

Refuting Premillennialism – Part 2

- I. *The church age will continue until Christ returns (7 years after the rapture) to finish the business he started (but was unable to complete) in the first century.*
- A. We do now live in the church age; i.e. the last days (**Isaiah 2:2; Acts 2:17; 1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 2:5; Heb. 1:1-2**).
 - B. The church age will continue until Christ returns (**1 Thess. 4:16-17; 1 Cor. 15:22-24**).
 - C. The part about the rapture is assumed to be true, but cannot be proven as such.
 - D. The part about a 7 year period following “the rapture” is assumed, but cannot be proven as such.
 - E. What kind of doctrine has deity unable to complete something? (**Romans 4:20-21; Psalm 1115:3**)
 - F. Christ accomplished His mission (**John 19:30; Plp. 2:8; Rom. 5:10; Eph. 2:16; Heb. 2:14; 9:15; Col. 2:14**).
- II. *Mankind is able to read signs leading up to the return of Christ in order to be ready for the second advent of Christ (the rapture per their view).*
- A. PM have a favorite section of scripture that they appeal to in an effort to prove their doctrine.
 - B. This sign business promotes laziness and inactivity for the real work of the Lord. What is the value in knowing a specific time? If we knew He would return in 2010, people would wait till 2009 to start obeying!
 - C. The unexpectedness of that day is a motivating factor (**Matt. 25:37-51; 25:1-13; Mark 13:35-37**).
 - D. **1 Thessalonians 5:1-6** is as clear as anything can be.
 - E. Matthew 24 is the favorite section of scripture many PM appeal to.
 - 1. In 1969, Billy Graham, in a daily newspaper column, took the signs of **Matt. 24:1-35** and wrote of them as indicators showing that the Lord's second coming was then imminent.
 - 2. Hal Lindsay used this section to predict the Lord's return as happening in 1988.
 - 3. Those “study” Bibles we spoke of before get really wild here.
 - 4. Just a quick surf on the net shows many appeal to this section of text.
 - 5. Let's look at **Matthew 24** below:

Does Matthew 24 Support Premillennial Sign Pointers?

- I. The question that needs to be asked:
- A. Is all of **Matthew 24** discussing the end of time and Jesus' literal second coming, or does at least part of **Matthew 24** deal with the Lord “coming” in judgment (through the Romans) upon Jerusalem in A.D. 70?
 - B. Question #1 = No
 - C. Question #2 = Yes
- II. The preceding context:
- A. To gain a better understand of what Jesus taught, we must first turn to **Matthew 23**.
 - 1. There Jesus brings numerous charges against the Jewish leaders for their mistreatment of God's law (**Matthew 23:1-32**).
 - (a) Pronounced 8 woes.
 - (b) Repeatedly calls them fools, blind, and hypocrites.
 - (c) He then concludes his condemnation by telling them what would be the consequences of their errors (**Matthew 23:34-36**).
 - (i) The Jews had killed God's people in the past (**30**).
 - (ii) Though that current generation thought they were above such misdeeds, Jesus stated that they would continue to kill righteous people.
 - (iii) They were not above the misdeeds of their forefathers; they would be just as guilty and would pay for it (**38**).
 - (iv) The punishment for killing God's people would fall upon that very generation (**36**).
 - 2. Also, see **Matthew 23** in view of the larger context of Matthew.
 - (a) John had foretold the coming of God's wrath upon the Jewish nation, **Matthew 3:7-10**.
 - (i) Part of **Matthew 24 (4-35)** states how and when the axe would fall.
 - (ii) Note: **Matthew 23:33** – Christ and John shared the same message.

3. In case you still do not have it, let me say the same things one more way:
 - (a) **Luke 19:9-15; John 1:11; John 7:1; Matthew 12:14; Matthew 23:37**
 - (b) The Father had sent prophets to prepare the minds of the people for the Messiah – most blew it.
 - (c) The Messiah was amongst the people, but the power broking Jews... **Matthew 23:13**.
 - (d) Jesus in **Matthew 23**...
 - (i) Plainly exposes the power brokers and tells them that they will pay heavily for their actions (**38**).
 - (ii) “I will not be appealing to you any more until you yourselves learn your terrible lesson” (**39**).
 - (iii) He stated that the Temple, as a house destitute of God, would be destroyed (**38**).
 - (iv) Its destruction (along with the city) was inevitable. (There is a lesson to learn here – **2 Kings 23:1-27**.)
 - (v) **Matthew 23:36** – All these things shall come upon this generation.

4. Do you understand the contextual backdrop that leads to the events and questions of **Matthew 24:1-3**? If so, then how can one miss the point that until there is a contextual break, part of **Matthew 24** deals with the destruction of the temple and, thus, Jerusalem?

