

Matthew 24:1-35

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[0 : 00] Take your Bibles and go with me to the Gospel of Matthew, Matthew chapter 24. Matthew chapter 24, we'll be starting into that 24th chapter this morning, reading verses 1 through 35 will be our text, Matthew 24, verses 1 through 35.

We have made our way to the place of the Gospel of Matthew in which we kind of take a sigh of relief because immediately preceding these chapters are Christ's final public discourse. And if we must be completely honest, his final public discourse is not one of great encouragement because it is rather one of rebuke and correction and even chastisement upon the religious establishment of his day.

That final public discourse is not easy to read and it's even harder to apply because it begins to speak of the realities of hypocritical living and how we must do much more than just put on a good show, but we must have the overflow of a genuine heart.

As we have read his final rebuke, we have entered midway through the Passion Week of Christ. Jesus has been on public display for the last couple of days after the triumphal entry of Palm Sunday, as we referred to it.

[1 : 19] And the multitudes going before him, waving palm branches, putting their coats upon the ground and crying out, Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

After the children crying out in the marketplace, the overturning of the money changer tables in the temple, Jesus has very much went public and he has put himself open for inspection.

We have seen how historically that is something that must take place. And I know that I'm giving you a lot of background information, but we always want to be sure to take things in context so that we do not take them out of context and make them say something which they never intended to say.

Jesus has put himself on display for all the world to see because we know that he is the lamb slain before the foundation of the world. He is the Passover lamb. John the Baptist himself said, Behold the lamb that has come to take away the sin of mankind.

It was absolutely necessary for the Passover lamb to be observed for a number of days prior to its sacrifice so that you could know for certain that what you were offering was a perfect, spotless and blameless lamb.

[2 : 27] You did not dare offer to God something that had fault within it, something that had blemish or blight. We can read the book of Malachi there at the end of the Old Testament and see how God says, I don't want that.

If you want to offer something not perfect, then offer that to your governors or your bosses and your leaders and see how they respond. God says, you give me something perfect. And to just fully clarify the reality that Jesus is not just a lamb, but he is the lamb and that he is the only one who is perfect.

He has put himself on display in the middle of the biggest crowd at the middle of the most exciting time in Jerusalem so that everybody could observe him. At his final discourse, he corrects and rebukes what most people claim to be the religious leaders of that day.

And it is really a rebuke against religion. But we can take a sigh of relief because now his public ministry is over. For three and a half years, Jesus has been involved in public ministry, immediately following the baptism by John the Baptist, his entrance into the wilderness to be led by the Spirit into the wilderness of temptation, and coming back from 40 days of being tempted and tried by Satan.

If you're following the reading plan, you'll know that even this morning it says in the Gospel of Luke that Satan left him alone until an opportune time. At this point, historically, that opportune time is just about three days away.

[3 : 59] We are probably at the close of Tuesday or the beginning of Wednesday of Passion Week. In just a couple of days, he will observe the Passover meal with his disciples, and we know that Satan will find his opportune time, and as Satan often does, he finds that opportunity in an individual.

My friend, don't ever be that individual. And he finds it in Judas Iscariot. And by finding that opportunity, we know that eventually, according to the plans and purposes of God, Christ is handed over, betrayed, put on mock trials, a number of them crucified on the cross, dead, buried, but yet comes back to life in three days.

But the public ministry is over. Now we're into private dealings. When I say private, not necessarily just one-on-one, but with his followers, with his disciples.

From this point on, what we will see, if you read even the other Gospels put together, you will see the private interactions. No longer is he chastising and rebuking.

Now he is preparing. Big difference. Remember when we entered into the 23rd chapter, and I know this is a long introduction, but it's worth repeating so that you can know where we're at.

[5 : 14] When we entered into the 23rd chapter, we said that there is a stark difference between where you stand with the Savior. If you stand with him publicly only, then usually he brings a rebuke to you.

If you interact with him in private fellowship and followership, then he can prepare you for what lies ahead. Because we are in Matthew 24 and 25, often referred to as the Olivet Discourse.

Because it takes place on the Mount of Olives. No longer is Jesus standing in the temple, he's sitting on the Mount of Olives. This is a section of scripture which people traditionally have studied and longed to know.

