

THE TRUTH OF MATTHEW 24

By Keith Greer

Twisting and taking passages of scriptures out of context is not new. It has been around for a long time. Satan used it on our Lord in tempting Him in the wilderness, Matthew 4:1-10.

One of the most abused passages by men is the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew. The Premillennialist has a field day in getting his doctrine from this chapter. They say it will tell us the "sign of the times", which gives us warning of the return of Christ. Yet, is that true?

To understand this section of scripture, we must examine the background of the setting. The Jews rejected Christ, and they were stirring up the people everywhere the gospel was being preached. Read the following passages carefully.

"And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." (Matthew 3:10)

"Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said to Him, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you." {Matthew 21: 31}

"Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt." {Matthew 23:32}

"See! Your house is left to you desolate." {Matthew 23:38}

The age of Judaism was coming to an end. Look carefully at the statement of Jesus at the temple.

"And Jesus said to them, 'Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down!'" {Matthew 24:2}

What was Jesus referring to? What were they looking at? The temple! The center of religion for the Jew in Jerusalem was the temple and it was going to be destroyed.

What is the next obvious question? When? "Now as He sat 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?'" {Matthew 24:3}

Look at Luke's account. "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near." {Luke 21:20} This would be a sure sign of the "end." End of what? God's temple and of Judaism!

In verses sixteen through twenty, Jesus gives instructions how they can escape. Now if the second coming of Christ is under consideration in the first thirty-four verses, please answer the following questions.

Why would they flee into the mountains? Could that protect them? Why will "those days be shortened"? Explain these verses, "So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near; at the doors! 'Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place'. " {Matthew 24:33,34}

According to 2 Peter 3:10 and 1 Thessalonians 5:2, He will come as a "thief in the night." Does a thief announce his plans to his victims? Are any of "this generation" still alive today? There would have to be if this is talking about His second coming!

Man cannot flee in that day. All will see Him, Revelation 1:7. It will happen suddenly and without warning. Much different than the events discussed in the first thirty-four verses in Matthew 24. One just needs to read the context and setting of the chapter! ***