

AN ANALYSIS OF MATTHEW 24

- ⇒ In lesson 1, we set the context of Matthew 24. We noticed Jesus' discourse about the blood of the prophets coming upon that generation, His lamentation over the city's rejection of Him, and His statement about the temple's destruction.
- ⇒ In lesson 2, we noted some of the "pre-mature" signs of the impending destruction. There would be wars, rumors of wars, famine, pestilence, and earthquakes. Not only would it be a time of hardship in Jerusalem, but the Christians specifically would suffer. They would be hated (as Jesus was), they would be betrayed by some, they would be delivered up to authorities, and they would be put to death (Jesus went through all this as well).
- ⇒ Now, we continue with the signs revealed by the Lord.

MATTHEW 24:11

FALSE PROPHETS



Now, there was then a great number of false prophets suborned by the tyrants to impose upon the people, who denounced this to them, that they should wait for deliverance from God: and this was in order to keep them from deserting, and that they might

be buoyed up above fear and care by such hopes. Now, a man that is in adversity does easily comply with such promises, for when such a seducer makes him believe that he shall be delivered from those miseries which oppress him, then it is that the patient is full of hopes of such deliverance. **(JOSEPHUS, THE WARS OF THE JEWS, Book 6, Chapter 5, Section 2)**

- ⇒ The Bible is filled with warnings about false apostles rising up. These false teachers & false prophets are workers of Satan (2 Corinthians 11:13:15), spread a cancerous message (2 Timothy 2:17-18), and are contrary to Christ and His people (1 John 2:18; 4:1).
- ⇒ Josephus (above) speaks about the hopes of the hopeless being raised, and thus the people being encouraged to remain in the city, rather than desert.
- ⇒ We saw similar quotes from Josephus and Tacitus about the false prophets when we looked at v 4-5 (lesson 1).
- ⇒ As the time grew nearer, the intensity of the message was increased; eventually, the leaders of the sedition among the Jews would harm those who sought to leave the city.

MATTHEW 24:12-14

**HE WHO ENDURES
TO THE END
SHALL BE SAVED**

To the angel of the church of Ephesus write ... I have this against you, that you have left your first love... (REVELATION 2:1, 4)

...to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write ... I know your works that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish that you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth.
(REVELATION 3:14-16)

...not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another and so much the more as you see the Day approaching ... But recall the former days, in which after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings...
(HEBREWS 10:25, 32)

- ⇒ As indicated in v 9-10, it would be a treacherous time for the Christians. We don't use the word "endure" about easy and pleasurable things (you don't endure a bowl of ice cream or a sunset). The Christian walk would be difficult.
- ⇒ The love of folks at Ephesus had gone cold. If one does not love the Lord as they ought, then it is doubtful they will love His people as they ought. The folks at Laodicea also were not on fire for the Lord and His cause.
- ⇒ Hebrews 10:25 speaks of forsaking the assembly. This is not missing 1 or 2 services, this is deserting the faith. Remember how much we loved the Lord when we first came to Him? We need to look back, recall & build on that faith.

MATTHEW 24:12-14

PREACHED IN ALL THE WORLD



And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.' (MARK 16:15)

"He {Paul} preached in the East and in the West, winning a noble reputation for his faith. He taught righteousness to all the world; and after reaching the furthest limits of the West, and bearing his testimony before kings and rulers..."
(CLEMENT TO THE CORINTHIANS, SECTION 5)

'Their sound has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.' (ROMANS 10:18)

- ⇒ When the gospel is preached in all the world, then the end would come. What end? This is not about the 2nd coming, the final judgment or a premillennial reign. The context has not changed; it is about the temple being destroyed.
- ⇒ Some try to limit "all the world" to "the known world" or "the Roman world" (see Clement above). As proof, folks will cite Acts 11:28, where the phrase is used in a limited sense. However, the commission to spread the gospel is universal. If Matthew 24:14 is not as universal as Mark 16:15, Matthew 28:19 and Romans 10:18, why not?

MATTHEW 24:12-14

**PREACHED
IN ALL THE
WORLD**



...if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister. (COLOSSIANS 1:23)

...under the influence of heavenly power, and with the divine co-operation, the doctrine of the Savior, like the rays of the sun, quickly illuminated the whole world; and straightway, in accordance with the divine Scriptures, the voice of the inspired evangelists and apostles went forth through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. (EUSEBIUS, CHURCH HISTORY, Book 2, Chapter 3)

