

Communion Service**Reading** - Matthew Chapter 24: v.1-14.**Theme:** The Birth pains of the second coming of Jesus.

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³Now 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?"

⁴And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. ⁶And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. ⁸All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

⁹"Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. ¹⁰And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. ¹¹Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. ¹²And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³But he who endures to the end shall be saved. ¹⁴And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

Introduction

We have now come to the last teaching block in Matthew's Gospel.

It is a very important teaching by Jesus because it concerns **His second coming**.

In fact it is the longest answer to any question that the disciples asked Jesus.

This teaching block is **the revelation from the lips of Jesus** about His **return in glory and power**.

If we have any strong views about the second coming of Jesus, it is important to put those views to one side and listen to the voice of Jesus over the next four Communion messages.

The ministry of Jesus here here is both **challenging and encouraging**.

Although we are covering these chapters in four sections, please view them as a whole when we have finished in February 2020. **I will summarize the teaching at our February Communion Service.**

We must see the message of Jesus to his disciples **in its context**, and we must apply the **transferable principles carefully to our own lives**.

Before we come to this teaching block which starts in v.3 we need to understand a few things.

- a) **The thinking of the Jewish believers**. - Consistent with the teaching of Zechariah **Chapter 14: v.1-5** and other Old Testament prophets, the Jewish people believed that the coming of the Messiah would be **preceded by a time of terrible tribulation**.

Zechariah 14: v. 1-9. In N.L.T.

Watch, for the day of the LORD is coming when your possessions will be plundered right in front of you! ²I will gather all the nations to fight against Jerusalem. The city will be taken, the houses looted, and the women raped. Half the population will be taken into captivity, and the rest will be left among the ruins of the city.

³Then the LORD will go out to fight against those nations, as he has fought in times past. ⁴On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem. And the Mount of Olives will split apart, making a wide valley running from east to west. Half the mountain will move toward the north and half toward the south. ⁵You will flee through this valley, for it will reach across to Azal. Yes, you will flee as you did from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all his holy ones with him.

⁶On that day the sources of light will no longer shine, ⁷yet there will be continuous day! Only the LORD knows how this could happen. There will be no normal day and night, for at evening time it will still be light.

⁸On that day life-giving waters will flow out from Jerusalem, half toward the Dead Sea and half toward the Mediterranean, flowing continuously in both summer and winter.

⁹ And the LORD will be king over all the earth. On that day there will be one LORD—his name alone will be worshiped.

What the Old Testament Prophets didn't see and to be fair to them, it was not revealed to them, was the "**Church age**" or period of time when mainly Gentiles became disciples of Jesus.

We are now living in this age.

(Romans 16: v. 25-26. in N.L.T.)

²⁵ Now all glory to God, who is able to make you strong, just as my Good News says. This message about Jesus Christ has revealed his plan for you Gentiles, a plan kept secret from the beginning of time. ²⁶ But now as the prophets foretold and as the eternal God has commanded, this message is made known to all Gentiles everywhere, so that they too might believe and obey him.

So the thinking of the Jewish believers was that **soon Jesus was going to establish His kingdom here on this earth.**

This Kingdom would **be preceded by a period of terrible persecution of the Jewish people.**

The thinking of the Jewish believers was **correct according to Zechariah chapter 14,** but the **timing** was wrong.

God was going to first extend his grace towards the Gentiles.

- b) **The destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.** – In v. 2 **Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple, which actually happened in A.D. 70**

This is what exactly happened when the Romans invaded Jerusalem and set fire to the Temple.

Everything was destroyed. Only the foundation stones were left which we can see today. (Show slides of the foundation stones)

The disciples **incorrectly connected this event with the second coming of Jesus.**

- c) **The thinking of the disciples about the second coming, after the resurrection of Jesus.** – It is interesting to note that **even after all the events of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the disciples were still thinking about the return of Jesus to establish His kingdom.**

(Acts 1: v. 6 -7 in the N.L.T.)

⁶ So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, "Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?"

⁷ He replied, "The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know.

With all of this background in mind we now begin to open the text in v. 3-14.

1. The question that the disciples asked Jesus – v. 3

Jesus is now on the **Mount of Olives** with His disciples. They asked Jesus a specific question based upon their understanding which was not totally correct.

Nevertheless the question the disciples asked concerned **the sign of Jesus coming,** which we call the **second coming,** but they thought would happen very soon.

They also asked for the **sign of the end of the age.**

To the disciples the "**end of the age**" was a completion of all events that would result in God's Kingdom of righteousness and Justice.

As far as Jesus was concerned, he taught about the end of the age in the parable of the wheat and the tares and the parable of the dragnet.

In both cases it represented the gathering of the wicked by God's Angels in preparation for judgement. (Matt. 13: 39,49)

Jesus also promised to be with His disciples until the end of the age.

(Matt. 28: v.20)

So to be clear the disciples wanted to know **the signs that preceded His second coming and the establishing of His kingdom here on this earth.**

Jesus never denied the fact that He was returning to this earth to establish His Kingdom.

2. The Answer that Jesus gave his disciples. – v. 4-14.

The answer that Jesus gives His disciples is a long one and it will take four of my teaching sessions at Communion to cover it. Therefore I need to divide it up into four sections.

The first is the beginning of sorrows, or as some people refer to them “the birth pains”

In v. 4-14 Jesus gives us a list of things that will happen before His second coming.

a) Deception concerning Jesus Christ claims.

There are going to be many people claiming to be Jesus Christ, having returned to this earth.

Of course we have always had some people in history claiming to be Jesus, even before His first coming, but the intensity and number of people deceived will greatly increase.

This is because of the miracles which they perform, many will be deceived.

This is an important prophecy from Jesus.

This warning is repeated in v.23-24.

Empowered by demons people who claim to be Jesus Christ will show great signs and miracles and will mislead many people.

It is very interesting to note that there is a cult operating in Japan today that is teaching a doctrine that says Jesus Christ will return again before His second coming. Beware of false teaching from young Chinese people!!!

Especially those who operate on the internet.

Even today in Japan, people are being prepared by Satan to be deceived. b) Wars and Rumours of wars.

Once again, there have always been wars and rumours of wars but the intensity will be very great just before the second coming.

b) Famines, Pestilence and Earthquakes.

We already know that there is going to be a scarcity of food in the future which is why preparation has already started in the agricultural and food industry to try and prevent future famines.

At the final stages of the end times the intensity of these things will be horrific.

c) All the nations in the world will hate the Jewish Nation.

This very disturbing sign has been around for a very long time.

Hitler tried to destroy the Jews, during the second world war in Europe. Today it seems to be the turn of Islam to try and destroy the Jewish nation. As the Islamic religion grows so will the intensity of hatred towards Israel grow. In the end even America as a nation will in the main hate Israel.

d) Lawlessness will abound and the love of many will grow cold and many people will be offended by the Gospel message.

It is easy to see how this will be part of the end times. It has already started.

Most people in the U.K. today are offended by the true Gospel message.

You can't preach the truth of the Gospel in the public arena of the U.K. today and soon it will be the case in the U.S.

What we need to realise before we come on to v.14 is that the period of time when these things will happen an intense and alarming way before the return of Jesus will be covered in one generation.

v.34. in N.K.J.

³⁴ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

This means when the severity starts, there will be a period of 25-30 years of these horrible things happening in this world.

A Biblical generation is about 25-30 years.

There are more horrible things to come next month from v. 15-44.

But there is also good news in v. 40-41, so please don't be too alarmed if you are a Christian.

(Some Christians don't believe in the rapture, but I do and next month I will encourage you with this fact)

The important thing for Christians is to concentrate on preaching, teaching and proclaiming the Gospel, while there is still time.

The time is coming when we won't be able to preach the Gospel.

However the Good News is that the Gospel message **will be preached to all nations before the end.**

Our job is **not to be too concerned about these second coming events** but to **preach the Gospel** so that people will at least have a chance of being rescued before it is too late.

Very briefly what is the Gospel of the Kingdom?

There are 7 things that you need to understand.

(provide some slides for these points if possible? Your computer skills are better than mine, thank you. – Alistair.)

1. **We need to understand that the God of the Bible is the only God in the world, there are not many gods.** All other gods are of man's making, they are false, they are idols and they can't help you with Salvation or anything else. (slide of false gods, and say the word false gods, Shinto shrine and Buddha Shrine and Temple slide here)
2. **We need to know that the God of the Bible is our creator owner.**
He created the first man and the first woman. He created us for a purpose. It was to have an eternal relationship with Him. Nevertheless He owned us in a sense that He was our creator. Let me put it this way. If you make something out of your own design and creation, say a paddle for a canoe, or perhaps even a Japanese wooden house?
Would it be O.K. if somebody destroyed it? Would you be upset if someone burned your new house down that you made or broke up your canoe paddle so you couldn't go fishing?
Of course you would be upset. You could no longer use the item for its created purpose.
3. **When God created man He created him for a purpose, that was friendship.** God only gave Adam the first man one rule, that is all. He also gave him a free will. He wasn't created like a Robot. The reason is that Robots can't show love and affection, and you can't really love a Robot. Although some Japanese people have Robot dogs and people, it is not the same.
4. **God warned the first man that if he disobeyed this one rule then he would not live forever, he would die.** Death for the punishment for disobedience.
5. **Sadly Adam disobeyed God's one rule and it brought death to the whole human race.**

(Romans 5: v.12 in N.K.J.)

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

This is the only reason that we have death in our world.

Some people die young and some die old.

Some people die in accidents and some die because of famine or disease. However one day we will all face death, unless Jesus returns to take us home to Heaven.

6. **God loved His created people and decided to provide a way back into His presence.** The problem was God is 100% Holy and He cannot be in the presence of sinful disobedient people.
God had to provide a way to punish mankind's sin without compromising His Holiness. The only way that the God of the Bible could do this was to send His only Son, Jesus Christ to this world.
7. **The purpose of sending Jesus was that He would act as our substitute. He would take the punishment for our sins. (slide of the cross here)**

(John 3: v. 16 in N.K.J.)

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Jesus would take our sin away.

8. **The question I need to ask you this morning is this. Do you want to die and take the punishment for your sin, or do you want to say sorry to Jesus and ask Him to take your sin? (Slide of a Japanese cemetery and a western one here)**

It is as simple as that.

If you are convicted of your sin before a Holy God, then today you need to come to the "Lift Sign" and talk to somebody about it.

Don't leave the service today without talking to a counsellor about your thought!!!

Matthew 11: v. 28-30 in N.L.T. to close.

²⁸ Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

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Watch, for the day of the LORD is coming when your possessions will be plundered right in front of you! ²I will gather all the nations to fight against Jerusalem. The city will be taken, the houses looted, and the women raped. Half the population will be taken into captivity, and the rest will be left among the ruins of the city.

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What the Old Testament Prophets didn't see and to be fair to them, it was not revealed to them, was the "**Church age**" or period of time when mainly Gentiles became disciples of Jesus.

We are now living in this age.

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So the thinking of the Jewish believers was that **soon Jesus was going to establish His kingdom here on this earth.**

This Kingdom would **be preceded by a period of terrible persecution of the Jewish people.**

The thinking of the Jewish believers was **correct according to Zechariah chapter 14,** but the **timing** was wrong.

God was going to first extend his grace towards the Gentiles.

- b) **The destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.** – In v. 2 **Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple, which actually happened in A.D. 70**

This is what exactly happened when the Romans invaded Jerusalem and set fire to the Temple.

Everything was destroyed. Only the foundation stones were left which we can see today. (Show slides of the foundation stones)

The disciples **incorrectly connected this event with the second coming of Jesus.**

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With all of this background in mind we now begin to open the text in v. 3-14.

1. The question that the disciples asked Jesus – v. 3

Jesus is now on the **Mount of Olives** with His disciples. They asked Jesus a specific question based upon their understanding which was not totally correct.

