A black and white, upside-down photograph of a city skyline, likely Dubai, featuring prominent skyscrapers like the Burj Khalifa. The image is mirrored vertically, creating a symmetrical effect.

MATTHEW

The Upside umog Kingdom

Matthew 24
Jesus Will Return



Matthew 24:1-14

The first sign of the end times was the destruction of the temple

MATTHEW
The Upside down Kingdom



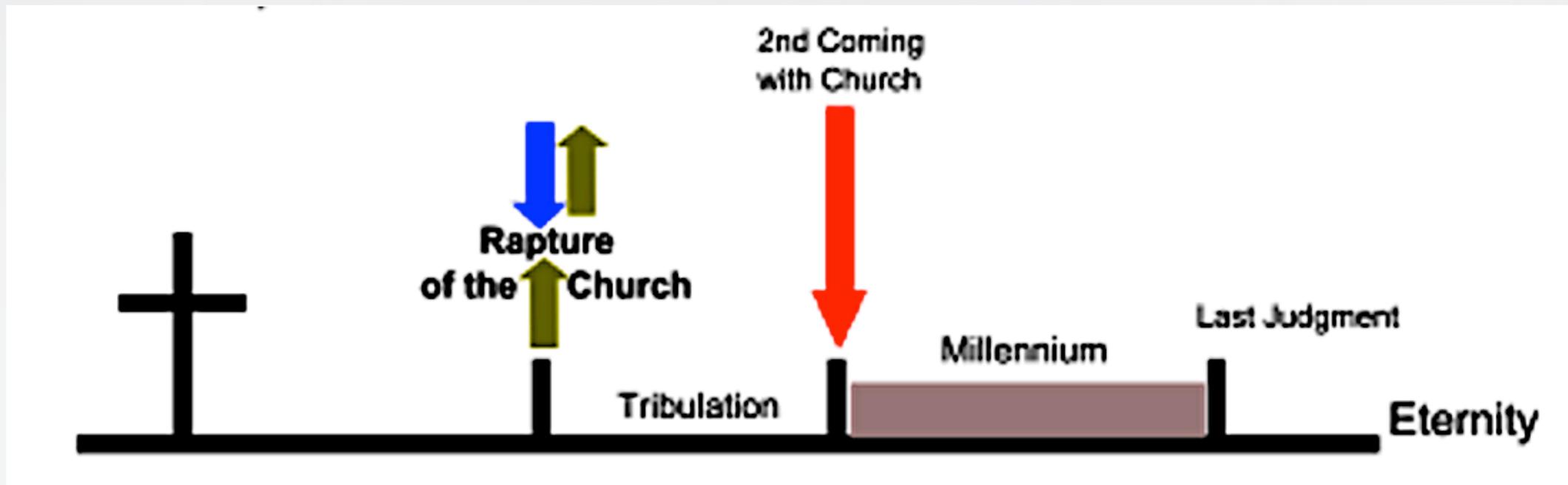
The first sign was the destruction of the temple

- There are various interpretations of this passage.
- Prestonwood teaches a pre-tribulation rapture.
- That is the belief that believers will be caught up together with Jesus in the sky before the tribulation (1 Thessalonians 4:16–18).



The first sign was the destruction of the temple

- Those who are left will go through seven years of tribulation, when the antichrist will rule (Revelation 6–19:10).
- At the end of the tribulation, Jesus will return in His Second Coming (Revelation 19:11–21) and institute the millennium.
- Then will come the final judgment (Revelation 20:11–15) and the new heavens and new earth are created (Revelation 21–22).



MATTHEW
The Upside down Kingdom



The first sign was the destruction of the temple

- Jesus was talking about some “signs of the end of the age” that would be fulfilled in the near future, this first generation of the church (verse 34), as well as some signs that would not happen until His Second Coming in the far future (verse 30).
- This was typical of biblical eschatological prophecy, to have both a near-future fulfillment and an eschatological-future fulfillment.



The first sign was the destruction of the temple

- For example, Daniel's prophecies about the "abomination of desolation" were fulfilled by the Greek ruler Antiochus Epiphanes.
- He declared himself to be God manifest ("Epiphanes"), placed a statue of Zeus (the god he believed was manifest in his own being) in the temple, stole all of the sacred vessels, and sacrificed a pig on the altar.



The first sign was the destruction of the temple

- But there will also be a future Antichrist in the end times who will be another “abomination of desolation.”
- Most of the prophets foretold both near events (such as the Babylonian exile) and future events (such as the Day of the Lord, referring to the final judgment).



The first sign was the destruction of the temple

- In Matthew 24, Jesus described both
 - A near “sign of the end” – the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem.
 - A final “sign of the end” – His physical return in the clouds with power and glory, with angels and loud trumpets (verse 31).



The first sign was the destruction of the temple

- The destruction of the temple (Matthew 24:2) was fulfilled in AD 70.
- The Second Coming of Christ wouldn't be until some unknown time in the distant future, after the Rapture and the Tribulation.
- The other signs described in this chapter happen either with the destruction of the temple or with His glorious return or in between.



