution of the Elgin Convention speaks of pressure to vote for certain candidates:**

*“Resolved, that we give **our votes and support** to those candidates or political officers who will pledge themselves **to vote for the enactment and enforcing of statutes in favor of the civil Sabbath.**” Civil Government and Religion, p. 95*

Words of the **Honorable John Cole, Tingley, Iowa** in the Christian Statesman, **September 16, 1886:**

*“If Congress does not find in our Constitution a basis for Sabbath legislation, then **let us elect a Congress** who will find such a basis.”*

### **Mass Pressure upon the legislators in Washington, D. C.**

*“Let us begin without delay the **circulation of petitions** (to be furnished in proper form by the Association), and let an opportunity be given to all parts of the country to make up **a roll of petitions** so great that it will require a procession of wheelbarrows to trundle the mighty mass into the presence of the representatives of the nation in the House of*

Congress. . . Let a **mass convention of the friends** of the cause be held in Washington, when the Blair resolution shall be under discussion, to accompany with its influence the presentation of the petitions, and to take such other action as may be deemed best to arouse the nation to a genuine enthusiasm in behalf of **our national Christianity.**” Words of John Alexander, father of the National Reform Movement. Christian Statesman, September 6, 1888

Words of Reverend **J. C. K. Milligan** in Christian Statesman, **July 26, 1888**

“By **letters** to senators and representatives in Congress, by **petitions** numerously signed and forwarded to them, by local, State, and national conventions held, and public meetings in every **school district**, such an influence can quickly be brought to bear as will **compel our legislators** to adopt the measure, and **enforce it** by the needed legislation. The **Christian pulpits**, if they would; could secure its adoption before the dog-days end.”

Reverend **J. C. K. Milligan** in the Christian Statesman, **July 26, 1888**

“The changes will come gradually, and probably only after the whole framework of **Bible legislation** has been thoroughly canvassed by **Congress and State Legislatures**, by the **Supreme Court** of the United States and of the several States, and by lawyers and citizens; an outpouring of the Spirit might soon secure it.”

The Lansing Republican opposed to this law stated about the **pressure upon legislators**:

“Thousands of men, if called upon to vote for such an Amendment, would hesitate to **vote against God**, although they might not believe that the Amendment is necessary, or that it is right; . . . such an Amendment would be likely to receive an **affirmative vote** which would by no means indicate the **true sentiment of the people**. . . Men who make **politics a trade** would hesitate to record their names against the **proposed Constitutional Amendment, advocated by the great religious denominations of the land, and indorsed** by such men as Bishop Simpson, Bishop McIlvaine, Bishop Eastburn, President Finney, Professor Lewis, Professor Seelye, Bishop Huntington, Bishop Kerfoot, Dr. Patterson, Dr. Cuyler, and many other divines who are the representative men of their respective denominations.” Views of National Reform, p. 50

### **Protestants uniting**

“We are different divisions of Immanuel’s army. The Methodists are the charging cavalry, the **Presbyterians** the fighting infantry, the **Covenanters** the batteries upon the heights. We have one Commander-in-chief, **and under him we go forward, one united phalanx against the common** enemy. And when the victory is gained, the army will be **one, and the Leader is one.**” Christian Statesman, February 7, 1884

## Pastors as the Moral Leaders of the Nation

Words of the Reverend **Mr. Milligan** about the **pastors** as the **moral conscience** through the **instrumentality of the state**, in Views of National Reform, pp. 9, 10

*“The **churches and the pulpits** have much to do with shaping and forming opinions on all moral questions, and with interpretations of Scripture on moral and civil as well as on theological and ecclesiastical points; and it is probable that in the most universal gathering of our citizens about these, the chief discussions and the final decision of most points will be **developed there** [the churches and the pulpits will determine the laws to be passed]. ‘Many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion. There certainly is no class of citizens more **intelligent, patriotic, and trustworthy** than the **leaders and teachers** in our churches.’” Words of the **Reverend Mr. Milligan** in Views of National Reform, pp. 9, 10*

## Change meaning of Establishment Clause

In the **Pittsburg Convention** held in **1874** **Professor Blanchard** defined the **union of church and state** in the following manner:

*“But union of Church and State is the **selection by the nation of one church**, the endowment of such a church, the appointment of its officers and oversight of its doctrines. For such a union none of us plead. To such a union we are all of us opposed.”* Views of National Reform, p. 38

Words of **W. J. Coleman** about the meaning of **the establishment clause**:

*“The first sentence of Article 1 of Amendments reads, ‘Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.’ This would be made consistent with the proposed Amendment by substituting the words ‘**a church**’ for ‘**religion**,’ making it read, ‘Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of a church.’ This is what the Reform Association believes should be **the rule in a rightly constituted State**. There should be **religion but no church**.”* Christian Statesman, November 1, 1886

## Embracing Roman Catholic Principles

*“We cordially, gladly, recognize the fact that in South American Republics, and in France and other European countries, the Roman Catholics are the recognized advocates of **National Christianity**, and stand opposed to all the proposals of **secularism**.”* Christian Statesman, December 11, 1884

The National Reformers wanted the **same things as Catholicism had in Europe and South America**—a national religion enforced by law. They thus wanted to make an **image to the beast** in the United States!

*“Whenever they [the Roman Catholics] are willing to co-operate in resisting the progress of political atheism [secular humanism], we will gladly **join hands** [significant expression] with them.” Christian Statesman, December 11, 1884*

Words of Reverend **Sylvester F. Scovel**, a leading national reformer on securing the **help of Roman Catholics**:

*“This common interest [‘of all religious people in the Sabbath’--Sunday] ought both to strengthen our determination to work, and our readiness to co-operate in every way with our **Roman Catholic** fellow-citizens. We may be subjected to some rebuffs in our first proffers, and the time is not yet come when the Roman Church will consent to **strike hands with other churches**—as such; but the time has come **to make repeated advances**, and gladly to accept **cooperation in any form** in which they may be willing to exhibit it. It is one of the necessities of the situation.” Christian Statesman, August 31, 1881*

### **Religious Instruction in Public Schools**

Words of **Senator Blair** about **religious text books** in schools:

*“I believe that a **text-book of instruction** in the principles of virtue, morality, and of the Christian religion, can be prepared for use in the **public schools**, by the joint effort of those who represent every branch of the Christian church, both Protestant and Catholic, and also those who are not actively associated with either.” Civil Government and Religion, p. 47*

### **Linked with Good Causes**

**Sam Jones**, a **Third-party Prohibitionist** in **July of 1888** preached in **Windsor, Canada** to an audience composed **mostly of Americans**:

*“Now I tell you, I think we are running the last political combat on the lines we have been running them on. It is between the **Republicans and the Democrats**, this contest, and it is the last the Republicans will make in America. The Democrats are going in overwhelmingly. Four years from now the Prohibition element will break the solid South. The issue then will be, God or no God, drunkenness or sobriety, **Sabbath or no Sabbath**, heaven or hell. That will be the issue. Then we will wipe up the ground with the Democratic Party, and **let God rule America** from that time on.” Civil Government and Religion, p. 63*

From the **Women's Christian Temperance Union's** monthly reading for **September, 1886:**

*"A true theocracy is yet to come and the enthronement of Christ in law and law-makers; hence I pray devoutly, as a Christian patriot, for the ballot in the hands of women, and rejoice that the National Women's Christian Temperance Union has so long championed this cause."* Civil Government and Religion, p. 56

### **The Desire for a Theocracy like in the Colonial Period**

Professor **Blanchard** in the **Elgin convention** stated about the **role of the ministers** in this new **theocracy**:

*"In this work we are undertaking for the Sabbath, we are the representatives of God."* Civil Government and Religion, p. 103

*"The government of Israel was a theocracy; the will of God was made known to the ruler by the prophets; the ruler compelled the officers of the law to prevent the ungodly from selling goods on the Sabbath. This government is to be made a **theocracy**; the **preachers** are the successors of the prophets; and they are to **compel the officers of the law** to prevent all selling of goods and all manner of work on Sunday." (Look for the source)*

**Dr. Crafts, general secretary** for the **National Sunday-law Union** stated:

*"The preachers are the successors of the prophets."* Christian Statesman, July 5, 1888

In the **Cincinnati National Reform** convention, Professor **J. R. W. Sloane, D. D.**, stated in **1872:**

*"Every government by equitable laws is a government of God. A republic thus governed is of Him through the people, and is as truly and really a **theocracy** as the commonwealth of Israel."* Civil Government and Religion, p. 102

### **President's Annual Address** in Convention, **Nashville, 1887**

*"The women's Christian Temperance Union, local, State, national and world-wide, has one vital, organic thought, one all absorbing purpose, one undying enthusiasm, and that is that Christ shall be **this world's king**;--yea, verily, **THIS WORLD'S KING** in its realm of cause and effect,--king of its courts, its camps, its commerce,--king of its colleges and cloisters—king of its customs and its constitutions. **The kingdom of Christ must enter the realm of law through the gate-way of politics** . . . We pray Heaven to give [the old parties] no rest. . . until they shall. . . swear an oath of allegiance to **Christ in politics**, and march in one great army **up to the polls to worship God.**"*

## Disenfranchising of those who disagree

Reverend **E. B. Graham** at the National Reform Convention held in **York, Nebraska** stated:

*“We might add, in all justice, if the opponents of the Bible do not like our Government and its Christian features, let them go to some wild, desolate land; and in the name of the devil, and for the sake of the devil, subdue it, and set up a Government of their own on infidel and **atheistic ideas**, and then, if they can stand it, stay there till they die.”*  
*Christian Statesman, May 21, 1885*

Reverend **John Calvin Knox Milligan** stated:

*“When the Amendment is adopted, how will it act upon the civil and political rights of infidels, Jews, etc.? This depends largely upon themselves. The worst result will be to **disfranchise them.**”*  
*Christian Statesman, February 21, 1884*

Reverend **M. A. Gault**, a **district secretary** of the Association stated:

*“Our remedy for all these malefic influences is to have the **Government simply set up the moral law and recognize God’s authority behind it**, and lay its hand on any religion that does not conform to it.”*  
*Civil Government and Religion, p. 52*

*“Give all men to understand that this is a **Christian nation**, and that, believing that **without Christianity we perish [note the key words]**, we must maintain **by all means** our Christian character. Inscribe this character on our **Constitution. Enforce** upon all who come among us the laws of Christian morality.”*  
*Christian Statesman, October 2, 1884*

Mr. **W. J. Coleman** in the **November 1, 1883** answered the question of a person who merely signed “**Truth Seeker**”:

*“What effect would the adoption of the Christian Amendment, together with proposed changes in the Constitution, have upon those who deny that God is sovereign, Christ the Ruler, and the Bible the law? This brings up the conscience question at once. . . The classes who would object are, as ‘Truth Seeker’ has said, Jews, infidels, atheists, and others. These classes are perfectly satisfied with the Constitution as it is. How would they stand towards it if it recognized the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ? To be perfectly plain, I believe that the existence of a Christian Constitution would **disfranchise every logically consistent infidel.**”*  
*Christian Statesman, November 1, 1883*

In a letter dated **December 14, 1887** Reverend **W. T. McConnell** of **Youngstown, Ohio** published in the Christian Nation an open letter to the editor of the American Sentinel:

*“You look for trouble in this land in the future, if these principles are applied. I think it will come to you, if you maintain your present position. The fool-hardy fellow who*

*persists in standing on a railroad track, may well anticipate trouble when he hears the rumble of the coming train. If he shall read the signs of the times in the screaming whistle and flaming head-light, he may change his position and avoid the danger; but if he won't be influenced by these, his most gloomy forebodings of trouble will be realized when the express strikes him. So you, neighbor, if, through prejudice or the enmity of unregenerate hearts, you have determined to **oppose the progress of this nation** in fulfilling its vocation as an instrument in the divine work of regenerating human society, **may rightly expect trouble**. It will be sure to come to you.” Civil Government and Religion, pp. 108, 109*

## **Persecution**

At the National Reform **W. T. C. U.** Convention at **Lakeside, Ohio in 1887** the statement was made:

*“There is a law in the State of Arkansas enforcing Sunday observance upon the people, and the result has been that many good persons have not only been **imprisoned**, but have lost their **property**, and even **their lives**.”*

In **answer**, Dr. McAllister stated: *“It is **better that a few should suffer**, [interesting in the context of the destruction of Jerusalem—John 11:47-52] than that the **whole nation** should lose its Sabbath.” Civil Government and Religion, p. 108 (notice the clear allusion to John 11:50-53)*

In **556 A. D. Pope Pelagius** called upon **Narses** to compel certain parties to **obey the pope's commands**. Narses objected to which the pope responded:

*“Be not alarmed at the idle talk of some, crying out against persecution, and reproaching the church, as if she delighted in cruelty, when she punishes evil with wholesome severities or procures the salvation of souls. **He alone persecutes who forces to do evil**. But to restrain men from doing evil, or to punish those who have done it, is not persecution, or cruelty, but love of mankind.” Civil Government and Religion, p. 107*

**John Cotton**, during the **Colonial period** had also said:

*“Persecution is not wrong in itself; it is wicked for **falsehood to persecute truth**, but it is the **sacred duty** of truth to persecute falsehood.” The Saving of America, p. 30*

Thus in the **Virginia Sunday Law of 1610** required attendance at the divine service twice a day with **economic fines for the first two offenses** and **“to suffer death”** for the third.” The Saving of America, p. 31



A minister in **Selma, California** stated in **September of 1888**:

*“We have laws to punish the man who steals our property; but we have no law to prevent people from working on Sunday. It is right that the thief be punished; but I have more sympathy for that man than I have for him that works on that day.” Civil Government and Religion, p. 105*

In **Arkansas** and **Tennessee** Seventh-day Adventists were persecuted for not observing Sunday as a day of rest. Their **property was confiscated**, they were **fined**, they were **imprisoned** and some of them even **lost their lives**. In the book, Civil Government and Religion, A. T. Jones documents 21 cases with **names** of the accused, **places**, names of the **judges, charges, penalties**, etc.

In The Century for **April 1888** a **Mr. Kennan** described the statutes of Russia on the subject of crimes against the faith. He quoted statute after statute *“providing that whoever shall censure the Christian faith or the Orthodox Church, or the Scriptures, or the holy sacraments, or the saints, or their images, or the Virgin Mary, or the angels, or Christ, or God, shall be **deprived of all civil rights**, and **exiled for life** to the most remote parts of Siberia. This is the system in Russia, and **it is in the direct line of the wishes of the National Reform Association**, with this difference, however, that Russia is content to send dissenters to Siberia, while the National Reformers want to **send them to the Devil, straight.**” (source?)*

Reverend **W. M. Grier** of **Due West, South Carolina** at the **Philadelphia convention in 1888** stated:

*“Every sin, secret or public, against God, is a sin against our country, and is **high treason against the State.**” Christian Statesman, August 9, 1888*



# STUDIES ON MATTHEW 24

*by Stephen Bohr*

## #6 - A BLUEPRINT OF END TIME EVENTS

- We studied about the eagles of Rome in Matthew 24. Those who escaped were Sabbath keepers
- We studied the connection between the **United State and Rome** and how the United States represented by the **eagle** will impose the **day of the sun**
- We saw how this was **plausible** in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when a National Sunday Law was proposed
- Today we will see examine **the blueprint** of how it will happen in the **future**
- Finally we will study how the **political** and **religious** environment today parallels that of the **late 1800's**.

**Why didn't the events** between 1864 and 1888 **lead to a national Sunday law**? There are two reasons: One having to do with the **church** and the other having to do with the **world**.

In order to understand we must go back to an event that took place **October 17-November 4, 1888** in **Minneapolis**, Minnesota. The famous Minneapolis General Conference session was held there.

We are told by the servant of the Lord that the **latter rain began** to fall and the **loud cry** of the third angel began to be given. **Satan knew** that this was taking place and so he tried to **preempt it** by influencing the churches to impose national Sunday law.

**God was planning** to bring about the **greatest revival** in the history of the church in the United States. But the message was **rejected** by the church. The church was therefore not ready and God had to **put a hold** on world events.

*“The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through **Elders Waggoner and Jones**. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Savior, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is **made manifest in obedience** to all the commandments of God. . . This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. **It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.**” TM 91, 92*

*“The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has **already begun** in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer [1888]. **This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth.**” ISM 363*

*“As the third message swells to a loud cry and as great power and glory attend the closing work, the faithful people of God will partake of that glory. It is the **latter rain** which revives and strengthens them to pass through the time of trouble.” Last Day Events, p. 201*

The latter rain is the **power** and the loud cry is the **message**. Notice that in 1888 the **loud cry had already begun** and would **swell** to a loud cry. **Satan knew this** and was also at work in the church and the religious and political world.

### **Ellen White's prophetic scenario**

1. The United States will embrace Roman Catholic principles by **uniting church and state. (Revelation 13, second beast)**
2. The Protestant churches of the United States will **unite on points of doctrine** which they hold in common. All of the churches are not going to merge into one **National Church**.
3. The **societal problems** will be blamed upon Sunday desecration (**Elijah, Nero, Matthew 24:9**). In the 1880's the social upheaval was the Civil War.
4. The **legislators** of this country, in order to secure the **favor of the people**, will support the Sunday law. (**this is how the beast of Revelation 13 speaks**) They will be afraid that if they don't support it they will be **voted out of office**. We should **not vote for anyone** who supports the union of church and state and religious legislation. If we do vote for them, we will be **guilty of the sins they commit while they are in office**. Interestingly, in the 1880's the **Democrats** were in the position of today's **Republicans**. The Democrats were especially pushing for religious legislation.

5. The leaders of this movement **had no idea** what they were getting into. They didn't have a clue as to the **source** and the **consequences** of what they proposed to do

This reminds us of **King Ahasuerus** in the story of **Esther**. His **religious advisor** convinced him that the Jews were a menace to his kingdom. He had a rude awakening when he realized what his religious advisor really wanted and he turned against him.

