

The Gospel of Matthew

Booklet 26 – Two Lessons

Lesson 72 - Matthew 24:3, 14, 27-28

Lesson 73 - Matthew 24:32-51



Holy Week Continues

International ESL/Bible Lessons
Intermediate to Advanced Level

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Contents

Matthew 24 Introduction to the Collection or Strands	3
Notes.....	3
Lesson 72 - Matthew 24: 9-10, 4-5, 11-13 and 23-26 A Time of Persecution	4
Matthew 24: 3, 14, 27-28. Signs of the End	5
Vocabulary	5
Questions.....	6
Notes.....	6
Lesson 73 - Matthew 24: 32-51.....	8
Vocabulary	9
Questions.....	10
Notes.....	10

Much of the material in these lessons come from *The Gospel of Matthew, Vol. I*, by William Barclay. Daily Study Bible Series. Other content comes from Bible Commentaries, Dictionaries and on-line sources. All pictures are from Google Images.

The Gospel Of Matthew

Matthew 24 Introduction to the Collection or Strands

Notes

1. Remember that Matthew, in writing his Gospel, gathers great blocks of the teachings of Jesus. Here he has gathered together all the teachings about the future and the world to come.
2. In order to understand Matthew 24 better, we will teach verses 1-31 in strands of the subject matter. Here is an outline of those strands:
3. Verses which tell of the *Destruction of Jerusalem* are found in verses 1-2. Those verses, 15-22, which foretell the terrible days of the *Siege of Jerusalem* by Titus, the Roman General took place in AD 70.
4. The coming of *The Day of the Lord* is foretold in verses 6-8 and 29-31. The *Day of the Lord* comes between the present age and the age to come. It will be a time of terror and upheaval.
5. The time of *persecution* of Christians is told in verses 9 and 10.
6. Several verses, 4-5, 11-13, 23-26, tell about the *threats* which will develop against the life and purity of the church.
7. Finally, some verses speak of the *Second coming of Christ*. These are verses 3, 14, 27-28.
8. These six strands form a vision of things to come. So these first 31 verses are extremely difficult. (*The Gospel of Matthew*, Barclay, p. 303-304.)

The Gospel Of Matthew

Lesson 72 - Matthew 24: 9-10, 4-5, 11-13 and 23-26 A Time of Persecution

⁹ “Then you will be handed over to be persecuted / and put to death,
/ and you will be hated / by all nations because of me. ***

⁴ Jesus answered: / “Watch out that no one deceives you. / ⁵ For
many will come in my name, / claiming, / ‘I am the Messiah,’ / and
will deceive many.

¹¹ and many false prophets will appear / and deceive many people.

¹² Because of the increase of wickedness, / the love of most will
grow cold, / ¹³ but the one / who stands firm to the end / will be
saved. / ¹⁴ And this gospel / of the kingdom / will be preached in the
whole world / as a testimony to all nations, / and then the end will
come.

²³ At that time / if anyone says to you, / ‘Look, / here is the Messiah!’
/ or, / ‘There he is!’ / do not believe it. / ²⁴ For false messiahs and
false prophets will appear / and perform great signs and wonders to
deceive, / if possible, / even the elect. ²⁵ See, / I have told you ahead
of time. /

²⁶ “So if anyone tells you, / ‘There he is, / out in the wilderness,’ / do
not go out; / or, / ‘Here he is, / in the inner rooms,’ / do not believe
it.

Matthew 24: 3, 14, 27-28. Signs of the End

³ As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, / the disciples came to him privately. / “Tell us,” / they said, / “when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming / and of the end of the age?”

¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom / will be preached in the whole world / as a testimony to all nations, / and then the end will come.

²⁷ For as lightning / that comes from the east / is visible even in the west, / so will be the coming of the Son of Man. / ²⁸ Wherever there is a carcass, / there the vultures will gather.

Vocabulary

1. To persecute: Make someone feel hostility or ill-treatment because of race or political or religious beliefs.
2. To deceive: Cause someone to believe something not true. Lie.
3. To stand firm: To persevere. To decide not to change your opinion.
4. Carcass: The dead body of an animal.
5. Vulture: a large bird of prey who feeds on the bodies of dead animals.



Questions

1. Can you remember a story about persecution of Christians?
2. How do you think the disciples felt about Jesus talking about death and persecution?
3. This talk seems so honest and direct. Why didn't Jesus sugarcoat this unpleasant reality?
4. What do you think a false messiah would look like and act like?
5. What does Jesus say about signs of his return?

Notes

1. Jesus did not compromise his honesty as he walked along toward Jerusalem. Through the ages Christians have been and continue to be killed and persecuted.
2. Jesus gives two warnings of danger: one of false leaders and one of discouragement. Since the true test of any leader is a likeness to Christ, be warned of those arrogantly proclaiming to be the messiah.
3. Jesus talks of those who follow false leaders, and those who grow cold and tired of wickedness and trouble. Yet, those who stay close to God will endure and be saved.
4. The New Testament does not use the words *Second Coming*, but uses the Greek word *Parousia*. This has come into our language as Second Coming, but it is used elsewhere in the New Testament

as the word for the arrival of a governor into his province or the arrival of a king to his subjects. It describes a coming in authority and in power.

5. Ultimately, Jesus will come in triumph. How and when, we do not really know. This all leads to the fact that history is going somewhere—to the “divine far-off event, to which the whole creation moves, and that event is not dissolution but the universal and eternal rule of God.