Nevertheless the question the disciples asked concerned **the sign of Jesus coming,** which we call the **second coming,** but they thought would happen very soon.

They also asked for the **sign of the end of the age.**

To the disciples the "**end of the age**" was a completion of all events that would result in God's Kingdom of righteousness and Justice.

As far as Jesus was concerned, he taught about the end of the age in the parable of the wheat and the tares and the parable of the dragnet.

In both cases it represented the gathering of the wicked by God's Angels in preparation for judgement. (Matt. 13: 39,49)

Jesus also promised to be with His disciples until the end of the age.

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So to be clear the disciples wanted to know **the signs that preceded His second coming and the establishing of His kingdom here on this earth.**

Jesus never denied the fact that He was returning to this earth to establish His Kingdom.

2. The Answer that Jesus gave his disciples. – v. 4-14.

The answer that Jesus gives His disciples is a long one and it will take four of my teaching sessions at Communion to cover it. Therefore I need to divide it up into four sections.

The first is the beginning of sorrows, or as some people refer to them “the birth pains”

In v. 4-14 Jesus gives us a list of things that will happen before His second coming.

a) Deception concerning Jesus Christ claims.

There are going to be many people claiming to be Jesus Christ, having returned to this earth.

Of course we have always had some people in history claiming to be Jesus, even before His first coming, but the intensity and number of people deceived will greatly increase.

This is because of the miracles which they perform, many will be deceived.

This is an important prophecy from Jesus.

This warning is repeated in v.23-24.

Empowered by demons people who claim to be Jesus Christ will show great signs and miracles and will mislead many people.

It is very interesting to note that there is a cult operating in Japan today that is teaching a doctrine that says Jesus Christ will return again before His second coming. Beware of false teaching from young Chinese people!!!

Especially those who operate on the internet.

Even today in Japan, people are being prepared by Satan to be deceived. b) Wars and Rumours of wars.

Once again, there have always been wars and rumours of wars but the intensity will be very great just before the second coming.

b) Famines, Pestilence and Earthquakes.

We already know that there is going to be a scarcity of food in the future which is why preparation has already started in the agricultural and food industry to try and prevent future famines.

At the final stages of the end times the intensity of these things will be horrific.

c) All the nations in the world will hate the Jewish Nation.

This very disturbing sign has been around for a very long time.

Hitler tried to destroy the Jews, during the second world war in Europe. Today it seems to be the turn of Islam to try and destroy the Jewish nation. As the Islamic religion grows so will the intensity of hatred towards Israel grow. In the end even America as a nation will in the main hate Israel.

d) Lawlessness will abound and the love of many will grow cold and many people will be offended by the Gospel message.

It is easy to see how this will be part of the end times. It has already started.

Most people in the U.K. today are offended by the true Gospel message.

You can't preach the truth of the Gospel in the public arena of the U.K. today and soon it will be the case in the U.S.

What we need to realise before we come on to v.14 is that the period of time when these things will happen an intense and alarming way before the return of Jesus will be covered in one generation.

v.34. in N.K.J.

³⁴ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

This means when the severity starts, there will be a period of 25-30 years of these horrible things happening in this world.

A Biblical generation is about 25-30 years.

There are more horrible things to come next month from v. 15-44.

But there is also good news in v. 40-41, so please don't be too alarmed if you are a Christian.

(Some Christians don't believe in the rapture, but I do and next month I will encourage you with this fact)

The important thing for Christians is to concentrate on preaching, teaching and proclaiming the Gospel, while there is still time.

The time is coming when we won't be able to preach the Gospel.

However the Good News is that the Gospel message **will be preached to all nations before the end.**

Our job is **not to be too concerned about these second coming events** but to **preach the Gospel** so that people will at least have a chance of being rescued before it is too late.

Very briefly what is the Gospel of the Kingdom?

There are 7 things that you need to understand.

(provide some slides for these points if possible? Your computer skills are better than mine, thank you. – Alistair.)

1. **We need to understand that the God of the Bible is the only God in the world, there are not many gods.** All other gods are of man's making, they are false, they are idols and they can't help you with Salvation or anything else. (slide of false gods, and say the word false gods, Shinto shrine and Buddha Shrine and Temple slide here)
2. **We need to know that the God of the Bible is our creator owner.**
He created the first man and the first woman. He created us for a purpose. It was to have an eternal relationship with Him. Nevertheless He owned us in a sense that He was our creator. Let me put it this way. If you make something out of your own design and creation, say a paddle for a canoe, or perhaps even a Japanese wooden house?
Would it be O.K. if somebody destroyed it? Would you be upset if someone burned your new house down that you made or broke up your canoe paddle so you couldn't go fishing?
Of course you would be upset. You could no longer use the item for its created purpose.
3. **When God created man He created him for a purpose, that was friendship.** God only gave Adam the first man one rule, that is all. He also gave him a free will. He wasn't created like a Robot. The reason is that Robots can't show love and affection, and you can't really love a Robot. Although some Japanese people have Robot dogs and people, it is not the same.
4. **God warned the first man that if he disobeyed this one rule then he would not live forever, he would die.** Death for the punishment for disobedience.
5. **Sadly Adam disobeyed God's one rule and it brought death to the whole human race.**

(Romans 5: v.12 in N.K.J.)

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

This is the only reason that we have death in our world.

Some people die young and some die old.

Some people die in accidents and some die because of famine or disease. However one day we will all face death, unless Jesus returns to take us home to Heaven.

6. **God loved His created people and decided to provide a way back into His presence.** The problem was God is 100% Holy and He cannot be in the presence of sinful disobedient people.
God had to provide a way to punish mankind's sin without compromising His Holiness. The only way that the God of the Bible could do this was to send His only Son, Jesus Christ to this world.
7. **The purpose of sending Jesus was that He would act as our substitute. He would take the punishment for our sins. (slide of the cross here)**

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¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

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8. **The question I need to ask you this morning is this. Do you want to die and take the punishment for your sin, or do you want to say sorry to Jesus and ask Him to take your sin? (Slide of a Japanese cemetery and a western one here)**

It is as simple as that.

If you are convicted of your sin before a Holy God, then today you need to come to the "Lift Sign" and talk to somebody about it.

Don't leave the service today without talking to a counsellor about your thought!!!

Matthew 11: v. 28-30 in N.L.T. to close.

²⁸ Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

Communion Service**Reading** - Matthew Chapter 24: v.1-14.**Theme:** The Birth pains of the second coming of Jesus.

Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. ²And 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."

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Introduction

We have now come to the last teaching block in Matthew's Gospel.

It is a very important teaching by Jesus because it concerns **His second coming**.

In fact it is the longest answer to any question that the disciples asked Jesus.

This teaching block is **the revelation from the lips of Jesus** about His **return in glory and power**.

If we have any strong views about the second coming of Jesus, it is important to put those views to one side and listen to the voice of Jesus over the next four Communion messages.

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This Kingdom would **be preceded by a period of terrible persecution of the Jewish people.**

The thinking of the Jewish believers was **correct according to Zechariah chapter 14,** but the **timing** was wrong.

God was going to first extend his grace towards the Gentiles.

- b) **The destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.** – In v. 2 **Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple, which actually happened in A.D. 70**

This is what exactly happened when the Romans invaded Jerusalem and set fire to the Temple.

Everything was destroyed. Only the foundation stones were left which we can see today. (Show slides of the foundation stones)

The disciples **incorrectly connected this event with the second coming of Jesus.**

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With all of this background in mind we now begin to open the text in v. 3-14.

1. The question that the disciples asked Jesus – v. 3

Jesus is now on the **Mount of Olives** with His disciples. They asked Jesus a specific question based upon their understanding which was not totally correct.

Nevertheless the question the disciples asked concerned **the sign of Jesus coming,** which we call the **second coming,** but they thought would happen very soon.

They also asked for the **sign of the end of the age.**

To the disciples the "**end of the age**" was a completion of all events that would result in God's Kingdom of righteousness and Justice.

As far as Jesus was concerned, he taught about the end of the age in the parable of the wheat and the tares and the parable of the dragnet.

In both cases it represented the gathering of the wicked by God's Angels in preparation for judgement. (Matt. 13: 39,49)

Jesus also promised to be with His disciples until the end of the age.

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So to be clear the disciples wanted to know **the signs that preceded His second coming and the establishing of His kingdom here on this earth.**

Jesus never denied the fact that He was returning to this earth to establish His Kingdom.

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The answer that Jesus gives His disciples is a long one and it will take four of my teaching sessions at Communion to cover it. Therefore I need to divide it up into four sections.

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In v. 4-14 Jesus gives us a list of things that will happen before His second coming.

a) Deception concerning Jesus Christ claims.

There are going to be many people claiming to be Jesus Christ, having returned to this earth.

Of course we have always had some people in history claiming to be Jesus, even before His first coming, but the intensity and number of people deceived will greatly increase.

This is because of the miracles which they perform, many will be deceived.

This is an important prophecy from Jesus.

This warning is repeated in v.23-24.

Empowered by demons people who claim to be Jesus Christ will show great signs and miracles and will mislead many people.

It is very interesting to note that there is a cult operating in Japan today that is teaching a doctrine that says Jesus Christ will return again before His second coming. Beware of false teaching from young Chinese people!!!

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Even today in Japan, people are being prepared by Satan to be deceived. b)Wars and Rumours of wars.

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At the final stages of the end times the intensity of these things will be horrific.

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This very disturbing sign has been around for a very long time.

Hitler tried to destroy the Jews, during the second world war in Europe. Today it seems to be the turn of Islam to try and destroy the Jewish nation. As the Islamic religion grows so will the intensity of hatred towards Israel grow. In the end even America as a nation will in the main hate Israel.

d) Lawlessness will abound and the love of many will grow cold and many people will be offended by the Gospel message.

It is easy to see how this will be part of the end times. It has already started.

Most people in the U.K. today are offended by the true Gospel message.

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What we need to realise before we come on to v.14 is that the period of time when these things will happen an intense and alarming way before the return of Jesus will be covered in one generation.

v.34. in N.K.J.

³⁴ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

This means when the severity starts, there will be a period of 25-30 years of these horrible things happening in this world.

A Biblical generation is about 25-30 years.

There are more horrible things to come next month from v. 15-44.

But there is also good news in v. 40-41, so please don't be too alarmed if you are a Christian.

(Some Christians don't believe in the rapture, but I do and next month I will encourage you with this fact)

The important thing for Christians is to concentrate on preaching, teaching and proclaiming the Gospel, while there is still time.

The time is coming when we won't be able to preach the Gospel.

However the Good News is that the Gospel message **will be preached to all nations before the end.**

Our job is **not to be too concerned about these second coming events** but to **preach the Gospel** so that people will at least have a chance of being rescued before it is too late.

Very briefly what is the Gospel of the Kingdom?

There are 7 things that you need to understand.

(provide some slides for these points if possible? Your computer skills are better than mine, thank you. – Alistair.)

1. **We need to understand that the God of the Bible is the only God in the world, there are not many gods.** All other gods are of man's making, they are false, they are idols and they can't help you with Salvation or anything else. (slide of false gods, and say the word false gods, Shinto shrine and Buddha Shrine and Temple slide here)
2. **We need to know that the God of the Bible is our creator owner.**
He created the first man and the first woman. He created us for a purpose. It was to have an eternal relationship with Him. Nevertheless He owned us in a sense that He was our creator. Let me put it this way. If you make something out of your own design and creation, say a paddle for a canoe, or perhaps even a Japanese wooden house?
Would it be O.K. if somebody destroyed it? Would you be upset if someone burned your new house down that you made or broke up your canoe paddle so you couldn't go fishing?
Of course you would be upset. You could no longer use the item for its created purpose.
3. **When God created man He created him for a purpose, that was friendship.** God only gave Adam the first man one rule, that is all. He also gave him a free will. He wasn't created like a Robot. The reason is that Robots can't show love and affection, and you can't really love a Robot. Although some Japanese people have Robot dogs and people, it is not the same.
4. **God warned the first man that if he disobeyed this one rule then he would not live forever, he would die.** Death for the punishment for disobedience.
5. **Sadly Adam disobeyed God's one rule and it brought death to the whole human race.**

(Romans 5: v.12 in N.K.J.)