The same will happen with the **political rulers of the world at the end when they awaken** to what their religious advisors really had in mind (**Revelation 16:14**—whole world; **Revelation 17**—kings of the earth commit fornication).

6. There will be an **attempt to change or amend the Constitution** of the United States. What is non-constitutional now will be considered constitutional when the Sunday law is enacted.
7. Protestants **will unite with Roman Catholics** to **lobby** for the national Sunday law. In fact it will not be Catholics who will lobby Protestants for a National Sunday Law but rather **Protestants who will lobby Catholics** to help them enact a Sunday law (the second beast actually makes an image to the first beast and wants to honor it).
8. Sunday laws will eventually become **anti-Sabbath laws**. (The **mark of the beast** will be imposed—**Revelation 13:16, 17**)

In other words not only will Sunday observance be required by law but **Sabbath observance will be forbidden**. In other words both the **establishment clause** and the **free-exercise clause** of the Constitution will be trampled upon (this is illustrated in the stories of **Daniel 3 and 6**)

9. **Underhanded and devious methods** will be used to secure Sunday law legislation.
10. Many **good social causes** will be linked with the Sunday law movement. In the 1880's it was prohibition. The **W. C. T. U.** and the **Third Party Prohibitionists**. In the 2000's it is **marriage** between a man and a woman and the **sanctity of life** are two.

11. There will be an attempt to introduce a **religious curriculum and practices** into the public schools.
12. The idea that the United States is a **theocracy will be introduced**. The **ministers** will claim to be the **conscience** of the nation and **dictate to the government** what should be done in religious affairs.

Like in Israel in **Nehemiah's day**, there must be a national Sabbath strictly enforced by law. **Reconstructionism** wants the United States to return to the Colonial period.

13. Eventually the **whole world will follow** in the steps of the United States and enforce a **universal Sunday law (Revelation 13:3: The whole world wondered after the beast)**. This now appears impossible with **Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists** but it will happen. **Miracles** and **global survival** due to natural disasters, wars, terrorism, economic upheaval, etc., will make it mandatory for all nations to go along.
14. God's people who refuse to keep the Sunday law and insist on keeping the Sabbath will **lose their civil rights and be persecuted and eventually sentenced to die (Revelation 13:15)**. They will not be able to buy or sell.

### Union of Church and State

*"Such action [a national Sunday law] would be directly contrary to the **principles of this government**, to the genius of its free institutions, to the direct and solemn avowals of the **Declaration of Independence**, and to the **Constitution**. The founders of the nation wisely sought to guard against the **employment of secular power on the part of the church**, with its inevitable result-- intolerance and persecution. The **Constitution** provides that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," and that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office of public trust under the United States." **Only in flagrant violation** of these safeguards to the nation's liberty, can any **religious observance** be enforced by **civil authority**. But the inconsistency of such action is no greater than is represented in the symbol. It is the beast with lamblike horns--in profession pure, gentle, and harmless--that speaks as a dragon. GC 442*

*"Let the principle once be established in the United States that the **church may employ or control the power of the state**; that religious observances may be enforced by **secular laws**; in short, that the **authority of church and state** is to dominate the conscience, and the triumph of Rome in this country is assured." GC 581*

*“As the Sabbath has become the special point of controversy throughout Christendom, and **religious and secular authorities have combined** to enforce the observance of the Sunday, the persistent refusal of a small minority to yield to the **popular demand** will make them objects of **universal execration**.” GC 615*

*“When Protestant churches shall **unite with the secular power** to sustain a false religion, for opposing which their ancestors endured the fiercest persecution, then will the papal sabbath be enforced by the combined authority of **church and state**. There will be a **national apostasy**, which will end only in **national ruin**.--Ev 235 (1899)*

*“The National Reform movement, exercising the power of **religious legislation**, will, when fully developed, manifest the **same intolerance and oppression** that have prevailed in past ages. Human councils then assumed the prerogatives of Deity, crushing under their despotic power liberty of conscience; and imprisonment, exile, and death followed for those who opposed their dictates. If popery or its principles shall again be **legislated into power**, the fires of **persecution will be rekindled** against those who will not sacrifice conscience and the truth in deference to popular errors. This evil is on the point of realization.” 5T 712*

### **Blinded to the Results**

*“There are many, even of those engaged in this movement for Sunday enforcement, who are **blinded to the results** which will follow this action. **They do not see** that they are striking directly against religious liberty.” 5T 711*

*“There is a **satanic force propelling** the Sunday movement, but it is concealed. Even the men who are engaged in the work, are **themselves blinded to the results** which will follow their movement.” R&H, January 1, 1889*

*“The Sunday movement is now making **its way in darkness**. The leaders are **concealing** the true issue, and many who unite in the movement **do not themselves see** whither the **undercurrent** is tending. Its professions are mild and apparently Christian, but when it shall speak it will reveal the spirit of the dragon.” 4T 452*

### **Protestants will Stretch her Hand to the Papacy**

*“**Protestants** will throw their whole influence and strength on the **side of the papacy**. By a **national act** enforcing the false sabbath they will **give life and vigor** to the corrupt faith of Rome, **reviving** [Revelation 13:3] her tyranny and oppression of conscience.” Maranatha, p. 179*

*“Protestants have tampered with and patronized popery; they have made compromises and concessions which papists themselves are surprised to see and fail to understand. Men are closing their eyes to the real character of Romanism and the dangers to be*

*apprehended from her supremacy. The people need to be aroused to resist the advances of this most dangerous foe to civil and religious liberty.” GC 566*

*“I saw the nominal church and nominal Adventists, like Judas, would betray us **to the Catholics** to obtain their influence to come against the truth. The saints then will be an **obscure people, little known** to the Catholics; but the churches and nominal Adventists who know of our faith and customs (for they hated us on account of the Sabbath, for they could not refute it) **will betray the saints and report them to the Catholics** as those who disregard the institutions of the people; that is, that they keep the Sabbath and disregard Sunday.” Spaulding-Magan Collection, p. 1*

*“Any movement in favor of **religious legislation** is really an act of **concession to the papacy**, which for so many ages has steadily warred against liberty of conscience. Sunday observance owes its existence as a so-called Christian institution to "the mystery of iniquity;" and its enforcement will be a virtual recognition of the principles which are the very cornerstone of Romanism. When our nation shall so abjure the principles of its government as to enact a Sunday law, Protestantism will in this act **join hands with popery**; it will be nothing else than **giving life** to the tyranny which has long been eagerly watching its opportunity to **spring again** into active despotism. 5T 711, 712*

### **Uniting on Common Points of Doctrine**

*“When the leading churches of the United States, **uniting upon such points of doctrine** as are held by them **in common**, shall **influence the state** to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy, and the infliction of **civil penalties** upon dissenters will inevitably result. GC 445*

*“. . . there is an increasing indifference concerning the doctrines that separate the reformed churches from the papal hierarchy; the opinion is gaining ground that, after all, we **do not differ so widely upon vital points as has been supposed**, and that a little concession on our part will bring us into a better understanding with Rome.” GC 563*

### **The Role of the Clergy**

*“Plans of serious import to the people of God are advancing in an **underhand manner** among the clergymen of various denominations, and the object of this **secret maneuvering** is to **win popular favor** for the enforcement of Sunday sacredness. If the **people** can be led to favor a Sunday law, then the **clergy** intend to exert their united influence to obtain a **religious amendment** to the Constitution, and compel the nation to keep Sunday.” RH, December 24, 1889*



## Politicians Will Accede to Popular Demand

*“The dignitaries of **church and State** will unite to bribe, persuade, or compel all classes to honor the Sunday. The lack of divine authority will be supplied by oppressive enactments. **Political corruption is destroying love of justice and regard for truth**; and even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to **secure public favor**, will yield to the **popular demand** for a law enforcing Sunday observance. Liberty of conscience, which has cost so great a sacrifice, will no longer be respected.” GC 592*

*“We cannot labor to please men who will use their influence to repress religious liberty, and to set in operation oppressive measures to lead or **compel** their fellow men to keep Sunday as the Sabbath. The first day of the week is not a day to be revered. It is a spurious sabbath, and the members of the Lord's family cannot participate with the men who exalt this day, and violate the law of God by trampling upon His Sabbath. The people of God **are not to vote to place such men in office**; for when they do this, they are partakers with them of the **sins which they commit while in office**.” FE 475*

## Efforts to Introduce Religious Curriculum

*“The present effort of the church to get the state to . . . introduce the teaching of Christianity into state schools, is but a revival of the . . . doctrine of force in religious things, and as such it is antichristian.” Watchman, May 1, 1906*

*Was Ellen White a secular humanist or atheist because of this? No. She was respecting the first amendment.*

*“I do not see the justice nor right in enforcing by law the bringing of the Bible to be read in the public schools.” Letter 44, 1893*

## Will be Linked with Good Causes

*“Here the temperance work, one of the most prominent and important of moral reforms, is often **combined with the Sunday movement**, and the advocates of the latter represent themselves as laboring to promote the highest interest of society; and **those who refuse to unite with them are denounced as the enemies of temperance and reform**. But the fact that a movement to establish error is connected with a work which is in itself good, is not an argument in favor of the error. We may disguise poison by mingling it with wholesome food, but we do not change its nature. On the contrary, it is rendered more dangerous, as it is more likely to be taken unawares. It is one of Satan's devices to combine with falsehood just enough truth to give it plausibility. **The leaders of the Sunday movement may advocate reforms** which the people need, principles which are in harmony with the Bible; yet while there is with these a requirement which is contrary to God's law, His*

*servants cannot unite with them. Nothing can justify them in setting aside the commandments of God for the precepts of men. GC 587, 588*

### **God's People Blamed**

*“Those who honor the Bible Sabbath will be denounced as **enemies of law and order**, as breaking down the **moral restraints** of society, causing **anarchy and corruption**, and **calling down the judgments of God** [Matthew 24] upon the earth. Their conscientious scruples will be pronounced obstinacy, stubbornness, and contempt of authority. They will be accused of **disaffection toward the government**. **Ministers** who deny the obligation of the divine law will present from the pulpit the duty of yielding **obedience to the civil authorities** as ordained of God. In legislative halls and courts of justice, commandment keepers will be misrepresented and condemned.” GC 592*

### **Amend the Constitution**

**It may begin as an amendment declaring that marriage is between a man and a woman.**

#### **The crisis was at hand in her day:**

*“A great crisis awaits the people of God. A crisis awaits the world. The most momentous struggle of all the ages is just before us. Events which for more than forty years we have upon the authority of the prophetic word declared to be impending are **now taking place before our eyes**. Already the question of an **amendment to the Constitution** restricting liberty of conscience has been **urged upon the legislators** of the nation. The question of enforcing Sunday observance has become one of **national interest** and importance.” 5T 711*

*“They do not see that if a Protestant government sacrifices the principles that have made them a free, independent nation, and through **legislation brings into the Constitution**, principles that will propagate papal falsehood and papal delusion, they are plunging into the **Roman horrors of the Dark Ages**.” R&H. December 11, 1888*

#### **She realized that this might not happen at that moment:**

*“It may be that **a respite** may yet be granted for God's people to awake and let their light shine. If the presence of ten righteous persons would have saved the wicked cities of the plain, is it not possible that God will yet, in answer to the prayers of His people, **hold in check the workings** of those who are making void His law? Shall we not humble our hearts greatly before God, flee to the mercy seat, and plead with Him to reveal His mighty power?” 5T 713*

**She saw that sooner or later it would happen (1905):**

*“Sooner or later Sunday laws will be passed. But there is much for God's servants to do to warn the people. This work has been greatly retarded by their having to wait and stand against the devisings of Satan, which have been striving to find a place in our work. We are years behind. RH, February 16, 1905*

**Sunday will be Imposed by Law**

*“The time will come when men will not only **forbid Sunday work**, but they will try to **force men to labor on the Sabbath**. And men will be asked to renounce the Sabbath and to subscribe to Sunday observance or forfeit their freedom and their lives. But the time for this has not yet come, for the truth must be presented more fully before the people as a witness.” The Southern Work, p. 69*

**Whole World will Join Forces**

*“The **whole world** is to be stirred with enmity against Seventh-day Adventists, because they will not yield homage to the papacy, by honoring Sunday, the institution of this antichristian power. It is the purpose of Satan to cause them to be **blotted from the earth**, in order that his supremacy of the world may not be disputed.” Maranatha, p. 217*

*“As America, the land of religious liberty, shall **unite with the papacy** in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the false sabbath, the people of **every country on the globe** will be led to follow her example.” 6T 18*

*“The so-called **Christian world** is to be the theater of great and decisive actions. Men in authority will enact laws controlling the conscience, after the example of the papacy. Babylon will make all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. **Every nation will be involved**. 3SM 392*

*“Foreign nations will follow the example of the United States. Though she leads out, yet the same crisis will come upon our people in **all parts of the world**.” 6T 395*

*“The wicked . . . declared that they had the truth, that miracles were among them, that angels from heaven talked with them and walked with them, that great power and signs and wonders were performed among them, and that this was the temporal millennium that they had been expecting so long. The **whole world** was converted and in harmony with the Sunday law. 3SM 427, 428*

## **The Role of the Ministry**

*“Not all **our ministers** who are giving the third angel's message really understand what constitutes that message. The National Reform movement has been regarded by some as of **so little importance** that they have not thought it necessary to **give much attention to it** and have even felt that in so doing they would be giving time to questions distinct from the third angel's message. May the Lord **forgive our brethren** for thus interpreting the very message for this time.*

*The people **need to be aroused** in regard to the dangers of the present time. The **watchmen are asleep**. We are **years behind**.” 5T 715*

## **What's wrong with the Church using the State?**

*“But today in the religious world there are multitudes who, as they believe, are working for the establishment of the kingdom of Christ as an earthly and temporal dominion. They desire to make our Lord the ruler of the kingdoms of this world, the ruler in its **courts** and camps, its **legislative** halls, its **palaces** and **market** places. They expect Him to rule through **legal enactments**, enforced by **human authority**. Since Christ is not now here in person, they themselves will undertake to act **in His stead**, to **execute the laws of His kingdom**. The establishment of such a kingdom is what the Jews desired in the days of Christ. They would have received Jesus, had He been willing to establish a temporal dominion, to enforce what they regarded as the laws of God, and to make them the expositors of His will and the agents of His authority. But He said, "My kingdom is not of this world." John 18:36. He would not accept the earthly throne.*

*The government under which Jesus lived was corrupt and oppressive; on every hand were crying abuses,--extortion, intolerance, and grinding cruelty. Yet the Savior attempted **no civil reforms**. He attacked no national abuses, nor condemned the national enemies. **He did not interfere with the authority or administration of those in power**. He who was our example kept **aloof from earthly governments**. Not because He was indifferent to the woes of men, but because the remedy did not lie in merely human and **external measures**. To be efficient, the cure must reach men individually, and must **regenerate the heart**.*

*Not by the decisions of **courts** or **councils** or **legislative assemblies**, not by the patronage of worldly great men, is the kingdom of Christ established, but by the **implanting of Christ's nature in humanity through the work of the Holy Spirit**. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:12, 13. Here is the only power that can work the*

*uplifting of mankind. And the human agency for the accomplishment of this work is the teaching and practicing of the word of God. DA 509, 510*

People are not changed by what happens on **Capitol Hill** but rather by what happens in **church**. Legislation does not change the heart, it is the Holy Spirit. When the **early church lost the spirit and power of God**, society began to go down hill and became corrupted. The church, seeing that things were getting out of hand, decided to appeal to the arm of the state to correct the situation and the result was **persecution**.



# STUDIES ON MATTHEW 24

by Stephen Bohr

## #7 - THE RETURN OF THE EAGLES

This study shows that Ellen White's view of end-time events in the United States is not some **speculative wild-eyed scenario**. What has happened will happen again because **history repeats itself**.

In actual fact, the great religious leaders of the United States today are **advocating similar causes** as the National Reform Movement in the **1880's**.

I am not **questioning** the **sincerity** of these people or their commitment to what **they regard as the truth**. **Saul** of Tarsus was **very sincere** when he **persecuted** the Christians. He thought he was doing **God's will**. He wanted to **preserve orthodoxy**. But his **enthusiasm was misguided**.

The humanist philosopher, **Friedrich Nietzsche** expressed it this way: "Be careful when you fight the dragon lest you become a dragon." By wanting to fight against the **dragon of the left wing**, or **secular humanism**, the **Christian right** will speak like the **dragon** which they wish to overcome.

### The chief protagonists:

- **Chuck Colson** (president of **International Prison Ministries**)
- **D. James Kennedy** (**Coral Ridge Ministries** in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida)
- **Pat Robertson** (president of **CBN, 700 Club**; CEO of **Regent University**; founder of the **American Center for Law and Justice**)
- **Jerry Fallwell** (the late) **Thomas Road Baptist Church** and chancellor of **Liberty University** in Lynchburg Virginia)
- **James Dobson** (President and CEO of **Focus on the Family**)
- **Rod Parsley** (**Harvest Ministries** in Columbus, Ohio)
- **Gary Bauer** (Family Research Council)

- **Charles Stanley** (In Touch Ministries)
- **Bill Bright** (Campus Crusade for Christ)
- **William Bennett** (Book of Virtues)
- **Tim La Haye** (President of the **American Coalition for Traditional Values**, author of the **Left Behind** series who provides the **eschatological foundation** for the Christian right movement)
- **John Hagee** (prolific author on prophecy from a futurist perspective)
- **Ralph Reed** (the Christian Coalition)
- **John Whitehead** (the Rutherford Institute, a conservative think tank)

### **First Amendment Tampering**

Many of these leaders are **tampering** with the First Amendment by **reinterpreting** it. They say that this amendment forbids a **national religion** or a **national church** but it does not forbid the government to **aid all religions** equally.

