

NOON BIBLE STUDY: MATTHEW 24 (PART 5)

Matthew 24:29-31 – The Coming Of The Son Of Man

Did you notice the Old Testament quotations in verses 29-31. Let's look systematically at what these verses are saying:

1 - heavenly disturbance

2 - “sign of the son of man appears” and the people of the earth will “see the coming of the son of man”. This will cause mourning among the nations/people (presumably that did not respond to the gospel).

3 - Jesus will send his angels with a trumpet blast to gather together his people from wherever they might be on the earth (or in the grave).

We're going to take some time to look at these three concepts.

1 - Heavenly Disturbance

In the Old Testament, descriptions like this are often associated with God's judgment and decisive intervention in history. This kind of cosmic language is frequently used by the prophets to describe moments when God acts in power against nations, judges the world, or marks the end of an age.

We see this pattern repeatedly:

Judgment on Babylon - Isaiah 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.

Judgment on Egypt - Ezekiel 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.

Day of the LORD:

Isaiah 34:4 - And all the host of heaven will wear away, And the sky will be rolled up like a scroll; All their hosts will also wither away As a leaf withers from the vine, Or as one withers from the fig tree.

Joel 2:10, 31 & 3:15 - Before them the earth quakes, The heavens tremble, The sun and the moon grow dark And the stars lose their brightness...2:31 The sun will be turned into darkness And the moon into blood Before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes....3:15 The sun and moon grow dark And the stars lose their brightness.

Haggai 2:6 - For thus says the LORD of hosts, "Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land."

Across these passages, the language of cosmic disturbance signals: divine judgment, the fall of kingdoms, the Day of the Lord - all moments of God stepping into history in power and the shaking of creation when His power is revealed. So, Jesus is not inventing new imagery in Matthew 24. He is using well-known prophetic language that His disciples would have immediately recognized as the language of God's judgment, justice and intervention in the world with power.

Some take these images as literal, meaning the sun will grow dark, the stars will fall, similar to what was seen during the Egyptian plagues. Others take a figurative approach that there will be global, political, spiritual disturbance and turmoil. Others think it might be a combination of both. But all views agree on the main point: This will not be an ordinary moment in history.

2 - Sign Of The Son Of Man

This is a quotation and reference to a verse we have mentioned throughout our study of Matthew, Daniel 7:13-14:

Daniel 7:13-14 - I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

In Daniel's vision, the Son of Man is not merely a human figure. He is a heavenly ruler who comes with the clouds (a sign of divine authority), is enthroned by God, receives universal dominion, rules all nations, and reigns forever. Jesus claims to be this "son of man" and his return will signal the beginning of his glorious reign over God's kingdom.

Matthew emphasizes that this coming will not just be in some night vision, but visible to all and that "all the tribes of the earth will mourn." (v. 30). For God's people, the return of Christ is a glorious day of salvation and joy, but for those who have rejected God's way and Messiah, it will be a time of great sorrow.

Is there some special sign that will appear in the sky with the coming of Christ? Perhaps, but the coming of Christ will itself be the sign of the son of man in the sky.

3 - Trump Sounding & Angelic Gathering Of God's People

Trumpet Announcement - In Scripture, the trumpet is not background noise. It is a signal of divine action. The trumpet was used to signal that God was acting, a call to pay attention and to come and assemble before him.

Trumpet On Mount Sinai - Exodus 19:16 - So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled.

Trumpet Regathering God's People - Isaiah 27:13 - It will come about also in that day that a great trumpet will be blown, and those who were perishing in the land of Assyria and who were scattered in the land of Egypt will come and worship the LORD in the holy mountain at Jerusalem.

Trumpet Announcing the LORD appearing in victory - Zechariah 9:14 - Then the LORD will appear over them, And His arrow will go forth like lightning; And the Lord GOD will blow the trumpet, And will march in the storm winds of the south.

Gathering Of God's People - The idea of God gathering His people from every direction is a major Old Testament promise tied to restoration, salvation, and covenant faithfulness.

Deuteronomy 30:4 - If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back.

