

The End of What Age?

By American Vision | Aug 5 2022

“Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?” (Matt. 24:3)

The disciples' question above involves three interrelated, contemporary events: (1) the *time* of the temple's destruction; (2) the *sign* that will signal Jesus' coming related to the destruction of the temple; and (3) the *sign* they should look for telling them that “the end of the age” has come. These questions are related to the destruction of the temple and the end of the Old Covenant redemptive system and nothing else.

Jesus never indicates that He has a distant coming in mind. There is nothing in the Olivet Discourse that would give the reader the impression that a distant event is in view. Jesus told his disciples that He was “going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels” before the last apostle died ([Matt. 16:27–28](#))... *

* I beg to differ: in verse 28 Jesus told his disciple that some of the hearers standing (t)here would not die before seeing Him coming in His kingdom i.e. ending the age and inaugurating His Messianic reign (the millennium”) of the new covenant; but just before that in verse 27 He spoke of his distant coming *in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.* i.e. at the universal judgment at the end of time as per 1 Cor. 15:

24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.

25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.

26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.

This view is supported by what the Lord spoke of in the preceding verses ([Matt.17](#):

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, *“If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.*

25 *For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.*

26 *For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?*

...which speaks of the contrast between temporal and eternal... He proclaims that He will come to present the then consummated kingdom to the Father, eternally judging all men who ever lived, at the end of His reign, which some there would see inaugurated by His ascension, the coming of the Holy Spirit, and the destruction of the old covenant, its temple, and apostate Israel (the divorced Harlot of Revelation) in that generation.

The otherwise irrefutably preterist assessment continues:

...While they did not understand the full implications of this coming in judgment, they did know that it would happen within the span of their generation. Jesus confirms the timing of His coming as He outlines the events leading up to the temple's destruction. We know the temple was destroyed just as Jesus prophesied. This happened within a generation.

For when the Romans had taken Jerusalem, Titus ordered his soldiers to dig up the foundations both of all the city and the temple.... As we read in the Jewish Talmud and in Maimonides, Turnus Rufus, or rather Terentius Rufus, who was left to command the army at Jerusalem, did with a ploughshare tear up the foundation of the temple; and thereby signally fulfilled those words of Micah, (iii. 12,) "Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field." Eusebius too affirms, that it was ploughed up by the Romans, and he saw it lying in ruins.**[1]**

Flavius Josephus (A.D. 37–101), the Palestinian Jewish historian of priestly decent who compiled a history of the Jewish people for the Romans, was an eyewitness to these events. His *Wars of the Jews* was written about A.D. 75, five years after the fall of Jerusalem. He wrote of the temple's destruction that "there was left nothing to make those who had come thither believe it had ever been inhabited."**[2]**

The End of the Age

Notice that the disciples did not ask about the end of the "world" (*kosmos*), as some Bible versions translate the Greek word *aión*. In context, with the temple and city as their primary focus, they asked about the end of the "age." They were asking when time would run out for the temple, the city of Jerusalem, and the covenant promises that were related to the Mosaic system of animal sacrifices, ceremonial washings, and the priesthood.

Time was divided by the Jews into two great periods, the age of the law and the age of the Messiah. The conclusion of the one was the beginning of the other, the opening of that kingdom which the Jews believed the Messiah was to establish, which was to put an end to their sufferings, and to render them the greatest people upon the earth. The apostles, full of this hope, said to our Lord, immediately before his ascension, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" [[Acts 1:6](#)]. Our Lord used the phrase of his coming to denote his taking vengeance upon the Jews by destroying their city and sanctuary.**[3]**

The "end of the age" refers to the end of the Old Covenant redemptive system with its attendant sacrifices and rituals. These were designed to be temporary symbols of the coming atoning work of Christ. The "end of the age" refers to the termination of the exclusive Jewish entitlement to the covenant promises and the inclusion of the Gentiles into the blessings of the covenant and the privileges of the gospel and kingdom ([Matt. 21:41, 43; 22:10](#)). "End of the age" is a covenantal phrase. With the temple destroyed, there would be no way and no need to carry out the rigorous demands of the sacrificial system, a system that was predestined to pass away with the incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension, and enthronement of Jesus. Jesus replaces the sacrificial system as the "lamb of God" ([John 1:29](#)), God's dwelling place as the "temple of God" (2:13–22), God's sanctuary as the "true tabernacle"

([Heb. 8:2](#); [John 1:14](#)), and God's earthly sinful high priest as the "perfect High Priest" ([Heb. 2:17](#), [3:1](#), [5:1-10](#), [7:26-28](#)).[4]

[[source](#)]

Matthew 16:27-28 (ESV)

27 ^aFor the Son of Man is going to come with ^bhis angels in the glory of his Father, and ^cthen he will repay each person according to what he has done. **28** Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not ^dtaste death ^euntil they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

Matthew 16:27-28 — The New International Version (NIV)

27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done.

28 "Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

Matthew 16:27-28 — King James Version (KJV 1900)

27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. **28** Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

Matthew 16:27-28 — New Living Translation (NLT)

27 For the Son of Man will come with his angels in the glory of his Father and will judge all people according to their deeds. **28** And I tell you the truth, some standing here right now will not die before they see the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom."

Matthew 16:27-28 — The New King James Version (NKJV)

27 For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works. **28** Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

Matthew 16:27-28 — New Century Version (NCV)

27 The Son of Man will come again with his Father's glory and with his angels. At that time, he will reward them for what they have done. **28** I tell you the truth, some people standing here will see the Son of Man coming with his kingdom before they die."

Matthew 16:27-28 — American Standard Version (ASV 1901)

27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds. **28** Verily I say unto you, Th

ere are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

Matthew 16:27–28 — 1890 Darby Bible (DARBY)

²⁷ For the Son of man is about to come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then he will render to each according to his doings. ²⁸ Verily I say unto you, There are some of those standing here that shall not taste of death at all until they shall have seen the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

Matthew 16:27–28 — GOD’S WORD Translation (GW)

²⁷ The Son of Man will come with his angels in his Father’s glory. Then he will pay back each person based on what that person has done. ²⁸ I can guarantee this truth: Some people who are standing here will not die until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

Matthew 16:27–28 — The Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB)

²⁷ For the Son of Man is going to come with His angels in the glory of His Father, and then He will reward each according to what he has done. ²⁸ I assure you: There are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.”

Matthew 16:27–28 — The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

²⁷ “For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. ²⁸ Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

Matthew 16:27–28 — The Lexham English Bible (LEB)

²⁷ For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and at that time he will reward each one according to what he has done. ²⁸ Truly I say to you, that there are some of those standing here who will never experience death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

Matthew 16:27–28 — New International Reader’s Version (1998) (NIrV)

²⁷ The Son of Man is going to come in his Father’s glory. His angels will come with him. And he will reward everyone in keeping with what they have done.

²⁸ “What I’m about to tell you is true. Some who are standing here will not die before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

Matthew 16:27–28 — New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update (NASB95)

²⁷ “For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds.

²⁸ “Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.”