The **1994 agenda** of the Republican Party in Congress is expressed in the book, Contract with the American Family, pp. 4, 5:

*“The founding Fathers intended the establishment clause to insure that America’s political institutions would never be used to benefit **one religion at the expense of another.**”*

*“They [Europeans] believed that the European system of officially sanctioned ‘state religions’ benefited neither the state nor the religion involved. Indeed, it was from such systems that the Pilgrims and Puritans fled. This is what is rightly meant by the phrase, ‘**separation of church and state.**’*

**William Rehnquist** the late chief justice of the Supreme Court of the United States said in **1985** when he **dissented** in a **school prayer case** stated that the **framers** of the Constitution intended only:

*“. . . to prohibit the designation of any church as a national one [and] to stop the Federal Government from asserting a preference of one religious denomination or sect over others.” The Saving of America, p. 61.*

This is a **new interpretation** of the establishment clause. The establishment clause does not speak of the non-establishment of **a church** or **a religion** but rather of **religion**.



Rehnquist affirmed that the establishment clause merely “*forbade the establishment of a national religion and forbade preference among religious sects and denominations.*” It did not “*prohibit the federal government from providing non-discriminatory aid to religion.*” *The Day of the Dragon*, p. 79.

In other words, it is alright for government to **help religion** as long it provides to all equally.

**Pat Robertson**, *Cosmopolitan*, (January) “The Fierce Furious March of Fundamentalists” 1995, p. 160:

*“The first amendment says . . . Congress can’t set up a national religion. End of story. There is not in the Constitution, at any point, anything that applies that to the states.”*

And that’s why there’s such a movement recently on **state’s rights**. You see the establishment and free-exercise clauses say that **congress** shall make no law. It does not say that the **states can’t do it**. So there has been a great movement to give more power to the individual states. This might sound ideal. It might sound nice **to keep the Federal Government out of the business of the states**—to keep it off our backs but the real hidden agenda that you can’t see in this movement is that the states become independent of the Federal government and **if enough of them enact religious laws**, they can exert their influence to **force the federal government** to do the same.

### **Strategy of the Religious Right**

When the religious right movement was in its beginnings, they held these **huge marches** on Washington, D. C. For example the “**Washington for Jesus**” rally where Pat Robertson marched with a **big cross on his shoulder** surrounded by **hundreds** of supporters.

But the movement has become much **more sophisticated**. They now know that **marches gain little**. They know that the best way to gain power is to **lobby members of congress** and to **take over local regions**. They know that they can have more power by organizing on a **local level** by taking over local high **school boards**, by taking over the **local governments**. In other words, they now know that all **politics is local**. When they take over **enough local precincts** then the state will be theirs as well.

Said **Ralph Reed** about this change in strategy (in **1888** they also emphasized **local chapter** and **state conventions** before attempting a national Sunday law):

*“We tried to charge Washington, when we should have been focusing on the states. The real battle of concern to Christians are in the neighborhoods, school boards, city councils and state legislatures.”* Quoted in *Church and State*, April 1990, p 12

There has also been talk of **amending the Constitution** to protect **Christians from discrimination** in the exercise of their religion. They are saying that Christians are being persecuted because they are not allowed by the government to put up nativity scenes on **public government property**, because a **judge** is not allowed to put a **monument** of the Ten Commandments in his **courthouse**.

They are saying: “Look, the **government is persecuting us** because it will **not support our religion**.” But this is not the case. The government is **keeping out of religion**. The government was established to preserve the **civil order** in order to allow **religion to flourish**. The government was not established to enforce the Ten Commandments, particularly the first four commandments. The first four commandments describe our duty to God alone. The state can have nothing to do with these commandments.

### **Changing the Constitution**

The Contract with the American Family, p. 1, refers to this when it stated:

*“We have witnessed the steady **erosion** of the time honored **rights of religious Americans**. The time has now come to **amend the Constitution** to restore freedom of speech for America’s people of faith.”*

### **Leaving the Country**

There is no country in the world that has the freedom of speech which the United States has. It is a blessing to live in the United States of America. Some people on the religious right are even saying that if **secular humanists don’t like it here, they should find another country** to live in.

Several years ago Indiana Moral Majority leader, **Greg Dixon**, had a **prayer hit list** where his group was praying that the Lord would **remove from office** one who did not **confess the Christian religion**.

**Alaska state senator, Edna DeVries**, once stated that non-Christians should “*leave the country*.” The Day of the Dragon, p. 53

The religious right complains that kids **can’t pray in public schools** anymore. It is true that you cannot have **state mandated** or **sponsored** prayer because prayer is a duty we **owe to God**. But no student is forbidden from praying in school. It is not even forbidden for a group of students to gather **voluntarily to pray** on school property or even to **study the Bible**. The Constitution guarantees the right of **free exercise of individuals** even on public school property.

Students are allowed by the Constitution to take their Bibles to school and to read them. They can even gather voluntarily in groups to read them.

It is true that there **a few teachers** here and there who have recriminated students for doing this but they have been **sued and have lost** in court. The government is supposed to be **neutral** when it comes to religion.

## **Voter Guides**

What about **voter's guides**? Politicians who want to win elections **cater to the preachers** and the churches. Even **Democrats**, who used to shy away from speaking about religion in the public arena, **now publicly address** moral and religious issues.

**Politicians** love to appear at religious right activities because they know that they can **deliver votes** by rallying **the base** to go out and vote for them.

Recently we heard that George Bush, Carl Rove, Dick Cheney really have very **little love for the agenda** of the religious right. In **private** they have called them **nuts and weird**. But they publicly support them because they can **bring out the vote**. The **voter's guides** give the names of the candidates and the **causes** they support and oppose. Basically the religious right is trying to **persuade Christians** to vote for candidates that support the causes which they **support and oppose** the causes which they oppose.

**Tim LaHaye**, in Time September 2, 1985 affirmed that **25% of federal jobs** should go to Christian conservatives. He also said: *“No humanist is qualified to hold any governmental office.”*

This flies in the face of the **fourteenth amendment** to the Constitution where it says that there can be **no religious test** to occupy any **office of trust** in these United States.

## **Protestants and Catholics Together**

It is interesting to notice that **Protestants and Catholics** are coming closer and closer together. Notice the following statements from religious leaders:

**August 12, 1993 Billy Graham** appeared on the program, *Good Morning America*. The **pope was visiting** the United States at the time. Billy Graham said:

*“I admire the Pope; we both address the same moral issues.”*

When the pope visited **Salt Lake City**, Billy Graham was interviewed by **Larry King** on his program (**January 21, 1998**), *Larry King Live*.

*King: “Do you feel comfortable with Salt Lake City? Do you feel comfortable with the Vatican?”*

*Graham: "Oh, I'm very comfortable with the Vatican. I've been to see the pope several times, and, in fact, the day that he was inaugurated, made pope, I was preaching in his Cathedral in Krakow. I was his guest."*

*King: "You were preaching in his church the day he was made pope?"*

*Graham: "That is correct, in Krakow." (Graham chuckled)*

*King: "You must have been shocked."*

*Graham: "Of course I was. There was shouting on the streets, you know, the next day: 'Polish pope, Polish pope.'"*

*King: "Do you like this pope?"*

*Graham: "I like him very much. He's very conservative . . . He and I agree on almost everything."*

**Billy Graham** received an **honorary doctorate** from a **Jesuit** Roman Catholic University, **Belmont Abbey College**. Someone wrote the College and asked if this was true and in a letter of response, **Cuthbert E. Allen**, executive vice-president of this university responded:

*"Billy Graham gave an inspiring and a theologically sound address that might have been given by bishop Fulton J. Sheen or any other Catholic preacher. I have followed Billy Graham's career and I must emphasize that he has been **more Catholic than otherwise**. I say this not in a partisan manner but as a matter of fact. I would state that **he could bring Catholics and Protestants together in a healthy ecumenical spirit**. I was the first Catholic to invite Billy Graham. I know that he will speak at three other Catholic universities next month. I believe he will be invited by more Catholic colleges in the future than Protestant colleges. So I am well pleased then to answer your question: Billy Graham is preaching a moral and evangelical theology **most acceptable to Catholics**."*

Notice what **Ralph Reed** says in his book, **Politically Incorrect**, p. 16

*"The future of American politics lies in the growing strength of Evangelicals and their Roman Catholic **allies**. If these two core constituencies—evangelicals comprising the swing vote in the south, Catholics holding sway in the north—can **cooperate** on issues and support like minded candidates they can **determine the outcome** of almost any election in the nation. Nasty nativism and dark distrust about Popery and foreign influence have been swept into the **ash heap of history**. John F. Kennedy's election in 1960 buried the Catholic bogeyman forever. No longer **burdened by the past**, Roman Catholics, Evangelicals, Greek Orthodox and many religious conservatives from the*

*mainline denominations are forging a new alliance that promises to be among the most powerful and important in the modern political era.”*

Discourse by **Ralph Reed** who was invited to speak at the **Catholic Campaign for America:**

*“The Catholic vote holds the key to the future and I believe that if they can **unite**, if Catholics can **unite** with the Evangelical Christians, the Protestants who **share their views** on the sanctity of innocent human life and the need for religious liberty, and school choice, and common sense values, I believe if Catholics and Evangelicals can **unite** there is no person who runs for office in any city or any state in America that **can’t be elected** and there is **no bill that can’t be passed** in either house of Congress or any state legislative chamber anywhere in America. It is the emerging force in the electorate today. The Pope does use the term hierarchy of doctrine. Father Robertson said: ‘Obviously some teachings are more important than others and there has to be an **agreement on those essential points** while leaving considerable latitude on other points that are **less essential** to the faith.”*

Compare this to what Ellen White had to say:

*“When the leading churches of the United States **uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common** shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and sustain their institutions then Protestant America will have formed an image to the Roman hierarchy and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result.” GC 445*

Let’s talk about the document “**Evangelicals and Catholics Together.**” It is an agreement by **40** of the most influential Evangelical and Roman Catholic leaders in the United States. It is a **25 page document** that was developed by Protestant, **Chuck Colson** and former Protestant (Lutheran pastor who became a Roman Catholic priest) **John Richard Niehaus**. It was signed on **March 29, 1994**. Colson and Niehaus say the following:

*“Evangelicals and Catholics have been finding one another as Christian brothers and sisters in various activities, notably in the **pro-life** movement and the **charismatic renewal**. Our concern was and is that animosities between Evangelicals and Catholics threatened to mar the image of Christ by turning Latin America into a Belfast of religious warfare.”*

One of the things this document recommends is that there be **no proselytizing** between Protestants and Catholics, especially in **Latin America** where there are thousands upon thousands of Catholics who are leaving the Roman Catholic Church every month and joining various Protestant denominations, including **Jehovah’s Witnesses, Seventh-day**

**Adventists, Pentecostals, Mormons, Baptists.** This has been a great concern for the Roman Catholic Church and so in this document the forty great leaders of Catholicism and Protestantism got together and **agreed to stop stealing one another' sheep.** Instead of **fighting over insignificant** points of doctrine, they agreed rather to unite forces to **fight the common enemy** of secular humanism which is manifested in a struggle against things such as **abortion, homosexual marriage and pornography.** This, of course, benefits the Catholics far more than the Protestants.

USA Today, March 30, 1994:

*"The leaders in a statement are urging the nation's fifty-two million Catholics and thirteen million evangelicals to no longer hold each other at theological arms length and stop aggressive proselytizing of each others flocks, in short, to turn their theological swords into a recognition of a **common faith.**"*

One of the signers of this document was **Keith Fournier** who wrote a book, **House United.** This book has incredible **ecumenical implications.** Notice his comment on page 336:

*"Catholics, Protestants and Orthodox can **come together, must come together, and are coming together.** The **wall of separation is cracking,** portions of the wall are beginning to fall away. Christians are waking up and starting to see each other as Family."*

#### **Joint Declaration of Justification by Faith (1999)**

**Kenneth Kantzer**, Christianity Today, "Church on the Move," November 7, 1986, p. 16:

*"Finally we [Catholic and Evangelicals] can **work together** on those political and social issues where we are in such **strong agreement.** Our **united effort** in these areas will do much to influence the world to the good . . . In spite of **basic differences,** we can use our **common** Judeo-Christian value system to forge moral leadership that will advance the cause of justice and peace through a stable society in our nation and around the world."*

**Pat Robertson** is quoted in Church and State magazine, August 1988, p. 15:

*"I believe frankly that the Evangelicals and the Catholics in America, **if they work together,** can see many pro-family initiatives in our society, and we can be an effective counterbalance to some of the radical, leftist initiatives."*

**Chuck Colson** in the introduction to **Keith Fournier's** book, Evangelical Catholics, p. 1 has some remarkable statements [notice that he claims to be both Evangelical and Catholic]:

*“It’s high time that all of us who are Christians **come together** regardless of the differences of our confessions and our traditions and make **common cause** to bring Christian values to bear in our society. When the barbarians are scaling the walls, there is no time for petty quarreling in the camp.”*

*“But at root, those who are called of God, whether Catholic or Protestant, are part of the **same Body**. What they share is a belief in **the basics**: the virgin birth, the deity of Christ, His bodily resurrection, His imminent return, and the authority of His infallible Word. They also share the **same mission**: presenting Christ as Savior and Lord to a needy world.” P. vi*

*“I pray that this his [Fournier’s] book will be read by Catholics and Protestant alike, that it will be **a bridge** across many of the historic divisions in the church that have weakened our stand in today’s culture.” P. vi*

And **Keith Fournier**, in the course of his book, expressed the same sentiments:

*“We Christians have **differences**—important, critical differences. But we have far **more in common** both in beliefs and in mission. These believers have built on their **commonalities** without denying their differences.” P. 12*

*“But as long as we see ourselves as disconnected, even polarized, communities with some of us adhering to ‘the right faith’ while the rest of us are languishing in error, we will never receive the incredibly rich benefits of a worldwide revival.” P. 65*

*“We must see that we were meant to be **one church united** under one Head for the purpose of carrying out a two-fold mission: proclaiming the gospel and maturing in Christ.” P. 65*

*“As we prepare to move into the next millennium, will we **do it together**, recognizing that what we have **in common** far exceeds what separates us? Or will we allow our internal divisions to hold us back from fulfilling our heritage?” p. 153*

You know, **Martin Luther** would die of a heart attack if he resurrected today and saw what is happening with Protestantism. The differences are called “**petty quarreling**”. We are not talking about petty quarreling. Is the **Sabbath** a petty thing? Is our view of the **state of the dead** insignificant?

**John Swamley** [who is **opposed** to what is happening], The Saving of America, p. 77:

*“The Roman Catholic bishops are also at work **politically to end** separation of church and state. They are working in an **informal alliance** with fundamentalist Protestants not only on the abortion issue, but to get government support of private church schools . . .*

*The major Protestant denominations have been effectively **silenced by ecumenism**, falsely based on fear of offending the Catholic hierarchy.”*

**Two professors** at **Jerry Falwell’s** Liberty Baptist College (Liberty Magazine, March/April 1986) affirmed:

*“We are seeking a political **alliance** between the Roman Catholic church and conservative Protestants that would have a profound impact in the areas of abortion, family life, school policy and public morality.”*

**Ralph Reed** in his speech to the **Catholic Campaign for America**:

*“The truth is, you and I are uniting . . . We are coming together because whatever **theological differences** there are, there is far more that **unites us** and **brings us together** than divides us and separates us . . . The good news is the **chasm is being bridged** and that those **walls are crumbling** . . . The truth my friends is this. **Catholicism never has been, is not today, and never will be a threat to American democracy.** It was and remains the most colorful and the most vibrant thread running through the tapestry of American democracy.*

*“Cardinal Gibbons said this: he said, **No constitution is more in harmony with Catholic principles than the American constitution** and no religion is more in accord with that **constitution than the Catholic religion** [Reed is suffering from voluntary amnesia and Gibbons is knowingly prevaricating].*

*“I want you to know that as Evangelicals we stand **shoulder to shoulder** with you in insuring that never again will bigotry be directed against Catholics and their religion be used to try and silence them and drive them from the public square.*

*“I think you know that we have recently launched a division of the Christian Coalition called the Catholic Alliance which is designed to formalize and continue **to build bridges** in our partnership with Roman Catholics. The Catholic Alliance, like the Catholic Campaign, will be a lay movement.”*

**Ralph Reed**, The Amarillo Sunday News Globe, December 10, 1995:

*“We can no longer afford to be divided. It is a **luxury** that is no longer ours. The left wants you and I to be divided. Nothing frightens them more than Christians **shattering the barriers of denomination.**”*

## **Tearing Down the Wall**

**Keith Fournier**, President of the **American Center for Law and Justice**, the legal arm of Pat Robertson’s organization:



*“Yet there is a wall which has been mistakenly erected in our own beloved country. Its impact on religious freedom has perhaps had an even more devastating effect, it is the so called **wall of separation of church and state.**”*

**Pat Robertson:**

*“They [liberals and secular humanists] have kept us in submission because they have talked about separation of church and state. There is no such thing in the Constitution. It’s a lie of the left, and we’re not going to take it anymore.” (Anti-Defamation League, The Religious Right: The Assault on Tolerance and Pluralism in America, p. 4)*

**Jerry Falwell:**

*“Separation of Church and State has long been the battle cry of civil libertarians wishing to purge our glorious Christian heritage from our nation’s history. Of course, the term never once appears in our Constitution and is a modern fabrication of discrimination.” Quoted in Church and State, June 2006, p. 14*

**D. James Kennedy:**

*“If we are committed and involved in taking back the nation for Christian values . . . there is no doubt we can witness the dismantling of not just the Berlin wall but the even more diabolical ‘wall of separation’ that has led to secularization, immorality, and corruption in our country.” (Quoted in “They Said It! Religious Right Leaders in Their Own Words.”*

**Thomas Jefferson, the architect of the new republic said in a letter to the Danbury Baptist Association:**

*“I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should ‘make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,’ thus building a wall of separation between church and state.”*

**William Rehnquist, the late Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court:**

*“**The wall** of separation between church and state is a metaphor based on bad history; a metaphor which has proved useless as a guide to judging; it should be frankly and explicitly abandoned.” The Saving of America, p.*

**Ellen White concurred:**

*“Republicanism and Protestantism became the fundamental principles of the nation. These principles are the secret of its power and prosperity.” The Great Controversy, p. 441*

W. A. Criswell, who for years was the senior pastor of the **First Baptist Church in Dallas** and is also the former president of the **National Baptist Convention** once stated:

*“I believe that this notion of the separation of **church and state** was the figment of some infidel’s imagination” The Saving of America p. 59.*

The **Baptists** came from the **Anabaptists** who were **slaughtered** for their religious convictions. They were in the forefront of struggling for **religious liberty**. Criswell has certainly forgotten his roots.

