

MATTHEW 24 – THY KINGDOM COME

(Signs of the times)

...for the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy (Rev.19:10)

STRUCTURE & CHARACTERISTICS OF MATTHEW 24

(Rightly dividing the Word ... 2 Tim 2:15)

PLEASE NOTE: Prophetic scriptures are usually of a structured nature. Discover the structures and the prophecies interpret themselves. Also, it is extremely important to comprehend that Matthew 24 encompasses a lengthy time period - beginning just prior to the crucifixion and culminates at the return of Jesus. It must also be borne in mind that the very core of this prophecy is Judaic. In other words, in addition to its global application the primary outworking is for the nation of Israel.

AD70 → +

Beginning of Sorrows	Sorrows	Great Tribulation	Sign of the Son of Man	Admonition	Coming of the Son of Man
1	2	3	4	5	6

1. BEGINNING OF SORROWS (birth pangs) & DECEPTION:

1: And Jesus went out and departed from the temple. And His disciples came to Him to show Him the buildings of the temple. 2: And Jesus said to them, Do you not see all these things (the temple buildings)? Truly I say to you, There shall not be left here one stone on another that shall not be thrown down. 3: And as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age? 4: And Jesus answered and said to them, Take heed that no man **deceive** you. 5: For many will come in My name, saying, I am 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 occur; but the end is not yet. 7: For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in different places. 8: **All these are the beginning of sorrows.**

Characteristics: Deception. Wars and rumours of wars. Nations rising against nations. Famines, pestilences and earthquakes in different places.

2. SORROWS:

9: Then they will deliver you up to be afflicted and will kill you. And you will be hated of all nations for My name's sake. 10: And then many will be offended, and will betray one another, and will hate one another. 11: And many false prophets will rise and **deceive** many. 12: And because **iniquity shall abound**, the love of many will become cold. 13: **But he who endures to the end, the same shall be kept safe.** 14: **And this gospel of the kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world as a witness to all nations. And then the end shall come.** 15: **Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation**, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand). 16: Then let those in Judea flee into the mountains. 17: Let him on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house. 18: Nor let him in the field turn back to take his clothes. 19: And woe to those who are with child, and to those who give suck in those days! 20: But pray that your flight is not in the winter, nor on the Sabbath day.

Characteristics: Persecution (torture + death) hated by all nations (peoples) for Jesus' sake. Many deceiving false prophets. Overwhelming sin - love of many will grow cold. Gospel of the kingdom to be preached to all nations. Abomination of desolation.

3. THE GREAT TRIBULATION:

21: For then shall be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world to this time; no, nor ever shall be. 22: And unless those days should be shortened, no flesh would be saved. But for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened. 23: Then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ! Or, There! **Do not believe it.**

24: For false Christ's and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders; **so much so that, if it were possible, they would deceive even the elect.** 25: **Behold, I have told you beforehand.**

26: Therefore if they shall say to you, Behold, He is in the desert! Do not go out. Behold, He is in the secret rooms! **Do not believe it.** 27: For as the lightning comes out of the east and shines even to the west, so also will be the coming of the Son of Man. 28: For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered. (Meaning wherever the crowds are, vs26).

Characteristics: Greatest tribulation ever!!! False Christ's and false prophets accompanied by great lying signs and wonders. Danger of the elect being deceived!

4. THE SIGN OF THE SON OF MAN:

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

Characteristics: Sun and moon to give no light. Stars fall from heaven, powers of heaven shaken. Sign of the Son of man will appear. Jesus returns in the clouds. Angels to gather the elect.

5. ADMONITION:

32: Now learn a parable of the fig tree. When its branch is still tender and puts out leaves, you know that summer is near. 33: **So you, likewise, when you see all these things, shall know that it is near, at the doors.** 34: Truly I say to you, this generation shall not pass until all these things are fulfilled. 35: The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away. 36: But of that **day and hour** no one knows, no, not the angels of Heaven, but only My Father.