Isaiah 43:5-6 - Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, And gather you from the west. I will say to the north, "Give them up!" And to the south, "Do not hold them back." Bring My sons from afar And My daughters from the ends of the earth,

Isaiah 11:12 - And He will lift up a standard for the nations And assemble the banished ones of Israel, And will gather the dispersed of Judah From the four corners of the earth.

When Jesus says the angels will gather His elect from the four winds, is bringing his people back from exile and their sojourn into God's promised land.

The Role Of Angels - Angels frequently appear in Scripture as agents who carry out God's commands, especially at moments of judgment or salvation.

Daniel 12:1 - Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And 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.

These Old Testament passages serve as an important foundation for the church's view and understanding of the coming of Christ. Here is how Paul will write to the churches of Thessalonica & Corinth, notice how many of the themes we have looked at so far are present:

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 - But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. 15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

16 For the Lord Himself will **descend from heaven** with a shout, with the voice of the **archangel** and with the **trumpet** of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the **clouds** to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Corinthians 15:52 - in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last **trumpet**; for the **trumpet** will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

Matthew 24:32-33 - Parable Of The Fig Tree

Fig trees in Israel follow a recognizable seasonal pattern. During winter the tree appears lifeless, with bare branches that show no outward signs of activity. But as spring approaches, the sap begins to flow, the branches soften, and small leaves start to sprout. Those early leaves are a reliable indicator that summer is near, because fig trees do not leaf out randomly, their growth follows a consistent, observable process tied to the seasons. Jesus' point is that just as anyone can look at a fig tree and recognize what season is approaching, His disciples should be able to observe the signs He described and understand what time they are living in.

Fig tree leaves → summer. Signs Jesus' spoke of in Matthew 24 → his return is nearing.

Matthew 24:34-35 - My Words Will Pass Away

What does Jesus mean by "this generation"? At first glance, it can sound as though he is saying everything would happen within the lifetime of His immediate audience, so it is important to slow down and interpret his words carefully, in context, and in light of how Scripture uses this language elsewhere.

The phrase *this generation* can legitimately be understood in several biblically supported ways:

Option 1 - The people alive at that time - Sometimes Jesus uses "this generation" to refer to his contemporaries (for example Matthew 12:41–42). If understood this way here, it would mean that the generation alive when these final signs begin will not pass away until all the

events are completed. In other words, once the end-time sequence starts, it will unfold within a single generation. And this would imply the generation alive when he spoke this.

Option 2 - A type or kind of people - In Scripture, “generation” can also refer to a group characterized by something rather than a time period. Psalm 24:6 speaks of “the generation of those who seek Him,” meaning a class of people, not a span of years. In this sense, Jesus could be referring to the continuation of fallen humanity or the present rebellious world order until all is fulfilled.

Option 3 - The generation that sees the signs - This is often considered the most natural reading in context. In verse 33 Jesus has just said, “when you see all these things, recognize that he is near.” That suggests he is referring to the generation that witnesses those signs (that had not yet occurred). The meaning would then be that once the final events begin, they will unfold quickly and decisively within that same generation.

The purpose of Jesus’ statement is not to provide a date but to emphasize certainty. He is assuring his disciples that God’s plan will not stall and history will not drift indefinitely. When the appointed time arrives, everything will move toward completion exactly as He has said.

He then reinforces that certainty with a staggering declaration: “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.” The word and promises of God in Scripture and those spoken by Jesus Christ are sure and true. Even the universe itself is more temporary than what he has spoken!

The emphasis, then, is not about calculating dates but about trusting the certainty of Christ’s promises. The same voice that spoke creation into existence is the voice that guarantees His return - and that means his words cannot fail.

So what should all of this produce in us? Not fear, not speculation, and not endless debate, but steady faith and watchful hope. Jesus did not give these words so his followers would obsess over timelines, but so they would trust Him, recognize the season when it comes, and remain faithful until the end. The world may shake, nations may tremble, and even the heavens themselves may be disturbed, but Christ’s promises stand firmer than creation itself. The King who will one day appear in glory is the same Savior who calls us to walk with him today. And because his words will never pass away, we can live with confidence, endure with patience, and wait with hope, knowing that when he comes, he will gather his people, keep his promises, and make all things new.