



Rightly Dividing Matthew 24

The Question

Is Jesus talking about...

the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.?

or

His Second Coming at the end of time?

Why does it matter?

The Question

Some say Jesus is talking about...

only the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

Why does it matter?

- **“Realized Eschatology”** or **“The A.D. 70 Doctrine”** teaches that all Bible prophecy, including everything in Matthew 24, was fulfilled in Jerusalem’s destruction by the Romans in A.D. 70
- The resurrection of the dead, the second coming of Christ, and the universal judgment of all men have already taken place...

The Question

Some say Jesus is talking about...

only His Second Coming at the end of time.

Why does it matter?

- “**Premillennialism**” views Matthew 24 as a end-time description by which one can determine the characteristic events, and therefore the general time when the Lord will return to earth and establish His kingdom for a 1,000 year, “millennial reign.”
- Supports future fulfillment expectation of Armageddon, rapture, etc.
- Denies Christ now reigns as a King with a kingdom

Matthew 24

KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING THIS DISCOURSE

- Jesus describes an event to happen in the disciples lifetime
 - 34 *“Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.”*
- Jesus describes an event preceded by perceptible signs
 - 15 *“Therefore when you see... flee to the mountains”*
 - 33 *“... when you see all these things, recognize...”*
- Jesus **also** describes an event with no perceptible signs
 - 36 *“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.”*

Matthew 24:1-3

- 1 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 said to them, *“Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down.”*
- 3 As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives...”



Matthew 24:1-3

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2 And He said to them, *“Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down.”*

3 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?”*

Matthew 24:3

2 QUESTIONS AND AN ASSUMPTION

- ***“Tell us, when will these things happen?”***
 - When will this Temple be reduced to a pile of stones?
- ***“what will be the sign of Your coming and of the end of the age?”***
 - How will we know this is about to happen?
- **They assume this will all happen at the same time**
 - Mark 13:4 / Luke 21:7
 - Not yet understanding the spiritual nature of the Messianic kingdom... or temple
- **Jesus’ answer separates the two events**

Matthew 24:4-8

FIRST BEWARE OF MISLEADING SIGNS

- **False Messiahs**

- Josephus wrote of “many, who pretending to Divine inspiration, deceived the people...” (War, b. ii. C. 13)

- **Wars and rumors of wars**

- **Natural disasters**

- **Earthquakes** ➡

1. Crete - A.D. 46 /47
2. Rome - A.D. 51
3. Apamea in Phrygia - A.D. 53
4. Laodicea in Phrygia - A.D. 60
5. Campania - A.D. 62 /63

“But all these things are merely the beginnings of birth pangs.”

Matthew 24:9-14

THERE WILL BE TRIBULATION FOR THE FAITHFUL

- You will be delivered to authorities, hated and killed for My name
- Many will fall away
- False prophets will arise and mislead many
- Most people's love will grow cold
- The gospel of the kingdom will be spread to the whole world
 - *"... the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven..."* (Col. 1:23) - circa 63 A.D.

"...and then the end shall come"

Matthew 24:15

WHEN YOU SEE THE SIGN OF DANIEL (DAN. 12:11)

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)*

Dan. 9:27 – *“on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed...”*

Dan. 12:1 – *“there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued.”*

Luke 21:20-21 – *“when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies... then recognize that her desolation is near... must flee to the mountains.”*

Matthew 24:16-22

FLEE TO THE MOUNTAINS!

- Don't let anything slow you down
- It will be terrible for those expecting and with small children
- Pray your not forced to flee in winter, or on a Sabbath
- It is going to be worse than anything that ever happened
- If not for Divine compassion, none would survive

“for the sake of the elect, those days shall be cut short”

Matthew 24:23-27

FALSE REPORTS OF MY RETURN

- Don't believe those that announce my return
- I'm warning you, false Messiahs and prophets will try to mislead
- If you "hear" I've returned don't believe it
- Because when I do come back, no one will have to be told...