**Arizona state senator John B. Conlan** once stated:

*“The **separation of church and state** is a false issue. It is a slogan created by the **secular humanists** which sounds **legal** but in fact is a sham. It does **not appear anywhere in the constitution**, and it is not a concept that our **Founding Fathers** believed. [there is a strong tendency today to **rewrite** what the founding fathers believed] . . . ‘Separation of church and state’ . . . is simply a line of propaganda created by modern humanists to intimidate Christians and make us believe that we are second-class citizens.” The Saving of America, p. 59*

**Keith Fournier, September 10-12, 1992** in Washington, D. C. at the **Second Annual Road to Victory** Briefing Conference of the **Christian Coalition**:

*“The **wall of separation between church and state** that was erected by **secular humanists** and other **enemies** of religious freedom has to come down. That wall is more of a threat to society than the **Berlin Wall** ever was. Those opposing our views are the new **Fascists**.”*

**David S. Nelson** who was the director of **Pat Robertson’s Christian Coalition in Colorado** stated:

*“The separation of church and state is (1) not a teaching of the founding fathers; (2) not an historical teaching; (3) not a teaching of law (except in recent years);(4) not a Biblical teaching. In summary, there should be absolutely **no ‘separation of church and state in America.**” Undated flyer in 1992*

**Gary North** has stated:

*“We must use the doctrine of religious liberty to gain independence for Christian schools until we train up a generation of people who know that there is no religious neutrality . . . Then they will get busy in **constructing a Bible-based social, political and religious order** which finally denies the religious liberty of the enemies of God.” Gary North quoted in The Religious Right: The Assault on Tolerance and Pluralism in America, pp. 5, 6*

In other words, train up a whole generation of kids in the **Christian system**, get them to **take over the government** and then deny religious liberty to all who disagree with their view of religion.

**Cal Thomas:**

*“If we will not be constrained from within by the power of God, we must be **constrained from without** by the power of the State acting as God’s agent.” Harper’s Magazine, March, 1995, p. 30*

**Pat Robertson** has stated that:

*“There will never be world peace until God’s house and God’s people are given their rightful place of **leadership at the top of the world**. How can there be peace when drunkards, drug dealers, communists, atheists, New Age worshipers of Satan, secular humanists, oppressive dictators, greedy moneychangers, revolutionary assassins, adulterers and homosexuals are on top? Under their leadership the world will never, I repeat never, experience lasting peace . . . Although I agree that it is unwise for the organized church as an institution to get itself entwined with government as an institution there is absolutely no way that government can operate successfully unless led by godly men and women operating **under the laws of the God of Jacob**.” Pat Robertson, The New World Order, p. 227.*

My Bible tells me in **Matthew 24** that the world is going to get **worse and worse** and the only thing which is going to save it is the **second coming of Jesus**. Those who are attempting to change the **world from without are attempting what is impossible**. Only a change within the **heart** can create a society where there is real and lasting peace.

**Tim LaHaye:**

*“While it is true that God has already given America three national revivals in the past, we desperately need another one today. [I surely would agree with him on this] Personally, I am not sure we can have one without **legislative reform**.” The Saving of America, p. 47*

Since when does **legislative reform bring about revival**? I thought it was brought about by the **power of the Holy Spirit through Bible study and prayer**. Since when does taking over the government bring about revival? Real change is not attained by **forcing from without but rather by changing from within**—the principle of the **leaven**.

**The Saving of America p. 59** refers to Tim LaHaye’s counsel for Christians becoming the **salt of the earth**:

They can become the salt of the earth by establishing a **political action committee**, encourage and preach on **Christian activism**, organize a **good government committee**, **circulate petitions and lobby**, conduct **political forums**, **introduce candidates** at services and so on. Is this what the Bible means when it says that we should be the salt of the earth?

**Richard Hogue** in his book, *Saints and Dirty Politics* stated:

*“. . . if our country survives—and I realize that’s a big IF—it will be because there is an awakening in the lives of committed Christians across our nation who finally begin to realize that it is not only their opportunity but also their absolute responsibility to be intricately involved in the political process of our country and use that involvement to turn this nation once again to the Lord.”* (Quoted in *The Saving of America*, p. 53)

Words of **Ralph Reed**, *Day of the Dragon*, p. 72

*“What Christians have got to do is take back this country, one precinct at a time, one neighborhood at a time, one state at a time. I honestly believe that in my lifetime we will see a country once again governed by Christians.”*

Speech by **Randall Terry** at Willoughby Hills, Ohio in July of 1993:

*“Our goal must be simple: We must have a **Christian nation built on God’s law**, on the Ten Commandments. No apologies.”* (Speech by Randall Terry at Willoughby Hills, Ohio in July of 1993)

Many years ago, **Pat Robertson** expressed the objectives of the Christian right:

*“. . . we have together with the Protestants and the Catholics **enough votes** to run the country and when the people say, ‘We’ve had enough,’ **we are going to take over.**”* *Conservative Digest*, August, 1979:

**Robert Grant**, president of *Christian Voice*, which was a branch of the **Moral Majority** established by Jerry Fallwell once said:

*“If Christians unite we can do anything. We can pass any law or **any amendment** and that’s exactly what **we intend to do.**”* Quoted in *Liberty Magazine*, May/June 1980, p. 4

In a television interview, **Grant** stated:

*“We can do anything. We can **amend the Constitution**. We can **elect a president**. We can change or make **any law** in the land. And it behooves us to do it. If we have to live under the law, as well, we should live under **moral and Godly Law.**”* (*20/20 program the week of the Democratic National Convention in 1980*)

**GC 297** on what it was like in Colonial America:

*“The regulation adopted by the early colonists, of **permitting only members** of the church to vote or to hold office in the civil government, led to most **pernicious results**. This measure had been accepted as a means of **preserving the purity of the state**, but it resulted in the **corruption of the church**. A profession of religion being the condition of suffrage and office holding, many, actuated solely by motives of **worldly policy**, united with the church without a **change of heart**. Thus the churches came to consist, to a considerable extent, of **unconverted persons**; and even in the ministry were those who not only held errors of doctrine, but who were ignorant of the **renewing power of the Holy Spirit**. Thus again was demonstrated the evil results, so often witnessed in the history of the church from the days of Constantine to the present, of attempting to build up the church by the aid of the state, of appealing to the secular power in support of the gospel of Him who declared: “My kingdom is not of this world.” John 18:36. The union of the church with the state, **be the degree never so slight**, while it may appear to bring the world nearer to the church, does in reality but bring **the church nearer to the world**.”*

**What about Sunday legislation? There are distant peals of thunder**

**D. James Kennedy:**

*“From the witness of the early Church, from the witness of our disarrayed lives, from the witness of our society as it teeters on the brink of moral collapse, we see that the need to keep the Sabbath is truly urgent.”*

*John Paul II:*

*“In the particular circumstances of our own time, Christians will naturally strive to see that civil legislation respects their duty to keep the Sabbath day.” Dies Domini, 4:67*



# STUDIES ON MATTHEW 24

by Stephen Bohr

## #8 - MATTHEW 24 AND THE FALSE PROPHET

### False Prophets in the End-time

#### Matthew 24:9-11

*“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. 10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. 11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.”*

#### Matthew 24:24

*“For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.”*

**What kind** of false prophets are these? Are they the **Jean Dixon** types? Are they the **David Koresh** types? Or are they far **more deceptive**? In order to know, we must go back to the **Mosaic legislation** on false prophets

### The Mosaic legislation about false prophets

#### Deuteronomy 13:1-5

*"If there arises **among you** [not outsiders] a **prophet** or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a **sign or a wonder** [remember this expression], 2 and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go **after other gods**'--which you have not known--'and let us serve [false worship] them,' 3 "you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you **love** the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 You shall **walk** after the LORD your God and **fear** Him, and **keep His commandments** [notice the key expression] and **obey His voice**, and you shall **serve Him** and **hold fast** to Him. 5 But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be **put to death**, because he has spoken in order to **turn you away from the LORD your God**, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, **to entice you from the way** in which*

*the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall put away the evil from your midst."*

### **The Role of a True Prophet**

Prophets were to be the **conscience of Israel**. They were not **revolutionary innovators** but rather **restorers** of the **ancient landmarks**. They called God's apostate people **back to the old time religion**. They were **God's lawyers** in divorce court. **Elijah** is an example of this: He called God's people **back** to the Lord their God.

### **Jeremiah 35:15-16: Turn from evil ways**

*"I have also sent to you all My servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, 'Turn now everyone from his evil way, amend your doings, and do not go after other gods to serve them; then you will dwell in the land which I have given you and your fathers.' But you have not inclined your ear, nor obeyed Me."*

### **The False Prophets and Jerusalem**

Talk about the **false prophets** just before the **first destruction of Jerusalem**. Show how they prophesied **peace, peace**, in **disobedience** to the [1] **law of God** and practicing [2] **false worship**.

**Isaiah 28:7:** The **use of wine** affected their judgment just like Nadab and Abihu.

*"But they also have erred through wine, and through intoxicating drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through intoxicating drink, they are swallowed up by wine, they are out of the way through intoxicating drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment."*

**Jeremiah 6:13-15:** **Covetousness**, cry **peace, peace**, and commit **abomination** (worshiping the sun in **Ezekiel 8**)

*"Because from the least of them even to the greatest of them, everyone is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even to the priest, everyone deals falsely. 14 They have also healed the hurt of My people slightly, saying, 'Peace, peace!' when there is no peace. 15 Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed; nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; at the time I punish them, they shall be cast down," says the LORD."*

**Jeremiah 23:17:** **Speak what people want to hear** saying **"peace, peace"**

*7 They continually say to those who despise Me, 'The LORD has said, "You shall have peace" '; and to everyone who walks according to the dictates of his own heart, they say, 'No evil shall come upon you.' "*



### **Jeremiah 14:13-16: Speak in God's name but they are liars. They are within the church**

*"Then I said, 'Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, the prophets say to them, 'You shall not see the sword, nor shall you have famine, but I will give you assured **peace** in this place.' " 14 And the LORD said to me, "The prophets **prophesy lies in My name**. I have not sent them, commanded them, nor spoken to them; they prophesy to you a **false vision**, divination, a worthless thing, and the deceit of their heart. 15 Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who **prophesy in My name**, whom I did not send, and who say, 'Sword and famine **shall not be in this land**'--'By sword and famine those prophets shall be consumed! 16 And **the people** to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; they will have **no one to bury them**--them nor their wives, their sons nor their daughters--for I will pour their wickedness on them.'"*

### **Jeremiah 27:9-10, 14-15: Lies in God's Name**

*"Therefore do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers, your soothsayers, or your sorcerers, who speak to you, saying, "You shall not serve the king of Babylon." 10 'For they **prophesy a lie** to you, to remove you far from your land; and I will drive you out, and you will perish. 14 Therefore do not listen to the words of the prophets who speak to you, saying, 'You shall not serve the king of Babylon,' for they **prophesy a lie** to you; 15 for I have not sent them," says the LORD, "yet they prophesy a **lie in My name**, that I may drive you out, and that you may perish, you and the prophets who prophesy to you."*

### **Jeremiah 29:8-9: Falsely in God's Name**

*"For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let your **prophets** and your **diviners** who are in your midst deceive you, nor listen to your dreams which you cause to be dreamed. 9 For they prophesy **falsely** to you **in My name**; I have not sent them, says the LORD."*

### **Jeremiah 23:14: Strengthen the evil doers**

*"Also I have seen a horrible thing in the prophets of Jerusalem: They commit adultery and walk in lies; they also **strengthen the hands of evildoers**, so that no one **turns back from his wickedness**. All of them are like Sodom to Me, and her inhabitants like Gomorrah."*

### **Jeremiah 23:20-22: Did not turn the wicked from their evil ways**

*"The anger of the LORD will not turn back until He has executed and performed the thoughts of His heart. In the latter days you will understand it perfectly. 21 "I have **not***

*sent these prophets, yet they ran. I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. 22 But if they had stood in My counsel, and had caused My people to hear My words, then they would have turned them from their evil way and from the evil of their doings.”*

#### **Jeremiah 23:14: Do not turn from wickedness**

*“Also I have seen a horrible thing in the prophets of Jerusalem: They commit **adultery** and walk in **lies**; they also strengthen the hands of **evildoers**, so that no one **turns back** from his wickedness. All of them are like Sodom to Me, and her inhabitants like Gomorrah.”*

#### **Jeremiah 23:31-32: Cause God’s people to err**

*31 Behold, I am against the prophets," says the LORD, "who use their tongues and say, 'He says.' 32 "Behold, I am against those who **prophecy false** dreams," says the LORD, "and tell them, and **cause My people to err** by their **lies** [II Thessalonians 2 speak of lying wonders] and by their recklessness. Yet I did not send them or command them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all," says the LORD.”*

#### **Jeremiah 26:4-6: True prophets teach to walk in the law**

*"And you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD: "If you will not listen to Me, to **walk in My law** which I have set before you, 5 to **heed the words** of My servants the prophets whom I sent to you, both rising up early and sending them (but you have not heeded), 6 then I will make this house like Shiloh, and will make **this city a curse** to all the nations of the earth." ' ' "*

#### **Jeremiah 28:15-17: Taught Lies and Rebellion**

*“Then the prophet Jeremiah said to Hananiah the prophet, "Hear now, Hananiah, the LORD has not sent you, but you make this people **trust in a lie**. 16 Therefore thus says the LORD: 'Behold, I will cast you from the face of the earth. This year you shall die, because you have **taught rebellion** against the LORD.' " 17 So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.”*

#### **Jeremiah 32:31-35: Abominations, Baal Worship**

*“For this city has been to Me a provocation of My anger and My fury from the day that they built it, even to this day; so I will remove it from before My face 32 because of all the evil of the children of Israel and the children of Judah, which they have done to provoke Me to anger--they, their kings, their princes, their priests, **their prophets**, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 33 And they have turned to Me the back, and not the face; though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not listened to receive instruction. 34 But they set their **abominations in the house** which*

is called by My name, to defile it. 35 And they built the **high places of Baal** which are in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire to Molech, which I did not command them, nor did it come into My mind that they should do this **abomination**, to cause Judah to sin.'

### **Ezekiel 22:25-26: Taken treasure, violated the law, no difference between the holy and the common**

25 "The **conspiracy of her prophets** in her midst is like a roaring lion tearing the prey; they have **devoured people**; they have **taken treasure and precious things**; they have made many widows in her midst. 26 Her priests have violated **My law** and profaned **My holy things**; they have not distinguished between the **holy and unholy**, nor have they made known **the difference** between the unclean and the clean; and they have hidden their eyes from My **Sabbaths**, so that I am **profaned** among them."

### **Daniel 9:10: Disobeyed God's law**

"We have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in **His laws**, which He set before us by His servants the **prophets**."

### **Zechariah 7:12-13: Refused to hear the law**

"Yes, they made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the **law and the words** which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets. Thus great wrath came from the LORD of hosts."

### **Jeremiah 5:31: The people wanted it so**

"The **prophets prophesy falsely**, and the priests rule by their own power; and **My people love to have it so**. But what will you do in the end?"

### **The False Prophets of Matthew 24**

In **Matthew 24** we once again have the **false prophets** who do their work before the second destruction of Jerusalem. They must have done **similar things** to those in the Old Testament. In fact they will send people **out to the desert** to find the Messiah.

### **Matthew 7:15, 16, 21-23**

"Beware of **false prophets**, who come to you in **sheep's clothing**, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. 16 You will know them by their fruits. 21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not **prophesied in Your name**, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in

*Your name?' 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who **practice lawlessness!**'*

**Matthew 24:11-13: Talk about the word *anomias***

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

**Matthew 24:24**

*"For false christs and **false prophets** will rise and show great **signs and wonders** [notice the key expression] to **deceive**, if possible, even the **elect**."*

**Luke 6:26: When the multitudes speak well**

*"Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets."*

Show the New Testament perspective of what a **false prophet** is and how the **law of God** is involved (Matthew 7)—not the **Jeanne Dixon** type but one from inside who forecasts **peace, peace (I Thessalonians 5)**.

Then go to **Revelation 13:11, 13; 16:13** and speak of the false prophet. **Two horns** like a lamb but it speaks as a **dragon**. Claims to be a follower of Christ but speaks like a dragon—like **Rome**. It contradicts its peaceful professions. It even makes fire come down from heaven as a **sign and wonder**

- The idea of two kingdoms:
  - Give to Caesar what is Caesar's
  - My kingdom is not of this world
  - Republicanism and Protestantism
  - Civil and religious liberty
  - The ram of Daniel
- 
- In Matthew 24 we find an **increase in lawlessness**,
  - II Thessalonians 2 we have the **mystery of lawlessness**,
  - Matthew 7 we have those who **work lawlessness**
  - Revelation you have the beast and his image who **promote lawlessness**.
  - In Daniel 7 you have the **change in the law** of God.
  - God's people keep the commandments of God and worship the Creator (Revelation 14:6, 7)

### **Revelation 16:13-14**

*“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the **false prophet**. 14 For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”*

This will happen also at the end with the antichrist according to **II Thessalonians 2**. He will walk on the earth and do **signs and wonders** like Jesus did and the false prophet will tell people to **believe him** because they believe that the **Messiah will set up his kingdom on earth** during the millennium. **I Thessalonians 5:1, 2** says that they will be saying “peace and safety.”