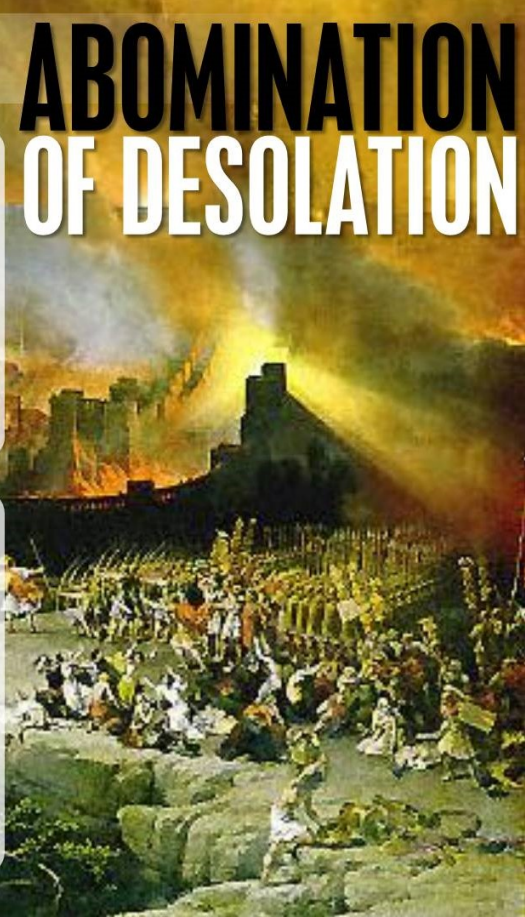
- ⇒ In his letter to Colosse (62 AD), Paul borrowed and strengthened Jesus' statement in Mark 16:15. The gospel had been preached to "every creature under heaven." The gospel went wherever the people were, whether Palestine or Peru.
- ⇒ How? Eusebius attributes it to "divine co-operation," as does the Bible! In Acts 8:39-40, the Spirit "caught Philip away" from where a location between Jerusalem & Gaza and he was found in Azotus (Ashdod), a distance of about 30 miles. If God can miraculously move a man 30 miles, what keeps Him from moving him 300 miles, or 3000 miles?
- ⇒ If the gospel was not spread throughout the world in the first century, then Jesus' prophecy failed.

MATTHEW 24:15

ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

So when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. (MARK 13:14)

...when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. (LUKE 21:20-21)



- ⇒ Looking at cross references is often helpful. Mark's gospel reads similar to Matthew, but Luke gives us more info.
- ⇒ In fact, consider Luke 19:43-44 (which is parallel to the end of Matthew 23:

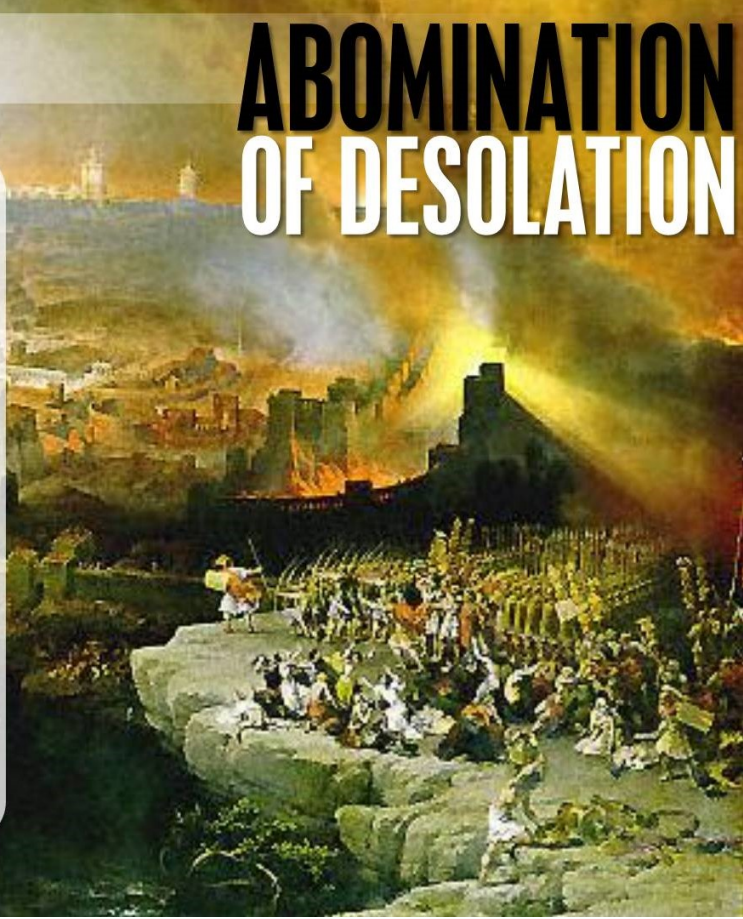
"For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation." (Luke 19:43-44)

MATTHEW 24:15

ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

Ananus stood in the midst of them, and casting his eyes frequently at the temple, and having a flood of tears in his eyes, he said, 'Certainly it had been good for me to die before I had seen the house of God full of so many abominations, or these sacred places, that ought not be trodden upon at random, filled with the feet of these blood-shedding villains...'

(JOSEPHUS, WARS, Book 4, Chapter 3, Section 10)



- ⇒ Ananus, a Sadducee, was a high priest in Jerusalem prior to the destruction. He is the one who ordered the execution of James the Just (Jesus' brother).
- ⇒ Ananus died in 68 AD, about midway through the Jewish-Roman war. Before his death, he saw the Romans setting up their abominations in the temple.