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

This is the only reason that we have death in our world.

Some people die young and some die old.

Some people die in accidents and some die because of famine or disease. However one day we will all face death, unless Jesus returns to take us home to Heaven.

6. **God loved His created people and decided to provide a way back into His presence.** The problem was God is 100% Holy and He cannot be in the presence of sinful disobedient people.
God had to provide a way to punish mankind's sin without compromising His Holiness. The only way that the God of the Bible could do this was to send His only Son, Jesus Christ to this world.
7. **The purpose of sending Jesus was that He would act as our substitute. He would take the punishment for our sins. (slide of the cross here)**

(John 3: v. 16 in N.K.J.)

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

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8. **The question I need to ask you this morning is this. Do you want to die and take the punishment for your sin, or do you want to say sorry to Jesus and ask Him to take your sin? (Slide of a Japanese cemetery and a western one here)**

It is as simple as that.

If you are convicted of your sin before a Holy God, then today you need to come to the "Lift Sign" and talk to somebody about it.

Don't leave the service today without talking to a counsellor about your thought!!!

Matthew 11: v. 28-30 in N.L.T. to close.

²⁸ Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

Communion Service**Reading** - Matthew Chapter 24: v.1-14.**Theme:** The Birth pains of the second coming of Jesus.

Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. ²And 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."

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⁴And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. ⁶And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. ⁸All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

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Introduction

We have now come to the last teaching block in Matthew's Gospel.

It is a very important teaching by Jesus because it concerns **His second coming**.

In fact it is the longest answer to any question that the disciples asked Jesus.

This teaching block is **the revelation from the lips of Jesus** about His **return in glory and power**.

If we have any strong views about the second coming of Jesus, it is important to put those views to one side and listen to the voice of Jesus over the next four Communion messages.

The ministry of Jesus here here is both **challenging and encouraging**.

Although we are covering these chapters in four sections, please view them as a whole when we have finished in February 2020. **I will summarize the teaching at our February Communion Service.**

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Before we come to this teaching block which starts in v.3 we need to understand a few things.

- a) **The thinking of the Jewish believers**. - Consistent with the teaching of Zechariah **Chapter 14: v.1-5** and other Old Testament prophets, the Jewish people believed that the coming of the Messiah would be **preceded by a time of terrible tribulation**.

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Watch, for the day of the LORD is coming when your possessions will be plundered right in front of you! ²I will gather all the nations to fight against Jerusalem. The city will be taken, the houses looted, and the women raped. Half the population will be taken into captivity, and the rest will be left among the ruins of the city.

³Then the LORD will go out to fight against those nations, as he has fought in times past. ⁴On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem. And the Mount of Olives will split apart, making a wide valley running from east to west. Half the mountain will move toward the north and half toward the south. ⁵You will flee through this valley, for it will reach across to Azal. Yes, you will flee as you did from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all his holy ones with him.

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What the Old Testament Prophets didn't see and to be fair to them, it was not revealed to them, was the "**Church age**" or period of time when mainly Gentiles became disciples of Jesus.

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This is because of the miracles which they perform, many will be deceived.

This is an important prophecy from Jesus.

This warning is repeated in v.23-24.

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Especially those who operate on the internet.

Even today in Japan, people are being prepared by Satan to be deceived. b) Wars and Rumours of wars.

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This very disturbing sign has been around for a very long time.

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v.34. in N.K.J.

³⁴ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

This means when the severity starts, there will be a period of 25-30 years of these horrible things happening in this world.

A Biblical generation is about 25-30 years.

There are more horrible things to come next month from v. 15-44.

But there is also good news in v. 40-41, so please don't be too alarmed if you are a Christian.

(Some Christians don't believe in the rapture, but I do and next month I will encourage you with this fact)

The important thing for Christians is to concentrate on preaching, teaching and proclaiming the Gospel, while there is still time.

The time is coming when we won't be able to preach the Gospel.

However the Good News is that the Gospel message **will be preached to all nations before the end.**

Our job is **not to be too concerned about these second coming events** but to **preach the Gospel** so that people will at least have a chance of being rescued before it is too late.

Very briefly what is the Gospel of the Kingdom?

There are 7 things that you need to understand.

(provide some slides for these points if possible? Your computer skills are better than mine, thank you. – Alistair.)

1. **We need to understand that the God of the Bible is the only God in the world, there are not many gods.** All other gods are of man's making, they are false, they are idols and they can't help you with Salvation or anything else. (slide of false gods, and say the word false gods, Shinto shrine and Buddha Shrine and Temple slide here)
2. **We need to know that the God of the Bible is our creator owner.**
He created the first man and the first woman. He created us for a purpose. It was to have an eternal relationship with Him. Nevertheless He owned us in a sense that He was our creator. Let me put it this way. If you make something out of your own design and creation, say a paddle for a canoe, or perhaps even a Japanese wooden house?
Would it be O.K. if somebody destroyed it? Would you be upset if someone burned your new house down that you made or broke up your canoe paddle so you couldn't go fishing?
Of course you would be upset. You could no longer use the item for its created purpose.
3. **When God created man He created him for a purpose, that was friendship.** God only gave Adam the first man one rule, that is all. He also gave him a free will. He wasn't created like a Robot. The reason is that Robots can't show love and affection, and you can't really love a Robot. Although some Japanese people have Robot dogs and people, it is not the same.
4. **God warned the first man that if he disobeyed this one rule then he would not live forever, he would die.** Death for the punishment for disobedience.
5. **Sadly Adam disobeyed God's one rule and it brought death to the whole human race.**

(Romans 5: v.12 in N.K.J.)

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

This is the only reason that we have death in our world.

Some people die young and some die old.

Some people die in accidents and some die because of famine or disease. However one day we will all face death, unless Jesus returns to take us home to Heaven.

6. **God loved His created people and decided to provide a way back into His presence.** The problem was God is 100% Holy and He cannot be in the presence of sinful disobedient people.
God had to provide a way to punish mankind's sin without compromising His Holiness. The only way that the God of the Bible could do this was to send His only Son, Jesus Christ to this world.
7. **The purpose of sending Jesus was that He would act as our substitute. He would take the punishment for our sins. (slide of the cross here)**

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¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

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If you are convicted of your sin before a Holy God, then today you need to come to the "Lift Sign" and talk to somebody about it.

Don't leave the service today without talking to a counsellor about your thought!!!

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²⁸ Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

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Introduction

We have now come to the last teaching block in Matthew's Gospel.

It is a very important teaching by Jesus because it concerns **His second coming**.

In fact it is the longest answer to any question that the disciples asked Jesus.

This teaching block is **the revelation from the lips of Jesus** about His **return in glory and power**.

If we have any strong views about the second coming of Jesus, it is important to put those views to one side and listen to the voice of Jesus over the next four Communion messages.

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Before we come to this teaching block which starts in v.3 we need to understand a few things.

- a) **The thinking of the Jewish believers**. - Consistent with the teaching of Zechariah **Chapter 14: v.1-5** and other Old Testament prophets, the Jewish people believed that the coming of the Messiah would be **preceded by a time of terrible tribulation**.

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Watch, for the day of the LORD is coming when your possessions will be plundered right in front of you! ²I will gather all the nations to fight against Jerusalem. The city will be taken, the houses looted, and the women raped. Half the population will be taken into captivity, and the rest will be left among the ruins of the city.

³Then the LORD will go out to fight against those nations, as he has fought in times past. ⁴On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem. And the Mount of Olives will split apart, making a wide valley running from east to west. Half the mountain will move toward the north and half toward the south. ⁵You will flee through this valley, for it will reach across to Azal. Yes, you will flee as you did from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all his holy ones with him.

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What the Old Testament Prophets didn't see and to be fair to them, it was not revealed to them, was the "**Church age**" or period of time when mainly Gentiles became disciples of Jesus.

We are now living in this age.

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The thinking of the Jewish believers was **correct according to Zechariah chapter 14,** but the **timing** was wrong.

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This is what exactly happened when the Romans invaded Jerusalem and set fire to the Temple.

Everything was destroyed. Only the foundation stones were left which we can see today. (Show slides of the foundation stones)

The disciples **incorrectly connected this event with the second coming of Jesus.**

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1. **We need to understand that the God of the Bible is the only God in the world, there are not many gods.** All other gods are of man's making, they are false, they are idols and they can't help you with Salvation or anything else. (slide of false gods, and say the word false gods, Shinto shrine and Buddha Shrine and Temple slide here)
2. **We need to know that the God of the Bible is our creator owner.**
He created the first man and the first woman. He created us for a purpose. It was to have an eternal relationship with Him. Nevertheless He owned us in a sense that He was our creator. Let me put it this way. If you make something out of your own design and creation, say a paddle for a canoe, or perhaps even a Japanese wooden house?
Would it be O.K. if somebody destroyed it? Would you be upset if someone burned your new house down that you made or broke up your canoe paddle so you couldn't go fishing?
Of course you would be upset. You could no longer use the item for its created purpose.
3. **When God created man He created him for a purpose, that was friendship.** God only gave Adam the first man one rule, that is all. He also gave him a free will. He wasn't created like a Robot. The reason is that Robots can't show love and affection, and you can't really love a Robot. Although some Japanese people have Robot dogs and people, it is not the same.
4. **God warned the first man that if he disobeyed this one rule then he would not live forever, he would die.** Death for the punishment for disobedience.
5. **Sadly Adam disobeyed God's one rule and it brought death to the whole human race.**

(Romans 5: v.12 in N.K.J.)

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

This is the only reason that we have death in our world.

Some people die young and some die old.

Some people die in accidents and some die because of famine or disease. However one day we will all face death, unless Jesus returns to take us home to Heaven.

6. **God loved His created people and decided to provide a way back into His presence.** The problem was God is 100% Holy and He cannot be in the presence of sinful disobedient people.
God had to provide a way to punish mankind's sin without compromising His Holiness. The only way that the God of the Bible could do this was to send His only Son, Jesus Christ to this world.
7. **The purpose of sending Jesus was that He would act as our substitute. He would take the punishment for our sins. (slide of the cross here)**

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¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

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8. **The question I need to ask you this morning is this. Do you want to die and take the punishment for your sin, or do you want to say sorry to Jesus and ask Him to take your sin? (Slide of a Japanese cemetery and a western one here)**

It is as simple as that.

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Don't leave the service today without talking to a counsellor about your thought!!!

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²⁸ Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

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⁴And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. ⁶And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. ⁸All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

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Introduction

We have now come to the last teaching block in Matthew's Gospel.

It is a very important teaching by Jesus because it concerns **His second coming**.

In fact it is the longest answer to any question that the disciples asked Jesus.

This teaching block is **the revelation from the lips of Jesus** about His **return in glory and power**.

If we have any strong views about the second coming of Jesus, it is important to put those views to one side and listen to the voice of Jesus over the next four Communion messages.

The ministry of Jesus here here is both **challenging and encouraging**.

Although we are covering these chapters in four sections, please view them as a whole when we have finished in February 2020. **I will summarize the teaching at our February Communion Service.**

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Before we come to this teaching block which starts in v.3 we need to understand a few things.

- a) **The thinking of the Jewish believers**. - Consistent with the teaching of Zechariah **Chapter 14: v.1-5** and other Old Testament prophets, the Jewish people believed that the coming of the Messiah would be **preceded by a time of terrible tribulation**.

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Watch, for the day of the LORD is coming when your possessions will be plundered right in front of you! ²I will gather all the nations to fight against Jerusalem. The city will be taken, the houses looted, and the women raped. Half the population will be taken into captivity, and the rest will be left among the ruins of the city.

