

General Comments on Matthew 24-25

Chapters 24-25 are a unity and should be taken together. Jesus' comments in these two chapters are instigated by the disciples questioning him regarding his pronouncement at the end of ch. 23 that the Temple would be demolished (cf. 23:38). The disciples are largely interested in timing, as to when the Temple will be demolished (v. 24:1-3). Jesus warns them against being deceived by seeking for signs (cf. 24:3-31) and then tells them it is more important to always be ready (cf. 24:32-25:30) for Judgement (cf. 25:31-25:46).

Jesus' message in these chapters is anti-apocalyptic, in that he is telling the disciples not to be sign seekers. Jesus is not telling them when the Day of the Lord is, he is telling them when it isn't. They want to know when the Temple will be overthrown, Jesus doesn't tell them. Instead, he warns them to always be ready because they never know when Judgement will come:

Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh (25:13).

The Jews in general and the apostles in specific wanted Jesus to fulfil the OT predictions of the Day of the Lord at that time. They wanted Jesus to overthrow the Romans and restore the kingdom of Judah to its former glory. And they ask Jesus when he is going to do it.

General Comments on Matthew 24

Christian commentators are divided over how to interpret this chapter. They generally fall into two groups: the historical readers, and the eschatological readers. The historical commentators see the events of ch. 24 as fulfilled with Titus' sack of the Temple in AD 70, and thus the text has no application when it comes to the future. The eschatological commentators read the text as being mainly about the future Second Coming. This lack of harmony in interpretation is because of the difficulty of the text. Reading the text as presented in the KJV is problematic.

Fortunately for the LDS commentator the IV clarifies the text significantly with numerous changes and explanatory comments. The IV makes it clear v. 4-22 are referring to the sack of the Temple at Jerusalem by Titus in AD 70, and that v. 23-31 is referring to the Day of the Lord, or Second Coming in glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. While both of these events were in the future for ancient disciples, only the latter event is now in our future.

The chapter can be divided based upon subject as follows:

- v. 1-2 Q&A regarding demolition of the Temple
- v. 3 Additional questions regarding timing
- v. 4-31 Jesus discusses the events of the end times
 - v. 4-22 The Abomination of Desolation
 - v. 4-14 Events leading up to the Abomination of Desolation, do not be deceived
 - v. 15-22 The Abomination
 - v. 23-31 The Day of the Lord
 - v. 23-28 Events leading up to the Day of the Lord, do not be deceived
 - v. 29-31 Day of the Lord
- v. 32-35 Parable of the Fig Tree
- v. 36-41 As in the days of Noah
- v. 42-51 Watch therefore...

The subject changes in v. 36 and continues through ch. 25 to deal with the importance of being prepared regardless of when these various events are.

Comments on Matthew 24

The Inspired Version (IV), also appearing as Joseph Smith-Matthew (JS-M) in the Pearl of Great Price, on this chapter makes substantial changes to the text. Comments will be made on some of the changes, but changes will not be addressed exhaustively. See the parallel below for the complete comparison. The IV harmonizes the differences between Matthew's and Luke's accounts, but it also clarifies ambiguities between historical and eschatological interpretations.

There is considerable debate among scholarly commentators as to whether this chapter has any eschatological, or latter-days, applications. The IV addresses this issue and unequivocally forwards the view that Daniel's abomination of desolation will be fulfilled twice: once contemporary to Jesus' time and once in the end times.

Parallel accounts of this same discourse appear in Mark 13 and Luke 21:5-36. Both Mark's and Luke's accounts contain unique material. The more significant differences between the accounts are noted in the comments below.

1 AND Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to [him] for to shew him the buildings of the temple. 2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

v1-2 As Jesus leaves the Temple with all of the disciples in tow, the disciples marvel over the impressive nature of the Temple structure (v. 1), and one of the disciples (cf. Mark 13:1) asks him about his prediction that the Temple will be overthrown (cf. 23:38). The disciples are apparently somewhat incredulous that the Temple will be overthrown given its impressive and sturdy construction. Jesus responds to them that the Temple will in fact be thrown down, even so that not one of these very large stones will be left upon another (v. 2).

