

# The Olivet Discourse

## MATTHEW CHAPTER 24



Matthew 24:1–2

### **Jesus Foretells Destruction of the Temple**

Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. But he answered them, “You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.” (ESV)

Discuss how Jesus took their enthusiasm around the temple and destroyed it with Spiritual truth from heaven.

37 years later in 70AD, this prophecy came true. Discuss how.

Discuss how General Vespasian and his first officer (son) Titus led the assault in Judea against the temple during the first Jewish-Roman War (AD 66-73).

Vespasian led the Roman campaign successfully through Galilee and surrounding areas from 67–69. In mid-69, Vespasian was acclaimed emperor by his troops and left for Rome to secure the throne during the Year of the Four Emperors.

He placed Titus in overall command of the remaining forces in Judea.

Titus then independently conducted the famous siege and destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, which is why he's often remembered as the conqueror of the city and its Temple.

This father-son dynamic later continued when Titus succeeded Vespasian as emperor in AD 79.



## Signs of the End of the Age

As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?” And Jesus answered them, “See that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.

“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name’s sake. And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. (ESV)

The disciples feared the end of the world was at hand.

Discuss the ramifications of the first seal (White Horse/False Christs) being broken on the large scroll.

Discuss the ramifications of the second seal (Red Horse/Wars) being broken on the large scroll.

Discuss the ramifications of the third seal (Black Horse/Famine & Plague) being broken on the large scroll.

Discuss how these, (1,260 days/mid-point) is only the beginning of birth pangs.

Discuss the ramifications of the fourth seal (Pale Horse/Death to God’s Elect) being broken on the large scroll.

Discuss the ramifications of the fifth seal (Martyrdom Completed) being broken on the large scroll.

Discuss the ramifications of the sixth seal (Day of the Lord Sign) being broken on the large scroll.

Discuss the ramifications of the seventh seal (The opening of the Large Scroll) being broken.

## **The Abomination of Desolation**

“So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house, and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath. For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand. So, if they say to you, ‘Look, he is in the wilderness,’ do not go out. If they say, ‘Look, he is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe it. For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather. (ESV)

Daniel 9:24–27

## **The Seventy Weeks**

“Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. And for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time. And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.” (ESV)

Daniel prophesied the exact day that the messiah would come to be cut off (Daniel 9:24-27), 434 Years or 62 Weeks (Hebrew prophetic week is 7 years) after the decree to rebuild Jerusalem was issued around 520 BC (Ezra 5:2).

In Matthew 24:15 Jesus points to the prophesy of Daniel.

In Matthew chapter 24 Jesus foretells of the destruction of the temple, which occurs 38 years later in 70AD.

The first 69 weeks of Daniel ran consecutively. 483 years.

But the 70th week has been put on hold. Why? (Why the long 2000+ year gap?)

Jesus explains in Luke 21:24 • Paul explains in Romans 11:25

Daniel has the seventy weeks divided into 3 sections.

Daniel says 7 weeks plus 62 weeks and finally the 70th week. (Daniel 9:24-27)

See also 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:9 (In Context 3:3-9)

### **The Seventy Weeks breakdown:**

Cyrus's 538 BC decree (which focused on temple return and rebuilding)

Cyrus's decree allowing the Jews to return from exile and rebuild the temple in Jerusalem was issued in his first year as king over Babylon, which historical and biblical chronologies date to 538 BC (following his conquest of Babylon in late 539 BC).

Darius decree 520 BC (the second year of Darius I, when temple rebuilding resumed per Ezra 5:2, Haggai, and Zechariah)

Cyrus's decree (538 BC, Ezra 1) and Darius's confirmation (520 BC onward, Ezra 6) were explicitly temple-focused (rebuilding the "house" after the Babylonian destruction).

Artaxerxes' decree to Ezra (457 BC) went beyond that by granting political/religious self-governance and resources that implicitly supported overall restoration of Jewish life in Jerusalem. It occurred in the seventh year of Artaxerxes I (Longimanus).

Artaxerxes' decree to Nehemiah (445/444 BC)

The explicit city/wall focus comes in the later decree to Nehemiah (445/444 BC, Nehemiah 2), where Artaxerxes grants letters for timber to rebuild the walls, gates, and a fortress near the temple.

Using Sir Robert Anderson's classic calculations with a Jewish 360-day prophetic year, we can reach AD 32–33 after 483 years of Artaxerxes decree to Nehemiah.