³Then the LORD will go out to fight against those nations, as he has fought in times past. ⁴On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem. And the Mount of Olives will split apart, making a wide valley running from east to west. Half the mountain will move toward the north and half toward the south. ⁵You will flee through this valley, for it will reach across to Azal. Yes, you will flee as you did from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all his holy ones with him.

⁶On that day the sources of light will no longer shine, ⁷yet there will be continuous day! Only the LORD knows how this could happen. There will be no normal day and night, for at evening time it will still be light.

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What the Old Testament Prophets didn't see and to be fair to them, it was not revealed to them, was the "**Church age**" or period of time when mainly Gentiles became disciples of Jesus.

We are now living in this age.

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So the thinking of the Jewish believers was that **soon Jesus was going to establish His kingdom here on this earth.**

This Kingdom would **be preceded by a period of terrible persecution of the Jewish people.**

The thinking of the Jewish believers was **correct according to Zechariah chapter 14,** but the **timing** was wrong.

God was going to first extend his grace towards the Gentiles.

- b) **The destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.** – In v. 2 **Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple, which actually happened in A.D. 70**

This is what exactly happened when the Romans invaded Jerusalem and set fire to the Temple.

Everything was destroyed. Only the foundation stones were left which we can see today. (Show slides of the foundation stones)

The disciples **incorrectly connected this event with the second coming of Jesus.**

- c) **The thinking of the disciples about the second coming, after the resurrection of Jesus.** – It is interesting to note that **even after all the events of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the disciples were still thinking about the return of Jesus to establish His kingdom.**

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⁷ He replied, "The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know.

With all of this background in mind we now begin to open the text in v. 3-14.

1. The question that the disciples asked Jesus – v. 3

Jesus is now on the **Mount of Olives** with His disciples. They asked Jesus a specific question based upon their understanding which was not totally correct.

Nevertheless the question the disciples asked concerned **the sign of Jesus coming,** which we call the **second coming,** but they thought would happen very soon.

They also asked for the **sign of the end of the age.**

To the disciples the "**end of the age**" was a completion of all events that would result in God's Kingdom of righteousness and Justice.

As far as Jesus was concerned, he taught about the end of the age in the parable of the wheat and the tares and the parable of the dragnet.

In both cases it represented the gathering of the wicked by God's Angels in preparation for judgement. (Matt. 13: 39,49)

Jesus also promised to be with His disciples until the end of the age.

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So to be clear the disciples wanted to know **the signs that preceded His second coming and the establishing of His kingdom here on this earth.**

Jesus never denied the fact that He was returning to this earth to establish His Kingdom.

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The answer that Jesus gives His disciples is a long one and it will take four of my teaching sessions at Communion to cover it. Therefore I need to divide it up into four sections.

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In v. 4-14 Jesus gives us a list of things that will happen before His second coming.

a) Deception concerning Jesus Christ claims.

There are going to be many people claiming to be Jesus Christ, having returned to this earth.

Of course we have always had some people in history claiming to be Jesus, even before His first coming, but the intensity and number of people deceived will greatly increase.

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It is very interesting to note that there is a cult operating in Japan today that is teaching a doctrine that says Jesus Christ will return again before His second coming. Beware of false teaching from young Chinese people!!!

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He created the first man and the first woman. He created us for a purpose. It was to have an eternal relationship with Him. Nevertheless He owned us in a sense that He was our creator. Let me put it this way. If you make something out of your own design and creation, say a paddle for a canoe, or perhaps even a Japanese wooden house?
Would it be O.K. if somebody destroyed it? Would you be upset if someone burned your new house down that you made or broke up your canoe paddle so you couldn't go fishing?
Of course you would be upset. You could no longer use the item for its created purpose.
3. **When God created man He created him for a purpose, that was friendship.** God only gave Adam the first man one rule, that is all. He also gave him a free will. He wasn't created like a Robot. The reason is that Robots can't show love and affection, and you can't really love a Robot. Although some Japanese people have Robot dogs and people, it is not the same.
4. **God warned the first man that if he disobeyed this one rule then he would not live forever, he would die.** Death for the punishment for disobedience.
5. **Sadly Adam disobeyed God's one rule and it brought death to the whole human race.**

(Romans 5: v.12 in N.K.J.)

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

This is the only reason that we have death in our world.

Some people die young and some die old.

Some people die in accidents and some die because of famine or disease. However one day we will all face death, unless Jesus returns to take us home to Heaven.

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God had to provide a way to punish mankind's sin without compromising His Holiness. The only way that the God of the Bible could do this was to send His only Son, Jesus Christ to this world.
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8. **The question I need to ask you this morning is this. Do you want to die and take the punishment for your sin, or do you want to say sorry to Jesus and ask Him to take your sin? (Slide of a Japanese cemetery and a western one here)**

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²⁸ Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

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We have now come to the last teaching block in Matthew's Gospel.

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In fact it is the longest answer to any question that the disciples asked Jesus.

This teaching block is **the revelation from the lips of Jesus** about His **return in glory and power**.

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Although we are covering these chapters in four sections, please view them as a whole when we have finished in February 2020. **I will summarize the teaching at our February Communion Service.**

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Watch, for the day of the LORD is coming when your possessions will be plundered right in front of you! ²I will gather all the nations to fight against Jerusalem. The city will be taken, the houses looted, and the women raped. Half the population will be taken into captivity, and the rest will be left among the ruins of the city.

³Then the LORD will go out to fight against those nations, as he has fought in times past. ⁴On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem. And the Mount of Olives will split apart, making a wide valley running from east to west. Half the mountain will move toward the north and half toward the south. ⁵You will flee through this valley, for it will reach across to Azal. Yes, you will flee as you did from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all his holy ones with him.

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What the Old Testament Prophets didn't see and to be fair to them, it was not revealed to them, was the "**Church age**" or period of time when mainly Gentiles became disciples of Jesus.

We are now living in this age.

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So the thinking of the Jewish believers was that **soon Jesus was going to establish His kingdom here on this earth.**

This Kingdom would **be preceded by a period of terrible persecution of the Jewish people.**

The thinking of the Jewish believers was **correct according to Zechariah chapter 14,** but the **timing** was wrong.

God was going to first extend his grace towards the Gentiles.

- b) **The destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.** – In v. 2 **Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple, which actually happened in A.D. 70**

This is what exactly happened when the Romans invaded Jerusalem and set fire to the Temple.

Everything was destroyed. Only the foundation stones were left which we can see today. (Show slides of the foundation stones)

The disciples **incorrectly connected this event with the second coming of Jesus.**

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⁶ So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, "Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?"

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With all of this background in mind we now begin to open the text in v. 3-14.

1. The question that the disciples asked Jesus – v. 3

Jesus is now on the **Mount of Olives** with His disciples. They asked Jesus a specific question based upon their understanding which was not totally correct.

Nevertheless the question the disciples asked concerned **the sign of Jesus coming,** which we call the **second coming,** but they thought would happen very soon.

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To the disciples the "**end of the age**" was a completion of all events that would result in God's Kingdom of righteousness and Justice.

As far as Jesus was concerned, he taught about the end of the age in the parable of the wheat and the tares and the parable of the dragnet.

In both cases it represented the gathering of the wicked by God's Angels in preparation for judgement. (Matt. 13: 39,49)

Jesus also promised to be with His disciples until the end of the age.

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So to be clear the disciples wanted to know **the signs that preceded His second coming and the establishing of His kingdom here on this earth.**

Jesus never denied the fact that He was returning to this earth to establish His Kingdom.

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The answer that Jesus gives His disciples is a long one and it will take four of my teaching sessions at Communion to cover it. Therefore I need to divide it up into four sections.

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In v. 4-14 Jesus gives us a list of things that will happen before His second coming.

a) Deception concerning Jesus Christ claims.

There are going to be many people claiming to be Jesus Christ, having returned to this earth.

Of course we have always had some people in history claiming to be Jesus, even before His first coming, but the intensity and number of people deceived will greatly increase.

This is because of the miracles which they perform, many will be deceived.

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This warning is repeated in v.23-24.

Empowered by demons people who claim to be Jesus Christ will show great signs and miracles and will mislead many people.

It is very interesting to note that there is a cult operating in Japan today that is teaching a doctrine that says Jesus Christ will return again before His second coming. Beware of false teaching from young Chinese people!!!

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Even today in Japan, people are being prepared by Satan to be deceived. b) Wars and Rumours of wars.

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At the final stages of the end times the intensity of these things will be horrific.

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This very disturbing sign has been around for a very long time.

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v.34. in N.K.J.

³⁴ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

This means when the severity starts, there will be a period of 25-30 years of these horrible things happening in this world.

A Biblical generation is about 25-30 years.

There are more horrible things to come next month from v. 15-44.

But there is also good news in v. 40-41, so please don't be too alarmed if you are a Christian.

(Some Christians don't believe in the rapture, but I do and next month I will encourage you with this fact)

The important thing for Christians is to concentrate on preaching, teaching and proclaiming the Gospel, while there is still time.

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However the Good News is that the Gospel message **will be preached to all nations before the end.**

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Watch, for the day of the LORD is coming when your possessions will be plundered right in front of you! ²I will gather all the nations to fight against Jerusalem. The city will be taken, the houses looted, and the women raped. Half the population will be taken into captivity, and the rest will be left among the ruins of the city.

³Then the LORD will go out to fight against those nations, as he has fought in times past. ⁴On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem. And the Mount of Olives will split apart, making a wide valley running from east to west. Half the mountain will move toward the north and half toward the south. ⁵You will flee through this valley, for it will reach across to Azal. Yes, you will flee as you did from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all his holy ones with him.

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What the Old Testament Prophets didn't see and to be fair to them, it was not revealed to them, was the "**Church age**" or period of time when mainly Gentiles became disciples of Jesus.

We are now living in this age.

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²⁵ Now all glory to God, who is able to make you strong, just as my Good News says. This message about Jesus Christ has revealed his plan for you Gentiles, a plan kept secret from the beginning of time. ²⁶ But now as the prophets foretold and as the eternal God has commanded, this message is made known to all Gentiles everywhere, so that they too might believe and obey him.

So the thinking of the Jewish believers was that **soon Jesus was going to establish His kingdom here on this earth.**

This Kingdom would **be preceded by a period of terrible persecution of the Jewish people.**

The thinking of the Jewish believers was **correct according to Zechariah chapter 14,** but the **timing** was wrong.

God was going to first extend his grace towards the Gentiles.

- b) **The destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.** – In v. 2 **Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple, which actually happened in A.D. 70**

This is what exactly happened when the Romans invaded Jerusalem and set fire to the Temple.

Everything was destroyed. Only the foundation stones were left which we can see today. (Show slides of the foundation stones)

The disciples **incorrectly connected this event with the second coming of Jesus.**

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⁶ So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, "Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?"

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With all of this background in mind we now begin to open the text in v. 3-14.

1. The question that the disciples asked Jesus – v. 3

Jesus is now on the **Mount of Olives** with His disciples. They asked Jesus a specific question based upon their understanding which was not totally correct.

Nevertheless the question the disciples asked concerned **the sign of Jesus coming,** which we call the **second coming,** but they thought would happen very soon.

They also asked for the **sign of the end of the age.**

To the disciples the "**end of the age**" was a completion of all events that would result in God's Kingdom of righteousness and Justice.

As far as Jesus was concerned, he taught about the end of the age in the parable of the wheat and the tares and the parable of the dragnet.

In both cases it represented the gathering of the wicked by God's Angels in preparation for judgement. (Matt. 13: 39,49)

Jesus also promised to be with His disciples until the end of the age.

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So to be clear the disciples wanted to know **the signs that preceded His second coming and the establishing of His kingdom here on this earth.**

Jesus never denied the fact that He was returning to this earth to establish His Kingdom.

2. The Answer that Jesus gave his disciples. – v. 4-14.

The answer that Jesus gives His disciples is a long one and it will take four of my teaching sessions at Communion to cover it. Therefore I need to divide it up into four sections.