Characteristics: The fig tree blossoming ... the generation that witnesses these things will not pass away until all these things are fulfilled. The exact day and hour only the Father knows.

6. THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN - THE END OF THE AGE:

37: But as the days of Noah were, so shall be the coming of the Son of Man. 38: For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered into the ark. 39: And they did not know until the flood came and took them all away. So also will be the coming of the Son of Man. 40: **Then two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 41: Two shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.** 42: Therefore watch; for you do not know what hour your Lord comes. 43: **But know this, that if the steward of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched and would not have allowed his house to be dug through.** 44: Therefore you also be ready, for in that hour you think not, the Son of Man comes. 45: Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord has made ruler over His household, to give them food in due season? 46: Blessed is that servant whom his Lord shall find him doing so when He comes. 47: Truly I say to you that He shall make him ruler over all His goods. 48: But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delays His coming, 49: and shall begin to strike his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, 50: the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he does not look for Him, and in an hour which he does not know. 51: And He shall cut him apart and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Characteristics: As in the days of Noah - people unprepared ... for the return of Jesus! Know the hour and be ready. Blessed are they that are ready and waiting.

TO RECAP: Matthew 24 has six structural components: **Beginning of Sorrows & Deception; Sorrows; Great Tribulation; Sign of the Son of Man; Admonition; Coming of the Son of Man - The End of the Age.** Therefore, based on the structural premise, it is a relatively simple exercise to gauge where we (this generation) are in terms of His coming.

SAINTS, WATCH OUT YOU ARE NOT DECEIVED!!!

DECEPTION

According to verse 4, Jesus says we are to watch out that we are not **deceived**. Therefore, the onus is on each individual to ensure that they are not **deceived!!!** With the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and knowledge of the Word - it should be impossible for the believer to be **deceived**. We will now examine **deception** relative to verse 3, 30, and 15 respectively. The purpose being - to see if any of us could possibly be **deceived?** Verse 3 says:

- ◇ **When shall these things be?**
- ◇ **And what shall be the Sign of Your coming?**
- ◇ **And the end of the age**

Jesus' answer in totality to these questions is verse 4. "And Jesus answered and said unto them, '**Take heed that no man deceive you.**'"

When shall these things be? This question by definition relates to the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. With the benefit of hindsight, according to history the temple was destroyed in AD 70 by the Romans after a lengthy siege; in which hundreds of thousands of Jews were massacred.

What will be the sign of your coming? Do not underestimate the importance of a '**sign**' for the Jewish people. In fact, Jesus once rebuked them over the sign issue! But He answered and said unto them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah" (Matt.12:39). Verse 30 is clear, there is a specific sign (symbol) that will appear in the sky prior to the return of Jesus.

What is the sign (symbol) of the Son of man? Throughout Christendom, the cross or crucifix, in all shapes and sizes is accepted as the universal sign of Christianity. So, is the cross really the sign of the Son of man?

According to verse 30, the sign of the Son of man will appear in the sky prior to the return of our blessed Saviour. In other words, will a huge cross appear in the sky just before the return of our beloved Lord Jesus?

We think not. In reality - the cross is a curse!!! Gal 3:13, Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that is hung on a tree... (see teaching: Is the cross a Christian symbol? ... www.apocalypsefoundation.co.za). Truth to tell, the crucifix was in use as a religious symbol throughout Egypt a thousand years before Jesus Christ. Nowhere in the New Testament are we instructed to remember the physical cross. As New Testament believers the only memorial we should have is the Lord's Table.