And just to be honest, as a pastor, this is a portion of scripture that I'm afraid you're entering into with more expectations than what I can deliver. But our text this morning will be Matthew 24, verses 1 through 35.

Would you stand with me if you're physically able and desire to do so? And before we even read the word, I want us to pray and ask God to speak to us through his word. So let's pray together. Lord, we come to you with so much rejoicing.

[6 : 24] Rejoicing that you are a God who sees, who hears, and who knows. Lord Jesus, we come before you asking now that as clearly as you spoke to your disciples then, that you would speak to your people today.

We ask, Lord, as we open up the portion of your word, God, that it would ring true with clarity. And Lord, that it would penetrate our confusing circumstances, that it would penetrate any distractions, that it would speak to the very core of our being.

Lord, may it inform the mind, may it persuade the heart, and may it move the lives of your people.

Lord, we ask that we would draw closer to you through the reading and understanding of it.

And Lord, that it would have a great transformational work in each one of us for your glory and yours alone. And we ask it in Christ's name. Amen. Matthew 24, starting in verse 1.

Then Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when his disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to him. And he said to them, Do you see all these things?

[7 : 28] Truly, I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down. And as he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?

And Jesus answered and said to them, See to it that no one misleads you, for many will come in my name, saying, I am the Christ, and will mislead many. You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars.

See to it that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And in various places there will be famines and earthquakes, but all these things are merely the beginning of birth pains.

Then they will deliver you to tribulation and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of my name. At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another.

Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

[8 : 37] This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come. 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, then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.

Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out of that, out of which are in his house. Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak.

But woe to those who are pregnant, to those who are nursing babies in those days. But pray that your flight will not be in the winter or on a Sabbath. For then there will be a great tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.

Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved. But for the sake of the elect, those days will be cut short. Then if anyone says to you, Behold, here is the Christ, or there he is, do not believe him.

For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.

[9 : 46] But hold, I have told you in advance. So if they say to you, Behold, he is in the wilderness, do not go out. Or behold, he is in the inner rooms, do not believe them. For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather. 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.

And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, 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.

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. 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. So you too, when you see all these things, recognize that he is near right at the door.

[10 : 48] 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.

Matthew 24, verses 1 through 35. You may be seated. As we have entered into this Olivet Discourse, and many of you know, this is a great prophetic word from the giver of all prophecy, and that is the Son of God himself.

This is one of the greatest prophetic words that is ever spoken. Many people throughout the ages have studied this in connection with other works of prophecy, mainly the book of Revelation, as we try to reconcile the two works, as we try to reconcile what Christ has said, what Paul wrote in 1 and 2 Thessalonians, which, by the way, in case you have not read it recently, every chapter of 1 and 2 Thessalonians ends with a reference to the second coming of Christ.

Every single chapter. And just as a side note, always remember that those are the earliest writings of Paul. That's what he wrote first. And then we have the great word of the revelation of Jesus Christ, recorded for us in the book of Revelations.

It's not the revelation of John. It's the revelation of Jesus Christ written by John. So we need to understand that. But when we come to prophecy, people just want to know. I mean, they just want to know.

[12 : 22] And I am afraid for those reasons, we enter into it with an unfair expectation. Because we're hoping to come and to affix a date and a time and even a series of events in which we could tell when things will be.

We notice here in this discourse at the very beginning of it, the disciples ask him three questions. And they ask him three questions very clearly. In verse three, tell us when will these things happen? What will be the sign of your coming? And what is happening at the end of the age? We know that they come to him with very clear questions. But as is often the case, we also understand it with Christ.

We seem to walk away with more questions than we came into it with. And I think some of that comes from a great misunderstanding of the prophetic word. So let's go ahead and just establish this from the very beginning.

Prophecy in scripture is not given so that we may simply know things and know the exact moment these things will happen. I'm talking about Old Testament prophecy, New Testament prophecy, and

even the prophecy of the book of Revelations.

[13:24] These things are not given so that we may know. These things are given so that we may be prepared. Big difference. Big difference.

Because the danger in knowing is that if an individual was to kind of figure out the precise prophetic word and come up with a concise date and could establish things in the proper way, I know man just like you know man because I am one of them, correct?

And I mean mankind. I don't mean men and gender. I mean mankind. I know mankind because I am one of them. If man could affix a date and say on this day, then we would wait until the exact last moment to be ready.