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In v. 4-14 Jesus gives us a list of things that will happen before His second coming.

a) Deception concerning Jesus Christ claims.

There are going to be many people claiming to be Jesus Christ, having returned to this earth.

Of course we have always had some people in history claiming to be Jesus, even before His first coming, but the intensity and number of people deceived will greatly increase.

This is because of the miracles which they perform, many will be deceived.

This is an important prophecy from Jesus.

This warning is repeated in v.23-24.

Empowered by demons people who claim to be Jesus Christ will show great signs and miracles and will mislead many people.

It is very interesting to note that there is a cult operating in Japan today that is teaching a doctrine that says Jesus Christ will return again before His second coming. Beware of false teaching from young Chinese people!!!

Especially those who operate on the internet.

Even today in Japan, people are being prepared by Satan to be deceived. b) Wars and Rumours of wars.

Once again, there have always been wars and rumours of wars but the intensity will be very great just before the second coming.

b) Famines, Pestilence and Earthquakes.

We already know that there is going to be a scarcity of food in the future which is why preparation has already started in the agricultural and food industry to try and prevent future famines.

At the final stages of the end times the intensity of these things will be horrific.

c) All the nations in the world will hate the Jewish Nation.

This very disturbing sign has been around for a very long time.

Hitler tried to destroy the Jews, during the second world war in Europe. Today it seems to be the turn of Islam to try and destroy the Jewish nation. As the Islamic religion grows so will the intensity of hatred towards Israel grow. In the end even America as a nation will in the main hate Israel.

d) Lawlessness will abound and the love of many will grow cold and many people will be offended by the Gospel message.

It is easy to see how this will be part of the end times. It has already started.

Most people in the U.K. today are offended by the true Gospel message.

You can't preach the truth of the Gospel in the public arena of the U.K. today and soon it will be the case in the U.S.

What we need to realise before we come on to v.14 is that the period of time when these things will happen an intense and alarming way before the return of Jesus will be covered in one generation.

v.34. in N.K.J.

³⁴ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

This means when the severity starts, there will be a period of 25-30 years of these horrible things happening in this world.

A Biblical generation is about 25-30 years.

There are more horrible things to come next month from v. 15-44.

But there is also good news in v. 40-41, so please don't be too alarmed if you are a Christian.

(Some Christians don't believe in the rapture, but I do and next month I will encourage you with this fact)

The important thing for Christians is to concentrate on preaching, teaching and proclaiming the Gospel, while there is still time.

The time is coming when we won't be able to preach the Gospel.

However the Good News is that the Gospel message **will be preached to all nations before the end.**

Our job is **not to be too concerned about these second coming events** but to **preach the Gospel** so that people will at least have a chance of being rescued before it is too late.

Very briefly what is the Gospel of the Kingdom?

There are 7 things that you need to understand.

(provide some slides for these points if possible? Your computer skills are better than mine, thank you. – Alistair.)

1. **We need to understand that the God of the Bible is the only God in the world, there are not many gods.** All other gods are of man's making, they are false, they are idols and they can't help you with Salvation or anything else. (slide of false gods, and say the word false gods, Shinto shrine and Buddha Shrine and Temple slide here)
2. **We need to know that the God of the Bible is our creator owner.**
He created the first man and the first woman. He created us for a purpose. It was to have an eternal relationship with Him. Nevertheless He owned us in a sense that He was our creator. Let me put it this way. If you make something out of your own design and creation, say a paddle for a canoe, or perhaps even a Japanese wooden house?
Would it be O.K. if somebody destroyed it? Would you be upset if someone burned your new house down that you made or broke up your canoe paddle so you couldn't go fishing?
Of course you would be upset. You could no longer use the item for its created purpose.
3. **When God created man He created him for a purpose, that was friendship.** God only gave Adam the first man one rule, that is all. He also gave him a free will. He wasn't created like a Robot. The reason is that Robots can't show love and affection, and you can't really love a Robot. Although some Japanese people have Robot dogs and people, it is not the same.
4. **God warned the first man that if he disobeyed this one rule then he would not live forever, he would die.** Death for the punishment for disobedience.
5. **Sadly Adam disobeyed God's one rule and it brought death to the whole human race.**

(Romans 5: v.12 in N.K.J.)

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

This is the only reason that we have death in our world.

Some people die young and some die old.

Some people die in accidents and some die because of famine or disease. However one day we will all face death, unless Jesus returns to take us home to Heaven.

6. **God loved His created people and decided to provide a way back into His presence.** The problem was God is 100% Holy and He cannot be in the presence of sinful disobedient people.
God had to provide a way to punish mankind's sin without compromising His Holiness. The only way that the God of the Bible could do this was to send His only Son, Jesus Christ to this world.
7. **The purpose of sending Jesus was that He would act as our substitute. He would take the punishment for our sins. (slide of the cross here)**

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What the Old Testament Prophets didn't see and to be fair to them, it was not revealed to them, was the "**Church age**" or period of time when mainly Gentiles became disciples of Jesus.

We are now living in this age.

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So the thinking of the Jewish believers was that **soon Jesus was going to establish His kingdom here on this earth.**

This Kingdom would **be preceded by a period of terrible persecution of the Jewish people.**

The thinking of the Jewish believers was **correct according to Zechariah chapter 14,** but the **timing** was wrong.

God was going to first extend his grace towards the Gentiles.

- b) **The destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.** – In v. 2 **Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple, which actually happened in A.D. 70**

This is what exactly happened when the Romans invaded Jerusalem and set fire to the Temple.

Everything was destroyed. Only the foundation stones were left which we can see today. (Show slides of the foundation stones)

The disciples **incorrectly connected this event with the second coming of Jesus.**

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With all of this background in mind we now begin to open the text in v. 3-14.

1. The question that the disciples asked Jesus – v. 3

Jesus is now on the **Mount of Olives** with His disciples. They asked Jesus a specific question based upon their understanding which was not totally correct.

Nevertheless the question the disciples asked concerned **the sign of Jesus coming,** which we call the **second coming,** but they thought would happen very soon.

They also asked for the **sign of the end of the age.**

To the disciples the "**end of the age**" was a completion of all events that would result in God's Kingdom of righteousness and Justice.

As far as Jesus was concerned, he taught about the end of the age in the parable of the wheat and the tares and the parable of the dragnet.

In both cases it represented the gathering of the wicked by God's Angels in preparation for judgement. (Matt. 13: 39,49)

Jesus also promised to be with His disciples until the end of the age.

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So to be clear the disciples wanted to know **the signs that preceded His second coming and the establishing of His kingdom here on this earth.**

Jesus never denied the fact that He was returning to this earth to establish His Kingdom.

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The answer that Jesus gives His disciples is a long one and it will take four of my teaching sessions at Communion to cover it. Therefore I need to divide it up into four sections.

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In v. 4-14 Jesus gives us a list of things that will happen before His second coming.

a) Deception concerning Jesus Christ claims.

There are going to be many people claiming to be Jesus Christ, having returned to this earth.

Of course we have always had some people in history claiming to be Jesus, even before His first coming, but the intensity and number of people deceived will greatly increase.

This is because of the miracles which they perform, many will be deceived.

This is an important prophecy from Jesus.

This warning is repeated in v.23-24.

Empowered by demons people who claim to be Jesus Christ will show great signs and miracles and will mislead many people.

It is very interesting to note that there is a cult operating in Japan today that is teaching a doctrine that says Jesus Christ will return again before His second coming. Beware of false teaching from young Chinese people!!!

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Even today in Japan, people are being prepared by Satan to be deceived. b) Wars and Rumours of wars.

Once again, there have always been wars and rumours of wars but the intensity will be very great just before the second coming.

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We already know that there is going to be a scarcity of food in the future which is why preparation has already started in the agricultural and food industry to try and prevent future famines.

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This very disturbing sign has been around for a very long time.

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Most people in the U.K. today are offended by the true Gospel message.

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What we need to realise before we come on to v.14 is that the period of time when these things will happen an intense and alarming way before the return of Jesus will be covered in one generation.

v.34. in N.K.J.

³⁴ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

This means when the severity starts, there will be a period of 25-30 years of these horrible things happening in this world.

A Biblical generation is about 25-30 years.

There are more horrible things to come next month from v. 15-44.

But there is also good news in v. 40-41, so please don't be too alarmed if you are a Christian.

(Some Christians don't believe in the rapture, but I do and next month I will encourage you with this fact)

The important thing for Christians is to concentrate on preaching, teaching and proclaiming the Gospel, while there is still time.

The time is coming when we won't be able to preach the Gospel.

However the Good News is that the Gospel message **will be preached to all nations before the end.**

Our job is **not to be too concerned about these second coming events** but to **preach the Gospel** so that people will at least have a chance of being rescued before it is too late.

Very briefly what is the Gospel of the Kingdom?

There are 7 things that you need to understand.

(provide some slides for these points if possible? Your computer skills are better than mine, thank you. – Alistair.)

1. **We need to understand that the God of the Bible is the only God in the world, there are not many gods.** All other gods are of man's making, they are false, they are idols and they can't help you with Salvation or anything else. (slide of false gods, and say the word false gods, Shinto shrine and Buddha Shrine and Temple slide here)
2. **We need to know that the God of the Bible is our creator owner.**
He created the first man and the first woman. He created us for a purpose. It was to have an eternal relationship with Him. Nevertheless He owned us in a sense that He was our creator. Let me put it this way. If you make something out of your own design and creation, say a paddle for a canoe, or perhaps even a Japanese wooden house?
Would it be O.K. if somebody destroyed it? Would you be upset if someone burned your new house down that you made or broke up your canoe paddle so you couldn't go fishing?
Of course you would be upset. You could no longer use the item for its created purpose.
3. **When God created man He created him for a purpose, that was friendship.** God only gave Adam the first man one rule, that is all. He also gave him a free will. He wasn't created like a Robot. The reason is that Robots can't show love and affection, and you can't really love a Robot. Although some Japanese people have Robot dogs and people, it is not the same.
4. **God warned the first man that if he disobeyed this one rule then he would not live forever, he would die.** Death for the punishment for disobedience.
5. **Sadly Adam disobeyed God's one rule and it brought death to the whole human race.**

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¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

This is the only reason that we have death in our world.

Some people die young and some die old.

Some people die in accidents and some die because of famine or disease. However one day we will all face death, unless Jesus returns to take us home to Heaven.

6. **God loved His created people and decided to provide a way back into His presence.** The problem was God is 100% Holy and He cannot be in the presence of sinful disobedient people.
God had to provide a way to punish mankind's sin without compromising His Holiness. The only way that the God of the Bible could do this was to send His only Son, Jesus Christ to this world.
7. **The purpose of sending Jesus was that He would act as our substitute. He would take the punishment for our sins. (slide of the cross here)**

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¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

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It is as simple as that.

If you are convicted of your sin before a Holy God, then today you need to come to the "Lift Sign" and talk to somebody about it.

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²⁸ Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

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Watch, for the day of the LORD is coming when your possessions will be plundered right in front of you! ²I will gather all the nations to fight against Jerusalem. The city will be taken, the houses looted, and the women raped. Half the population will be taken into captivity, and the rest will be left among the ruins of the city.

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What the Old Testament Prophets didn't see and to be fair to them, it was not revealed to them, was the "**Church age**" or period of time when mainly Gentiles became disciples of Jesus.

We are now living in this age.

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So the thinking of the Jewish believers was that **soon Jesus was going to establish His kingdom here on this earth.**

This Kingdom would **be preceded by a period of terrible persecution of the Jewish people.**

The thinking of the Jewish believers was **correct according to Zechariah chapter 14,** but the **timing** was wrong.

God was going to first extend his grace towards the Gentiles.

- b) **The destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.** – In v. 2 **Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple, which actually happened in A.D. 70**

This is what exactly happened when the Romans invaded Jerusalem and set fire to the Temple.