If the cross is not the sign of Jesus, what could His sign be? According to scripture it is most likely a **star**. What was overhead Bethlehem at the birth of Jesus? What guided the Magi to Bethlehem? Indeed, is not our Lord Jesus known as '**The Bright Morning Star**' (Rev 22:16). "...Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen **His star** in the east, and are come to worship Him." (Matt 2:2). At the return of our Lord Jesus there will be complete darkness, the sun, moon and stars will give no light. Jesus, as the Bright Morning Star, will be visible hundreds of kilometers out into space. In addition, as the earth rotates on a twenty-four hour axis, the whole earth will witness His return. Another aspect of the sign is a cloud. Verse 30 says, "...and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

When can we expect the 'end of the age'? (Verse 3) Once all the events as prophesied in Matthew 24 have come to fruition, then the present age (grace) will be at an end. We must hasten to add, the end of the age - is definitely not the end of the world! The end of the world occurs a thousand years after the end of the age has run its course.

What is the abomination of desolation? (Verse 15) The abomination of desolation is the sacrilegious defilement of the temple by the **Beast**, the son of perdition - the lawless one!

According to prophecy, he will enter the rebuilt temple (most likely on a Sabbath) and proclaim himself to be God Almighty, and will demand that all worship him as such. This act is an abomination and will lead to desolation. In addition, an animated statue of his persona will be erected in the temple.

The fact is: if you did not know the answers to these examples prior to reading this document - you are set up to be **deceived!!** You are thus because you do not know the prophetic scriptures. Based on the structure of Matthew 24, and in the writer's opinion, we are well and truly approaching the end of the 'beginning of sorrows' period.

RAPTURE THEORY

Whilst sharing this teaching, I am frequently asked about the timing of the rapture. In other words, when will the rapture occur? Therefore, I feel somewhat compelled to deal with this issue for the sake of clarity. My points of reference being the standard (accepted) position on this subject: Pre-tribulation, Mid-tribulation and Post-tribulation.

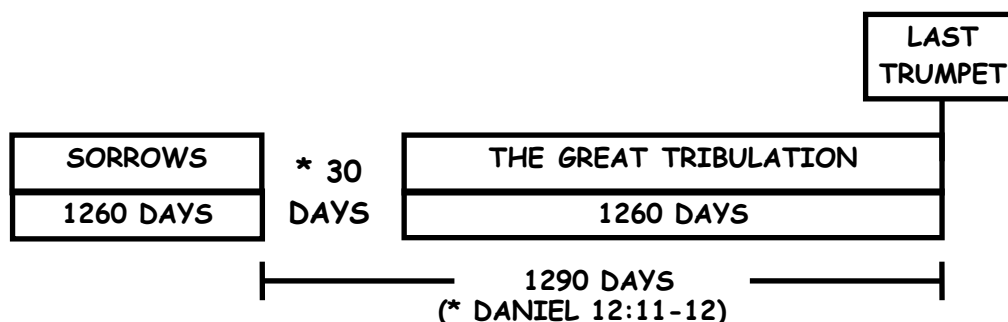
Firstly, I have not seen or read the actual word 'rapture' in our English Bibles. I am led to believe that in the original Greek/Aramaic documents the English word rapture is rendered Harpuzo. Harpuzo in the English tongue is translated as follows: To be 'caught-up' or 'snatched-away'.

Secondly, there is also a great deal of misunderstanding relative to the tribulation period per'se. There is only one reference to tribulation and that is: 'The Great Tribulation'. The structure of Matthew 24 confirms this. The period commonly referred to as the 'tribulation' actually incorporates two time periods; and should be designated 'sorrows' and 'the great tribulation' respectively. They are so called because of their relationship to the Jewish people and therefore the sovereign state of Israel.

COMMONLY ACCEPTED TRIBULATION RAPTURE POSITIONS:



POST-TRIBULATION RAPTURE AS PER MATTHEW 24:



THE SEVENTH (LAST) TRUMPET BLAST IS THE PRECURSOR TO JESUS' RETURN

1 Cor 15:20-26, 51-52

20: But now Christ has risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruit of those who slept. 21: For since death is through man, the resurrection of the dead also is through a Man. 22: For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all will be made alive. 23: But each in his own order: Christ the first-fruit, and afterward they who are Christ's at His coming; 24: then is the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He makes to cease all rule and all authority and power. 25: for it is right for Him to reign until He has put all the enemies under His feet. 26: The last enemy made to cease is death. 51: Behold, I speak a mystery to you; we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed. 52: In a moment, in a glance of an eye, **at the last trumpet**. For a trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed.