### **Revelation 19:20**

This is a vital text because it says that the false prophet **worked signs in the presence of the beast** by which he **deceived people to receive the mark of the beast** and to **worship the image**. The false prophet thus teaches all to **receive the mark of the beast**.

*“Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, **by which he deceived** those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image.”*

*“Those who ignore the Lord's Sabbath to keep holy the first day of the week, offer strange fire to God. It is a strange sabbath, which He has commanded them not. Will He accept it at their hands? Men have sought out many inventions. They have taken a common day, upon which God has placed no sanctity, and have clothed it with sacred prerogatives. They have declared it to be a holy day, but this does not give it a vestige of sanctity. They dishonor God by accepting human institutions and presenting to the world as the Christian Sabbath a day which has no "Thus saith the Lord" for its authority. As did Nadab and Abihu, they offer the common in place of the sacred.” Signs of the Times March 31, 1898*



# STUDIES ON MATTHEW 24

by Stephen Bohr

## #9 - THE GREAT TRIBULATION

### Two Tribulation Periods

- We need to apply the tribulation in Matthew to the middle Ages and to the end of time **dually**. What **Biblical proof** do we have of this?
- The **Papacy** (power that ruled in the middle Ages) has **two stages** of power.
- This is seen by the souls under the altar (Revelation 6:9-11) who cried out—**two groups of martyrs** in the **fifth seal**
- The beast of **Revelation 13** has two stages during which it oppresses God's people [42 months and after the wound is healed, Revelation 13:3]
- In **Daniel 11** the king of the north has **two stages** of dominion (verses 30-39 and verses 40-45)
- *"We have no time to lose. Troublous times are before us. The world is stirred with the spirit of war. Soon the scenes of trouble spoken of in the prophecies will take place. The prophecy in the eleventh of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment. Much of the history that has taken place in fulfillment of this prophecy will be repeated. In the thirtieth verse a power is spoken of that "shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant." [Verses 31-36, quoted.] Scenes similar to those described in these words will take place."* 13MR 394
- At **both stages** you have **Sunday** involved. During the 1260 years the papacy thought it could **change the law** (Daniel 7:25). In the end-time the false prophet will impose the **mark of the beast** which is the change in the law (Revelation 13:11-18).
- Both are tribulations such as the **world has not seen**. The first is incomparable because of its **length** and the second is without par because of its **intensity**.
- At the conclusion of **both you have signs** in the heavens (preliminary signs **preparatory** to the global signs at the second coming among the same heavenly bodies)

### Revelation has the same sequence of events as Matthew 24:

- Preaching of the gospel (Revelation 14:6)
- World divided into two groups (Revelation 14:14-20)
- Close of probation (Revelation 15:5-8)
- Great tribulation (Revelation 16-18)

- Second coming (Revelation 19:11-19)

*“The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old.” GC 614*

#### **Matthew 24:21 as past:**

*“Then shall be great tribulation,” He said, “such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be”*

*“For more than a thousand years such persecution as the world had never before known was to come upon Christ's followers. **Millions upon millions** of His faithful witnesses were to be slain. Had not God's hand been stretched out to preserve His people, all would have perished. “But for the elect's sake,” He said, “those days shall be shortened.” DA 631*

#### **Matthew 24:21 as future:**

*“We are to realize that the judgments of God are about to fall upon the earth, and we should most earnestly present before the people the warning that the Lord has commissioned us to give: “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” R&H November 22, 1892*

#### **The sequence of Matthew 24**

- We have noted that in Matthew 24 you have **disasters**
- God's people **blamed**
- Help of the **Holy Spirit**
- Preaching with **power**
- Then the **abomination of desolation** which leads to a **separation** among those who profess to serve God. One group **stays** in Jerusalem and is bound for **destruction** and the **other flees** and is **saved**.
- The **abomination of desolation** is the equivalent of the **mark of the beast**. Both have to do with **the sun** and both are the **final test** which separates God's people
- Then flight to the **mountains**
- Then **not one of God's people** will **perish** during the time of trouble
- Then lives in danger then the **deliverance** of God's people
- Then the **resurrection at the coming** of Jesus.

#### **Daniel 11 follows the same sequence**

- At the end you have the **loud cry** through the power of the latter rain [news from the north and the east. At this point the king of the north is in Egypt and Libya],



- This **enrages the wicked** [troubles the king of the north, they go out to destroy many],
- Then you have the **abomination of desolation** set up [the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain]
- Then you have the **time of trouble** [Daniel 12:1]
- Then God's **people are delivered**
- Then you have the **resurrection** at the coming of Jesus [Daniel 12:1].
- Thus Daniel 11:44-12:1 follows the same sequence as Matthew 24 in the **identical order**.

### Matthew 24:21:

The word “**then**” indicates that when God’s people flee they **will be plunged** into the **time of trouble** such as never has been seen.

Ellen White corroborates this in 5T 451 where after talking about the **Sunday law** she says that God’s people will **flee** and then they will be **plunged** into the time of trouble. Why would God’s people have to flee? It must be because there is going to be **persecution**. Did God’s people flee in the **middle ages to the desolate places** of the earth? Will God’s people flee to the desolate places of the earth at the end time?

*“The people of God--some in prison cells, some hidden in **solitary retreats in the forests and the mountains**--still plead for divine protection, while in every quarter companies of armed men, urged on by hosts of evil angels, are preparing for the work of death.” GC 635*

### Matthew 24:22: **The tribulation shortened**

*“And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.”*

- Notice that for the elect’s sake the tribulation will be **shortened**. If God did not intervene all of God’s people would be **wiped out**.
- God does **not allow** events to reach their **inevitable conclusion**. Those who fled were the elect or the **sealed ones**.
- Notice also that the **elect will go through the tribulation** which shows that they will not be taken out (raptured) before the tribulation.
- Matthew 24:22 says that the tribulation will be **shortened** because of the elect. And **who** are the elect? Romans 8 explains **who the elect are**—they are those who have accepted Jesus as Savior and Lord (see also I Peter 2:9; Colossians 3:12; Revelation 17:14 where the same word is translated “**chosen**”).
- Furthermore when Jesus comes he will gather his elect from the **four winds**. Why would he gather them if they were **already in heaven** with Him? The fact is that it is **after the tribulation** does Jesus come to gather His elect.

- The devil wants us to think that we will **not go through the tribulation** because he knows that we will need a **special quality of faith** in order to go through this period victoriously and this faith must be developed now.
- Would you prepare for a **hurricane in California** if it was expected in **Florida**? If you believe that **Revelation 4-22** will be fulfilled after the rapture, why even bother to study it? It would **not apply to you**. The devil does not want us to study Revelation.

GC 631 (the chapter on the time of trouble) Ellen White **universalizes** the meaning of the **tribulation**. In this page Ellen White assures us that for the good of the elect the days of the time of trouble will be shortened. She makes many **allusions to Matthew 24** such as **flight** from the cities, the **death decree**, the **shortening** of the time of trouble:

*“Yet for the elect's sake the time of trouble will be **shortened**. . . The heavenly sentinels, faithful to their trust, continue their watch. Though a **general decree** has fixed the time when commandment keepers may be put to death, their enemies will in some cases anticipate the decree, and before the time specified, will endeavor to take their lives. But none can pass the mighty guardians stationed about every faithful soul. Some are assailed in their **flight** from the **cities and villages**; but the swords raised against them break and fall powerless as a straw. Others are defended by angels in the form of men of war. GC 631”*

#### Matthew 24:23: **Counterfeit second coming**

*Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it.”*

- Then you have the **counterfeit second coming** of Jesus [the word “**then**” indicates that this counterfeit will take place **after the close of probation** during the time of trouble.
- The question begs to be asked: **Why would Satan try to deceive the elect if he knows that probation has closed and they are sealed?** Because Satan harbors the hope that he will be able to **counteract** the word of God. He does not give up. He is **relentless**. He still hopes he will be able to counteract God’s word] God’s people are **crying day and night** for their deliverance from their Adversary [Luke 18:1-8], they long for the coming of Jesus and so now Satan is going to **apparently answer** their pleas by counterfeiting the second coming.

#### Matthew 24:24: **False christs and prophets**

*“For false **christs** and false **prophets** will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.” 26 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.”*

- But starting in verse 25 you have an **individual**. The word “he” is used.
- How will we be able to distinguish the counterfeit?
- Jesus will **not touch** the earth. **II Thessalonians 2:1** tells us we will be **gathered to Him** at his *parousia*.
- **I Thessalonians 4:17** tells us that we will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.
- **Matthew 24:30** tells us that the angels will gather the elect from the four corners of the earth
- **John 14:3** says that Jesus will receive us to himself and take us to the Father’s house.
- **II Thessalonians 2** describes this **counterfeit** second coming. There are **two parousias** in this passage. The genuine one is mentioned in **verse 1** and the counterfeit in **verse 9**. Notice that the *parousia* of the antichrist must precede the *parousia* of Christ because the *parousia* of Christ destroys the antichrist.
- **Acts 2:22** is the opposite of what the antichrist will do.

**Matthew 24:25:**

*“Behold, I have told you beforehand.”*

This means that it is **God’s people who are in danger** of being deceived, not the world at large.

**Ellen White describes Satan’s counterfeit:**

*“As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will **personate** Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Savior’s advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will **make it appear** that Christ has come. In **different parts** of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation. **Revelation 1:13-15**. The **glory that surrounds him** is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air: “Christ has come! Christ has come!” The people prostrate themselves in **adoration** before him, while he lifts up his hands and pronounces a blessing upon them, as Christ blessed His disciples when He was upon the earth. His voice is **soft and subdued**, yet full of **melody**. In **gentle, compassionate tones** he presents **some** of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Savior uttered; **he heals** the diseases of the people, and then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have **changed the Sabbath to Sunday**, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are **blaspheming his name** by refusing to listen to his angels sent to them with light and truth. This is the strong, **almost overmastering delusion**.” GC 624*

God's people will detect the counterfeit in **two ways**:

- The **manner** of his coming
- The **content** of his teachings

*"But the people of God will not be misled. The **teachings** of this false christ are not in accordance with the **Scriptures**. His blessing is pronounced upon the worshipers of the beast and his image, **the very class upon whom the Bible declares that God's unmingled wrath shall be poured out.***

*And, furthermore, Satan is **not permitted to counterfeit the manner of Christ's advent**. The Savior has warned His people against deception upon this point, and has clearly foretold the manner of His second coming. "There shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. . . . Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert; go not forth; behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:24-27, 31; 25:31; Revelation 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. **This coming there is no possibility of counterfeiting. It will be universally known--witnessed by the whole world.**" *The Great Controversy*, p. 625*

**Matthew 24:28:**

*"For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together."*

Notice that when Jerusalem was destroyed the **eagles of Rome** were present. Now at the end of the world we encounter those **eagles again**.

**Matthew 24:29-31:**

*"Immediately **after the tribulation** of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."*

- The **papacy** has **two stages**
- Therefore the **tribulation** has **two stages**
- The **signs in the heavens** have **two stages**

- A partial fulfillment took place in **1755, 1780 and 1833**. These signs showed that the **first stage** of the tribulation was **coming to an end**.
- Someone says: How can you believe that these are signs of the soon coming of Jesus when **over 200 years** have passed since then.
- Look up Maxwell's explanation in the book Magnificent Disappointment. But the fuller fulfillment will take place as harbingers of the second coming of Jesus. When God's people see these things they will know that their **redemption draws nigh** (Luke 21)
- **Revelation 6:12-13**. In Revelation we are told that the moon became **like blood**, not that it was darkened. These are not the same signs as those in Matthew 24. In Revelation we are told that the moon became like blood, not that it was darkened.
- The signs in Revelation 6:12, 13 are **similar to those in Joel 2:31**. These are the signs which are described in Revelation 6: The sun is darkened and the **moon is turned into blood, before** the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord.
- **Joel 2:10, 11** has **different signs** than Revelation 6:12, 13 and Joel 2:31: The earth trembles, the heavens tremble, the sun and the moon grow dark and the stars do not shine. Here the signs technically are referring to those who immediately precede the second coming of Jesus.
- **Joel 3:15, 16**: This is not the same sign as in Revelation 6:12, 13. The heavens and the earth will shake and the sun, moon will be dark.
- **Isaiah 13:10ff**: Not the same sign as in Revelation 6:12, 13. The sun, moon and stars are darkened. These things did not happen in 1755, 1780 and 1833. Notice that the heavens and earth will be removed from their places. Joel 2:31:
- Notice that Revelation 6 presents the signs in the **very order** in which they occurred: **Earthquake** (1755), **sun** (1780), **moon** (1780), **stars** (1833)
- **Acts 2:20**: Peter quotes the same verse from Joel 2:31. The signs in Joel 2:31; Acts 2:20 and Revelation 6:12, 13 are different than those in Matthew 24:30; Joel 2:10, 11; Joel 3:15, 16 and Isaiah 13:10ff.
- There is a difference between the expression "**the time of the end**" and "**the end of time**."
- The signs in Revelation 6:12, 13 are signs that we are entering upon the **time of the end**. The signs in Matthew 24:30 reveal that we have reached the **end of time**.
- Who are the rulers of the heavens? **Genesis 1:16** tells us that the sun and the moon were made to rule the heavens. Matthew 24 tells us that the powers of the heaven are the sun, moon and stars (**EW 41** explains this very well)
- Ellen White quotes verses 12, 13 in The Great Controversy, **p. 304** and applies them to the signs in 1755, 1870 and 1833.
- She does not quote Verses 14-17 until **pages 641, 642**:
- *"The heavens are rolled together as a scroll, the earth trembles before Him, and every mountain and island is moved out of its place."* And then she quotes verses 15-17)
- Why does she **separate the two verses** by many, many chapters? Because she knew there was a **parenthesis** of time between the two verses.
- In the series on the **seals**, I prove this point.

- The principle is that there are **signs which mark the end of the two stages of the tribulation**. In both cases the signs indicate that God has intervened to **deliver his people**—in the first instance from the oppression of the 1260 years and in the second instance from the oppression of the Time of Jacob’s Trouble.
- This must be understood in the context of the fifth seal. In the fifth seal there are **two groups of martyrs**, one past and one future. The **signs in the sixth seal** (6:12, 13) are an announcement that the **oppression of the first group of martyrs is about to come to an end**. The signs of 6:14-17 are an announcement that the **oppression of the second group of martyrs is about to come to an end** because God’s people are going to be delivered by the voice of God which moves the sun, moon and stars out of their places and causes the great earthquake.

**Luke 21:25, 26:**

*"And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; 26 men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken."*

- Be careful not to take these verses out of context. They are not referring to **simple distress** among the nations today. They are actually referring to the **distress which comes as a result of the sun, moon and stars being moved out of their places**.
- GC 636, 637: The chapter before this is titled, **The Time of Trouble** and now she is going to describe the signs in the sun, moon and stars in the chapter, **God’s People Delivered**.
- She is following the **same order** as Matthew 24 where you have the great tribulation and then the signs in the sun, moon and stars.
- In GC Ellen White has the chapter on the **Time of Trouble** for God’s people and then in the very next chapter we have the **signs** in the sun, moon and stars.
- **God’s voice shakes** the heavens and the earth. There will be a mighty earthquake. Notice then the **roaring of the sea and the tempestuous fury**. The whole earth heaves like the waves of the sea. Here Ellen White is using the language of **Luke 21:25, 26** to describe what will take place when God’s people will be delivered at the second coming.
- **A few pages later** Ellen White describes the arrival of Jesus and the **sending of His angels** to gather His **elect**. This is the very next event in Matthew 24.

**The signs in the heavens as past:**

*"Prophecy not only foretells the manner and object of Christ's coming, but presents tokens by which men are to know when it is near. Said Jesus: "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars." Luke 21:25. "The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are*

*in heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory." Mark 13:24-26. The revelator thus describes the first of the signs to precede the second advent: "There was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood." Revelation 6:12." GC 304*

### **The signs in the heavens as future:**

*"December 16, 1848, the Lord gave me a view of the shaking of the powers of the heavens. I saw that when the Lord said "heaven," in giving the signs recorded by **Matthew, Mark, and Luke**, He meant heaven, and when He said "earth" He meant earth. The powers of heaven are the sun, moon, and stars. They rule in the heavens. The powers of earth are those that rule on the earth. The powers of heaven will be shaken at the voice of God. Then the sun, moon, and stars will be moved out of their places. They will not pass away, but be shaken by the voice of God." EW 41*

Notice that it is **not** the Son of man who is seen in heaven after the signs in the sun, moon and stars. It is the **SIGN of the Son of man** which is seen.

What is the sign of the Son of man? It is found in the story of Elijah. **I Kings 18:41ff**: What is it that Elijah sees at the end of his period of tribulation at the hand of the threefold union. Now a sign is seen in heaven. It looks like a cloud the size of the palm of a man's hand. The chariot is coming to pick up Elijah. Shortly after this a chariot of fire picked up Elijah (II Kings 2:11).

Notice that this chariot will rescue God's people at the second coming. The **chariot will come to take God's people to their heavenly home**. Read here about this chariot in The Great Controversy.

Notice in **Matthew 24:30** that all the tribes of the earth will mourn over him. This is picked up in **Revelation 1:7** where it is added that those who pierced him will be alive.

This requires a special resurrection because the general resurrection of the wicked is not until after the millennium.

**Matthew 26:64** must be added here. This must be connected with Daniel 12:1-2 where at the conclusion of the time of trouble when God's people are delivered there will be a special resurrection of righteous people and wicked people.