Prophecy is never given so that we may know with certainty and clarity. Prophecy is given so that we may prepare with expectation. And therein lies the difference.

Man reading prophecy just wants to know. The Lord in giving it just wants us to be prepared. So may we not go to it hoping to know with certainty certain things that have never been revealed to us, but may we go to it with a heart of openness and saying, Lord, let this word speak to me so that my life may look differently in light of the word which has been shared.

[14:39] And therefore I live in a moment of preparation. I live in a moment of expectation.

Because what we have here in the verse 35 verses of chapter 24 is expectations for days ahead.

Expectations for days ahead. Now you need to understand. Matthew is writing to the Jewish people. The synoptic gospels. Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

Synoptic is just a big word that means same. They're similar. They share a lot of similarities. Of the synoptic gospels. Matthew is the only one that records the entirety of the Olivet Discourse.

Mark and Luke record little bits and pieces of it, but they don't record all of it. Matthew alone records the whole thing. He has it recorded over two chapters, 24 and 25. And we will begin to see if the Lord allows us to tarry what takes place because of this.

But Matthew alone records a lot of the minute details. Matthew is writing to, who was it he was writing to? The Jewish people. He was a Jewish individual writing to Jewish people. And you need to understand that much of what it recorded in the Olivet Discourse has a very Jewish tense to it, which means it speaks to the Jewish people.

[15:49] It has application to us, but it speaks directly to the Jewish people. Much of what you see there in the gathering of his people from the four winds, that's an Old Testament Jewish text.

When the blowing of the shofar, the trumpet, that's an Old Testament Jewish text. The coming of the Son of Man on the clouds, Daniel chapter 7, that expectation of the Jewish people.

All of this has a very Jewish purpose intent behind it. And we try to wrap our Western mind around that and we don't understand some things.

And we can't separate it from where it was delivered or to whom it was delivered to. But we need to also understand it within our text, even our text this morning. There is a dual fulfillment role.

Jesus is speaking of two events, one which has already happened and one that has not yet happened consecutively. And he kind of overlays them and he kind of intertwines them.

[16:47] And herein is where we scratch our heads and we say, well, wasn't that already fulfilled? Or what about this? And this thing happened? And what about these things? And I'll just give you one very clearly because he says, but this gospel of the kingdom must be preached to all nations and then the end will come, right?

You see it there. I believe it's in that 12th verse. But first the kingdom, the message of the kingdom, the gospel, the good news of the kingdom must be preached to all the nations and then the end will come. There are a multitude of people that tell you, as soon as we get the gospel to the very last nation, as soon as we get the gospel, I mean the International Mission Board right now, and I know I'm kind of going fast because I want to get to the good stuff.

The IMB right now could tell you how many unreached people groups there are in the world. That is how many nations, how many people have never heard the gospel. And there are people who think, well, the moment that last group hears it, the end is going to come.

Well, the only problem I have with that is twice in the book of Colossians. Twice. Stay with me. Now, the book of Colossians is a lot more authoritative than any other book that man may write.

Correct? I mean, it is recorded. Last time I checked, the book of Colossians is recorded in the canon of Scripture or within the Word of God and therefore it carries with it divine authority. Twice in the book of Colossians, you know, Paul makes this statement, but the gospel has gone to all

nations.

[18 : 06] What? Paul declares twice this very same phrase. Once in the first chapter as he introduces to the church of Colossians and says, you have believed in Jesus Christ as those who have also from all the nations responded to the gospel.

And then later on within, I believe it's the third chapter, it could be the second, you have to go back and check me and I expect you to do that. He records two times that the gospel had went to all nations.

He uses the very same phrase that Christ uses in like the mid-60 AD. Therefore, when Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians, he wasn't waiting for the last nation to hear because concerning what God had revealed to him, the gospel had already went to all nations.

So again, we must pump the brakes and say, well, we cannot dictate prophetic history based upon that one phrase, right? Because there's this dual fulfillment. So, rather than trying to date set, and by the way, I've always said and I'll continue to say, if you ever meet an individual who tells you they know the exact time in which Christ is going to come and they can tell you the exact date on which these events will happen, I will tell you, you have just met an individual who is absolutely wrong.