1 Thess 4:15-17

15: For we say this to you by the Word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until **the coming of the Lord** shall not go before those who are asleep. 16: For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout,

with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first. 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 so we shall ever be with the Lord.

2 Thess 2:1-12

1: Now we beseech you, my brothers, with regard to **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him**, 2: That you should not be soon shaken in mind or troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word or letter, as through us, as if the Day of Christ is at hand. 3: Let not anyone deceive you by any means. **For that Day shall not come unless there first comes a falling away, and the man of sin shall be revealed**, the son of perdition. 4: Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, setting himself forth, that he is God. 5: Do you not remember that I told you these things when I was still with you? 6: And now you know what holds back, for him to be revealed in his own time. 7: For the mystery of lawlessness already works. Only there is one who restrains now, until he is taken out of the way (WEB translation). 8: And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming. 9: Whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders. 10: And with all deceit of unrighteousness in those who perish, because **they did not receive the love of the truth, so that they might be saved**. 11: And for this cause **God shall send them strong delusion**, that they should believe a lie. 12: So that all those who do not believe the truth, but delight in unrighteousness, might be condemned.

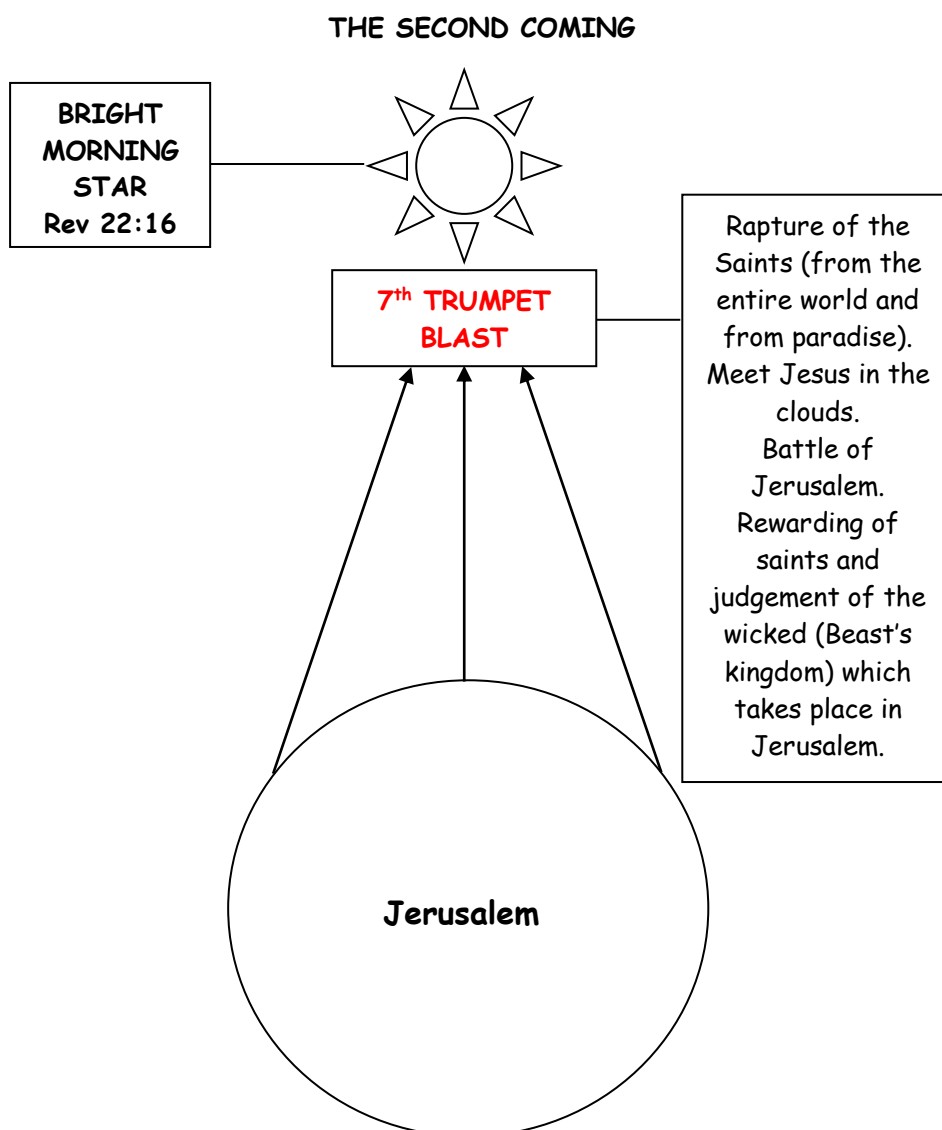
According to scripture these events **MUST** be fulfilled prior to Jesus' return.