At least some of the disciples were marveling over the impressive construction of the Temple and its ornate decoration. The First Temple was built by Solomon and was an impressive structure, but was destroyed by the Babylonian siege of Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC. The Second Temple was rebuilt on the foundations of the First Temple around 515 BC (cf. Haggai 1:4-15), and was much more plain than Solomon's Temple. Herod the Great refurbished and greatly expanded the Temple starting around 18 BC and work on the Temple continued through about 63 AD, only about seven years before it was destroyed again in 70 AD by the Roman armies of Titus.

Herod's refurbishing and expansion of the Second Temple was only a small part of his massive nationwide construction campaigns. Josephus, in his Wars of the Jews, spends the entire chapter 21 of book 1 describing all of Herod's constructions. He describes the Temple construction as follows:

Accordingly, in the fifteenth year of his reign, Herod rebuilt the temple, and encompassed a piece of land about it with a wall, which land was twice as large as that before enclosed. The expenses he laid out upon it were vastly large also, and the riches about it were unspeakable. A sign of which you have in the great cloisters that were erected about the temple, and the citadel which was on its north side. The cloisters he built from the foundation, but the citadel he repaired at a vast expense; nor was it other than a royal palace, which he called Antonia, in honor of Antony. He also built himself a palace in the Upper city, containing two very large and most beautiful apartments; to which the holy house itself could not be compared [in largeness]. The one apartment he named Caesareum, and the other Agrippium, from his [two great] friends. (Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 1, Chapter 21, Paragraph 1)

Later in the same work Josephus further describes the Temple in the following manner:

Now nine of these gates were on every side covered over with gold and silver, as were the jambs of their doors and their lintels; but there was one gate that was without the [inward court of the] holy house, which was of Corinthian brass, and greatly excelled those that were only covered over with silver and gold.... Now the magnitudes of the other gates were equal one to another; but that

over the Corinthian gate, which opened on the east over against the gate of the holy house itself, was much larger; for its height was fifty cubits; and its doors were forty cubits; and it was adorned after a most costly manner, as having much richer and thicker plates of silver and gold upon them than the other....

As to the holy house itself, which was placed in the midst [of the inmost court], that most sacred part of the temple, it was ascended to by twelve steps; and in front its height and its breadth were equal, and each a hundred cubits, though it was behind forty cubits narrower; for on its front it had what may be styled shoulders on each side, that passed twenty cubits further. Its first gate was seventy cubits high, and twenty-five cubits broad; but this gate had no doors; for it represented the universal visibility of heaven, and that it cannot be excluded from any place. Its front was covered with gold all over...But that gate which was at this end of the first part of the house was, as we have already observed, all over covered with gold, as was its whole wall about it; it had also golden vines above it, from which clusters of grapes hung as tall as a man's height. But then this house, as it was divided into two parts, the inner part was lower than the appearance of the outer, and had golden doors of fifty-five cubits altitude, and sixteen in breadth; but before these doors there was a veil of equal largeness with the doors. It was a Babylonian curtain, embroidered with blue, and fine linen, and scarlet, and purple, and of a contexture that was truly wonderful. Nor was this mixture of colors without its mystical interpretation, but was a kind of image of the universe; for by the scarlet there seemed to be enigmatically signified fire, by the fine flax the earth, by the blue the air, and by the purple the sea; two of them having their colors the foundation of this resemblance; but the fine flax and the purple have their own origin for that foundation, the earth producing the one, and the sea the other. This curtain had also embroidered upon it all that was mystical in the heavens, excepting that of the [twelve] signs, representing living creatures....