"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."

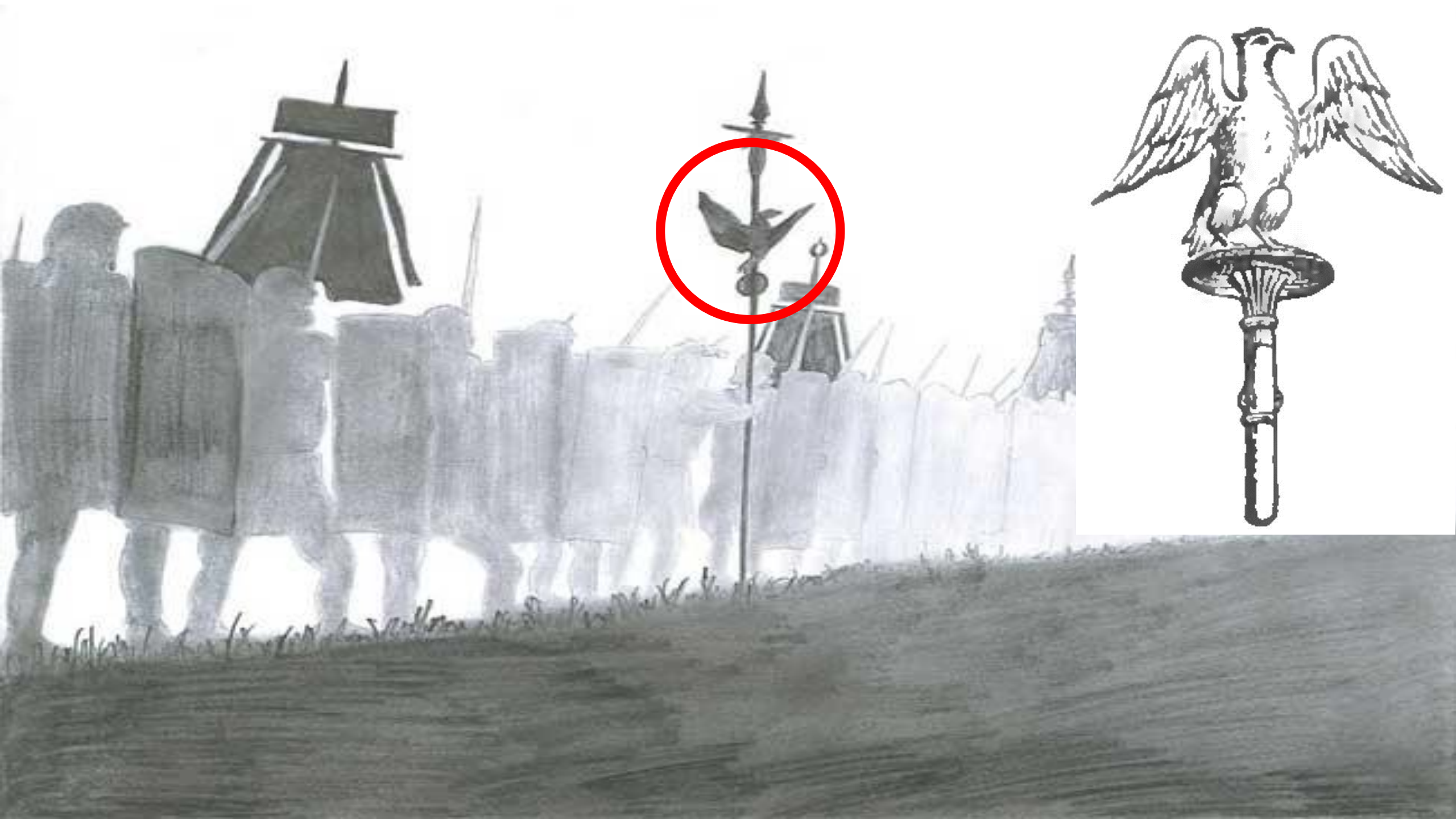
Matthew 24:28

THIS WILL BE THE END OF THE NATION OF ISRAEL

8 *“Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.”*

“... the eagles will be gathered together...” (NKJV, KJV)

- “vultures” makes the point, but...
- “eagles” might be intended





Matthew 24:29

THIS IS DIVINE JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL

- **Prophetic language of judgment upon a nation**

- **Babylon – Isa. 13:10**

“For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light; the sun will be dark when it rises and the moon will not shed its light.”