And there have been some good ones, by the way. Some of you have a study Bible and I'm not going to say his name. Some people carry a study Bible. The individual was a lawyer who lived in the state of Tennessee and, well, actually, he was from St. Louis and moved to the state of Tennessee, came to Christ, had a problem, and he wrote a study Bible, very revered study Bible.

[19 : 44] Well, he also predicted a date of the rapture and the coming of Christ. Absolutely wrong. Many people throughout the years and throughout church history have, starting in the very early church, have said, this is going to be the day, this is going to be the day.

And the reason I can say it's absolutely wrong because the Bible says no man knows the day. So therefore, the moment a day is picked, I can tell you with certainty, it's not going to be that day. Not going to be that day.

Martin Luther himself had a great time where he thought, well, Christ is going to come this day and then later on in his writing, rebuked individuals for trying to pick days, you know, because his day didn't come about.

So we can find throughout history, men trying to figure this out. Let's stop trying to figure it out and let's start listening to see what he's trying to say. And he's given us expectation for the days ahead. The days ahead, both when Christ was speaking and as he's speaking to us now. See how this stays the same. Solomon wrote, or the preacher, we assume it's Solomon in the book of Ecclesiastes, there's nothing new under the sun.

[20 : 46] What has been will be, right? So what's going on has already been. There's nothing new under the sun. So this is why we come to the word of God and we say it transcends time because these expectations were expectations for the disciples sitting before Jesus and expectations for us sitting before Christ today.

Same expectation of the days ahead. These will be days, number one, of deception. These will be days of deception. Jesus, in the end of the 23rd chapter, he tells the religious leaders that the glory of God is leaving the temple.

He says, behold, I have left you. God's glory has left. And we have united that with the realities in verse one of the 24th chapter. Then he left the temple. So this pronouncement and we see it further in, I believe it is the gospel of Luke that Jesus says the glory has left the temple and then he turned and walked out.

He walks out. So it's like, he's saying, when I leave, it leaves. He is the glory of God, right? So he is there and he's walking out of the temple and he's walking out of the temple mount and he is going back to Bethany because you know that he's been hanging out in Bethany.

That's where his friends live, right? There's this guy that came back to life and he's got these two sisters and they feed him good when he hangs out there where they live in Bethany which is near Jerusalem. So he's going back and to go out of Jerusalem, you leave temple mount and you go across what is called the Kidron Valley.

[22 : 06] So you walk down the staircase and you cross the Kidron Valley and you go up the side of mount, all of it and as you're walking up the side of mount, all of it, all of a sudden you get this beautiful view of Jerusalem and it's probably about that time the disciples all go to him and say, look at the temple.

Look at the temple. One of the great ancient wonders of the world, Herod's temple started construction. I think it was 4 BC. It was either 6 or 4 BC and did not complete construction. So at this time it was still under construction until 64 AD, right? Herod the Great, by the way, is not referred to as great because he was a great guy. I've told you this.

He was great because he was a great builder and he was a great, he had all these, his construction manners and things that he did. I mean, it's just amazing the things that he did if we separate it from his moral character but the things he did and one of those magnificent things was his temple and Herod the Great's temple is there and it's temple mount.

It's not just the Holy of Holies, it's all these buildings all around it and it's all over there and they point out to him and they say, look at these buildings and Jesus starts this whole thing with this declaration and don't lose it, he starts this whole thing and he says, do you see all these things?

[23 : 15] Do you see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another which will not be torn down. Now, we want to put it in context. We have some pretty good sized foundation stones here, right?

Pretty good sized foundation stones on some of these ancient buildings here. Herod's temple, the foundation stones which many of which are still there but they haven't really got down to the big ones. They're like 12 feet thick, 18 feet tall and 20 to 25 feet long.

See how I say that? I don't think man is progressing. I believe we're digressing because that was their foundation stones back then. We use cement blocks now. I'm just saying.

12 feet thick, 18 feet tall, 25 feet long and they were massive. White limestone.

Jesus points to them and says, see all that? Not one stone will be left. Some people say, well, there's still some today that welling wall, that's a portion of Herod's temple. It's still there and it's still constructed. Well, the wording there means they will all be destroyed.