In both Matthew and Daniel you have the **same sequence** of events: Time of **trouble**, God's people **delivered**, special **resurrection**, shining as the **stars** for eternity (see Matthew 13:43)

*"The world will then behold, as never before, the results of Satan's rule. But in that day, as in the time of Jerusalem's destruction, God's people will be delivered, "every one that*

*shall be found written among the living." Christ has declared that he will come the second time, to gather his faithful ones to himself: "Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." GC*  
37



# STUDIES ON MATTHEW 24

by Stephen Bohr

## #10 - AS A THIEF IN THE NIGHT

### Matthew 24:37-39:

*“But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38 For as in the days **before** the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah **entered** the ark, 39 and did **not know** until the **flood came** and took them all away, **so also** will the coming of the Son of Man be.”*

Jesus is comparing **two great events**: The days of Noah and the days of His coming. So if we are going to understand this passage correctly we must go back to the flood story of the Old Testament.

**Four** key points of time in the text we began with:

# 1: For **120 years** the **Spirit** strove with man as Noah **preached** (Hebrews 11:7; II Peter 2:5)

### Genesis 6:3

*“And the LORD said, ‘My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.’”*

Noah’s message was contrary to **historical** and **scientific** information idea of a **universal** flood was **preposterous**:

- At **creation** the planet was **covered** with **water** (Genesis 1:2)
- On the **second day** of creation God put water **above** and **below** the earth (Genesis 1:7)
- The earth was not watered by rain but by a kind of automatic **sprinkler system** (Genesis 2:5, 6)
- At the flood the waters **above** and **below** were brought back to the planet’s surface, the **fountains** of the great deep and the **windows** of heaven (Genesis 7:11)

**Just imagine** what the **experts** in **academia** must have said:

- **Department of the Natural Sciences:** *“It has never rained before. Everything has continued as from the beginning. It would be **unscientific** to believe that water could fall from heaven.”*
- **Theology Department:** *“God loves the world too much to destroy it. Besides, rain from heaven would require a **miracle** and nature works on the basis of **natural law**.”*
- **History Department:** *“There is **no historical record** of any flood in the past so why should we believe there would be **one now**?”*
- **Behavioral Sciences Department:** *“Noah is suffering an imaginary **mental delusion**. He is confusing **reality with fantasy**. He is **mentally deranged**.”*
- **Sociology Department:** *“We must not allow a **lunatic** like Noah to interrupt the **stable order** of society.”* Noah was probably looked upon as peculiar, sectarian and perhaps even **cultist**.
- **Philosophy Department:** *“Noah is suffering because of an **existential void** in his life. **What’s truth** for Noah is not necessarily truth for everyone else.”*

# 2: The Spirit **ceased to strive** and the **door was closed**. At this point the **saved were saved** and the **lost were lost** (7:16)

*“So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the LORD shut him in.”*

# 3: Seven days of **trial** went by with Noah inside the ark and the wicked outside (7:10)

*“And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth.”*

# 4: It began to **rain** (7:11)

*“In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.”*

Let’s take a closer look at verses **37-39**. What do the **day** and the **hour** refer to? Is it talking about the day and hour of the **second coming**? Most people think so.

### Matthew 24:37-39:

*“But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38 For as in the days [1] **before** the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah [2] **entered** the ark, 39 and did [3] **not know** until the [4] **flood came** and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.”*

Verses 37-41 are actually **illustrating the previous context** of Matthew 24:

- The **gospel** preached to all nations (II Peter 2:5—**Noah**; Revelation 14:6—**end-time**)
- The **abomination of desolation** is set up and the inhabitants of Jerusalem are divided into **two groups**—those who **flee** and those who **stay** (24:15); People in Noah’s day divided into two groups—those inside and those outside (Genesis 7:16) **Seal of God** and **Mark of the Beast** and the **door closes** (Revelation 15:5-8)
- God’s people flee, are caught up in the **tribulation** and face **incredible deceptions** (24:16-28), Noah **in the ark** during the seven days—**tempted to doubt** and the wicked become **more daring** (Genesis 7:10). The time of trouble at the end (Daniel 12:1)
- Then **destruction** comes when Jesus appears (24:29-31) the world is destroyed by a flood (Genesis 7:11)
- One is **taken** by the destruction and the other is **left** (24:40, 41; Genesis 7:22, 23; at the end the taken are the lost and the left are the saved)
- This shows that God must shut His people in for two reasons: First to pass to **survive the tribulation** when the wicked want to destroy them, second, to **survive the cataclysmic events** connected with the second coming of Jesus. This shows that probation closes, there is then the tribulation and only then does the destruction come.

I want to draw your attention to the very important little word which appears twice in **Matthew 24:38, 39**, the word “**until**.” It marks **two specific moments** of time. The **first “until”** marked the moment when Noah and his family entered the ark and the **second “until”** marked the moment when it started to rain and the wicked were all taken away. These **two “untils”** were separated by a period of seven days.

## **The coming of the thief**

The coming of the thief has **two key moments** of time: When the **thief comes** and everyone is sleeping, and when those who were **sleeping awake** and realize that the thief has come. Before the flood there were also two key moments: The **closing of the door** and the **execution** of the punishment. Both came upon the **pre-flood** race as an overwhelming surprise.

The door closed for the **Jewish nation** and then execution.

The door closed for **Babylon** and then the execution,

The door closed in **Sodom and Gomorrah** and then the execution.

The door **closed for Jerusalem** (Ezekiel 8) and then destruction

The **judgment** takes place (Revelation 14:6, 7), the **sanctuary closes** (Revelation 15:5-8) and then the **plagues** fall

I love the expression: “**and the Lord shut him in.**” Ellen White said that God **sealed the door**. The **sealed were inside and the unsealed were outside**.

Noah needed to be shut in for **two reasons**: First because the wicked wanted to **destroy him** before it began to rain and second because he needed to be **shielded from the destruction** to come.

Notice the following comment by Ellen G. White:

*“So when Christ shall cease His intercession for guilty men, **before His coming in the clouds of heaven, the door of mercy will be shut.** Then divine grace will no longer restrain the wicked, and **Satan will have full control** of those who have rejected mercy. They will endeavor to destroy God's people; but as Noah was shut into the ark, so the righteous will be **shielded by divine power.**”*

*For seven days after Noah and his family entered the ark, there appeared **no sign of the coming storm.** During this period their **faith was tested.** It was a time of **triumph to the world without.** The apparent **delay** confirmed them in the belief that Noah's message was a delusion, and that the Flood would never come. Notwithstanding the solemn scenes which they had witnessed--the beasts and birds entering the ark, and the angel of God closing the door--they still continued their sport and revelry, even making a jest of these signal manifestations of God's power. They gathered in crowds about the ark, deriding its inmates with a daring violence which they had never ventured upon before. PP 98, 99*

The **number seven** appears to be significant. This period foreshadows the period of the **seven last plagues**. Also the three young men were thrown into a fiery furnace **heated seven times hotter** than ever before. It appears that precious metals were purified **seven times** (Psalm 12:6) Isaiah 48:10: The furnace represents **refining through affliction**. **Job 23:10**: Describes Job's affliction. When he comes forth he will be like pure gold.

Ellen White also remarks:

*"When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death. Probation is ended a short time before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. Christ in the Revelation, looking forward to that time, declares: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22:11, 12.*

*The righteous and the wicked will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state--men will be planting and building, eating and drinking, all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the sanctuary above. Before the Flood, after Noah entered the ark, God shut him in and shut the ungodly out; but for seven days the people, knowing not that their doom was fixed, continued their careless, pleasure-loving life and mocked the warnings of impending judgment. "So," says the Savior, "shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:39. Silently, unnoticed as the midnight thief, will come the decisive hour which marks the fixing of every man's destiny, the final withdrawal of mercy's offer to guilty men.*

*"Watch ye therefore: . . . lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping." Mark 13:35, 36. Perilous is the condition of those who, growing weary of their watch, turn to the attractions of the world. While the man of business is absorbed in the pursuit of gain, while the pleasure lover is seeking indulgence, while the daughter of fashion is arranging her adornments--it may be in that hour the Judge of all the earth will pronounce the sentence: "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." Daniel 5:27. GC 491*

**Mark 13:33-37** is the key passage:

*"Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is. 34 It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch. 35 Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming--in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning-- 36 lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. 37 And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!"*

Notice Ellen White's comment on this passage from Mark:

*"Jesus has left us word: "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house **cometh**, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest **coming suddenly** He find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." We are waiting and watching for the return of the Master, who is to bring the morning, lest **coming suddenly** He find us sleeping. **What time is here referred to? Not to the revelation of Christ in the clouds of heaven to find a people asleep.** No; but to His return from His ministration in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, when He lays off His priestly attire and clothes Himself with garments of vengeance, and when the mandate goes forth: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still."*

*When Jesus ceases to plead for man, the cases of all are forever decided. This is the time of reckoning with His servants. To those who have neglected the **preparation of purity and holiness**, which **fits them** to be waiting ones to welcome their Lord, the sun sets in gloom and darkness, and rises not again. Probation closes; Christ's intercessions cease in heaven. This time finally comes suddenly upon all, and those who have neglected to **purify their souls by obeying the truth** are found sleeping. They became **weary** of waiting and watching; they became **indifferent** in regard to the coming of their Master. They **longed not** for His appearing, and thought there was no need of such **continued, persevering** watching. They had been disappointed in their expectations and might be again. They concluded that there was **time enough** yet to arouse. They would be sure not to lose the opportunity of securing an **earthly treasure**. It would be safe to get all of this world they could. And in securing this object, they lost all **anxiety** and **interest** in the appearing of the Master. They became **indifferent** and **careless**, as though His coming were yet in the **distance**. But while their interest was buried up in their worldly gains, the work closed in the heavenly sanctuary, and they were unprepared." 2T 190, 191*

**Must the close of probation catch us by surprise?**

**Wednesday, November 13, 1985** the city of **Armero**, Colombia was totally buried by an avalanche of mud caused by the eruption of the volcano "**Nevado del Ruiz**." Some **22,000** people perished. Could this loss of life have been **prevented**? Were there not **signs** of the impending destruction?

The answer is a **resounding yes!** Why were so many people taken by **surprise**? Or, were they?

In an article published by the newspaper, *El Espectador*, under the title “Un Desastre Anunciado,” written by **Rodolfo Rodriguez Calderon** it becomes clear that every single person could have saved their lives if they had **paid attention to the signs** of the impending doom but they chose to **ignore the signs**. The article gives some very telling details:

- **Eleven months** before the disaster, the mountain had begun **spewing out smoke**
- The **fluffy snow** on the mountain had become a **solid sheet of ice** due to the intense heat within the mountain
- The **water level** of the rivers had increased due to the great amount of melting snow
- The **cloud of ash and gases** which was only **15 feet** high at first, increased to **750 feet** the second day, and the day before the eruption, it had reached a height of **16,000 feet**
- On **September 11<sup>th</sup>** the earth tremors reached an **intensity of 3** on the Mercalli scale. The people frequently felt the **earth quake**
- On occasions the people could **hear the mountain** rumbling from within
- The authorities had to **close the access roads** to the mountain’s ski resort because they were totally **covered by mudslides**
- It was impossible for people to **keep their houses** clean because of the **volcanic ash** which blew into town each and every day
- The people could constantly **smell sulphur** in the air
- A **torrential rain** along with wind of **hurricane proportions** began to fall around 9:00 P. M. It was dark, **unusually dark**. Eyewitnesses who survived affirmed that it was like a **supernatural darkness**

In spite of all these signs, **22,000 perished**. Is it possible, then to have signs which announce the **second coming of Christ** and still be caught by surprise when He comes? Of course! The reason is that people will **choose to ignore** or **reject** the signs.

There was a **tragic reason** why people chose to ignore or reject the signs. What is the reason? Just like in the time of Noah, they **chose to listen to the voice of the experts** instead of paying attention to the signs **for themselves**. In the same article mentioned above, we find the following telling information:

- A **priest, Edgar Efren Torres** came over the radio at 7:00 P. M. and told the people: *“There is no reason to panic. Please keep calm.”*
- The **Civil Defense**, in an official radio release affirmed: *“There is no reason to be concerned.”*
- The bishop of the town, **Augusto Osorio** warned **against fanatics** who were making it appear like a major disaster was imminent.
- The **mayor** of the town said: *“Don’t worry.”*
- The **governor of the state of Tolima** later said: *“The disaster could not have been predicted in advance.”*

- Colombian scientist, **Jaime Villegas Velazquez**, affirmed: *“This volcano is not going to erupt. Nothing is going to happen. Beware of speculations and exaggeration.”*
- The **Secretary of Mines, Ivan Duque Escobar** asserted: **“Nothing will happen.”**
- Even **United States geologist, Darrel Herd**, had said: *“It is very unlikely that the cities could be buried by rocks, lava or mud.”*
- The **Regional Emergency Committee** sent out a message: *“Don’t expect your windows to shatter. . . don’t expect darkness, don’t expect lava to run down the mountain, don’t expect large layers of ash, among other things.”*
- The people did not know that **their door to life had been shut** until the mud came and took them all away. Very **few** were **left**. The ones **“taken away”** perished while those who were left **“remained alive.”** So it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. The lost will be marked for destruction but they will not know until the flood of fire comes.”

Deal here briefly with the two groups in **Genesis 7:22-23** and briefly explain who is **left** and who is **taken**. Also emphasize that there were not **some dead** and **some alive left behind**. All who were left behind died. So what happened with Noah and his family does not symbolize the rapture when some wicked will be left behind alive. The word **“left”** is a **remnant word**. It describes people who **survive a catastrophe**.

Satan **lost his power base** because all his followers perished. He was **forced to remain** among the churning elements and the earth returned to the condition it was in at creation. This will happen **also at the end**. Satan will lose all of his followers and he will be forced to remain on a **desolate planet** which will be in a condition similar to that which is described in Genesis 1:2. Obviously there will be no one living here during the millennium as there was no one living on earth during the flood.



# STUDIES ON MATTHEW 24

by Stephen Bohr

## #11 - THE BUDDING FIG TREE

### Matthew 24:32-35

*"Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. 33 So you also, when you see **all these things**, know that it is near--at the doors! 34 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. 35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."*

Dispensationalists say that the **fig tree** here is a symbol of Israel and the **budding** is the reestablishment of Israel as a nation in **1948**. They teach that this is the **greatest sign** that the coming of Jesus is **imminent**, even at the doors. So we need to take a look at this to see if it is true.

It is true that the **fig tree** and the **vine** are **associated** with **Israel in the Old Testament**

### Hosea 9:10

*"I found Israel like **grapes** [also Isaiah 5] in the wilderness; I saw your fathers as the first-fruits on the **fig tree** in its first season. But they went to Baal Peor, and separated themselves to that shame; they became an abomination like the thing they loved."*

Let's see what the **New Testament** has to say about the **fig tree** and the **vineyard**

### Israel as a Tree (part one)

Go to **Matthew 3** and John the Baptist

### Matthew 3:8-10 (6 months before Christ's ministry)

*"Therefore bear fruits worthy of **repentance**, 9 and do not think to say to yourselves: 'We have **Abraham as our father**.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones [the gentiles]. 10 And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore **every tree** which does not bear **good fruit** is **cut down** and thrown into the **fire**."*

### Israel as a Tree (part two)

**Luke 13:1-9:** We immediately discern the **similarity** between **this parable** and the message of **John the Baptist**

*"There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. 2 And Jesus answered and said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? 3 I tell you, no; but unless you **repent** you will all likewise **perish**. 4 Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem? 5 I tell you, no; but unless you **repent** you will all likewise **perish**." 6 He also spoke this parable: "A **certain man** [God the Father] had a **fig tree** [Israel] planted in his **vineyard** [the world], and he came seeking **fruit** [the fruit of the Spirit] on it and found **none**. 7 Then he said to the **keeper of his vineyard** [Jesus], 'Look, for **three years** [John preached six months and Jesus preached two and a half years] I have come seeking **fruit** on this **fig tree** and find **none**. **Cut it down** [just what John said]; why does it **use up the ground**?' 8 But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone **this year** [last year of Jesus' ministry] also, until I **dig** around it and **fertilize** it. 9 And if it bears **fruit**, well. But if not, after that you can **cut it down**.' "*

After this parable we are left in **suspense**. We do not know if the fig tree **bore fruit or not**. The story was **still being written** just like in the story of the **prodigal son**.

### **Israel as a Tree (part three)**

#### **Matthew 21:17-19**

*"Then He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and He lodged there. 18 Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was **hungry**. 19 And seeing a **fig tree** by the road, He came to it and found **nothing on it but leaves**, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever **again**." And immediately the fig tree **withered away**."*

#### **Mark 11:12-14**

*"Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was **hungry**. 13 And seeing from afar a fig tree having **leaves**, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. And when He came to it, He found **nothing but leaves**, for it was **not the season** for figs. 14 In response Jesus said to it, "Let no one eat fruit from you **ever again**." And His disciples heard it."*

## Mark 11:20-21

*"Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up **from the roots**. 21 And Peter, remembering, said to Him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has **withered away**."*

**Jerusalem** was **burnt** in the year **70** because it bore no fruit

The **Vineyard** also represents **Israel**. Notice the following parable also y **chapter 21 of Matthew**

## Israel as a Vineyard

### Matthew 21:33-46

*"Hear another parable: There was a certain **landowner** [God the Father] who planted a **vineyard** [Israel] and set a **hedge** around it [the law], dug a winepress in it and built a **tower** [the temple]. And he leased it to **vinedressers** [the Jewish leaders] and went into a **far country** [heaven]. 34 Now when vintage-time **drew near**, he sent his servants to the vinedressers [before the Babylonian captivity], that they might receive its fruit. 35 And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another [what they did to the prophets]. 36 Again he sent **other servants** [after the captivity until John the Baptist], more than the first, and they did likewise to them. 37 Then **last of all he sent his son** [Jesus] to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 38 "But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him [the death of Christ] and seize his inheritance.' 39 "So they took him and cast him **out of the vineyard** [outside of Jerusalem] and killed him. 40 Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?" 41 They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to **other vinedressers** [the Gentiles] who will render to him the fruits in their seasons." 42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'? 43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be **taken from you** [the kingdom no longer belongs to Israel] and given to a nation [ethne] bearing the **fruits** of it. 44 And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder." 45 Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was **speaking of them**."*

### Matthew 24 and the Fig Tree

Now let's **go back** to **Matthew 24** and see if the fig tree represents the Jewish Nation.