- **Egypt – Ezek. 32:7-8**

“And when I extinguish you, I will cover the heavens and darken their stars; I will cover the sun with a cloud and the moon will not give its light. “All the shining lights in the heavens I will darken over you and will set darkness on your land,” declares the Lord God.”

Matthew 24:29

THIS IS DIVINE JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL

- **Prophetic language of judgment upon a nation**
 - **Israel – Joel 2:30-32**

“I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, blood, fire and columns of smoke. “The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. “And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be delivered...”

- **Peter quotes Joel 2 on Pentecost (Acts 2:19-21)**
 - Proclaiming the beginning of the end of the Mosaic Age and beginning of the new covenant under the Messiah

Matthew 24:30

THE SIGN THAT VALIDATES I AM THE SON OF MAN IN HEAVEN

30 *“and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky”* (NASB)

“then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man” (ESV)

- **This is not the original word order**
 - This wording would have people looking in the sky for the sign
- **Original:** *“then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven...”*
 - “in heaven” is **NOT** where the sign will be
 - “in heaven” is where the Son of Man will be
- **His “sign” is this divine judgment He prophesied on Jerusalem**
 - Fulfillment will prove the Son of Man is the Son of God ascended to heaven

Matthew 24:31

THE SON IS “COMING” IN JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL

- ***“the Son of man coming on the clouds”*** is to be understood in the sense of coming in judgment upon Jerusalem
 - *“the Lord is riding on a swift cloud, and is about to come to Egypt”* (Isa. 19:1)
- Jesus uses similar language to describe events other than His personal, visible Second Coming:
 - Mt. 16:28 – *“... there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.”*
 - Mt. 26:64 – *“... I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.”*
- His gospel messengers will draw followers from all nations

Matthew 24:32-33

A LOCAL SIGN FOR A LOCAL EVENT

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 so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door.*

- These signs will be as discernable as the leaves on your fig trees
- And, just as clearly as fig leaves tell you it is summer...
- When you see these signs you can know *“these things”* are near

Matthew 24

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 will not pass away.”*

- **The things discussed so far will happen during this generation**
 - Within the normal lifespan of His listeners
- **My words will come to pass**

“...not one stone here shall be left upon another...”

Matthew 24

NOW ABOUT YOUR SECOND QUESTION

36 *“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.”*

- **Jesus switches to discuss His Second Coming and the end of time**
 - *“Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming”* (vs. 42)
 - *“For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.”* (1 Thess. 5:2)
 - *“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away...”* (2 Pet. 3:10)

Matthew 24:37ff

- **Examples of being unprepared for an event with no warning:**
 - Noah: A global example for a global event (24:37-39)
 - People going about their normal routines (24:40-41)
 - The thief in the night (24:42-44)
 - The Master's return (24:45-51)
- **Followed by parables about being ready for a reckoning:**
 - The Ten Virgins (25:1-13)
 - The Talents (25:14-30)
- **Followed by the scene of Judgment (25:31-46):**
 - *"But when the Son of Man comes in His glory..."*

The Question

Is Jesus talking about...

the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.?

or

His Second Coming at the end of time?

Why does it matter?

The Answer

Jesus is talking about...

the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. (Matt. 24:1-35)

and then

His Second Coming at the end of time (Matt. 24:36-51)

Why does it matter?

We want to rightly divide Matthew 24

