

# Preparing for the future

## Matthew 24-25 part 11

*"You also must be ready all the time, for the Son of Man will come when least expected." Matthew 24:44*

### I. Understanding prophecy

The telescoping principle: An immediate sign foreshadowing a long term event

Example

*"All right then, the Lord himself will give you the sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel (which means 'God is with us')." Isaiah 7:14*

Immediately fulfilled in the birth of Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, born to King Ahaz as a reassuring sign that the king of Aram would not conquer Judah, BUT is quoted again in Matt 1:23 as a prophetic announcement of the birth of Christ.

Suggested division of passage:

- 24:1-3 description of the setting & asking of the question
- 24:4-14 Overview of warning that applies to both the destruction of Jerusalem & end of age
- 24:15-35 Specific warnings are given about destruction of Jerusalem

*"I tell you the truth, this generation will not pass from the scene until all these things take place." Matt 24:34*

- 24:36-51 Uncertainty of timing of Christ's second coming
- 25:1-46 3 parables about aspects of judgement at his coming

*"As Jesus was leaving the Temple grounds, his disciples pointed out to him the various Temple buildings." Matthew 24:1*

*"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem the city...And now, look, your house is abandoned and desolate." Matthew 23:37-38*

*"<sup>2</sup> But he responded, 'Do you see all these buildings? I tell you the truth, they will be completely demolished. Not one stone will be left on top of another!'" Matt 24:2*

*"His disciples came to him privately and said, 'Tell us, when will all this happen? What sign will signal your return and the end of the world?'" Matt 24:3*

### II. Jesus gives some general warnings regarding 'signs' (24:4-14)

**There will be false messengers** *"Don't let anyone mislead you" v 4*

**False exaggeration of events** *"And you will hear of wars and threats of wars, but don't panic. Yes, these things must take place, but the end won't follow immediately." v 6*

*"Yes, these things must take place, but the end won't follow immediately." v 6*

*"You also must be ready all the time, for the Son of Man will come when least expected." v 44*

### III. Specific warnings regarding Destruction of Jerusalem (24:15-35)

*"The day is coming when you will see what Daniel the prophet spoke about—the sacrilegious object that causes desecration standing in the Holy Place." Matthew 24:15 (Dan 11:31 & Dan 12:11)*

*"Then those in Judea must flee to the hills. <sup>17</sup> A person out on the deck of a roof must not go down into the house to pack. <sup>18</sup> A person out in the field must not return even to get a coat. <sup>19</sup> How terrible it will be for pregnant women and for nursing mothers in those days. <sup>20</sup> And pray that your flight will not be in winter or on the Sabbath. <sup>21</sup> For there will be greater anguish than at any time since the world began. And it will never be so great again." Matt 24:16-21*

*"Now learn a lesson from the fig tree. When its branches bud and its leaves begin to sprout, you know that summer is near." Matthew 24:32*

*"I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it." Matt 16:18b*

Then he went on to say... *"And I tell you the truth, some standing here right now will not die before they see the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom." Matt 16:28*

Not referring to his second coming, for he clearly stated that it would take place in the lifetime of the disciples. He was referring to Pentecost when he established his kingdom in the hearts of his people.

## IV. Jesus Christ's second coming

Jesus told 3 parables to illustrate the need for readiness.

Each feature an absent key figure – bridegroom, master, king

In each story once the key figure returns there is a division – no excuses accepted if got it wrong

Not isolated stories. But show a progression to teach of the events surrounding Christ's return

### 1. He will come when we least expect – always be on alert

*"So you, too, must keep watch! For you do not know the day or hour of my return." Matt 25:13*

*"However, no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows." Matt 24:36*

*<sup>42</sup> "So you, too, must keep watch! For you don't know what day your Lord is coming. <sup>43</sup> Understand this: If a homeowner knew exactly when a burglar was coming, he would keep watch and not permit his house to be broken into. <sup>44</sup> You also must be ready all the time, for the Son of Man will come when least expected." Matt 24:42-44*

**Are you prepared for Christ's return?**

### 2. He will call us to account for our lives

*"After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money." Matt 25:19*

*"Yes, each of us will give a personal account to God." Roman 14:12*

**Are you using your life wisely for God?**

### 3. There will be a judgment, with eternal consequences

*"But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne. <sup>32</sup> All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate the people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. <sup>33</sup> He will place the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left." Matt 25:31-33*

*"And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life." Matthew 25:46*

*"God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. <sup>9</sup> Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. <sup>10</sup> For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago." Ephesians 2:8-10*

**Is the fruit of the Holy Spirit being displayed in your actions?**