B. Side-bar:

1. Jesus is here preaching the demolition, not the establishment, of a national, physical, earthly kingdom, and is doing so before He was “surprisingly” rejected.
2. All of this must have come as shocking news to those who were expecting such a thing.

C. **Matthew 24:1-3**.

1. As Jesus and the disciples were leaving the area, the disciples were pointing out to Jesus the glories of the temple (**24:1**).
 - (a) Jesus used the opportunity to emphasize His point.
 - (b) He stated the temple would be destroyed to the point that not one stone would be left upon another.

2. When the disciples had a private moment with Jesus they had questions for Him:
 - (a) When will these things happen?
 - (b) What will be the sign of your coming to destroy the temple?
 - (c) What will be the sign of the end of the world?

3. Jesus’ response:
 - (a) It is highly possible that the disciples thought of all three parts as only one question.
 - (b) **Either way**, Jesus separates the three questions into two segments.
 - (i) He places questions 1 and 2 regarding the temple and Jerusalem into one period of time which could be discerned ahead of time by the proper signs (**24:1-35**).
 - (ii) He placed question three – the one regarding the end of the world –into a second segment (**24:36ff**) (no signs).

D. Helpful hints for **Matthew 24**

1. The careful student will follow the flow of the text. We cannot allow Jesus’ words to apply to the end of time, before He does.
2. The words “coming” and “cometh” with regard to Christ do not always have reference to His coming at the end of time (**John 1:15, 27; 12:13; Acts 7:52; 13:24; Rev. 2:5; 2:16**).
3. The words “the end” (**6, 13, 14**) do not always mean the end of time (**John 13:1; Heb. 9:26; 3:6; 1 Cor. 15:24**).
4. The events leading up to **verse 35** are preceded by signs. What is discussed in **verses 36ff** is not preceded by signs (**24:43**).
5. Jesus was speaking of things that would take place before “**this generation**” passes away (**v. 34**).
 - (a) Note vs. 33. Who is the “ye” referring to?
 - (b) **γίνομαι {gínomai}** - *genea*, a very important word. Jesus uses this word eleven times in Matthew (**11:16; 12:34, 39, 41, 42, 45; 16:4; 17:17; 23:33, 36; 24:34**).
 - (c) The PM position maintains that the word should be translated "race" (NASB footnote).
 - (i) They have Jesus saying “the Jewish race” will not pass away until these things take place.
 - (ii) This would be the only place it would mean race in the whole book.
 - (iii) There is no textual proof in Matthew to have this mean anything other than that the people of that day would personally witness Jesus' prophecy.

6. The use of the demonstrative pronouns – “those days” (19, 22, 29) “these things” (6, 8, 33, 34) versus “that day” (vs. 36).
 - (a) These show a clear distinction between time periods.
 - (b) Side-Note – this also defeats the A.D. 70 Theory that all of chapter 24 is referring to the destruction of Jerusalem.

7. The change from plural "days" to a singular "day."
 - (a) In vs. 4-35 Jesus was talking about events that would take place over a duration of several days (19, 22, 29).
 - (b) Yet when He answers the disciple's third question, He says it will occur on one particular day.
 - (c) Numerous other passages refer to the second coming of Jesus as "the day" of the Lord (e.g. 2 Pet 3:10-12).

8. Look at **verses 16-20**.
 - (a) Why give signs to look for and expect people to look for them so as to be raptured and then ask them to flee?
 - (b) Is Judea a region today?
 - (c) Is the Sabbath in force today? Will it ever be again?
 - (i) Note: according to PM Jesus returns before the rapture and before the Old Testament system is reinstated.
 - (ii) Yet, according to the text the Sabbath (the Old Testament system) is in place before He returns.
 - (iii) How will they get out of this?

9. One must view language like that found in vs. 29-30 in a manner that is consistent with similar language throughout the Bible (Isaiah 13:1-13; 19:1; 34:1-5; Ezekiel 30:1-4; 32:1-8, etc).

10. One must remember that although the Lord is said to be coming, when He does come it will be a sign that He is where (vs. 30)? This one point alone destroys any PM use this section of scripture.

11. Trace the antecedents throughout the context from verse 3.
 - (a) Vs. 4 – them who?
 - (b) Vs. 4 – you who?
 - (c) Vs. 6 – ye (x2) who?
 - (d) Vs. 9 – you who? (By the way – who does they refer to in the context – Bin Laden; a one world government, etc?)
 - (e) Vs. 9 – ye who?
 - (f) Vs. 15 – ye who? (By the way, what readers? Makes no sense if it had no application to those living then.)
 - (g) Vs. 20 – ye who?
 - (h) Vs 23 – you who?
 - (i) Vs 25 – you who?
 - (j) Vs 26 – you who?
 - (k) Vs. 32 – ye who?
 - (l) Vs. 33 – ye who?
 - (m) Vs. 34 – you who?

Next time we will look in detail at the types of signs mentioned in **Matthew 24:4-35**.