Everything was destroyed. Only the foundation stones were left which we can see today. (Show slides of the foundation stones)

The disciples **incorrectly connected this event with the second coming of Jesus.**

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With all of this background in mind we now begin to open the text in v. 3-14.

1. The question that the disciples asked Jesus – v. 3

Jesus is now on the **Mount of Olives** with His disciples. They asked Jesus a specific question based upon their understanding which was not totally correct.

Nevertheless the question the disciples asked concerned **the sign of Jesus coming,** which we call the **second coming,** but they thought would happen very soon.

They also asked for the **sign of the end of the age.**

To the disciples the "**end of the age**" was a completion of all events that would result in God's Kingdom of righteousness and Justice.

As far as Jesus was concerned, he taught about the end of the age in the parable of the wheat and the tares and the parable of the dragnet.

In both cases it represented the gathering of the wicked by God's Angels in preparation for judgement. (Matt. 13: 39,49)

Jesus also promised to be with His disciples until the end of the age.

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So to be clear the disciples wanted to know **the signs that preceded His second coming and the establishing of His kingdom here on this earth.**

Jesus never denied the fact that He was returning to this earth to establish His Kingdom.

2. The Answer that Jesus gave his disciples. – v. 4-14.

The answer that Jesus gives His disciples is a long one and it will take four of my teaching sessions at Communion to cover it. Therefore I need to divide it up into four sections.

The first is the beginning of sorrows, or as some people refer to them “the birth pains”

In v. 4-14 Jesus gives us a list of things that will happen before His second coming.

a) Deception concerning Jesus Christ claims.

There are going to be many people claiming to be Jesus Christ, having returned to this earth.

Of course we have always had some people in history claiming to be Jesus, even before His first coming, but the intensity and number of people deceived will greatly increase.

This is because of the miracles which they perform, many will be deceived.

This is an important prophecy from Jesus.

This warning is repeated in v.23-24.

Empowered by demons people who claim to be Jesus Christ will show great signs and miracles and will mislead many people.

It is very interesting to note that there is a cult operating in Japan today that is teaching a doctrine that says Jesus Christ will return again before His second coming. Beware of false teaching from young Chinese people!!!

Especially those who operate on the internet.

Even today in Japan, people are being prepared by Satan to be deceived. b) Wars and Rumours of wars.

Once again, there have always been wars and rumours of wars but the intensity will be very great just before the second coming.

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We already know that there is going to be a scarcity of food in the future which is why preparation has already started in the agricultural and food industry to try and prevent future famines.

At the final stages of the end times the intensity of these things will be horrific.

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This very disturbing sign has been around for a very long time.

Hitler tried to destroy the Jews, during the second world war in Europe. Today it seems to be the turn of Islam to try and destroy the Jewish nation. As the Islamic religion grows so will the intensity of hatred towards Israel grow. In the end even America as a nation will in the main hate Israel.

d) Lawlessness will abound and the love of many will grow cold and many people will be offended by the Gospel message.

It is easy to see how this will be part of the end times. It has already started.

Most people in the U.K. today are offended by the true Gospel message.

You can't preach the truth of the Gospel in the public arena of the U.K. today and soon it will be the case in the U.S.

What we need to realise before we come on to v.14 is that the period of time when these things will happen an intense and alarming way before the return of Jesus will be covered in one generation.

v.34. in N.K.J.

³⁴ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

This means when the severity starts, there will be a period of 25-30 years of these horrible things happening in this world.

A Biblical generation is about 25-30 years.

There are more horrible things to come next month from v. 15-44.

But there is also good news in v. 40-41, so please don't be too alarmed if you are a Christian.

(Some Christians don't believe in the rapture, but I do and next month I will encourage you with this fact)

The important thing for Christians is to concentrate on preaching, teaching and proclaiming the Gospel, while there is still time.

The time is coming when we won't be able to preach the Gospel.

However the Good News is that the Gospel message **will be preached to all nations before the end.**

Our job is **not to be too concerned about these second coming events** but to **preach the Gospel** so that people will at least have a chance of being rescued before it is too late.

Very briefly what is the Gospel of the Kingdom?

There are 7 things that you need to understand.

(provide some slides for these points if possible? Your computer skills are better than mine, thank you. – Alistair.)

1. **We need to understand that the God of the Bible is the only God in the world, there are not many gods.** All other gods are of man's making, they are false, they are idols and they can't help you with Salvation or anything else. (slide of false gods, and say the word false gods, Shinto shrine and Buddha Shrine and Temple slide here)
2. **We need to know that the God of the Bible is our creator owner.**
He created the first man and the first woman. He created us for a purpose. It was to have an eternal relationship with Him. Nevertheless He owned us in a sense that He was our creator. Let me put it this way. If you make something out of your own design and creation, say a paddle for a canoe, or perhaps even a Japanese wooden house?
Would it be O.K. if somebody destroyed it? Would you be upset if someone burned your new house down that you made or broke up your canoe paddle so you couldn't go fishing?
Of course you would be upset. You could no longer use the item for its created purpose.
3. **When God created man He created him for a purpose, that was friendship.** God only gave Adam the first man one rule, that is all. He also gave him a free will. He wasn't created like a Robot. The reason is that Robots can't show love and affection, and you can't really love a Robot. Although some Japanese people have Robot dogs and people, it is not the same.
4. **God warned the first man that if he disobeyed this one rule then he would not live forever, he would die.** Death for the punishment for disobedience.
5. **Sadly Adam disobeyed God's one rule and it brought death to the whole human race.**

(Romans 5: v.12 in N.K.J.)

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

This is the only reason that we have death in our world.

Some people die young and some die old.

Some people die in accidents and some die because of famine or disease. However one day we will all face death, unless Jesus returns to take us home to Heaven.

6. **God loved His created people and decided to provide a way back into His presence.** The problem was God is 100% Holy and He cannot be in the presence of sinful disobedient people.
God had to provide a way to punish mankind's sin without compromising His Holiness. The only way that the God of the Bible could do this was to send His only Son, Jesus Christ to this world.
7. **The purpose of sending Jesus was that He would act as our substitute. He would take the punishment for our sins. (slide of the cross here)**

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¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

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8. **The question I need to ask you this morning is this. Do you want to die and take the punishment for your sin, or do you want to say sorry to Jesus and ask Him to take your sin? (Slide of a Japanese cemetery and a western one here)**

It is as simple as that.

If you are convicted of your sin before a Holy God, then today you need to come to the "Lift Sign" and talk to somebody about it.

Don't leave the service today without talking to a counsellor about your thought!!!

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²⁸ Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

Communion Service**Reading** - Matthew Chapter 24: v.1-14.**Theme:** The Birth pains of the second coming of Jesus.

Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. ²And 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."

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Introduction

We have now come to the last teaching block in Matthew's Gospel.

It is a very important teaching by Jesus because it concerns **His second coming**.

In fact it is the longest answer to any question that the disciples asked Jesus.

This teaching block is **the revelation from the lips of Jesus** about His **return in glory and power**.

If we have any strong views about the second coming of Jesus, it is important to put those views to one side and listen to the voice of Jesus over the next four Communion messages.

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Although we are covering these chapters in four sections, please view them as a whole when we have finished in February 2020. **I will summarize the teaching at our February Communion Service.**

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Everything was destroyed. Only the foundation stones were left which we can see today. (Show slides of the foundation stones)

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With all of this background in mind we now begin to open the text in v. 3-14.

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Jesus is now on the **Mount of Olives** with His disciples. They asked Jesus a specific question based upon their understanding which was not totally correct.

Nevertheless the question the disciples asked concerned **the sign of Jesus coming,** which we call the **second coming,** but they thought would happen very soon.

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To the disciples the "**end of the age**" was a completion of all events that would result in God's Kingdom of righteousness and Justice.

As far as Jesus was concerned, he taught about the end of the age in the parable of the wheat and the tares and the parable of the dragnet.

In both cases it represented the gathering of the wicked by God's Angels in preparation for judgement. (Matt. 13: 39,49)

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Jesus never denied the fact that He was returning to this earth to establish His Kingdom.

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In v. 4-14 Jesus gives us a list of things that will happen before His second coming.

a) Deception concerning Jesus Christ claims.

There are going to be many people claiming to be Jesus Christ, having returned to this earth.

Of course we have always had some people in history claiming to be Jesus, even before His first coming, but the intensity and number of people deceived will greatly increase.

This is because of the miracles which they perform, many will be deceived.

This is an important prophecy from Jesus.

This warning is repeated in v.23-24.

Empowered by demons people who claim to be Jesus Christ will show great signs and miracles and will mislead many people.

It is very interesting to note that there is a cult operating in Japan today that is teaching a doctrine that says Jesus Christ will return again before His second coming. Beware of false teaching from young Chinese people!!!

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Even today in Japan, people are being prepared by Satan to be deceived. b) Wars and Rumours of wars.

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This very disturbing sign has been around for a very long time.

Hitler tried to destroy the Jews, during the second world war in Europe. Today it seems to be the turn of Islam to try and destroy the Jewish nation. As the Islamic religion grows so will the intensity of hatred towards Israel grow. In the end even America as a nation will in the main hate Israel.

d) Lawlessness will abound and the love of many will grow cold and many people will be offended by the Gospel message.

It is easy to see how this will be part of the end times. It has already started.

Most people in the U.K. today are offended by the true Gospel message.

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What we need to realise before we come on to v.14 is that the period of time when these things will happen an intense and alarming way before the return of Jesus will be covered in one generation.

v.34. in N.K.J.

³⁴ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

This means when the severity starts, there will be a period of 25-30 years of these horrible things happening in this world.

A Biblical generation is about 25-30 years.

There are more horrible things to come next month from v. 15-44.

But there is also good news in v. 40-41, so please don't be too alarmed if you are a Christian.

(Some Christians don't believe in the rapture, but I do and next month I will encourage you with this fact)

The important thing for Christians is to concentrate on preaching, teaching and proclaiming the Gospel, while there is still time.

The time is coming when we won't be able to preach the Gospel.

However the Good News is that the Gospel message **will be preached to all nations before the end.**

Our job is **not to be too concerned about these second coming events** but to **preach the Gospel** so that people will at least have a chance of being rescued before it is too late.

Very briefly what is the Gospel of the Kingdom?

There are 7 things that you need to understand.

(provide some slides for these points if possible? Your computer skills are better than mine, thank you. – Alistair.)

1. **We need to understand that the God of the Bible is the only God in the world, there are not many gods.** All other gods are of man's making, they are false, they are idols and they can't help you with Salvation or anything else. (slide of false gods, and say the word false gods, Shinto shrine and Buddha Shrine and Temple slide here)
2. **We need to know that the God of the Bible is our creator owner.**
He created the first man and the first woman. He created us for a purpose. It was to have an eternal relationship with Him. Nevertheless He owned us in a sense that He was our creator. Let me put it this way. If you make something out of your own design and creation, say a paddle for a canoe, or perhaps even a Japanese wooden house?
Would it be O.K. if somebody destroyed it? Would you be upset if someone burned your new house down that you made or broke up your canoe paddle so you couldn't go fishing?
Of course you would be upset. You could no longer use the item for its created purpose.
3. **When God created man He created him for a purpose, that was friendship.** God only gave Adam the first man one rule, that is all. He also gave him a free will. He wasn't created like a Robot. The reason is that Robots can't show love and affection, and you can't really love a Robot. Although some Japanese people have Robot dogs and people, it is not the same.
4. **God warned the first man that if he disobeyed this one rule then he would not live forever, he would die.** Death for the punishment for disobedience.
5. **Sadly Adam disobeyed God's one rule and it brought death to the whole human race.**

(Romans 5: v.12 in N.K.J.)

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

This is the only reason that we have death in our world.

Some people die young and some die old.

Some people die in accidents and some die because of famine or disease. However one day we will all face death, unless Jesus returns to take us home to Heaven.