See Chuck Missler's book titled **Daniel's 70 Weeks** for further detailed breakdowns.

God declared the exact day of Messiah's triumphal entry into Jerusalem 483 years prior.

From the decree to restore to the coming of the "anointed one" would be exactly 483 years.

This is why Jesus wept over Jerusalem in Luke 19:41 because they did not know the hour of His coming. (aka Palm Sunday)

## The Time of the End

“At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

Then I, Daniel, looked, and behold, two others stood, one on this bank of the stream and one on that bank of the stream. And someone said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream, “How long shall it be till the end of these wonders?” And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream; he raised his right hand and his left hand toward heaven and swore by him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time, and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end all these things would be finished. I heard, but I did not understand. Then I said, “O my lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?” He said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end. Many shall purify themselves and make themselves white and be refined, but the wicked shall act wickedly. **And none of the wicked shall understand, but those who are wise shall understand. And from the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be 1,290 days. Blessed is he who waits and arrives at the 1,335 days. But go your way till the end. And you shall rest and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of the days.**”  
(ESV)

The 30 day Reclamation period is in view here as well at the 45 day Restoration period.

70th Week of Daniel is how many days again???

A 7 year period you say?

The 70th week of Daniel has within it not only Gods judgment, but a 30 day reclamation period and a 45 day restoration period after the 1260 days. This then is all followed by the 1000 year millennium reign of Christ over the earth.

Here's how it works:

The Hebrew calendar has 360 days per year.

Daniel 9:27 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.

$(3.5 \text{ years} \times 360 \text{ days} = 1260 \text{ days})$

Matthew 24:15 **Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place** (let the reader understand),

2nd Thessalonians 2:3-4 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

Daniel Chapter 12:11-12

And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.

Hebrew prophetic week is 7 years.

360 days a year in the Hebrew calendar.

$360(\text{days}) \times 3.5(\text{years}) = 1260 \text{ (days)}$ .

1260 days (middle of the 70th week)

1290 days ( $1290 - 1260 = 30$  day period where Christ reclaims the earth back to Himself)

1335 days ( $1335 - 1290 = 45$  day period where Christ restores the earth prior to the millennium)