[24 : 19] It will all be, it will all suffer. It is not literally saying that not one would be stacked upon another. He's not saying that in literal translation. What he is saying is that every one of them will be affected. Nothing will be complete anymore and that's how he starts it because he just leaves them with that because what they're looking at is one of the most amazing structures ever constructed.

They're looking at one of the most amazing works that man has ever put and Jesus tells them this thing is about to be destroyed and then he walks on. He keeps going. So he gets up about halfway up the Mount of Olivet probably and he sits down to rest and they're there and they come to him and they say, tell us when these things will be.

And he begins this discourse based upon that. He got their attention by showing them something the world revered and telling them this is going to be nothing in just a matter of years. This is about AD 30 to AD 33 based upon how you time the birth of Christ.

And I don't let this either 30 to 33, okay? So this is 80. The construction still has about 34 to 31 more years to go on in the Temple Mount.

So there's still all these things going on there and he tells them this and they're just amazed because this project is so amazing and now they have these questions and they want to know.

They want to know just like us and he tells them the first thing is that these will be days of deception.

[25 : 31] He says, see to it that no one misleads you. Now, I have a habit of underlining in my Bible and I do it with different things and sometimes they use pencil, sometimes they use pen.

You just take these 35 verses here and you can just underline just very lightly if you would like to all the times that Christ speaks of being misled, mislead you, nobody misleading you, nobody misleading you. He says it twice right here really quick.

He says it in verse 4 and he says it in verse 5 that no one misleads you. He says it again in verse 11, many false prophets will arise and mislead many. He says it again in verse 24, for false Christ and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders so as to mislead if possible even the elect.

And we have this repetition of being misled, misled, misled, misled. Why? Because in the days ahead one of the great expectations is that it will be days of deception. It will be days of leading people astray.

He says, be careful. See to it that no one misleads you for many will come in my name saying I am the Christ and will mislead many. By the way, I forgot to announce the table talk questions are up here.

[26 : 37] I'll try to take a few in the back and he says this is a weird time to pause and stop that. Well, it would be if it wasn't a reminder in my own mind to realize you have an opportunity to sit down around your table and to talk about the dangers of false religions.

Because in our own day there are a lot of people that say, well, I'm the Messiah. I've seen the Messiah. I've met the Messiah and all these things. And Jesus speaks to this reality. These are days of deception. Be careful that no one misleads you and you need to be on your guard, he says. He says, many false prophets will arise and will mislead many that there will be all these signs so that we mislead many. Verse 6 says, you'll be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See to that you are not frightened for those things must take place.

But that is not yet the end. Jesus clearly tells us that in the days ahead, both when he was speaking and the days ahead of us. Now, these will be days that will mislead many because they are days of deception.

He said, well, what is our application there then? Jesus says, if it is quite possible, because he says to mislead, if possible, even the elect. That's another word that's repeated. We'll get to that in just a moment.

[27 : 45] That is repeated throughout the text. That it is the enemy working to deceive and mislead people and to lead them away from the Savior. So how do we prepare for that?

Because this is not so that we may know the day. This is so that we may live in preparation. It is absolutely essential. Here's your application for this one. It is absolutely essential that God's people be well grounded and well informed as to what they believe.

You need to know what you believe and you need to believe what you know. Because if you're not a person of conviction, but rather you're a person of convincing, if someone has convinced you of something, then your mind can be changed.

But if you are convicted of something, that thing has taken root in the very bowels of your being.

And a conviction is not easily broken and a conviction is not easily swayed. One of the great tragedies of our day is we have churches that are full of people who are convinced of the truth, but we have very, very, very few individuals who are convicted of the truth.

They are convinced that it is good for them at the moment. They are convinced for them that it meets their needs presently. They are convinced that it's a good thing to do for their children. They are convinced that it may help them out financially. They are convinced that it can help them have a little peace that seems to pass a little bit of understanding, but they're not convicted to the point that their lives will be completely altered.

[28 : 56] But I promise you that anything that any preacher or any person can convince you of, Satan can deceive you and lead you astray from. Until your faith becomes one of conviction, not of convincing, then you are not fully prepared for the days ahead.

Because, friend, when it all falls apart, and this is what Jesus is talking about, what you are convinced of doesn't matter anymore because circumstances have changed.

But what you're convicted of has not changed. How do we prepare ourselves for days of deception? We live in conviction, not convincing.