6. **God loved His created people and decided to provide a way back into His presence.** The problem was God is 100% Holy and He cannot be in the presence of sinful disobedient people.
God had to provide a way to punish mankind's sin without compromising His Holiness. The only way that the God of the Bible could do this was to send His only Son, Jesus Christ to this world.
7. **The purpose of sending Jesus was that He would act as our substitute. He would take the punishment for our sins. (slide of the cross here)**

(John 3: v. 16 in N.K.J.)

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

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8. **The question I need to ask you this morning is this. Do you want to die and take the punishment for your sin, or do you want to say sorry to Jesus and ask Him to take your sin? (Slide of a Japanese cemetery and a western one here)**

It is as simple as that.

If you are convicted of your sin before a Holy God, then today you need to come to the "Lift Sign" and talk to somebody about it.

Don't leave the service today without talking to a counsellor about your thought!!!

Matthew 11: v. 28-30 in N.L.T. to close.

²⁸ Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

Communion Service**Reading** - Matthew Chapter 24: v.1-14.**Theme:** The Birth pains of the second coming of Jesus.

Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. ²And 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."

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⁴And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. ⁶And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. ⁸All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

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Introduction

We have now come to the last teaching block in Matthew's Gospel.

It is a very important teaching by Jesus because it concerns **His second coming**.

In fact it is the longest answer to any question that the disciples asked Jesus.

This teaching block is **the revelation from the lips of Jesus** about His **return in glory and power**.

If we have any strong views about the second coming of Jesus, it is important to put those views to one side and listen to the voice of Jesus over the next four Communion messages.

The ministry of Jesus here here is both **challenging and encouraging**.

Although we are covering these chapters in four sections, please view them as a whole when we have finished in February 2020. **I will summarize the teaching at our February Communion Service.**

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Before we come to this teaching block which starts in v.3 we need to understand a few things.

- a) **The thinking of the Jewish believers**. - Consistent with the teaching of Zechariah **Chapter 14: v.1-5** and other Old Testament prophets, the Jewish people believed that the coming of the Messiah would be **preceded by a time of terrible tribulation**.

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Watch, for the day of the LORD is coming when your possessions will be plundered right in front of you! ²I will gather all the nations to fight against Jerusalem. The city will be taken, the houses looted, and the women raped. Half the population will be taken into captivity, and the rest will be left among the ruins of the city.

³Then the LORD will go out to fight against those nations, as he has fought in times past. ⁴On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem. And the Mount of Olives will split apart, making a wide valley running from east to west. Half the mountain will move toward the north and half toward the south. ⁵You will flee through this valley, for it will reach across to Azal. Yes, you will flee as you did from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all his holy ones with him.

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What the Old Testament Prophets didn't see and to be fair to them, it was not revealed to them, was the "**Church age**" or period of time when mainly Gentiles became disciples of Jesus.

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So the thinking of the Jewish believers was that **soon Jesus was going to establish His kingdom here on this earth.**

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This is because of the miracles which they perform, many will be deceived.

This is an important prophecy from Jesus.

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Especially those who operate on the internet.

Even today in Japan, people are being prepared by Satan to be deceived. b) Wars and Rumours of wars.

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We already know that there is going to be a scarcity of food in the future which is why preparation has already started in the agricultural and food industry to try and prevent future famines.

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This very disturbing sign has been around for a very long time.

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v.34. in N.K.J.

³⁴ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

This means when the severity starts, there will be a period of 25-30 years of these horrible things happening in this world.

A Biblical generation is about 25-30 years.

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(Some Christians don't believe in the rapture, but I do and next month I will encourage you with this fact)

The important thing for Christians is to concentrate on preaching, teaching and proclaiming the Gospel, while there is still time.

The time is coming when we won't be able to preach the Gospel.

However the Good News is that the Gospel message **will be preached to all nations before the end.**

Our job is **not to be too concerned about these second coming events** but to **preach the Gospel** so that people will at least have a chance of being rescued before it is too late.

Very briefly what is the Gospel of the Kingdom?

There are 7 things that you need to understand.

(provide some slides for these points if possible? Your computer skills are better than mine, thank you. – Alistair.)

1. **We need to understand that the God of the Bible is the only God in the world, there are not many gods.** All other gods are of man's making, they are false, they are idols and they can't help you with Salvation or anything else. (slide of false gods, and say the word false gods, Shinto shrine and Buddha Shrine and Temple slide here)
2. **We need to know that the God of the Bible is our creator owner.**
He created the first man and the first woman. He created us for a purpose. It was to have an eternal relationship with Him. Nevertheless He owned us in a sense that He was our creator. Let me put it this way. If you make something out of your own design and creation, say a paddle for a canoe, or perhaps even a Japanese wooden house?
Would it be O.K. if somebody destroyed it? Would you be upset if someone burned your new house down that you made or broke up your canoe paddle so you couldn't go fishing?
Of course you would be upset. You could no longer use the item for its created purpose.
3. **When God created man He created him for a purpose, that was friendship.** God only gave Adam the first man one rule, that is all. He also gave him a free will. He wasn't created like a Robot. The reason is that Robots can't show love and affection, and you can't really love a Robot. Although some Japanese people have Robot dogs and people, it is not the same.
4. **God warned the first man that if he disobeyed this one rule then he would not live forever, he would die.** Death for the punishment for disobedience.
5. **Sadly Adam disobeyed God's one rule and it brought death to the whole human race.**

(Romans 5: v.12 in N.K.J.)

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

This is the only reason that we have death in our world.

Some people die young and some die old.

Some people die in accidents and some die because of famine or disease. However one day we will all face death, unless Jesus returns to take us home to Heaven.

6. **God loved His created people and decided to provide a way back into His presence.** The problem was God is 100% Holy and He cannot be in the presence of sinful disobedient people.
God had to provide a way to punish mankind's sin without compromising His Holiness. The only way that the God of the Bible could do this was to send His only Son, Jesus Christ to this world.
7. **The purpose of sending Jesus was that He would act as our substitute. He would take the punishment for our sins. (slide of the cross here)**

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¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

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8. **The question I need to ask you this morning is this. Do you want to die and take the punishment for your sin, or do you want to say sorry to Jesus and ask Him to take your sin? (Slide of a Japanese cemetery and a western one here)**

It is as simple as that.

If you are convicted of your sin before a Holy God, then today you need to come to the "Lift Sign" and talk to somebody about it.

Don't leave the service today without talking to a counsellor about your thought!!!

Matthew 11: v. 28-30 in N.L.T. to close.

²⁸ Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

Communion Service**Reading** - Matthew Chapter 24: v.1-14.**Theme:** The Birth pains of the second coming of Jesus.

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⁴And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. ⁶And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. ⁸All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

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Introduction

We have now come to the last teaching block in Matthew's Gospel.

It is a very important teaching by Jesus because it concerns **His second coming**.

In fact it is the longest answer to any question that the disciples asked Jesus.

This teaching block is **the revelation from the lips of Jesus** about His **return in glory and power**.

If we have any strong views about the second coming of Jesus, it is important to put those views to one side and listen to the voice of Jesus over the next four Communion messages.

The ministry of Jesus here here is both **challenging and encouraging**.

Although we are covering these chapters in four sections, please view them as a whole when we have finished in February 2020. **I will summarize the teaching at our February Communion Service.**

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Before we come to this teaching block which starts in v.3 we need to understand a few things.

- a) **The thinking of the Jewish believers**. - Consistent with the teaching of Zechariah **Chapter 14: v.1-5** and other Old Testament prophets, the Jewish people believed that the coming of the Messiah would be **preceded by a time of terrible tribulation**.

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Watch, for the day of the LORD is coming when your possessions will be plundered right in front of you! ²I will gather all the nations to fight against Jerusalem. The city will be taken, the houses looted, and the women raped. Half the population will be taken into captivity, and the rest will be left among the ruins of the city.

³Then the LORD will go out to fight against those nations, as he has fought in times past. ⁴On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem. And the Mount of Olives will split apart, making a wide valley running from east to west. Half the mountain will move toward the north and half toward the south. ⁵You will flee through this valley, for it will reach across to Azal. Yes, you will flee as you did from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all his holy ones with him.

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What the Old Testament Prophets didn't see and to be fair to them, it was not revealed to them, was the "**Church age**" or period of time when mainly Gentiles became disciples of Jesus.

We are now living in this age.

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So the thinking of the Jewish believers was that **soon Jesus was going to establish His kingdom here on this earth.**

This Kingdom would **be preceded by a period of terrible persecution of the Jewish people.**

The thinking of the Jewish believers was **correct according to Zechariah chapter 14,** but the **timing** was wrong.

God was going to first extend his grace towards the Gentiles.

- b) **The destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.** – In v. 2 **Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple, which actually happened in A.D. 70**

This is what exactly happened when the Romans invaded Jerusalem and set fire to the Temple.

Everything was destroyed. Only the foundation stones were left which we can see today. (Show slides of the foundation stones)

The disciples **incorrectly connected this event with the second coming of Jesus.**

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With all of this background in mind we now begin to open the text in v. 3-14.

1. The question that the disciples asked Jesus – v. 3

Jesus is now on the **Mount of Olives** with His disciples. They asked Jesus a specific question based upon their understanding which was not totally correct.

Nevertheless the question the disciples asked concerned **the sign of Jesus coming,** which we call the **second coming,** but they thought would happen very soon.

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To the disciples the "**end of the age**" was a completion of all events that would result in God's Kingdom of righteousness and Justice.

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In both cases it represented the gathering of the wicked by God's Angels in preparation for judgement. (Matt. 13: 39,49)

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So to be clear the disciples wanted to know **the signs that preceded His second coming and the establishing of His kingdom here on this earth.**

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He created the first man and the first woman. He created us for a purpose. It was to have an eternal relationship with Him. Nevertheless He owned us in a sense that He was our creator. Let me put it this way. If you make something out of your own design and creation, say a paddle for a canoe, or perhaps even a Japanese wooden house?
Would it be O.K. if somebody destroyed it? Would you be upset if someone burned your new house down that you made or broke up your canoe paddle so you couldn't go fishing?
Of course you would be upset. You could no longer use the item for its created purpose.
3. **When God created man He created him for a purpose, that was friendship.** God only gave Adam the first man one rule, that is all. He also gave him a free will. He wasn't created like a Robot. The reason is that Robots can't show love and affection, and you can't really love a Robot. Although some Japanese people have Robot dogs and people, it is not the same.
4. **God warned the first man that if he disobeyed this one rule then he would not live forever, he would die.** Death for the punishment for disobedience.
5. **Sadly Adam disobeyed God's one rule and it brought death to the whole human race.**

(Romans 5: v.12 in N.K.J.)

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

This is the only reason that we have death in our world.

Some people die young and some die old.

Some people die in accidents and some die because of famine or disease. However one day we will all face death, unless Jesus returns to take us home to Heaven.

6. **God loved His created people and decided to provide a way back into His presence.** The problem was God is 100% Holy and He cannot be in the presence of sinful disobedient people.
God had to provide a way to punish mankind's sin without compromising His Holiness. The only way that the God of the Bible could do this was to send His only Son, Jesus Christ to this world.
7. **The purpose of sending Jesus was that He would act as our substitute. He would take the punishment for our sins. (slide of the cross here)**

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¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

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8. **The question I need to ask you this morning is this. Do you want to die and take the punishment for your sin, or do you want to say sorry to Jesus and ask Him to take your sin? (Slide of a Japanese cemetery and a western one here)**

It is as simple as that.

If you are convicted of your sin before a Holy God, then today you need to come to the "Lift Sign" and talk to somebody about it.

Don't leave the service today without talking to a counsellor about your thought!!!

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⁴And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. ⁶And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. ⁸All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

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Introduction

We have now come to the last teaching block in Matthew's Gospel.

It is a very important teaching by Jesus because it concerns **His second coming**.

In fact it is the longest answer to any question that the disciples asked Jesus.

This teaching block is **the revelation from the lips of Jesus** about His **return in glory and power**.