Now the outward face of the temple in its front wanted nothing that was likely to surprise either men's minds or their eyes; for it was covered all over with plates of gold of great weight, and, at the first rising of the sun, reflected back a very fiery splendor, and made those who forced themselves to look upon it to turn their eyes away, just as they would have done at the sun's own rays. But this temple appeared to strangers, when they were coming to it at a distance, like a mountain covered with snow; for as to those parts of it that were not gilt, they were exceeding white. On its top it had spikes with sharp points, to prevent any pollution of it by birds sitting upon it. Of its stones, some of them were forty-five cubits in length, five in height, and six in breadth. Before this temple stood the altar, fifteen cubits high, and equal both in length and breadth; each of which dimensions was fifty cubits. (Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 5, Chapter 5, Paragraphs 3-6)

Clearly, the Temple as refurbished by Herod was an impressive and awe-inspiring structure. This is probably why the disciples were a bit surprised when Jesus said it would be overthrown. But, Jesus was not so impressed by Herod's construction as they were.

v1 Mark 13:1 and Luke 21:5 indicates the disciples were commenting on the impressive size and nature of the stones used in construction of the Temple. The IV indicates the context is their marveling over how Jesus could be predicting they will all be toppled (cf. Luke 19:44).

That Jesus had predicted the Temple would be made desolate, as indicated in the IV on v. 1, suggests the prediction of 23:38 of the Pharisees' house being made desolate is a reference to the Temple. To the Jewish student of the Scriptures Jesus' reference to the house being made desolate would immediately bring Daniel's Desolation of Abomination to mind, hence the disciple's further questions and Jesus' subsequent comments on it.

v2 Jesus makes it plain he was both serious and was speaking literally when he said they Temple would be made desolate. He indicates the Temple will be knocked down, stone by stone. This was fulfilled anciently in 70 AD by Roman armies headed by Titus. Various passages in John's Revelation use language from Daniel to suggest a second eschatological Desolation of Abomination as well.

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? 4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. 5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. 6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all [these things] must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. 8 All these [are] the beginning of sorrows. 9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. 10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. 11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. 13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

v3-14 After leaving the Temple, Jesus retires to the mount of Olives. Some of the disciples come to him privately to ask him when the Day of the Lord will be (v. 3). Jesus warns them against being deceived (v. 4) because there will be great afflictions and many false messiahs and false prophets will appear and deceive many (v. 5-12). But, those who remain true and endure to the end will be saved in kingdom of Heaven (v. 13-14).

The most prominent apostles approach Jesus privately, apparently hoping for additional insight into when the Day of the Lord will happen. Jesus tells them not to be deceived, and that they should endure to the end regardless. Their interest is in when these events are to occur. Jesus' interest is when it comes to an individual's salvation, it doesn't matter when these events occur.

Note all of Jesus' comments here are very generalized. There will be false messiahs, and false prophets, and persecutions, and backstabbing, and sin. When has this not been the case? Jesus is effectively making a policy statement on the general condition of society. Things will always be messy when it comes to human populations, so it is the individual's responsibility to endure it.

The apostles are believing and hoping the Day of the Lord is imminent. They see themselves as being the leaders in the soon to be restored Kingdom of David with Jesus as King (cf. 20:20-21, Mark 9:33-34). Even after Jesus' death, they are still assuming the Day of the Lord is imminent (cf. Acts 1:6-7, also see 2 Thes. 2:1-5). It is not until after the day of Pentecost that the apostles appear to fully understand they are to lead a spiritual kingdom and not a physical one.

This same notion of the immediacy of the event was present among the early restored LDS Church. All of the early Church leaders saw it as imminent, and Smith even enquired as to the date, only to be rebuffed, cf. D&C 130:14-17.

v3 Mark's account (cf. Mark 13:3) specifically mentions Peter, James, John, and Andrew as the disciples who approached Jesus privately.

v4 Jesus' primary interest here is the faithful not being deceived. This is particularly emphasized in the discussion of the events leading up to the Day of the Lord, cf. v. 23-26.

v5 After this verse Mark 13:9-12 and Luke 21:12-16 insert predictions of imminent persecution and contention combined with an admonition to rely on the Holy Spirit in these trials.

v7 Luke 21:11 appends "and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven."

v9 After this verse Luke 21:18-19 inserts "Yet not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance you will gain your lives" (New American Standard).