1	2	3	4	5
APOSTACY (2 Thess 2: 3)	RESTRAINER (2 Thess 2 : 7)	MAN OF SIN REVEALED (2 Thess 2 : 3.8-9)	REIGN OF THE BEAST (Rev 13 : 5)	LAST TRUMPET (7th) (Rev 11 : 15)
Church falls away from the truth	Leaves and lawlessness abounds	Beast goes into the temple	Satanic kingdom for three & half years	"...the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ: and He will reign for ever and ever." Thy Kingdom Come!

EVENTS HERALDING THE PHYSICAL RETURN OF JESUS

1. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." Matt 24:29
2. "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and 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." Matt 24:30
3. Trumpet blast!! "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.' And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, 'We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which is, and was, and is to come; because thou has taken to thee thy great power, and has reigned. (Rev 11:15)
 - a. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou should give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and should destroy them which destroy the earth." Rev 11:15-18. 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." Matt 24:31
 - b. "Then two men will be in the field, one will be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken, and the other left." Matt24: 40-41

- c. Dead in Christ to rise first: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not precede them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thess 4:15-16
- d. "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess 4:17
4. Battle of Jerusalem (the winepress, Rev 14:19, 19:15) — erroneously called the Battle of Armageddon.
5. Judgement Seat of Christ (sheep and goat separation). "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." Matt 25:31-33
- a. "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, 'Come you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'" Matt 25:34
- b. "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.' And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Matt 25: 41, 46.
7. 1000 Year rule of Jesus upon the earth. Rev 20:4



THEN:

- Millions of the angelic host (armies of heaven) together with the raptured saints returns to earth with our beloved Lord Jesus.
- Battle of Jerusalem (erroneously called the battle of Armageddon). Jesus Himself destroys the huge satanic army that surrounds Jerusalem.
- Sheep and Goat Judgments: The sheep are most likely the raptured saints. The goats (wicked) are possibly from the Beast's kingdom. The wicked are cast alive into hell and will be resurrected after the 1000-year reign to face the Great White Throne Judgment (second death).
- 1000-year reign - Thy Kingdom Come.

What must I do to be sure I will go to heaven when I die?

Romans Chapter 10:9-10. If you confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from death, you will be saved. For it is by our faith that we are put right with God; it is by our confession that we are saved." The Bible states that the will of the Father is to believe in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ." John 6:28-29. So they asked him, "What can we do in order to do what God wants (will) us to do?" Jesus answered, "What God wants you to do is to believe in the one he sent."

Yes! Thereafter, daily pray the 'Our Father' (Matt 6:9-13) and begin to put into practice what you read. Also, start to read the Bible, beginning with the Book of John.

Obviously our beloved Lord Jesus will check-out your heart attitude, and never forget He cannot be fooled by the motives of men/woman. Sincerity is His hallmark.

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