

Jesus' Olivet Discourse

Matthew 24 & 25



Matthew 24:29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

Matthew 24:30 Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Matthew 24:31 And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Most people can identify at least some of the major events that surrounded the first coming of Jesus. Even if all you know is what Linus recounts in the Charlie Brown Christmas special, you know something! There were shepherds in the fields when suddenly a great choir of angels appeared in the heavens directing them to the manger where they would find the Savior as a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths.

The details of the Lord's Second Coming are not so well known. Too bad because the Second Coming of Jesus will be much more spectacular. For one thing, it will be on a global scale. For another, the angels will have a lot more involvement. They won't be confined to the choir but will actively participate.

They're probably not as well known because they are so terrifying to nonbelievers! Jesus described certain key aspects of His return. It sounds like something right out of science fiction.

Matthew 24:29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days...

Mid-way through the Tribulation the antichrist will have defiled the Jewish Temple. Jews flee to the mountains but fully two out of three in the Holy Land will be slaughtered. The rest, along with the 144,000, will be supernaturally protected. The antichrist's presence in the Middle East will draw the armies of the world there to the last great battle, the Battle of Armageddon. As those armies face-off the Lord returns.

Matthew 24:29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

Lighting is important in movies and theater. This is the cosmic back-lighting that is best to emphasize the return of Jesus. It seems the universe itself is darkened so that Jesus can shine all the brighter. Enter stage... East & from above.

The stars will fall from heaven means that there will be massive fluctuations among the heavenly bodies. Astronomers and scientists can predict stellar events centuries in advance due to the laws of physics and the constancy of the universe. In the last days of the Tribulation it will seem as though the very universe is disintegrating. Nothing will be stable.

In a show of His awesome **power** the heavenly bodies will careen through space. All navigation will be futile; there will be no stable reference points.

It's kind of interesting since Jesus is the real reference point around which the universe really exists.

The powers of the heavens will be shaken. Physicists are looking for the Higgs-Boson. It is the particle that they speculate holds the entire universe together. We know it is God who holds the universe together and who sustains it. We're not afraid of science because its search really leads us back to the Creator.

Matthew 24:30 Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven...

One of the original questions asked by the disciples was about the **sign** of His coming. Certainly there are 'signs,' e.g., the abomination of desolation. But the real **sign** is simply Jesus Himself returning from Heaven to earth. He is THE **sign**.

One of the things this reminds us is that Jesus is really returning in a physical body. This is not some secret, spiritual return.

The sight of the risen Savior in all His glory will be overwhelming to His enemies. He destroys them, we read elsewhere, with the very brightness of His coming.

Matthew 24:30 ... and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming...

They will **mourn** over the judgment to come. It will be too late to repent and believe. They are doomed.

Matthew 24:30 ... and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven...

When Jesus ascended into Heaven He was taken into the clouds. The two witnesses who appeared to His disciples told them He would reappear in the same manner.

The Bible is one consistent message from start to finish. It is not a random collection of religious writings. That's why the best commentary on the Bible is the Bible!

Speaking of the Lord's Second Coming Zechariah wrote,

Zechariah 14:6 It shall come to pass in that day *That* there will be no light; The lights will diminish.

Zechariah 14:7 It shall be one day Which is known to the LORD Neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen *That* it will be light.

It is the brilliance of Jesus Christ's own glory that illuminates the world at its very darkest moment.

Matthew 24:30 ... with power and great glory.

Jesus will exercise **power** over the inhabitants and invaders of the planet:

1. The inhabitants are men who have rebelled against Him. They will be cast into Hades.
2. The invaders are the devil and his demons. The devil will be taken by angels and cast into the bottomless pit.

Then the Lord will exercise **power** over the earth. The descriptions throughout the Bible of the Millennial earth are fantastic. For example:

Zechariah 14:8 And in that day it shall be -*That* living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, Half of them toward the eastern sea And half of them toward the western sea; In both summer and winter it shall occur.

Great glory accompanies both His return and reign. Part of that glory is **us** – the saints of the church age. We return with Him in our glorified bodies.

Matthew 24:31 And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

The Lord will send angels to **gather together His elect** from all over the earth. We previously saw that **elect** can refer to the church or to Jews or to those saved during the Tribulation.

Here it probably refers to the Jews. Remember, Jesus is still dealing with Israel in this section.

In 1948, something took place that had never before happened in history: a nation was re-birthed. A nation that hadn't existed for almost two thousand years was suddenly re-established exactly as the Old Testament prophesied when Jews from all over the world gathered in Israel once again.

The things Jesus predicted in this discourse will happen, too – just as He said.