The first sign was the destruction of the temple

- These signs will happen over and over until Christ returns (wars, false prophets, famines and earthquakes).
- Jesus told them not to be alarmed when they saw these things happen, “for this must take place, but the end is not yet” (verse 6).
- These things are only “the beginning of the birth pains” (verse 8).



The first sign was the destruction of the temple

- The first sign was the destruction of the temple (AD 70).
- It happened 40 years later: the biblical number for a generation.
- When Jesus said “these things” will take place before this generation passes away (verse 34), He was referring to the near-future fulfillment of the destruction of the temple.



The first sign was the destruction of the temple

- Even as they saw the northern kingdom fall to Assyria, those in Judah thought they were invincible because they had God's Spirit dwelling among them in the temple (Jeremiah 7:1–8).
- But Ezekiel saw a vision of God's Spirit leaving the temple because His people only gave Him lip service. They didn't actually live by His law of justice and righteousness (Ezekiel 10).



The first sign was the destruction of the temple

- God allowed the destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem as a sign of His judgment against His people.
- Jesus was saying He was about to do it again.
- The destruction of the temple in AD 70 was God's judgment against the religious establishment of Jesus' day.



The first sign was the destruction of the temple

- The true end is when the Gospel of the kingdom is proclaimed to every nation – then the end will come (verse 14).
- This is a motivation of many missionary groups, to evangelize every people group, because they believe it will hasten the Second Coming of Jesus.
- Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 1:6–11; Romans 11:25–26; 2 Peter 3:9–15



111 Ethnolinguistic, Unengaged, Unreached People Groups

(sorted by country; populations over 500)

Progress on previously Unengaged People Groups as of May 2021

Many mission organizations and churches have prioritized the sending of workers to previously Unengaged People Groups.

The *Finishing The Task* Network reports the following since November, 2005.

3,196 Groups engaged by 5,245 teams

43,355 Fully-focused vocational workers sent by 422 engaging ministries

89,782 Bi-vocational and part-time workers

157,052 Churches planted

3,612,825 Reported believers

As of this publication, workers have yet to begin engaging the following people groups with the Gospel.

Please prayerfully consider co-laboring together for the acceleration of the Great Commission.

WS-Written Scripture; OS-Oral Scripture; J-JESUS Film; F-Faith/Evangelistic; G-Gospel Recording; R-Radio
C-Churches; B-Believers; WN-Workers Needed (1 per 50k pop., min); WR-Workers Reported

FTT#	COUNTRY	PEOPLE GROUP NAME	POPULATION	ROL	LANGUAGE	RELIGION	WS	OS	J	F	G	R	C	B	WN	WR
657	Argentina	Quichua, Santiago de Estero	64,000	qus	Quichua, Santiago d	Ethnic Religions	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	1	0
1555	Brazil	Apiaká	950	api	Apiaká	Ethnic Religions	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	1	0
5482	Brazil	Kalapalo	550	kui	Kuikúro-Kalapálo	Ethnic Religions	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	1	0
2895	Brazil	Kanindé	1,033	por	Portuguese	Needs Verification	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	1	0
2898	Brazil	Koiupanka	1,100	por	Portuguese	Ethnic Religions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	1	0

MATTHEW
The Upside umog Kingdom



Matthew 24:15-33

No one knows when all of this will happen

MATTHEW
The Upside down Kingdom



No one knows when all of this will happen

- “Abomination of desolation” refers to God’s sanctuary is defiled.
- In AD 66, the Romans shed the innocent blood of priests in the temple, which was a desecration.
- In AD 70, the temple was destroyed, and the Romans erected standards with images of their emperors on its ruins, a further desecration of the site.



No one knows when all of this will happen

- During that time, those in Judea fled to the mountains (verse 16).
- Jesus' advice to flee was parallel to Lot and his family fleeing from the destruction of Sodom.
- Those who stayed in the city and did not flee suffered terribly. Jesus talked about how difficult it would be for a pregnant or nursing mother to flee (verse 19).



No one knows when all of this will happen

- Another “abomination of desolation” will occur in the tribulation.
- Jesus warned His disciples that during the time of tribulation, false prophets would arise and lead people astray (verse 24).
- People would say Christ Himself had come back (verses 23, 26).
- Jesus warned us NOT to believe them.



No one knows when all of this will happen

- The sun will go dark, the stars will fall from heaven.
- Jesus will appear in glory and power coming on the clouds of heaven (imagery is from Daniel's vision in Daniel 7).
- A loud trumpet will sound, and angels will go out and gather the elect from all over the earth (verses 29–31).



No one knows when all of this will happen

- Jesus used the fig tree as a lesson (produced leaves early).
- When you see the sign of the fig tree, you know summer is near.
- In the same way, when you see these signs, you will know Jesus' return is near.
- Everyone will see it Everyone will know it is happening.



Matthew 24:34-51

No one knows when it will actually happen

MATTHEW
The Upside down Kingdom



No one knows when it will actually happen

- The disciples asked for signs, and Jesus gave them some signs.
- All these signs, except for Christ's actual return, happened in their first generation – wars, famine, earthquakes, desecration.
- The only "sign" Jesus gave that isn't repeated in every generation is when the Gospel is proclaimed throughout the world to every nation (verse 14).