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) 16 Then let them which be in Judaea

flee into the mountains: 17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: 18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. 19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! 20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: 21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

v15-22 Jesus then gives a somewhat more explicit warning by referring to the prediction of Temple destruction by Daniel. Jesus endorses this prediction as literal and one that is yet to be fulfilled. But, note he still does not say when it will occur, just that it will.

Matthew's account does not contain any explicit reference to Jerusalem, although it does reference "Judea". The Luke 21:20-23 account explicitly cites Jerusalem and the people in the land of that city. On v. 21 the IV appears to harmonize Matthew's and Luke's accounts by making explicit reference to Jerusalem, Jews, and Israel.

Here and again in v. 29-31 Jesus draws on OT Prophets to address the main points. In doing so Jesus is probably gently rebuffing the four of them by referring them back to the current Scriptures rather than giving them the new information they are asking for. He is telling them all the revelation on the matter intended to be available is already in their hands, so go spend some more time with that.

However, something added by Jesus' comments is that these various predictions by the OT Prophets are presented as both literal part of God's word which will be fulfilled. Thus, this is an endorsement by Jesus of those preceding prophets. Similarly, Jesus' equation of the Day of the Lord with his Second Coming in glory is made explicit by himself, which would otherwise be left implicit.

v19 Hela. 15:2 contains a similar warning, but qualifies it based upon righteousness:

Yea, except ye repent, your women shall have great cause to mourn in the day that they shall give suck; for ye shall attempt to flee and there shall be no place for refuge; yea, and woe unto them which are with child, for they shall be heavy and cannot flee; therefore, they shall be trodden down and shall be left to perish.

v21-22 The IV on these verses (IV v. 18-24) explicitly identifies Jerusalem and is supported by, and perhaps even derived from, Luke 21:23-24. The IV v. 24 also explicitly cites the "times of the Gentiles" and states that Jerusalem shall be trodden under the feet of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles is fulfilled, cp. D&C 45:25-30.

v22 The IV inserts the phrase "according to the covenant". The salvation of natural Israel is still the Lord's top priority per the Abrahamic covenant.

After this verse, the IV inserts two verses making it clear a change in time has occurred, thus identifying a shift from a contemporaneous setting to an eschatological setting.

23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here [is] Christ, or there; believe [it] not. 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if [it were] possible, they shall deceive the very elect. 25 Behold, I have told you before. 26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, [he is] in the secret chambers; believe [it] not. 27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

v23-28 Jesus expands his warning against false messiahs from v. 5. He states that when He comes again in His glory it will not be a hidden thing. Jesus is implicitly referring to all of the various OT prophetic statements concerning the Day of the Lord. The events depicted therein are major events that will affect all nations and the whole world. So, if anyone tells the messiah has returned in secret, then they are obviously liars or deceived themselves.

v24 The IV inserts two verses informing us the warning is given for the sake of the elect, and therefore serve as signs to those who have eyes to see per v. 32-33. He states the events described must come to pass, but these events are a forerunner of "the end".

v25 The Mark 13:23 account of this verse better conveys Jesus' intent as a warning:

But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.

v26-28 These verses are a distillation of Luke 17:23-37, but the

IV expands on Luke's account considerably, making explicit reference to Daniel's abomination of desolation.

One substantial difference between the two accounts is the Luke 17 version makes use of Noah's Deluge and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah as well, but does not reference Daniel's Abomination of Desolation. The KJV and IV on Matthew do not make mention of Sodom and Gomorrah, but it does reference Daniel's Abomination of Desolation.

The difference between these two accounts may be due to the target audiences. In the Matthew 24 version, especially the IV account, Jerusalem and Judea are explicitly referenced as where the events are to take place. In the Luke 17 version Jesus is asked generally about the arrival of the kingdom of God, and no specific locale is given. Thus, Daniel's abomination of desolation would be associated with Jerusalem in specific and Sodom and Gomorrah would be associated with world in general.

v27 The IV changes the KJV "lightning" to "light" in the sense of a new day dawning and all the world seeing it. This emendation fits better as lightning is a local rather than universal event, and Jesus' simile is that his second advent will be a universal event, unlike those described in v. 26.