MATTHEW 24:15

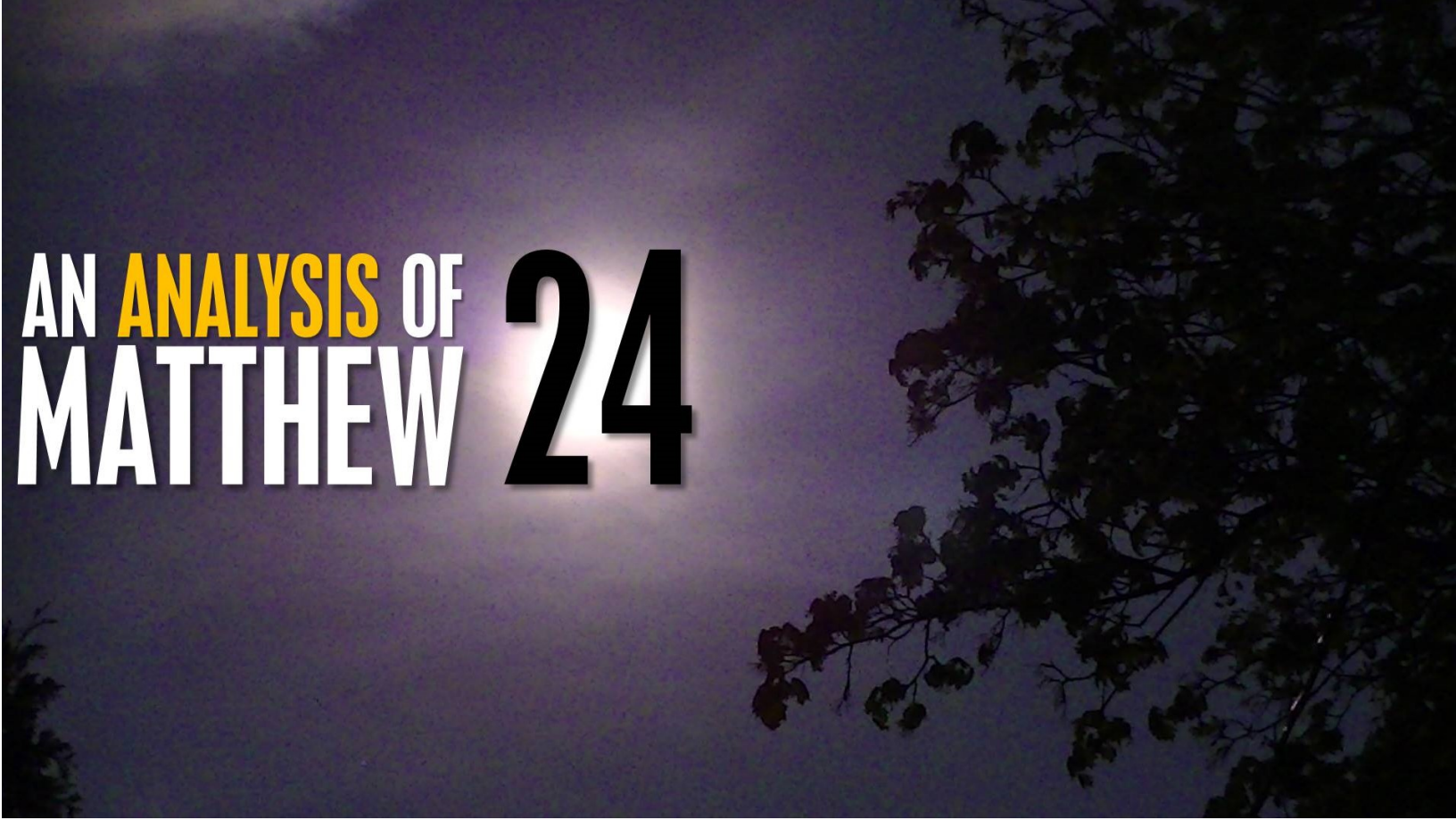
...the Romans, upon the flight of the seditious into the city, and upon the burning of the holy house itself, and of all the buildings round about it, brought their ensigns to the temple, and set them over against its eastern gate; and there did they offer sacrifices to them...

(JOSEPHUS, WARS, Bk 6, Ch 6, Sct 1)

**WHOEVER
LET HIM
UNDERSTAND**

...there should arise a certain king that should overcome our nation and their laws, and should take away our political government, and should spoil the temple, and forbid the sacrifices to be offered for three years' time. And indeed it so came to pass, that our nation suffered these things under Antiochus Epiphanes, according to Daniel's vision, and what he wrote many hears before they came to pass. In the very same manner Daniel also wrote concerning the Roman government, and that our country should be made desolate by them. (JOSEPHUS, WARS 10:11:7)

- ⇒ Daniel mentioned the abomination of desolation 3 times:
Daniel 9:23-27 (Rome), Daniel 11:31 (Antiochus Epiphanes),
and Daniel 12:10-11 (Rome).
- ⇒ Daniel did not understand (Daniel 12:8-10), but he didn't need to. At the time of the Jewish-Roman war, knowing the fulfillment of what Daniel prophesied about was a life/death situation. The Christians understood and escaped; many of the Jews did not, and perished. Reading Josephus, we see that he understood (and thus reported on the destruction rather than being part of it).



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