If we have any strong views about the second coming of Jesus, it is important to put those views to one side and listen to the voice of Jesus over the next four Communion messages.

The ministry of Jesus here here is both **challenging and encouraging**.

Although we are covering these chapters in four sections, please view them as a whole when we have finished in February 2020. **I will summarize the teaching at our February Communion Service.**

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Before we come to this teaching block which starts in v.3 we need to understand a few things.

- a) **The thinking of the Jewish believers**. - Consistent with the teaching of Zechariah **Chapter 14: v.1-5** and other Old Testament prophets, the Jewish people believed that the coming of the Messiah would be **preceded by a time of terrible tribulation**.

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Watch, for the day of the LORD is coming when your possessions will be plundered right in front of you! ²I will gather all the nations to fight against Jerusalem. The city will be taken, the houses looted, and the women raped. Half the population will be taken into captivity, and the rest will be left among the ruins of the city.

³Then the LORD will go out to fight against those nations, as he has fought in times past. ⁴On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem. And the Mount of Olives will split apart, making a wide valley running from east to west. Half the mountain will move toward the north and half toward the south. ⁵You will flee through this valley, for it will reach across to Azal. Yes, you will flee as you did from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all his holy ones with him.

⁶On that day the sources of light will no longer shine, ⁷yet there will be continuous day! Only the LORD knows how this could happen. There will be no normal day and night, for at evening time it will still be light.

⁸On that day life-giving waters will flow out from Jerusalem, half toward the Dead Sea and half toward the Mediterranean, flowing continuously in both summer and winter.

⁹ And the LORD will be king over all the earth. On that day there will be one LORD—his name alone will be worshiped.

What the Old Testament Prophets didn't see and to be fair to them, it was not revealed to them, was the "**Church age**" or period of time when mainly Gentiles became disciples of Jesus.

We are now living in this age.

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²⁵ Now all glory to God, who is able to make you strong, just as my Good News says. This message about Jesus Christ has revealed his plan for you Gentiles, a plan kept secret from the beginning of time. ²⁶ But now as the prophets foretold and as the eternal God has commanded, this message is made known to all Gentiles everywhere, so that they too might believe and obey him.

So the thinking of the Jewish believers was that **soon Jesus was going to establish His kingdom here on this earth.**

This Kingdom would **be preceded by a period of terrible persecution of the Jewish people.**

The thinking of the Jewish believers was **correct according to Zechariah chapter 14,** but the **timing** was wrong.

God was going to first extend his grace towards the Gentiles.

- b) **The destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.** – In v. 2 **Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple, which actually happened in A.D. 70**

This is what exactly happened when the Romans invaded Jerusalem and set fire to the Temple.

Everything was destroyed. Only the foundation stones were left which we can see today. (Show slides of the foundation stones)

The disciples **incorrectly connected this event with the second coming of Jesus.**

- c) **The thinking of the disciples about the second coming, after the resurrection of Jesus.** – It is interesting to note that **even after all the events of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the disciples were still thinking about the return of Jesus to establish His kingdom.**

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⁶ So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, "Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?"

⁷ He replied, "The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know.

With all of this background in mind we now begin to open the text in v. 3-14.

1. The question that the disciples asked Jesus – v. 3

Jesus is now on the **Mount of Olives** with His disciples. They asked Jesus a specific question based upon their understanding which was not totally correct.

Nevertheless the question the disciples asked concerned **the sign of Jesus coming,** which we call the **second coming,** but they thought would happen very soon.

They also asked for the **sign of the end of the age.**

To the disciples the "**end of the age**" was a completion of all events that would result in God's Kingdom of righteousness and Justice.

As far as Jesus was concerned, he taught about the end of the age in the parable of the wheat and the tares and the parable of the dragnet.

In both cases it represented the gathering of the wicked by God's Angels in preparation for judgement. (Matt. 13: 39,49)

Jesus also promised to be with His disciples until the end of the age.

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So to be clear the disciples wanted to know **the signs that preceded His second coming and the establishing of His kingdom here on this earth.**

Jesus never denied the fact that He was returning to this earth to establish His Kingdom.

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The answer that Jesus gives His disciples is a long one and it will take four of my teaching sessions at Communion to cover it. Therefore I need to divide it up into four sections.

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In v. 4-14 Jesus gives us a list of things that will happen before His second coming.

a) Deception concerning Jesus Christ claims.

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Of course we have always had some people in history claiming to be Jesus, even before His first coming, but the intensity and number of people deceived will greatly increase.

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This warning is repeated in v.23-24.

Empowered by demons people who claim to be Jesus Christ will show great signs and miracles and will mislead many people.

It is very interesting to note that there is a cult operating in Japan today that is teaching a doctrine that says Jesus Christ will return again before His second coming. Beware of false teaching from young Chinese people!!!

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This very disturbing sign has been around for a very long time.

Hitler tried to destroy the Jews, during the second world war in Europe. Today it seems to be the turn of Islam to try and destroy the Jewish nation. As the Islamic religion grows so will the intensity of hatred towards Israel grow. In the end even America as a nation will in the main hate Israel.

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4. **God warned the first man that if he disobeyed this one rule then he would not live forever, he would die.** Death for the punishment for disobedience.
5. **Sadly Adam disobeyed God's one rule and it brought death to the whole human race.**

(Romans 5: v.12 in N.K.J.)

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

This is the only reason that we have death in our world.

Some people die young and some die old.

Some people die in accidents and some die because of famine or disease. However one day we will all face death, unless Jesus returns to take us home to Heaven.

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God had to provide a way to punish mankind's sin without compromising His Holiness. The only way that the God of the Bible could do this was to send His only Son, Jesus Christ to this world.
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8. **The question I need to ask you this morning is this. Do you want to die and take the punishment for your sin, or do you want to say sorry to Jesus and ask Him to take your sin? (Slide of a Japanese cemetery and a western one here)**

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²⁸ Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

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In fact it is the longest answer to any question that the disciples asked Jesus.

This teaching block is **the revelation from the lips of Jesus** about His **return in glory and power**.

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Watch, for the day of the LORD is coming when your possessions will be plundered right in front of you! ²I will gather all the nations to fight against Jerusalem. The city will be taken, the houses looted, and the women raped. Half the population will be taken into captivity, and the rest will be left among the ruins of the city.

³Then the LORD will go out to fight against those nations, as he has fought in times past. ⁴On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem. And the Mount of Olives will split apart, making a wide valley running from east to west. Half the mountain will move toward the north and half toward the south. ⁵You will flee through this valley, for it will reach across to Azal. Yes, you will flee as you did from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all his holy ones with him.

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What the Old Testament Prophets didn't see and to be fair to them, it was not revealed to them, was the "**Church age**" or period of time when mainly Gentiles became disciples of Jesus.

We are now living in this age.

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So the thinking of the Jewish believers was that **soon Jesus was going to establish His kingdom here on this earth.**

This Kingdom would **be preceded by a period of terrible persecution of the Jewish people.**

The thinking of the Jewish believers was **correct according to Zechariah chapter 14,** but the **timing** was wrong.

God was going to first extend his grace towards the Gentiles.

- b) **The destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.** – In v. 2 **Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple,** which actually happened in A.D. 70

This is what exactly happened when the Romans invaded Jerusalem and set fire to the Temple.

Everything was destroyed. Only the foundation stones were left which we can see today. (Show slides of the foundation stones)

The disciples **incorrectly connected this event with the second coming of Jesus.**

- c) **The thinking of the disciples about the second coming, after the resurrection of Jesus.** – It is interesting to note that **even after all the events of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the disciples were still thinking about the return of Jesus to establish His kingdom.**

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⁶ So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, "Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?"

⁷ He replied, "The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know.

With all of this background in mind we now begin to open the text in v. 3-14.

1. The question that the disciples asked Jesus – v. 3

Jesus is now on the **Mount of Olives** with His disciples. They asked Jesus a specific question based upon their understanding which was not totally correct.

Nevertheless the question the disciples asked concerned **the sign of Jesus coming,** which we call the **second coming,** but they thought would happen very soon.

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To the disciples the "**end of the age**" was a completion of all events that would result in God's Kingdom of righteousness and Justice.

As far as Jesus was concerned, he taught about the end of the age in the parable of the wheat and the tares and the parable of the dragnet.

In both cases it represented the gathering of the wicked by God's Angels in preparation for judgement. (Matt. 13: 39,49)

Jesus also promised to be with His disciples until the end of the age.

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So to be clear the disciples wanted to know **the signs that preceded His second coming and the establishing of His kingdom here on this earth.**

Jesus never denied the fact that He was returning to this earth to establish His Kingdom.

2. The Answer that Jesus gave his disciples. – v. 4-14.

The answer that Jesus gives His disciples is a long one and it will take four of my teaching sessions at Communion to cover it. Therefore I need to divide it up into four sections.

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In v. 4-14 Jesus gives us a list of things that will happen before His second coming.

a) Deception concerning Jesus Christ claims.

There are going to be many people claiming to be Jesus Christ, having returned to this earth.

Of course we have always had some people in history claiming to be Jesus, even before His first coming, but the intensity and number of people deceived will greatly increase.

This is because of the miracles which they perform, many will be deceived.

This is an important prophecy from Jesus.

This warning is repeated in v.23-24.

Empowered by demons people who claim to be Jesus Christ will show great signs and miracles and will mislead many people.

It is very interesting to note that there is a cult operating in Japan today that is teaching a doctrine that says Jesus Christ will return again before His second coming. Beware of false teaching from young Chinese people!!!

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Even today in Japan, people are being prepared by Satan to be deceived. b) Wars and Rumours of wars.

Once again, there have always been wars and rumours of wars but the intensity will be very great just before the second coming.

b) Famines, Pestilence and Earthquakes.

We already know that there is going to be a scarcity of food in the future which is why preparation has already started in the agricultural and food industry to try and prevent future famines.

At the final stages of the end times the intensity of these things will be horrific.

c) All the nations in the world will hate the Jewish Nation.

This very disturbing sign has been around for a very long time.

Hitler tried to destroy the Jews, during the second world war in Europe. Today it seems to be the turn of Islam to try and destroy the Jewish nation. As the Islamic religion grows so will the intensity of hatred towards Israel grow. In the end even America as a nation will in the main hate Israel.

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It is easy to see how this will be part of the end times. It has already started.

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What we need to realise before we come on to v.14 is that the period of time when these things will happen an intense and alarming way before the return of Jesus will be covered in one generation.

v.34. in N.K.J.

³⁴ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

This means when the severity starts, there will be a period of 25-30 years of these horrible things happening in this world.

A Biblical generation is about 25-30 years.

There are more horrible things to come next month from v. 15-44.

But there is also good news in v. 40-41, so please don't be too alarmed if you are a Christian.

(Some Christians don't believe in the rapture, but I do and next month I will encourage you with this fact)

The important thing for Christians is to concentrate on preaching, teaching and proclaiming the Gospel, while there is still time.

The time is coming when we won't be able to preach the Gospel.

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Very briefly what is the Gospel of the Kingdom?

There are 7 things that you need to understand.

(provide some slides for these points if possible? Your computer skills are better than mine, thank you. – Alistair.)

1. **We need to understand that the God of the Bible is the only God in the world, there are not many gods.** All other gods are of man's making, they are false, they are idols and they can't help you with Salvation or anything else. (slide of false gods, and say the word false gods, Shinto shrine and Buddha Shrine and Temple slide here)
2. **We need to know that the God of the Bible is our creator owner.**
He created the first man and the first woman. He created us for a purpose. It was to have an eternal relationship with Him. Nevertheless He owned us in a sense that He was our creator. Let me put it this way. If you make something out of your own design and creation, say a paddle for a canoe, or perhaps even a Japanese wooden house?
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Don't leave the service today without talking to a counsellor about your thought!!!

Matthew 11: v. 28-30 in N.L.T. to close.

²⁸ Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."