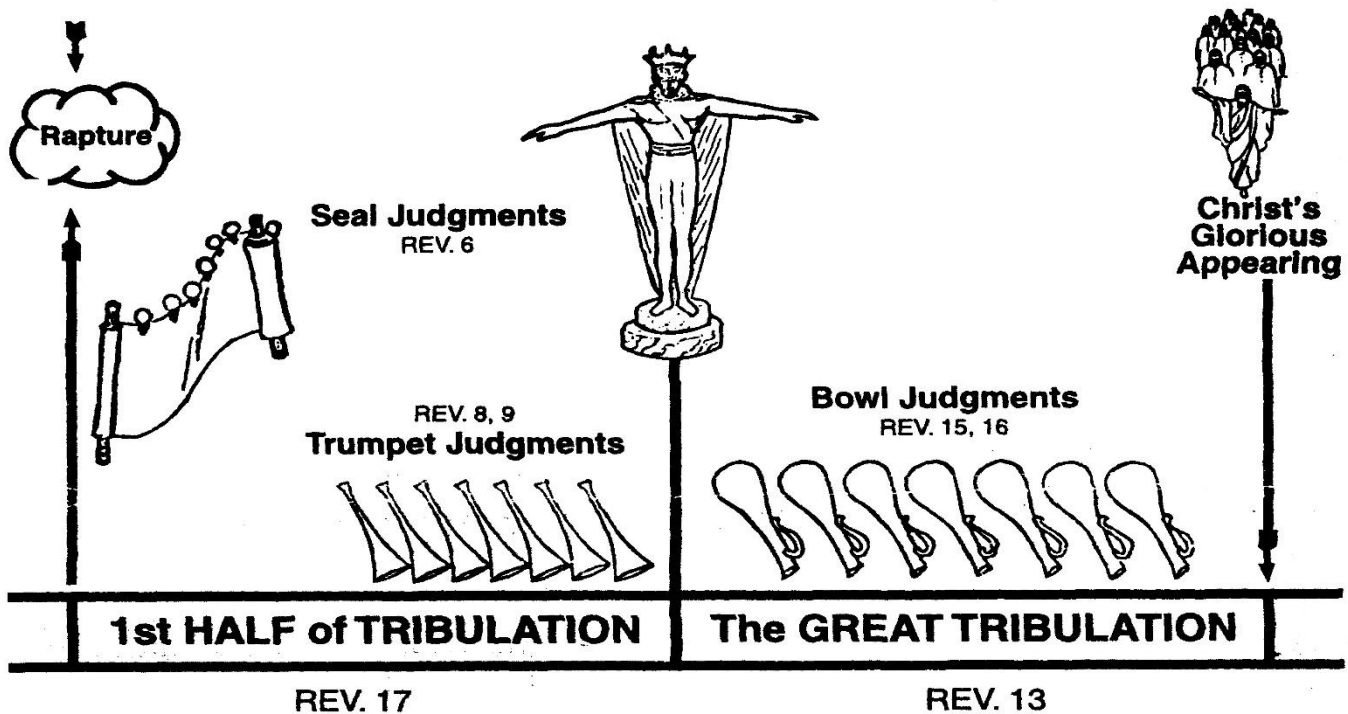
Now, continuing with Matthew 24:15–28

Discuss the Great Tribulation aka Satan's Wrath in Matthew 24 that Jesus warned about.

Discuss the second half of the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel (1260 days)

Contrast the first half (The Beginning of Birth Pangs) against the second half (The Great Tribulation aka Satan's Wrath) See Revelation 12:12 to support the idea of Satan's Wrath being the last half of the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel.

Discuss the pretribulation position that declares that the entire 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel is God's wrath.



# The Entire 70th Week Is Not the Wrath of God

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- 1.** Nowhere in Scripture are the first four seals of Revelation referred to as manifestations of God's Day of the Lord wrath.
- 2.** God's wrath is not spoken of until after the sixth seal. (Rev. 6:16-17)
- 3.** If the entire 70th Week is God's wrath, the first seal representing false christs (Matt. 24:5) would therefore teach that God will send false christs to deceive His own elect.
- 4.** If the entire 70th Week is God's wrath then He will be responsible for the martyrdom of the saints [who will persevere in the face of Antichrist's persecution] during the fifth seal. (Rev. 6:9; 13:7, 10; cf. 1 Thes. 5:9)
- 5. The great tribulation (Matt. 24:21) is called the wrath of Satan in the Book of Revelation.** (Rev. 12:12)
- 6.** If the entire 70th Week is the Day of the Lord, then Antichrist will prevail during the time when Isaiah says, "the Lord alone shall be exalted..." (Is. 2:12, 17)
- 7.** Christ affirms that the end [of the age—the eschatological Day of the Lord] comes after the first two seals (Matt. 24:6) and after the persecution of Antichrist (24:9-10) is in progress (24:13-14).

Discuss the warning that Jesus gave us not to be led astray by false profits in those days.

Discuss how the second coming of Jesus will be unmistakable.

Finally, talk about why the vultures gather around corpses.

Remember, Jesus said “*Let the dead, bury the dead*”.

Matthew 8:22 and Luke 9:60

The End of the Discussion of Matthew 24:15–28 started on page 4.