Number two, they will be days of destruction. Jesus speaks of the reality that this temple will be destroyed. This is why we have this dual fulfillment. The construction of the temple was completed in A.D. 64.

About three years prior to that, there's this great disruption in Roman society. You have the death of Caesar, and you have, there's a period of what they call the four kings in Roman history where there's four men that are kind of battling back and forth.

[30 : 06] And so about A.D. 67, there's this besieging of the city of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem is surrounded, and they want to fall. Now, it was so unpenetrable that they really kind of bound themselves in.

And finally, in A.D. 70, the Romans decided they had enough of that, and they were just going to go in, right? They were just going to ramrod the whole thing. So in A.D. 70, the Romans finally broke into Jerusalem, and Temple Mount was destroyed.

By the time they got there, the inhabitants of the city had resulted to cannibalism. They had resulted to, really, the disparity is the despair.

Much of what Jeremiah speaks of, the default of Babylon, when Babylonian came in, is also what took place in A.D. 70. Historically, Josephus, who wrote, who was a Jewish individual who wrote the

history, he wasn't a believer, okay, so just because he's Jewish doesn't mean he's a believer, who wrote the history, he was a historian who wrote for the Roman Empire.

He was present there, and he said that when Temple Mount fell, some two million Jews died. Two million Jews. People were starving to death.

[31 : 16] People were eating one another. It was horrific. The temple was raised because it was seen as a place of prominence, but also because it was overlaid with gold.

And the reason the stones were knocked over is because they set the temple on fire so to melt the gold to get it out from between the stones. So what Jesus is speaking of are the days ahead.

He is about 30 years ahead of schedule here, and he says these days that are coming will be days of destruction. And he tells them very clearly, for nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and various places there will be famines and earthquakes.

He says, but all of these things are merely just the beginning of the birth pains. Again, a very Jewish thought. Beginning of the birth pains of the end of the age.

And he says that what is coming in the days ahead are days of destruction which will disrupt everything that was known to those individuals and something that seemed so clear.

[32 : 26] And he said that it will completely change. By the way, they've never rebuilt that temple. Now the Dome of the Rock sits there, which is a Muslim mosque. You understand that.

The Wailing Wall is just one portion that remains, but it's still a testimony to the destruction that finally came in A.D. 70. When we open up the Book of Revelations, we see John on the island of Patmos near the end of the first century, probably written somewhere around 90 A.D.

Some 30 years on the other side of the fall of Jerusalem. After seeing those days of destruction, John looks into the future through the leading of the Spirit of God on the island of Patmos and he speaks of another coming day of destruction when the waters will be changed and they'll become bitter and there'll be wormwood in the waters.

It won't be drinkable that the seas will dry up, that the fish will die, that the land animals will die, that men will cry out and they'll have sores and all these things will fall and they'll be crying out that Babylon, Babylon has fallen and all the merchants will be at woe and misery and all these things. It will be days of destruction. And we see that one of the expectations for days ahead are days of destruction.

[33 : 45] So what application do we have for the preparation of those days? It's very clear. rather than God's people being so rooted in the things in which they see maybe they need to be a little bit more rooted to one another and connected to the unchangeable one who is Christ.

Paul speaks of this all throughout 1 and 2 Thessalonians. The writer of the book of Hebrews says there is coming yet again another shaking. It's in Hebrews 10, I believe it is.

That those things which can be shaken will be shaken once more so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Friend, listen to me. Everything you see around you physically can be shaken.

The kingdom of heaven is unshakable. Rather than putting all of our confidence and all of our comfort and all of our continuation upon these things which can be shaken, may our hope be laid in that which cannot be shaken because I can assure you days of destruction are a great expectation for what lies ahead.

I'm not a doom and gloom preacher. I'm just telling you what Christ has said. Number three, we see they will be days of disorder. Jesus says the destruction will be so great that in those days when it does happen that people must flee.

[35 : 10] Those from Judea must flee to the mountain. Whoever's on the rooftop must not go into his house to get his thing. Whoever's in the field must not go back. You must flee. You must flee. You must flee again. Historians record for us that when Jerusalem finally fell the Christians did flee.

They left. They left Jerusalem and went into the hills just a little bit east of Jerusalem and it is there by the way that we must be thankful because there a large portion of the manuscripts which we have recorded for us as the Bible were kept and even down south when they went a little south because they fled to the hills and to the mountains because they took the word of God literally and said he told us to flee so they fled.