Notice in **Matthew 24:32, 33** that it is **not the one fig tree** sign which shows that the coming of Jesus is even at the doors but rather the **collection of all the signs** of Matthew 24.

As you see the fig tree bud it is a sign that the **summer is near**. In the **same way** [he is using an analogy] when you see **all these things** [not only the sprouting of the fig tree] know that it is near, even at the doors.

Jesus is not saying that the budding of the fig tree is **the great sign** of the imminence of His coming. He is saying that the **accumulation of all the signs** then they will know that the end is near.

Furthermore, **Luke 21:29-31** has the parallel passage. Interestingly Jesus did **not single out the fig tree** as being particularly important. He added **“and all the trees.”** Once again Jesus says: “when you see these **things** happening.” Jesus is saying: “When you see the fig tree and all of the trees bud you know that the summer is near. **Likewise**, when you see **all of these signs** you will know that the end is near.

*“Then He spoke to them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and **all the trees**. 30 When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near. 31 So you also, when you see **these things** happening, know that the kingdom of God is near.”*

### **The Nathaniel Experience**

**John 1:43-48** describes the experience of **Nathanael**.

*“The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, “Follow Me.” 44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote--Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” 46 And Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” 47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, “Behold, an **Israelite indeed**, in whom is **no deceit!**” 48 Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the **fig tree**, I saw you.”*

If there are **Israelites indeed**, then there must be Israelites **not indeed**. Why was Nathanael **singled out as an Israelite indeed?** [by the way, the Greek word for “indeed” really means **true or real**. It is translated in the **NIV** as “a **true** Israelite”. There must also be **false Israelites then**.

This translation is corroborated by the fact that the verse ends by saying that there is in him no **pseudos**.

Notice that Nathanael was an **Israelite** indeed **under a fig tree** which was a **symbol of Israel**. Here you have together the **symbol** and what the symbol **represents**. The Israelite indeed is sitting under a tree which represents Israel.

**Verse 49:** What made Nathanael an Israelite indeed is that he recognized Jesus as the Son of God, the King of Israel. What is a true Israelite indeed? **One who acknowledges Jesus Christ as the Messiah.**

## **John 8 and True Israel**

### **John 8:37-45: True Israelites and false Israelites**

*"I know that you are **Abraham's descendants**, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. 38 I speak what I have seen with **My Father**, and you do what you have seen with **your father**." 39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "**If** [He is implying that they were not] you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. 40 **But** [the combination of "if . . . but" shows they are not children of Abraham] now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. 41 You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father--God." 42 Jesus said to them, "If [once again He denies that they are the children of God because they reject Him] God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. 43 Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. 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 [they are Israelite liars unlike Nathanael and therefore they are the devil's children]."*

### **Romans 2:28, 29:** An Israelite indeed receives Jesus as Messiah

*"For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 29 but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God."*

### **Romans 9:6-8**

*"But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, 7 nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called." 8 That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed."*

### **Galatians 3:26-29**

*“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

### **Philippians 3:3-8 if there is time**

*“For we **are the circumcision**, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, 4 though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; 6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. 7 But what things were gain to me, these **I have counted loss for Christ**. 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and **count them as rubbish**, that I may **gain Christ**.”*

In **1948** the Jewish nation was **still rejecting the Messiah** and therefore 1948 could not be a fulfillment of prophecy because the Bible says that God **scattered Israel at the destruction of Jerusalem because they rejected the Messiah**. In 1948 the Jewish nation was **still rejecting** Christ and so no fulfillment of prophecy could have taken place at that time.

*“The **curse rests upon Jerusalem**. The Lord has obliterated those things which men would worship in and about Jerusalem, yet many hold in reverence literal objects in Palestine, while they neglect to behold Jesus as their advocate in the heaven of heavens.”*  
*RH February 25, 1896*

*“How many there are who feel that it would be a good thing to tread the soil of old Jerusalem, and that their faith would be greatly strengthened by visiting the scenes of the Saviour's life and death! But **old Jerusalem will never be a sacred place** until it is cleansed by the refining fire from heaven. The **darkest blot of guilt rests upon the city that refused the light of Christ**. Do we want to walk in the footsteps of Jesus? We need not seek out the paths in Nazareth, Bethany, and Jerusalem. We shall find the footprints of Jesus by the sick-bed, by the side of suffering humanity, in the hovels of the poverty-stricken and distressed. We may walk in these footsteps, comforting the suffering, speaking words of hope and comfort to the despondent. Doing as Jesus did when he was upon earth, we shall walk in his blessed steps. Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." When the sin-cursed earth is purified from every stain of sin; when the Mount of Olives is rent asunder, and*

*becomes an immense plain; when the holy city of God descends upon it,--the land that is now called the Holy Land will indeed become holy. But God's cause and work will not be advanced by making pilgrimages to Jerusalem. **The curse of God is upon Jerusalem for the rejection and crucifixion of his only begotten Son. But God will cleanse away the vile blot.** The prophet says, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband." R&H June 9, 1896*





# STUDIES ON MATTHEW 24

by Stephen Bohr

## #12 - THE FINAL ABOMINATION

God's **own people** before the destruction of Jerusalem

Jeremiah 31:32: Israel was **God's wife**

*“. . . not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD.”*

Ezekiel 16:1, 2: Full of **abominations**

*“Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2 "Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations.”*

Ezekiel 8:15, 16: **Sun worship** the greatest **abomination**

*“Then He said to me, "Have you seen this, O son of man? Turn again, you will see greater abominations than these." 16 So He brought me into the inner court of the LORD's house; and there, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty-five men with their backs toward the temple of the LORD and their faces toward the east, and they were worshiping the sun toward the east.”*

Ezekiel 16:15: **Harlot, fornications**

*"But you trusted in your own beauty, played the **harlot** because of your fame, and poured out your harlotry [**fornications in the KJV**] on everyone passing by who would have it.”*

Ezekiel 16:28-30: **Harlot** with the Assyrians, Canaan, Chaldeans

*“You also played the harlot with the Assyrians, because you were insatiable; indeed you played the harlot with them and still were not satisfied. 29 Moreover you multiplied your acts of harlotry as far as the land of the trader, Chaldea; and even then you were not satisfied. 30 How degenerate is your heart!" says the Lord GOD, "seeing you do all these things, the deeds of a brazen harlot.*

Ezekiel 16:17: Full of **jewels**

*“You have also taken your beautiful jewelry from My gold and My silver, which I had given you, and made for yourself male images and played the harlot with them.”*

Ezekiel 23:40: Full of **jewels**

*“Furthermore you sent for men to come from afar, to whom a messenger was sent; and there they came. And you washed yourself for them, painted your eyes, and adorned yourself with ornaments.”*

Ezekiel 16:32: **Unfaithful wife**

*“You are an adulterous **wife**, who takes strangers instead of her **husband**.”*

Ezekiel 23:28: Defiled the **sanctuary** and the **Sabbath**

*“Moreover they have done this to Me: They have defiled My sanctuary on the same day and profaned My Sabbaths.”*

Ezekiel 16:38 (NIV): Shed the **blood of the innocent** (Jesus in **Matthew 23** accused them of shedding the blood of His servants and the prophets)

*“I will sentence you to the punishment of women who commit adultery and who shed blood; I will bring upon you the blood vengeance of my wrath and jealous anger.”*

Jeremiah 5:31: Attitude of **religious leaders**

*“The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule by their own power; and My people love to have it so.”*

Ezekiel 23:32: Shall **drink the cup** of God’s wrath

*“You have walked in the way of your sister; therefore I will put her cup in your hand.’ 32 “Thus says the Lord GOD: ‘You shall drink of your sister’s cup, the deep and wide one; you shall be laughed to scorn and held in derision; it contains much.”*

Ezekiel 7:1-8: Destruction from the **four corners**

*“Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2 “And you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD to the land of Israel: ‘An end! The end has come upon the four corners of the land. 3 Now the end has come upon you, and I will send My anger against you; I will judge you according to your ways, and I will repay you for all your abominations. 4 My eye will not spare you, nor will I have pity; but I will repay your ways, and your abominations will be in your midst; then you shall know that I am the LORD!’ 5 “Thus says the Lord GOD: ‘A disaster, a singular disaster; behold, it has come! 6 An end has*

*come, the end has come; it has dawned for you; behold, it has come! 7 Doom has come to you, you who dwell in the land; the time has come, a day of trouble is near, and not of rejoicing in the mountains. 8 Now upon you I will soon pour out My fury, and spend My anger upon you; I will judge you according to your ways, and I will repay you for all your abominations."*

**Ezekiel 9:1-6: Sealing before the destruction**

*"Then He called out in my hearing with a loud voice, saying, "Let those who have charge over the city draw near, each with a deadly weapon in his hand." 2 And suddenly six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his battle-ax in his hand. One man among them was clothed with linen and had a writer's inkhorn at his side. They went in and stood beside the bronze altar. 3 Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub, where it had been, to the threshold of the temple. And He called to the man clothed with linen, who had the writer's inkhorn at his side; 4 and the LORD said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it." 5 To the others He said in my hearing, "Go after him through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare, nor have any pity. 6 Utterly slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women; but do not come near anyone on whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary." So they began with the elders who were before the temple."*

**Jeremiah 17:27: Sabbath breaking led to her destruction**

*"But if you will not heed Me to hallow the Sabbath day, such as not carrying a burden when entering the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I will kindle a fire in its gates, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched." ' ' "*

**Ezekiel 20:12: The Sabbath a sign**

*"Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them."*

**Ezekiel 16:39: Kings that she loved will hate her**

*"I will also give you into their hand, and they shall throw down your shrines and break down your high places. They shall also strip you of your clothes, take your beautiful jewelry, and leave you naked and bare."*

**Revelation 12:1: Church of the Old Testament**

*"Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet."*

Revelation 12:6: **Same church** in the New Testament

*“Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.”*

Ephesians 5:25: Church is **Christ’s bride**

*“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.”*

Revelation 17:1: **Harlot** woman

*“Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters.”*

Revelation 17:1: Sits on **many waters**. **Worldwide apostate church**. Controls the masses

*“Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters.”*

Revelation 14:6, 7: In contrast **God’s people** will also present message to the **world**

*“Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth--to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people-- 7 saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”*

Revelation 17:15: Many waters are the **multitudes**

*“Then he said to me, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.”*

**Revelation 17:2:** Fornicates with the kings. Attracts the kings by her **beauty and riches** but **beneath** she is **ugly** as them come

*“. . . with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.”*

Revelation 17:5: Called the **mother** and she has **daughters**

*“And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”*

Revelation 17:5: Cup full of **abominations**

*“And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”*

Here I must show that the wine is her false teachings: **Idolatry** (Deuteronomy 7:25, 26), **spiritism** (Deut. 18:9-12), **law** (Proverbs 28:9), **fornication** (Jeremiah 13:26, 27), **justification by works** (Luke 16:16), **eating unclean meats** (Deuteronomy 14:3), shedding **innocent blood** (Ezekiel 22:2), **worshipping the sun** (Ezekiel 8:16; Jeremiah 17:27).

Revelation 17:2: Gives **wine (opposite of three angels’ messages)**

*“. . . with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.”*

Revelation 17:4: Is decked with **jewels and purple and scarlet**

*“The woman was arrayed in **purple and scarlet**, and adorned with **gold and precious stones and pearls**, having in her hand a golden cup full of **abominations** and the filthiness of her **fornication**.”*

Revelation 17:6: Full of the **blood of the saints**

*“I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.”*

Revelation 6:14-17: **Destruction will come**

*“Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. 15 And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, 16 and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17 For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”*

Revelation 7:1-3: **Sealing before** the destruction from the four corners

*“After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. 2 Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, 3 saying, “Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.”*

Revelation 13:16: **Mark of the beast. Is it the same to worship the sun as it is to worship on Sunday?**

*“He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads.”*

Revelation 14:1: **Contrast the seal** of God. Talk about **Ugarit** if I have time

*“Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.”*

Revelation 14:7: Worship the **creator**

*“. . . saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."*

Revelation 14:9: Worship the beast will **drink the cup**

*“Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation.”*

Has to do with **first four commandments**: Claims to be God, makes an image, speaks in God's name, sign of the Creator

Revelation 17:16: The kings will **hate her** and make her naked. Notice the key word **desolate**

*“And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her **desolate** and naked, eat her flesh and **burn her** with fire.”*

Notice what will happen with this system. The kings with which she fornicated will leave her **desolate** and will **burn her with fire** just like happened to Jerusalem in **586 B. C.** and **70 A. D.** Notice that her

Revelation 18:1: Whole earth lightened with this message. This is the **sighing and crying** because of the abominations but now **Jerusalem has become global**

*“After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory.”*

**Revelation 18:2: Full of demons**

*“And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!”*

Revelation 18:3

*“For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.”*

Revelation 18:4 God’s people **called out** just like before Jerusalem was destroyed

*“And I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.”*

A matter of **authority**, not a matter of **days**.





# STUDIES ON MATTHEW 24

by Stephen Bohr

## #13 - LIVING IN EXPECTANCY – Part 1

In Matthew 24 Jesus first gives the signs, then he gives two analogies (the fig tree and Noah's day) to illustrate when we can be sure that Jesus is at the doors, then in the rest of Matthew 24 and 25 he speaks about how to make sure that you are ready (parables of the faithful servant, the virgins and the sheep and the goats)

### Parable of the Faithful and Wise Servant

- Matthew 24:42ff. The master is Jesus, the household is the church and the faithful and wise servant represents the leaders of the church. The food is the word of God and the due season would be present truth for this time. The delay represents the delay of the return of Jesus. This parable is for those who claim to be Christ's servants. These people claimed Jesus as Lord. V. 51: The unfaithful servant will be cut in two and will be placed with the hypocrites. Every single time that Jesus uses the word hypocrite in Matthew it refers to the Jewish nation. It is never used of an unbeliever. It is always used to denote professed believers. The word hypocrite in Greek means "an actor under an assumed character." That is to say, these people are pretending. They put up a façade, they are phony. They are pretending to be followers of Jesus. Matthew 15:7: Jesus called the Jewish leaders hypocrites because they honored him with their lips but their heart the will of the Father. The whole point of these stories is that those who profess to follow and serve him can be caught by surprise. Most people think they can prepare until Jesus is coming on the clouds. They don't realize that if they are not ready for the close of probation, they will not be ready for the second coming. The message of these parables is for insiders. Jesus is telling us how to be ready and how not to be caught by surprise.

*"That evil servant who said in his heart, "My lord delayeth His coming," Professed to be waiting for Christ. He was a "servant," outwardly devoted to the service of God while at heart he had yielded to Satan. He does, like the scoffer, openly deny the truth, but reveals in his life the sentiment of the heart—that the Lords coming is delayed. Presumption renders him careless of eternal interests. He accepts the world's maxims and conforms to its customs and practices Selfishness, worldly pride, and ambitions predominate. Fearing that his brethren may stand higher than himself, he begins to disparage their efforts and impugn their motives. Thus he smites his fellow servants. As he alienates himself from the people of God he unites more and more with the ungodly. He is found eating and*

*drinking “with the drunken”—joining with the worldings and partaking of their spirit. Thus he is lulled into a carnal security and overcome by forgetfulness, indifference, and sloth.*

*The very beginning of the evil was a neglect of watchfulness and secret prayer, then came a neglect of other religious duties, and thus the way was opened for all the sins that followed. Every Christian will be assailed by the allurements of the world, the clamors of the carnal nature, and the direct temptation of Satan. No one is safe. No matter what our experience has been, no matter how high our station, we need to watch and pray continually. We must be daily controlled by the spirit of God or we are controlled by Satan. 5T 101, 102.*

- **Matthew 7:21-23** portrays the same picture. People who profess the name of Jesus but live contrary to Jesus.
- The entire Christian world is oblivious to the fact that the ones who are in danger of being caught by surprise and deceived are the Christians who claim to follow Jesus. Christians have the tendency of thinking that it is us versus them, Christian versus non-Christians. The better part of the Christian world is sitting self-satisfied, thinking that all is alright, thinking that Jesus is going to rapture them away before the tribulation just for intellectually believing in Him and the close of the door of probation is going to take them by surprise and they will find themselves in the midst of the worst tribulation in human history with no preparation of character to withstand the trials. Ellen White says that we will have to gather courage from the cowardice of others, warmth from their coldness. How do you gather warmth from someone else’s coldness? There will be nothing in this world that we can depend on except our relationship with the Lord.