The Gospel Of Matthew

Lesson 73 - Matthew 24: 32-51

³² “Now / learn this lesson from the fig tree: / As soon as its twigs get tender / and its leaves come out, / you know that summer is near. / ³³ Even so, / when you see all these things, / you know that it is near, / right at the door. / ³⁴ Truly I tell you, / this generation will certainly not pass away / until all these things have happened. / ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, / but my words will never pass away.

The Day and Hour Unknown

³⁶ “But about that day or hour / no one knows, / not even the angels in heaven, / nor the Son, / but only the Father. / ³⁷ As it was in the days of Noah, / so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. / ³⁸ For in the days before the flood, / people were eating and drinking, / marrying and giving in marriage, / up to the day Noah entered the ark; / ³⁹ and they knew nothing about what would happen / until the flood came / and took them all away. / That is how it will be / at the coming of the Son of Man. / ⁴⁰ Two men will be in the field; / one will be taken / and the other left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; / one will be taken and the other left.

⁴² “Therefore keep watch, / because you do not know / on what day your Lord will come. / ⁴³ But understand this: / If the owner of the house had known / at what time of night the thief was coming, / he

would have kept watch / and would not have let his house be broken into. / ⁴⁴ So you also must be ready, / because the Son of Man will come at an hour / when you do not expect him.

⁴⁵ “Who / then / is the faithful and wise servant, / whom the master / has put in charge of the servants in his household / to give them their food at the proper time? / ⁴⁶ It will be good for that servant / whose master finds him doing so / when he returns. / ⁴⁷ Truly I tell you, / he will put him in charge of all his possessions. / ⁴⁸ But suppose that servant is wicked / and says to himself, / ‘My master is staying away a long time,’ / ⁴⁹ and he then begins to beat his fellow servants / and to eat and drink with drunkards. / ⁵⁰ The master of that servant / will come on a day / when he does not expect him / and at an hour / he is not aware of. / ⁵¹ He will cut him to pieces / and assign him a place with the hypocrites, / where there will be weeping / and gnashing of teeth.

Vocabulary

1. Twigs: A small and slender shoot growing from a branch of a tree or shrub.
2. Ark: (the ark) (in the Bible) the ship built by Noah to save his family and two of every kind of animal from the Flood; Noah's ark.
 - Archaic a chest or box: the ark was of Italian walnut.
 - A large, flat-bottomed boat.



- (Also Holy Ark) a chest or cupboard housing the Torah scrolls in a synagogue.

3. Grinding with a hand mill:
4. Possessions: All a person owns.
5. Gnashing of teeth. Grind one's teeth, typically as a sign of anger.



Questions

1. What do you say to someone who is intent on finding out when Christ will return?
2. Read this chapter from beginning to end. How does it help or not help you to divide up the chapter in strands as we have done?
3. What does God expect us to do with our lives?
4. What are some of the symbols in this chapter?

Notes

1. Noah: The Bible story in Genesis 6-8 tells of Noah building the ark (large boat) that saved his family and specimens of the animals and creatures of the earth. All others died in a great flood.
2. Matthew gathered the strands of the future and times to come and includes them in one long chapter. These cover many different discussions Jesus had with his disciples.
3. The fig tree seems to represent the nation of Israel or Judea. The fig was one of the first fruits in the spring and considered very nutritious. It is the third tree mentioned in the Bible.

4. The first part of verses 32-35 seems to contradict the rest. First, it seems to say that the signs of nature and the signs of the world indicate that the Second Coming of Jesus is on the way. Then, it changes. It seems to say that the Second Coming will happen within the lifetime of the generation listening to Jesus.
5. This contradiction produces some difficulty. However, if we remember that Jesus is referring in verses 32-25 to the doom of Jerusalem, and then the difficulties are removed. Both Barclay and John Gill commentaries agree on this point.
6. Verses 36-41 do refer to the Second Coming. They tell us that God alone knows the event. Speculation about when the Second coming or the time of tribulation is simply not knowing what the Bible teaches.
7. The remainder of the chapter, verses 42-51, tells us to be watchful and faithful and to continue to live our lives, as God would have us live.

8. The Fable:

Three apprentice devils were coming to earth to complete their apprenticeship. They were talking to Satan about their plans to tempt and ruin mankind.

The first said: "I will tell them there is not God."

Satan answered: "That will not delude or fool many, for they know that there is a God."

The second said: "I will tell men there is no hell."

Satan answered: "You will deceive no one that way; men know even now that there is a hell for sin."

The third said: "I will tell them there is no hurry."

"Go!" said Satan, "and you will ruin them by the thousands."

The most dangerous of all delusions is that there is plenty of time.

—Barclay: The Gospel of Matthew, Part 2. P. 317

9. The parable of the wise servant tells us that rejection by God is based on failure to do our duty and reward is based on fidelity and faith. The servant who fulfilled his duty faithfully was given a still greater place. He was rewarded.

10. A Negro poet writes:

There's a king and a captain high,
And he's coming by and by.
And he'll find me hoeing cotton when he comes.
You can hear his legions charging in the regions of the sky,
And he'll find me hoeing cotton when he comes.
There's a man they thrust aside,
Who was tortured till he died,
And he'll find me hoeing cotton when he comes.
He was hated and rejected,
He was scorned and crucified,
And he'll find me hoeing cotton when he comes.
When he comes! When he comes!
He'll be crowned by saints and angels when he comes.
They'll be shouting out Hosanna! to the man that men denied,
And I'll kneel among my cotton when he comes.