They were able to hold on to the word because when they destroyed the temple they destroyed the records of the Jewish history but when the Christians left they took it with them in the word of God right?

So we have it recorded here for us. So we see that when they fled they were living in obedience and Jesus says it's going to be days of disorder. You're going to be fleeing. You're going to leave everything behind. You're going to have to go here and you're going to have to go there and there's going to be all these things and all these wars and rumors of wars and he says therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet when you see it standing in the holy place let the reader understand if there's any point in which we wish we really understood it's here because the Bible tells us let the reader understand and we see this and say what does he mean?

And some say well when you go to the book of Revelations and you have the abomination of desolation now that just means that's a lot this is so deep so good and I do apologize for your time but I'm not going to leave us here because we've got to get to the last one so the abomination of desolation is an abomination which creates a desecration of something holy that's what it means so it is something so horrendous that it desecrates the holy many people believe that happened in the intertestament time the time you don't have recorded for you between Malachi and Matthew when Antichonus Epiphanes came and he went into the temple and this is what led to the Maccabean revolt by the way we're about to enter into a season which celebrates that among the Jewish people Hanukkah celebrates the end of that or the beginning of the Maccabean revolt and sometime we'll go through the history and we'll do that but anyway Judas Maccabees and all these people rose up and the reason they fought against him is because Antichonus Epiphanes went into Jerusalem and he went into the temple and he put another altar in the temple and he said you know what I want to offer on this temple is I want some good barbecue so he offered a pig on the temple now that is horrendous he put a pig on the altar in the temple and he desecrated the temple what happened with Hanukkah as they went in and cleaned out the temple and purged that desolation out of there and reset it aside and so some people would say that's already happened what Daniel prophesied already happened with Antichonus Epiphanes and then when we get moving a little bit forward when the Roman leaders came they would have carried with them these Roman soldiers they would have had this stick and on this stick would have been a bust of the Roman emperor and when they went into Jerusalem they went to Temple Mount and it is there they stuck it and said we worship the emperor here so all of a sudden it looks like it was desecrated once again and yet over and over and over and over again we read of this let the reader understand and what it is saying is things will be in such a disorder in the days ahead that that which was holy will no longer be counted holy oh we don't have to stretch very far do we did you notice verse 12 by the way did you notice verse 12

[38 : 31] I put a star beside it it says because lawlessness is increased lawlessness not the breaking of the law of the land but the breaking of the law of God because lawlessness is increased many or most people's love will grow cold he's not speaking of love for one another he's speaking of one's love for the savior and one's love for God with an increase in lawlessness most people's love for the savior and for the things of God will grow cold another way of saying is that what was once deemed holy has now been defamed and it's no longer holy that which was once esteemed and used as a celebration of a love for savior has been desecrated because lawlessness has increased friend listen to me one of the great expectations that we have for the days ahead is that they will be days of disorder we're seeing it in our own lives and we're seeing it played out and I'm not here to tell you that these things are sure signs of the end is coming but we should not be surprised because things are in such disarray because when the holy becomes unholy when lawlessness increases and most people's love grows cold the cold love for the savior leads to a disruption in society and when society is disrupted things are in disorder when the church ain't right the world ain't right that's just a better way of putting it and when we can't get ourselves straight we should not be surprised when the world is not straight so what should we do how should we apply that we're going to be living in a day of disorder the church should have a love for the savior in such a way it doesn't matter how much the lawlessness of this society grows it doesn't matter how much disruption there is in the world it doesn't matter how much the things which we deem holy are desecrated and defiled it doesn't matter how far the world may go in these things our love must never grow cold may it push us to love him greater than to love him less which means we must put safeguards over our lives there may be things that we once could do that we no longer can do there may be places that we once could go that we can no longer go we may have to change our life a little bit for the love we have for the savior now let's get to some good news and i'll be done i promise i'll be quick expectation for the days ahead will be days of deception destruction disorder