### **Parable of the Ten Virgins**

#### **This parable has a threefold application: Jews, 1844 and the end time**

- Matthew 25:1-13: This parable applies to those who claim to be the people of God. All of the virgins had lamps. The lamp is a symbol of the Bible (Psalm 119:105). All of them had some oil. The oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit (Zachariah 4). All of them were waiting for the bridegroom to come who is Jesus. The coming is not the second coming but rather coming to His Father to receive the kingdom (Daniel 7:13, 14). The virgins represent those who claim to be the people of God. The critical point of time in this parable is the coming of the bridegroom and the closing of the door after he comes. The coming of the bridegroom is not the second coming. It is the coming of Jesus to His Father to receive the kingdom just like we are told in Daniel 7. After the door closes the foolish virgins are not dead. They go to try and buy oil for their lamps but it is too

late. This is addressed in Amos 8:11, 12. The foolish virgins began well, they received the early rain but they did not have the extra supply of the latter rain. They allowed their religious experience to die and the latter rain could not benefit them. Notice that those who were ready went in with the bridegroom. The key is to be ready as Jesus has instructed in Matthew 24, 25. To be ready is to pray, watch, occupy, invest, work, reveal the love of Jesus. The foolish virgin saying “*Lord, Lord*” reminds us of Matthew 7 where they also cry out the same words and Jesus has the same answer: “*I do not know you.*” The foolish virgins are counterfeit Christians. Verse 13 does not apply to the second coming but to the close of human probation. At the end, after Jesus has cleansed the most holy Place, the holy place and the court, He will come from the court to His Father and then change His garments. This is what it means that He will come to His Father. Obviously He could not come to His Father if He is with the Father in the most holy place. He must have left the most holy to cleanse the holy and then the court and then returns to His Father.

**The first application:** The early Writings 259-261 (complement this with the notes where I show that John was disappointed). Here Ellen White compares the three angels’ messages to what happened in the days of John the Baptist. John was sent to prepare the way for Jesus. In the 1830’s God sent William Miller to do the same work before 1844. John the Baptist preached a judgment hour message (he will separate the wheat from the chaff) and so people must prepare through repentance and confession. William Miller preached the same message before 1844 (the hour of his judgment is come), he called people to prepare for the coming of Jesus. Both were wrong about the manner of Christ’s coming and were disappointed. In both cases there was a midnight cry: The triumphal entry and the seventh month movement. Those who rejected the message of John were not prepared to accept the teachings of Jesus (Matthew 17:12). The message of Jesus was equivalent to the second angel’s message. By the way, Jesus is called the bridegroom in the gospels and John is called the friend of the bridegroom who announces His coming. Jesus rebuked the formal religion of the Jews and called the faithful to come out of the apostate system. He got into trouble with the religious leaders who cast him out of their synagogue. The same happened to the Millerites. Protestantism was centered on forms ritual and rejected the message of the Millerites and cast them out from their churches. By rejecting the first two messages they placed themselves where they could not be benefited by the message of the day of Pentecost. On the day of Pentecost, Jesus left the court and entered the holy place and group followed Jesus into the holy place. He shut the door to the court and entered the holy place.

Most of the Jewish nation did not follow Jesus into the holy place (there was only a small remnant) and they were left in the darkness. They continued offering their useless sacrifices and Satan took control of the nation. The same thing happened in 1844. Jesus

closed the door to the holy place and entered the most holy place. Only a small remnant followed him. The Christian would continue its rituals and Satan took control of the Protestantism. This is in Early Writings, pp. 54-56. By rejecting the message of John and of Jesus they placed themselves where they could not be benefited by what happened on the day of Pentecost (being sealed with the Holy Spirit as at the end God's people will be sealed with the seal of God) which would have taught them the way into the heavenly sanctuary. The Jews had no knowledge of the change and therefore they could not be benefited by the mediation of Jesus in the holy place. Notice how Ellen White then makes the application of this in Early Writings: "*Many look with horror...*" She compares the message of John, Jesus and Pentecost with the three angels' messages. When Jesus shut the door in 1844 those who had rejected the first two messages were left in total darkness. They had lost sight of Jesus in the court. They did not know that he had moved to the holy place. The same things happened in 1944. The majority of the Christian would keep worshipping in the Holy place. Satan then took control. This is where the topic on the synagogue of Satan comes in and I must deal with the church of Philadelphia here. The religious Establishment became apostate and a small remnant followed Jesus into the sanctuary.

The Jews and the Millerites had lamps (the Scriptures). They were waiting for the bridegroom to come to the earth to establish His kingdom. The door to the court opened and Jesus entered. But they misunderstood how he would come. Originally the Millerites thought He would come in 1843 but he tarried. All of the Millerites slumbered after they were disappointed in 1843. There was a group who had made provision and their heart was truly converted by the Holy Spirit. They loved the Lord but slumbered and were disappointed. The others slumbered but they had joined the movement without a true conversion experience. Some joined out of fear and others out of excitement. Finally, in the Midnight Cry was given. There was a great religious revival. The printing presses rolled again, powerful prophetic preaching was again heard that instructed the people that Jesus was going to come on October 22, 1844. Jesus did not come to the earth when He was expected. He went to His Father for the wedding. Instead, Jesus closed the door to the holy place and entered the most holy place. Jesus married his people in absentia. Daniel 7:13, 14; Luke 12:34, 25 (notice the connection with the parable of the virgins. You have a door, knocking, lamps, etc.) explains that the wedding took place in heaven and then he returns from the wedding to rescue His people. But he married his people through the examination of their records in heaven.

Once he has examined every case, he has determined the subjects of His kingdom and He comes and empirically takes the kingdom. We are in heaven and on earth at the same time. When Jesus comes to get the bride he has married in heaven, he then takes the bride to the reception (the marriage supper of the Lamb). We are not going to heaven for the wedding but rather for the reception and the honeymoon. After the 1000 years the

husband will bring his bride to her new home which will be the New Jerusalem, as a bride adorned for her husband.

The Jews had the Scriptures but they studied them without spiritual discernment. Therefore they reached wrong conclusions. The religious world today is in the same boat. They have the Bible (the lamp) but they study without the aid of the Holy Spirit. They don't follow Jesus into the most holy place. The door closes for them and they are left in darkness (Philadelphia). They thought God was still with them and they had miracles and excitement but the door of probation had closed for these churches (EW 54-55: This is a commentary on the parable of the ten virgins).

We see that Matthew 24 and 25 have a much broader application than to the Jewish nation. The parables have a two-fold application just like the signs of Matthew 24. They have an application to the times of Jesus and also in the end times. We are dealing with history and with prophecy. There is more depth than meets the eye. But if you want to know what will happen in the future, you must know the history of the past which is the foundation for the future. It helps to know the three messages preached in the times of Jesus as the backdrop for the three angels' messages at the end. History is the foundation of prophecy.

In evangelism we must lead people from the camp to the court to the holy place to the most holy place. Don't reverse the order. The three angels' message begins with the everlasting gospel and then leads people into the most holy place. The sanctuary and the three angels' messages follow a parallel order. This is the problem with the billboards identifying the pope as the beast. This is starting with the third message before preaching the first.



# STUDIES ON MATTHEW 24

by Stephen Bohr

## #14 - LIVING IN EXPECTANCY – Part 2

### Parable of the Talents

- Matthew 25:14-30: This parable is directed at God’s people as well. The use of our talents for God (talents). The parable is for the Master’s **own servants** who profess to serve Him (25:14); time and again the servants call their master, **lord**. The leaving of the Master represents the ascension of Jesus. He gives them **His** goods (25:14); according to ability to use them (25:15). If he gave more than ability to use them they would go to waste; It was not the one who had the most who was unfaithful but he who had the least (24:16-18). Sometimes we think that the rich are the most danger of misusing what God gives them but here it was the one who received the least; notice that he buried **is lord’s money**. He looked upon God as a taskmaster or dictator who takes advantage of his subjects. This would have been true except for the fact that the Lord had given Him the resources in the first place. He master had sowed by giving his servant the one talent and therefore he expected to reap. He who sows has every right to expect to reap. The long time is the period between the ascension and the judgment. The settling of accounts is the judgment (25:19); notice “**my** money with interest” (25:27); why given to the one who had the five talents? We invest our money where it pays the greatest dividends (25:28). If you had a corporation where worker multiplies your assets twice as much as another, with whom would you invest your money? The expression: “To everyone who has (the basic amount plus interest), more will be given,” means that whoever has the original money plus interest, more will be given. Simply having what the owner gave you originally does not guarantee receiving more. The man who had one talent had one but more was not given to him. The one who “does not have” is the one who did not multiply what was given to him.
- 24:30: Another reason why we know that these parables apply especially to God’s people is an expression that we find in Matthew 24:51 and 25:30: “*there will be the wailing and gnashing of teeth.*” It doesn’t say “*eternal weeping and gnashing of teeth.*” This expression is always used by Jesus to describe what will happen to the unfaithful Jewish nation. One example is in Matthew 8 where we find the story of the healing of the centurion’s servant. Let’s pick up the story at verse 5ff.

The centurion was not a Jew, he was a Roman. We will find that in the sight of Jesus, the Centurion was a Jew and the Jews were Gentiles. This man had more faith in Jesus than most of the Jews. He believed that Jesus could heal his servant by just speaking the word. Verses 11 and 12 present Jesus' conclusions based on the episode which has just transpired. He is going to say that the Gentile is a son of the kingdom and the Jews are not. The Jews claimed that they would sit with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom. But lo and behold we find that it is the Gentile who sits with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob because he had the faith which they had. The sons of the kingdom end up in the outer darkness where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth. The same lesson is taught as in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. Lazarus ends up in the bosom of Abraham and the rich man ends up wailing in hell. It is not the unbelievers that are portrayed as wailing but the professed sons of and the kingdom.

If we are saved by grace through faith, then why does Jesus say that our salvation will depend on how we used the talents which God has given us? Is this righteousness by multiplying talents? The answer is no. If you really love your Lord you will multiply His resources. If you do not love your Lord then you will not multiply what is His. It is the same principle as James 2. If you have genuine faith, it will produce works. If you have a workless faith then you do not have genuine faith. A dead faith will never save you. Real vibrant, living faith is the only faith that saves. This parable is speaking of the fruit of our relationship with Jesus.

### **Parable of the Sheep and the Goats**

- Matthew 25:31-46: Practical religion (Matthew 5:43-48; James 1:27; Luke 10:25-37). God's people have neglected Jesus in the person of His people. They were condemned by what they should have done and didn't.

### **How should we live until Jesus comes?**

- Noah **invested** all he had in the ark (time, treasure, talents, and strength): All that he possessed, he invested in the ark... Every blow struck upon the ark was a witness to the people. PP 95 The parable of the Talents illustrates this point.
- **Watch:** (the parable of the good and faithful servant illustrates this) Matthew 26:38, 40, 41, 42 (the coming of the thief), 42-44; 25:13; I Thessalonians 5:6; Revelation 16:15; 3:3. The word means "*to be alert, wakeful to pay attention.*" Don't become indifferent and careless. If you leave your house unlocked for a thousand nights and the thief never comes, what is your tendency? You had a tendency to relax and become careless thinking that he will never come and then the thief comes in the 1001<sup>st</sup> night and robs you. As Jesus delays His



coming the tendency is not to become more alert and expectant but rather to lose anxiety and preparedness. As time goes by we should live in greater expectancy but this not what usually happens. I have heard about Jesus' coming, my parents did and my grandparents did. The result is that the hope grows dim.

- **Pray** (Mark 13:33) Jesus told the disciples to watch and pray in the Garden and they slept
- **Be ready:** (the parable of the Ten Virgins illustrates this) Luke 1:17; Matthew 24:44; 25:10; Revelation 19:7; Luke 22:33; Titus 1:3. Mom went to Wisconsin Academy to accompany my sister to school. She told us the day and hour of her return to Venezuela. We didn't worry about cleaning the house and washing the dishes because we said that we could clean up right before she came. We should have kept the house clean all the time. Then lo and behold she came early and surprised us. This is the reason why Jesus did not tell us the day and hour of his coming. He knew we would procrastinate till the last minute to clean up our act so He left the element of surprise open. We should be ready all the time. Then it makes no difference whether he comes in one month, one year, and ten years or twenty years, we will always be ready.
- A faith that worked to preach and build the ark. When the work of building the church is finished, then Jesus will come. Luke 19:13: Occupy until I come. Example of when I first started to travel and a flight was delayed and I had nothing to do. When we are busy, time flies by in a hurry.



# STUDIES ON MATTHEW 24

by Stephen Bohr

## #15 - THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES

In Luke the **tribulation sign seems to be missing** while it is present in Matthew and Mark. But is it really missing?

**Luke 21:24A** refers to the destruction of literal Jerusalem

*“And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations.”*

**Luke 19:41-44: The city is personified**

*Now as He drew near, He saw the **city** and **wept over it**, 42 saying, "If **you** had known, even you, especially in this **your day**, the things that make for **your** peace! But now they are hidden from **your** eyes. 43 For days will come upon **you** when **your** enemies will build an embankment around **you**, surround you and close **you** in on every side, 44 and level **you**, and **your children within you**, to the ground; and they will not leave in **you** one stone upon another, because **you** did not know the time of **your** visitation."*

**Matthew 23:37-39**

*"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! 38 See! **Your** house is left to you desolate; 39 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!' "*

*“When passing over into the Christian Era there is an automatic transition from literal to spiritual Babylon; from literal to spiritual Jerusalem; from literal lands of Israel and Babylon to their spiritual antitypes.” Louis Were, The King of the North at Jerusalem, p. 75*

**Luke 21:24B:** It would be a **redundant repetition** if this second line referred to literal Jerusalem

*And Jerusalem will be **trampled** by **Gentiles** until the **times of the Gentiles** are fulfilled [completed].”*

Four key terms in 21:24B: The second half of verse 24 has **four key elements**:

- “Jerusalem”
- “trampling”
- “gentiles”
- “times” which have a **definite ending point** denoted by the word “until”.

**Revelation 11:1-4:** Parenthesis in the **sixth trumpet**. This is happening late in the history of the **Christian Church**.

*“Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, “Rise and measure the **temple of God**, the altar, and those who **worship there**. 2 But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the **Gentiles**. And they will **tread the holy city** underfoot for **forty-two months**. 3 And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy **one thousand two hundred and sixty days**, clothed in sackcloth.”*

- “Holy City”
- “trampling”
- “gentiles”
- “42 months”

### **Explanation:**

John is told to measure the **temple** and **those who worship** in it (the **sanctuary** and the **host**). When **Revelation** was written the **earthly temple had been destroyed** by Pagan Rome and the **literal Jews had been scattered** among the nations. This means that the temple here must be the one in **heaven** (Hebrews, Revelation) and the **worshippers** must be those who worship there **spiritually**. The temple is the church and also the heavenly sanctuary

### **Revelation 11 and the 42 Months and 1260 Days**

The trampling takes place for **42 months** which is identified as **1260 days**. That is, 42 months and 1260 days are **interchangeable** in Revelation 11:2, 3.

We must go back to the **Old Testament roots** of this prophecy of Revelation 11.

### **Daniel 7 and Revelation 12**

**Daniel 7:25** speaks of a **little horn** which persecutes the saints for time, times and half a time. Talk about the **sequence** of Daniel 7:

- Lion: Babylon
- Bear: Medo-Persia
- Leopard: Greece
- Dragon: Rome
- 10 horns: 10 kingdoms
- Little horn: Papacy

*“He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for **a time and times and half a time.**”*

### **Daniel 8**

**Daniel 8** further amplifies this little horn power by saying that it tramples on the **sanctuary** and the **host (8:13)**, language very **similar to Revelation 11:2, 3**.

### **Daniel 8:13**

*“Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said to that certain one who was speaking, “How long will the vision be, concerning the daily sacrifices and the transgression of **desolation**, the giving of both the **sanctuary** and the **host** to be **trampled under foot?**”*

In Daniel 8 there are two stages to this little horn power—**horizontal** and **vertical**, both are **Roman**.

The **42 months** are also mentioned in **Revelation 13:5-7** where the saints, the tabernacle and those who dwell in heaven are blasphemed.

### **Revelation 13**

#### **Revelation 13:5-7**

*“And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. 6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His **tabernacle**, and those who **dwell in heaven**. 7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.”*

This connects the 42 months of **chapter 11** with the 42 months of **chapter 13**.

But the little horn of **Daniel 7** is to be connected with **Revelation 12** because the same time period is mentioned in both (Daniel 7:25 and 12:14)

### **Daniel 7 and Revelation 12:13, 14**

*“Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. 14 But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a **time and times and half a time**, from the presence of the serpent.”*

But the period of three and a half times in Revelation 12:14 must also be connected with the 1260 days in verse 6.

### **Revelation 12:6**

*“Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there **one thousand two hundred and sixty days**.”*

So the conclusion is that the **three and a half times**, the **1260 days** and the **42 months** are all **parallel**.

A careful study of these time prophecies indicates clearly that they are fulfilled during a 1260 year period **after the ascension of Jesus**. This means that the **Jerusalem being depicted is not literal Jerusalem but spiritual Jerusalem**.

The **times** of Luke 21:24B must be an allusion to the **time, times and half a time** of Daniel 7:25 and Revelation 12:14.

**Daniel 9:26-27** describes a trampling by **literal Rome** of the **literal city** of Jerusalem. The **very words abomination** and **desolation** are used there which are the words used in Matthew 24:15.

*“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. 27 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**.”*

But Daniel 9:26, 27 not only refers to a **future desolation** of literal Jerusalem but also of a subsequent desolation until the end. This is denoted by the use of the plural form **“desolations”** which covers both abominations.

Daniel 9:27A depicts the **first desolation** of literal Jerusalem in **A. D. 70** (as does Luke 21:24A) while Daniel 9:27B describes the **desolation of spiritual Jerusalem** which is linked to Luke 21:24B.

Matthew and Mark refer to this period as the **tribulation**, a word which does not appear in Luke but is referred to as the **trampling** of Jerusalem by the Gentiles.

This fits very well with the fact that Jesus **blended** the description of the literal Jerusalem and spiritual Jerusalem according to the Spirit of Prophecy

Furthermore, the papacy's deadly wound is going to be healed and she will **continue the abominations** which she performed during the **first stage** of her existence. This is where Revelation 17 comes in with the use of the words "**abominations**" and "**desolate**".

### **Revelation 17:4-6, 15, 16**

*"The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of **abominations** and the filthiness of her fornication. 5 And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE **ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH**. 6 I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement. 15 Then he said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. 16 And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her **desolate** and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire."*







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