Section Titled: **The Abomination of Desolation**

## The Coming of the Son of Man

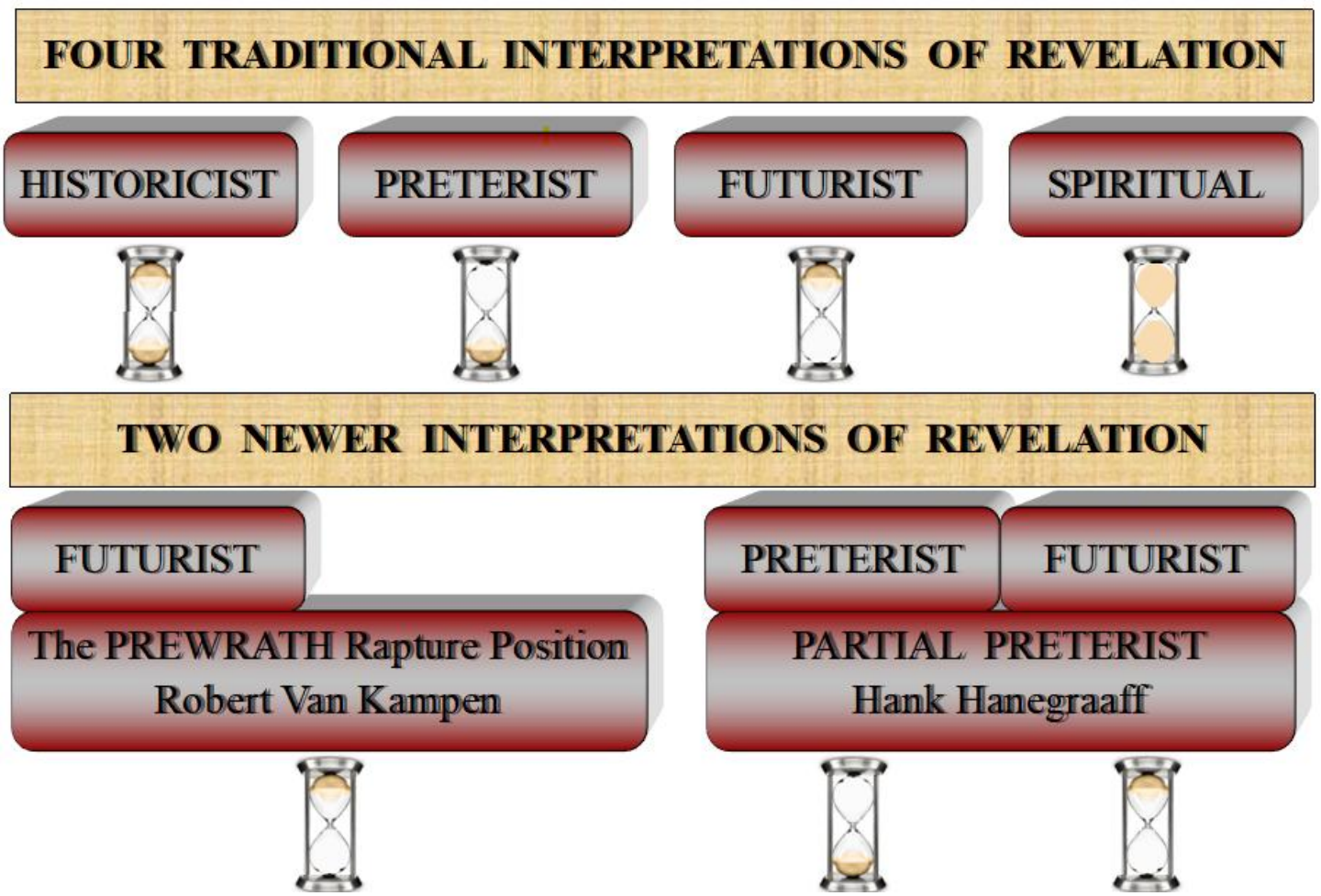
“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. (ESV)

Jesus goes back to addressing what will happen between the sixth and seventh seal (*aka The Great Tribulation / Satan's Wrath*) being broken on the Large Scroll.

Discuss the Parousia of Christ surrounding His second coming.

Explain how the Rapture of the Saints is plainly taught here between the sixth and seventh seal.

Discuss the six interpretive positions on the Book of Revelation.



## The Lesson of the Fig Tree

“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see all these things, you know that He is near, at the very gates. Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. (ESV)

Jesus cursed a fig tree because it had leaves but no fruit, symbolizing spiritual hypocrisy and the impending judgment on Israel, particularly its fruitless temple and leadership, teaching his disciples about faith and God's expectations for true righteousness beyond mere appearance, as the tree withered by morning.

The event, recorded in Mark 11:12-25 and Matthew 21:18-22, served as a prophetic object lesson before Jesus cleansed the temple, demonstrating that outward religious show without inner spiritual fruit leads to divine judgment.

Jesus instructs them to be aware of the times like the Sons of Issachar in 1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 12:32

- † Understanding of the Times
- † Knowledge of What Israel Ought to Do
- † Having Influence on Israel's Decisions

“...*you know that He is near*” is in the Present tense.

Koine Greek verb (ginōskete) (VF2PPIA) translated into the English word “know”

Explain why this negates a pretribulation rapture position.

This generation will not pass away means that from the moment the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel starts, the generation that is alive, will undergo the whole 7-year period until the return of Christ. Many will perish during the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel, but the 7-year timeline will play out consecutively until completion.

*Heaven (ouranos, not epiouranos) and earth will pass away...*

Explain what heavens are in view.

*My words (logoi) will not pass away.* The Logos of Christ in view.

## No One Knows That Day and Hour

“But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left. Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. But if that wicked servant says to himself, ‘My master is delayed,’ and begins to beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know and will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (ESV)

Discuss that it’s the “day and hour” no one know, not the seasons and epochs.