number four praise be to god they're days of deliverance they are days of deliverance Jesus is speaking of things that will come and he is telling them of things that will come in their own lifetime and things that will come in a day in which we know not yet through it all he says these are days of deliverance verse 13 says but the one who endures to the end will be saved but the one who endures to the end will be saved sometimes that endurance looks like death sometimes that endurance looks like rapture we don't know but the one who endures to the end that is holds their love to the end will be saved it says in verse 24 that many false Christ and prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders so as to mislead if possible the elect he says it's not going to happen he says that if these days had not been shortened verse 22 unless these days had been cut short no life would be saved but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short these will be days of deliverance when it's all falling apart they will be days of deliverance we'll get into it in just a little bit as we continue on our text where you'll have two that are gathered together one will be taken and one will not one will be taken one will not and we'll kind of try to dive into what does it mean to be taken does that mean he's taken as rapture does that mean he's taken to judgment we don't know but what we do know is that this is

these are days of deliverance he says we don't have to be misled we won't know that we won't think that we've missed it say well did I miss it he says no you don't have to worry about that for just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west that as everybody sees it and it happens quickly and it's noticeable so will the coming of the son of man be and where the corpse is there the vultures will gather and I don't over fulfill that he says you can tell where it is because the vultures are circling around it you know something's happened right and he's not here being dark or anything just saying it's a mistakable event you'll know that it happened he says but immediately after the tribulation of those days and the sun will be darkened this is how far the disorder goes even the heavenlies will be transformed by it 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 and everything's going to be going now it doesn't mean heaven the kingdom of heaven the powers of the heavens that is the heavenly bodies so the things that we see not the things which you cannot see he says and then the son of man will appear and look at what he says in verse 31 and he will send forth his angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together his elect

I did a little word study on that word with the great trumpet he will send forth his angel with a great trumpet now that's shofar you understand that right but it is the wording there is it gives a very clear distinct sound it's a sound that was in particular to a moment it was the battle sound of come here remember when Nehemiah was building the walls and he had the trumpeter beside him right and he told him there were certain sounds if he blew the sound and everybody gathers in that one place right that's what it is he says you won't miss it you'll hear it it'll be so loud that the angels I know what that means so what does it sound like I don't have to tell you because you'll know that's for me I'm going right and what does he say that he will gather his elect from the four winds from one end of the sky to the other what is he telling you as bad as the days ahead may be there are also days of deliverance all of this is going to fall apart everything is going to mess up and Jesus is telling that but he will not forsake them right he tells them I am there he's speaking to his people he's not speaking to the public anymore he's speaking to his people right those who are following him as bad as it's going to get I will be there and I am able to take you out of it they are days of deliverance what he's saying is no matter how scary the days before you may be no matter how certain the destruction is coming may appear no matter how uncertain everything you once trusted in is now no matter what falls apart

I will not fail or forsake you I am going to come get you friend listen to me the good news is is those who trust in Christ no matter what the days ahead have before us we know the one who has all the days in the palm of his hand and they are days of deliverance we may have so much uncertainty about what may be ahead but we do know that there is one who with unfailing certainty can deliver us from them all this is the hope of the individual this is the hope of the believer he says truly I say to you this generation that could mean race that could mean that particular people if you're looking at dual fulfillment many of them there would have seen the fall of Jerusalem the Jewish race is still in existence people have that there we're not here to split hairs will not pass away until all these things take place he said heaven and earth will pass away but look at this but my words will not pass away friend listen to me Christ will not fail us no matter what lies ahead in the days before us he is able to deliver to the uttermost and these are days of deliverance we do not know when it will

happen he tells us how it will happen we do not know the exact moment and we don't need to because as long as we know the one who can take us from them all nothing else really matters no matter how bad it gets he's still in control no matter how downward he goes listen if I enter into some periods of tribulation or if he takes me before the tribulation and all these things and I'm not here to get into all that

I have my interpretation scripture but I'm not here to push out anybody right now all I know is that I have a savior who can deliver me from it all and what lies ahead for me as a follower of Christ is I will be delivered that I know everything else is going to be burned up as if with fire but I will be delivered and for that I raise a hallelujah and say praise be to God my savior let's pray Lord thank you thank you for this day I thank you for your word Lord we pray that you would speak to our hearts and minds and draw us closer to you as your people Lord if there's one here today who's living with uncertainty Lord that the word of God would speak clearly to their hearts and minds you would draw them closer to you as only you can and we ask it in Christ's name amen so [48 : 13] Thank you.