No one knows when it will actually happen

- Jesus told His disciples that no one knows the day or the hour He will return, not even Himself (verse 36).
- Instead of wasting your time obsessing over signs, get busy preaching the gospel.
- Get busy doing the work of the kingdom.



No one knows when it will actually happen

- When Jesus comes back, it will be just like the days of Noah.
- People will be going about their regular lives, with no idea that Jesus is about to come and judge the world.
- It will just happen one day, out of the blue, like a thief in the night.
- We don't have any time to waste.



Four conclusions

- We should be ready for Jesus to come back at any time (verse 44).
- We should live our lives for His glory and His kingdom.
- We should be sharing the Gospel with everyone we can.
- We should be working as hard as we can to fulfill the Great Commission.

Israel:

Violent Riots and Rocket Attacks

Jerusalem Post > Middle East

Is Israel reaching a tipping point with internal clashes?

The explosion of violence appears to have come from nowhere but has deep roots in the country.

Soldier viciously beaten in Jaffa, synagogue burned in Lod, as rioting deepens

Numerous reports of shootings, other acts of violence in Jewish-Arab cities throughout country; Gantz extends emergency order in Lod, epicenter of escalating unrest

Rockets launched from Syria amid Palestinian solidarity riots on borders

Eleven Palestinians were killed as over 5,000 people gathered to protest in the West Bank. Over 150 people were injured in the same protests.

Two Events Collide

- Last Sunday was “Jerusalem Day” - a national Israeli holiday commemorating the reunification of Jerusalem and establishment of the Israeli control over the Old City after the 1967 Six Day War.
- It is celebrated with prayer services at the Western Wall.
- The Muslim “Laylat al-Qadr” or “Night of Power” commemorating the night when the first verse of the Qur’an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad by the angel Gabriel.
- Muslims gathered at the al-Aqsa Mosque on the Temple Mount.

Another Controversy

- Arab riots broke out concerning the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood.
- Buildings in this East Jerusalem neighborhood were purchased by Jews 146 years ago. The area was seized by Jordan in 1948.
- When Israel liberated this area of Jerusalem in 1967, the owners of the buildings reasserted their property rights.
- Those land rights were registered in Israel's land registry.
- But when the owners tried to take repossession, a 48-year-old legal battle between owners and squatters and came to an end this week.



Rocket Attacks

- The militant Palestinian group Hamas (zeal), which rules Gaza, called for a new intifada (uprising) against Israel.
- More than 1700 rockets have been launched against Israel, some actually hit Gaza. Most were stopped by the Iron Dome.
- The official charter of Hamas calls for the destruction of Israel in order to raise “the banner of Allah over every inch of Palestine.”
- Israel responded with air strikes and a possible land invasion.







Street Violence

- Hundreds of Jewish extremists in Bat Yam vandalized Arab property and assaulted an Arab driver in his car, dragging him and beating him savagely. Jewish mobs were seen roaming the streets of Haifa and Tiberias looking for Arabs to assault.
- Arab riots were reported in Jerusalem, Lod, Haifa, Tamra, and elsewhere. A Jewish man in Acre was in critical condition after he was assaulted with rocks and iron bars. A Jewish man in Tamra was stabbed and assaulted by an Arab mob. An Arab paramedic said the attackers almost burned the man inside his car.

Israel: Background

- Israel's population is 9 million: 2 million Arabs and 7 million Jews.
- Another 2 million live in Gaza, and 2.7 million live in what is called the West Bank (West of the Jordan River).
- Hamas rules Gaza.
- Fatah rules the West Bank.



No Political Solutions

- One state solution - the Palestinian groups would never allow this.
- Even if this were possible, the Arabs would outnumber the Jews.
- Two state solution - both states would have to agree to the borders and the separation. No agreement about the Temple Mount.
- Jerusalem would be designated as the capital of Israel.
- The Israeli border is only 6 miles wide at one point, and there would be no buffer zone.

Iran and Hamas

- Hamas is fighting against Israel to establish why they are in power. They need an enemy to keep the people in Gaza behind them.
- But the key issue is the influence of Iran in the Middle East.
- Iran has been trying to expand the Shiite crescent and is very concerned about the Saudis.
- The Iranian leaders are also troubled by Israel's relationship with the Sunni nations (Bahrain, UAE, Saudi Arabia) that occurred through the "Abraham Accords" under President Trump.

Iran

- If Israel were to attack Gaza, then that action could be used by the Iranians to argue that Israel is attacking all Muslims.
- Muslims would be obligated to defend Islam (Surah 2:190) and this could unite the Muslim world under Iran.
- Many of the Iranian leaders are looking for the Mahdi to return, and he will return when the world is in chaos.
- The former president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is saying to the Iranian people that the Mahdi will protect them.

Response

- Pray for our leaders (1 Timothy 2:1-2) and those in other countries.
- Pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6).
- Pray for Jews and Muslims to turn to Jesus as their Messiah and Savior. He is the only path to peace (John 16:33).
- Rejoice that an unprecedented number of Jews and Muslims are coming to faith in Jesus.
- Stand against anti-semitism in this country and in the world.