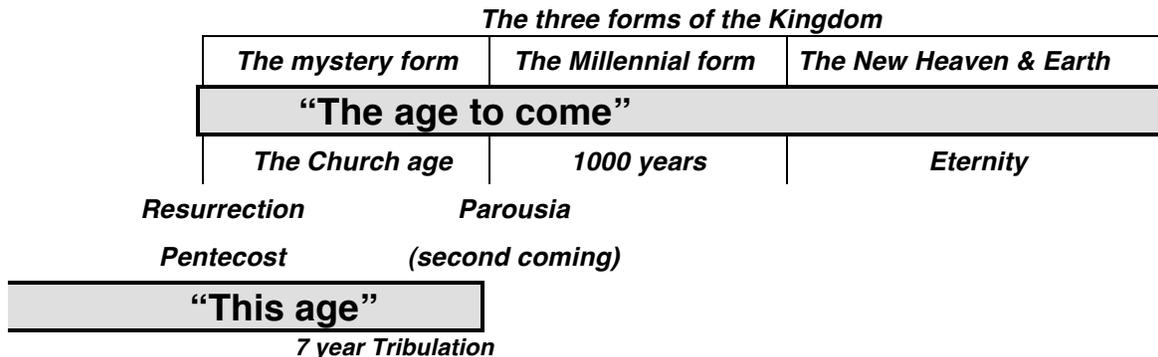


Matthew 24

- The next two chapters represent the clearest prophetic teaching from Jesus.
- The sequence of events is in agreement with the other prophetic passages in the Bible.

“¹ And Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him. ² And He answered and said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here shall be left upon another, which will not be torn down." ³ And as He was sitting 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?**"

- There are two questions asked here. 1. What are the signs of your coming? 2. When will this age end?
- The end of “this age” and “the age to come” are best understood with the following chart.



The beginning of birth pangs.

⁴ And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you. ⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many. ⁶ And you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not frightened, for {those things} must take place, but {that} is not yet the end. ⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. ⁸ But all these things are {merely} the beginning of birth pangs. ⁹ Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name. ¹⁰ And at that time many will fall away and will deliver up one another and hate one another. ¹¹ And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many. ¹² And because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold. ¹³ But the one who endures to the end, he shall be saved. ¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come.

- The events described here are not to be taken too literally. For example if it is true that “they . . . will kill you” vs.9 then what is the meaning of “enduring to the end” vs.13?
- The general idea is clear. The times ahead are full of trouble, and persecution for the faith. The disciples are to not be afraid but are to endure.

The Great Tribulation.

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), 16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; 17 let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; 18 and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. 19 But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! 20 But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath; 21 for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. 22 And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short. 23 Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There {He is,} do not believe {him.}' 24 For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. 25 Behold, I have told you in advance. 26 If therefore they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go forth, {or,} 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe {them.}' 27 For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. 28 Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.

- The abomination of desolation is mentioned in Dan.9:27, 11:31, 12:11. It refers to the interruption of the regular temple sacrifice and its replacement with something that is designed to insult the system. Some have equated it with the sacrifice of a pig on the temple altar by Antiochus Epiphanes in 167B.C. Others have identified it with the coming Antichrist at the end of the age.
- The parallel passage in Luke 21:5-36 describes a time of trouble that probably referred to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. The passage probably has a double fulfillment as do many other prophetic scriptures.
- The restoration of Israel to the land (prophesied in much of the OT) was a prerequisite for the literal future fulfillment of Jesus' predictions in this chapter. The fact that the promised restoration of Israel is tied to her spiritual renewal suggests that her present occupation of the land of Palestine is not a part of God's promise Ezek.36-37, Deut.30.

The Second Coming of Christ.

29 But 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 the sky*, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, 30 and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in

the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the *Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky* with power and great glory.

- The second coming of Christ will be dramatic and in contrast to His first advent.
- It is unclear as to how literal these vivid descriptions of natural calamity are to be understood.
- The whole world will witness His coming and many will find it painful.

The Gathering of the saints.

³¹ And He will send forth His angels with *a great trumpet* and *they will gather together* His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

- This chronology places “the rapture of the saints” at the time of Christ’s Second Coming not before the Great Tribulation as often taught.
- The clearest reference to the rapture of the church is found in I Thess.4:17 “Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord.” Also, look at I Cor.15:50-58 and Jn.14:1-3

Chronological chart of Matt.24-25 compared to the rest of the New Testament.

Beginning of birth pangs	Great Tribulation	Coming of Christ	Parables	Final Judgment
<p>24:4-14</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • False Christs • Wars & rumors of wars • Famine & earthquake • Believers hated • Conflict within the church • False prophets • Many will be misled • Lawlessness • Love will grow cold • World evangelism <p>I Thess.5:1-11 Rev.6-7 SEALS (Antichrist)</p>	<p>24:15-28</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desecration • Tribulation • False signs <p>II Thess.2:1-12 Rev.8-18 TRUMPETS (wrath on all) BOWLS (wrath on nations)</p>	<p>24:29-31</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmic signs • Christ is seen • Trumpet sounds • Elect gathered <p>II Pet.3:3-13 I Thess.4:13-18 Rev.19</p>	<p>24:32-25:42</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fig Tree • Servants • Virgins • Talents 	<p>25:31-46</p> <p>II Pet.3:3-13</p>

True disciples will not be uninformed.

32 Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender, and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; 33 even so you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, {right} at the door. 34 Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. 35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away.

- This generation could refer to the generation that sees these signs. In other words all these signs would take place in one generation.
- If “this generation” is equated with the lives of the apostles, then the signs leading up to the coming of Christ were all fulfilled in the early church leaving only the second coming of Christ to take place.

True disciples will not be presumptuous.

36 But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. 37 For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. 38 For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day

that Noah entered the ark, 39 and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. 40 Then there shall be two men in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. 41 Two women {will be} grinding at the mill; one will be taken, and one will be left.

- Just as Noah's day was made up of two types of people so will the end of the age be configured. True believers will know what God's plan is about and be cooperating with it.
- The dramatic "taking away" could refer to the Angels taking the believers to be with Christ at His coming (vs.31) or it could be linked to vs.39 and refer to the coming judgment of some who will mourn (vs.31).

True disciples will not be asleep.

42 Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. 43 But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. 44 For this reason you be ready too; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think {He will.}

- This passage suggests that Christ could come at any time, even though there are some events yet to be fulfilled just before His actual appearing.
- The key word here is "alert". True believers will be watching and waiting for the coming of Messiah as King.

True disciples will not be delinquent.

45 Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time? 46 Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes. 47 Truly I say to you, that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. 48 But if that evil slave says in his heart, 'My master is not coming for a long time,' 49 and shall begin to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkards; 50 the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect {him} and at an hour which he does not know, 51 and shall cut

him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; weeping shall be there and the gnashing of teeth.”

- It is important that we look at our present age as an age of accountability.
- It is assumed that all true believers will live as faithful servants and those who do not believe will ignore the promise of His coming and the accountability that will be a part of that coming.