

- Last week we started the overview of Mt 24.
 - Two questions: When will all this happen? (This being the judgement and destruction of Jerusalem), and two "What will be the sign of your return?"
- The big 'take away' was this: The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple marks the end of the old order there by making room for the reign Christ. This understanding is what prompts the two questions that the disciples ask.
 - We saw that vs 4-35 are in answer to first question and vs 36-ff answer the second question.
 - The first question gets lots of detail. The second question does not because the answer is...No one knows the day or hour.
- **We are looking at this passage as one from Jesus day. Therefore we have to put away all of our end time teaching momentarily in order to understand the context and message Jesus was sending.

I. What Will Be the Sign of Your Parousia?

- A. The Parousia is described by a collection of shorter sayings then back up by a series of three parables. (24:45-51; 25:1-13; 25:14-30).
1. All of which point to the arrival of an authority figure.
 2. And the need to be prepared so as to avoid punishment.
 3. All through this long discourse Jesus refused to give the disciples the sign that they are asking for! This therefore requires that one live ready. Each parable reinforces that message.
- B. And the *parousia* at the end of the age. Parousia is a Greek word meaning 'presence or coming presence.' Appearing. It also has an interesting usage in that it is what the city, and city dignitaries did when someone of authority came to visit. They would go out to greet them and then come into the city together.
1. 24:36 Marks a turning point or shift in Jesus discourse. He moves from answer the disciples first question to now answering the second. "What will be the sign of your return?"
 - a) Gr-'*Peri de*' - 'however, but about' The words are used by Mt. to show a shift or change of subject or focus. It is a rhetorical formula to present a new beginning.
 - b) 'that day' verses 'those days' of the prior section.
 - c) Jesus now speaks of an time that cannot be known.
 - d) Because parousia is used in 37 and 39 it is now very clear what Jesus is talking about as the subject of this section.
 - e) Verse 36 by nature make this section of discourse 'eschatological' or end times. The prior section more of historical.

II. Shorter Sayings 24:36-44

- A. This section points our three aspects we always consider.

1. The time of the parousia is unknown vs. 26
 2. Therefore it will catch many people unaware. vs. 37-41
 3. Therefore disciples of Christ must always live prepared. 42-44
- B. Jesus uses vivid illustration from life to make these points. If the parousia is unknown it only serves to reason that people will be caught unaware.
1. Noah's day - common day with regular activities. Yet, Surprise! Many were not ready for 'that day.'
 2. People working today- the idea is separation...not rapture. Rapture is a 19th century idea. Therefore context leads us to recognize "separation". We are not told why but that will come in chapter 25.
 3. Homeowner not ready for thief. Again the theme is to ready for 'that day.'
- C. Being ready verses last minute preparation. *"being ready" is to be understood more ethically than intellectually. It demands a continuously acceptable lifestyle, not an attempt to calculate the timing of the parousia so as to "prepare" specifically for that event."*
NICNT p.939
1. The final section in 25:31-46 reveals that the criteria of judgment relates not to conscious alertness... but to a life lived, even unknowingly, as Jesus would have it lived.
 2. vs. 44 sends a clear and final message to be ready for the parousia at any time.
 3. The following parable will define what it means to be ready for the parousia. Like Noah, the disciples now know what is coming they just do not know when. Jesus now spells out how to prepare.

III. Three Parables 24:48; 25:5; 25:19 all reference an extended time away regarding the parousia. Delay and imminent are not in conflict. The message is just as real for us today as it was for Matthew in his day.

IV. 25:31-46 explains the final judgment and the FINAL separation of the saved and the lost. In keeping with the context of the last three chapters...it is not only the Jew who must be concerned but all the nations of the earth must prepare.