Discuss God’s mercy. Give examples of how God waited to the very last before bringing judgement upon the people.

Discuss the “At any moment of Christ’s Return” argument, aka the “Imminency” Phantom Doctrine.

The doctrine of imminency is nowhere taught in Scripture. The concept that Christ could return at “any moment” since His departure back to heaven is simply not taught anywhere in the entire Bible. Not one of the passages used to sustain imminency, actually teach imminency.

Expectancy, yes. Imminency (an any-moment rapture), no. If imminency had been the concept that the writers had wanted to convey, it could have and would have been clearly stated (*in fact 19th century promoters of pretribulationism initially taught expectancy rather than imminency for this reason*). In addition, there were many events prophesied by Christ, known throughout the Christian world at that time, that still had to occur before He could return, such as the destruction of the Temple (Lk. 21:6) and the death of Peter (Jn. 21:18-19). Imminency was an impossibility until the Temple was destroyed in 70 A.D.

Discuss that “Expectation and Anticipation” is what is in view in the latter part of this passage.

Finally, discuss *“that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth”*.

What is this place? Where is this place? Is this place hell? Which one is the “second” death?

Hebrew Sheol (OT) as "Sheol" (or occasionally "the grave" or similar in context). AB&H in view Abrahams Bosom/Side (e.g., in Luke 16:22-23, Abraham’s side, Lazarus at his side).

Greek Hades (NT) as "Hades" (e.g., in Acts 2:27, Matthew 11:23, Revelation passages).

Greek Gehenna (NT) as "hell" (e.g., in Matthew 5:22, 5:29–30, Mark 9:43–47, James 3:6).

Tartarus (used once in 2 Peter 2:4) as "hell" in some contexts or "Tartarus" in notes.

Eternal Lake of Fire (e.g., Revelation 19:20, 20:10, 20:14-15 and 21:8)

The different names/terms for what is commonly called "hell" (the place or state of judgment for the wicked, or the realm of the dead) highlighted in the ESV Study Bible include:

**Sheol:** The Hebrew term in the Old Testament for the realm/place of the dead (e.g., notes on Psalm 9:17, Job 26:6, Isaiah 5:14). It refers to where all people go at death—a shadowy abode, not necessarily a place of torment for all. The ESV Study Bible notes describe it as the "place where people go when they die," similar to Hades, sometimes a place of rest for believers but punishment for the wicked (e.g., in notes on Job or Psalms facts).

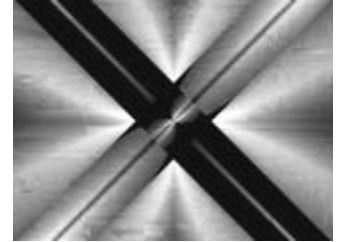
**Hades:** The Greek equivalent in the New Testament to Sheol, the realm of the dead (e.g., notes on Acts 2:27, Luke 16:23 in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus). It can denote a temporary holding place, divided into compartments of comfort (for the righteous, like "Abraham's bosom") and torment (for the unrighteous), awaiting final judgment.

**Gehenna:** The term Jesus uses most often for final, fiery judgment/hell proper (translated as "hell" in the ESV text). It derives from the Valley of Hinnom near Jerusalem, a site of child sacrifice and later a burning garbage dump, symbolizing unquenchable fire and punishment (e.g., notes on Matthew 5:22, 10:28, Mark 9 passages). The Study Bible emphasizes this as the place of eternal punishment for the unrighteous.

**Lake of fire:** The final, eternal hell/destination mentioned in Revelation (e.g., Revelation 20:14–15), into which Hades/Death and the unrighteous are cast. Notes clarify this as the ultimate place of punishment, distinct from the intermediate state of Hades/Sheol.

Occasionally, related terms like Abaddon (destruction, linked to the realm of the dead, e.g., Job 26:6, Proverbs 15:11) or the bottomless pit/abyss appear in notes, but the primary distinct names for "hell" or the afterlife realm of judgment/death in the ESV Study Bible are Sheol, Hades, Gehenna, and the lake of fire. These reflect the Bible's nuanced portrayal: Sheol/Hades as the intermediate realm of the dead (for all), and Gehenna/lake of fire as the final place of punishment for the wicked. For precise wording, check the notes in passages like Matthew 5, Luke 16, Acts 2, or Revelation 20 in an ESV Study Bible edition.

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