The "new day dawning" can be taken as a metaphor of the advent of the millennium, but more specifically it can be equated with the events described in Zechariah 14:6-7.

v28 The simile employed here originally appears in Luke 17:37 and just as the IV on that passage presents it as a symbol of the gathering of the remnant, so does the IV on this passage.

"eagles", better translated "vultures".

29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

v29-31 Following on the theme of v. 23-28, Jesus accentuates the universality of the events of the Day of the Lord. All the world will be affected by these events as the heavens, moon, and stars will be shaken (v. 29). All people on earth will be afflicted by these things. Then they will see the Lord Himself coming out of

heaven (v. 30), and He will send His angels to gather the elect (v. 31).

Jesus' comments here plainly equate his Second Coming with the Day of the Lord as described in the OT Prophets. Jesus explicitly quotes OT Prophets to describe "the sign of the Son of Man".

v29 The Luke 21:25-26 account inserts additional warnings:

and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth:

"the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven", a quotation of Joel 2:10 (see also Isa. 13:10), which is a description of the Day of the Lord.

v30 "Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven", a quotation of Dan. 7:13.

v31 This verse is generally taken to be referring to the "rapture", wherein the believers are caught up into the sky to meet the condescending Jesus, cf. 1 Thes. 4:16-17, D&C 45:45, D&C 88:96, D&C 101:31, D&C 109:75. However, a more mundane reading is entirely possible.

"great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together", a quotation of Isa. 27:13.

32 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer [is] nigh: 33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, [even] at the doors. 34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. 35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

v32-51 Jesus changes the subject away from the Day of the Lord to a series of admonitions of "be prepared". This theme carries on through the ch. 25.

v32-35 Jesus gives these descriptions so those who are watching for them may know the chain of events leading up to the Second Coming. Just as you can see a fig tree budding you know it will leaf out (v. 32-33), so when you see the given events you know the Day of the Lord is coming (v. 34-35).

However, note there is a considerable amount of ambiguity

left in the descriptors and signs provided. These events can take years to fulfil over time (Jesus limits the time period to one generation, which is anywhere from 20 to 100 years in the Scriptures), so while Jesus gives general indicators he leaves plenty of space for people to not be able to pin down exact timing thus becoming short-sighted sign seekers, cf. v. 42-43.

v33 The Luke 21:31 account explicitly identifies Matthew's "it" as "the kingdom of God".

v35 After this verse Luke 21:28 inserts a verse that changes the mood from one of fretful watching to one of looking for salvation:

And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

36 But of that day and hour knoweth no [man], no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. 37 But as the days of Noe [were], so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, 39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 41 Two [women shall be] grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

v36-42 Nobody on earth knows exactly when the Day of the Lord will be (v. 36), so don't be caught unawares (v. 37-41), rather be watchful (v. 42).

These verses again paraphrase the original introduction from Luke 17:23-37. The Luke 21:34-36 account omits the material from v. 37-41 but adds a more generalized commentary on the events surrounding the Deluge, and then incorporates and expands on the material from v. 42:

And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

"Surfeiting" means to glut or gorge oneself. Luke 21:36 also

states the faithful will escape the destruction, just as Noah and his family escaped the Deluge.

Mark's 13:34-37 account then inserts a parable of a man taking a far journey:

For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

v37 That Jesus would make reference to the days of Noah by ways of comparison indicates how bad things will be for those in the latter days. Just as there was gross immorality and general abandonment of religion necessitated the general destruction of the people, so will it be in the latter days.

v40-41 The IV on Luke 17:36-40 presents those "taken" as the elect who are gathered and spared from destruction. The typical reading on "taken" is those who are killed.

43 But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. 44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. 45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? 46 Blessed [is] that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. 47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. 48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; 49 And shall begin to smite [his] fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; 50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for [him], and in an hour that he is not aware of, 51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint [him] his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

v42-51 If we knew exactly when we were to be held accountable, we would only be ready then.

Jesus explains precisely why he doesn't give a step by step detailed countdown of time and events. The ambiguity of the events in v. 32-36 is intentional so as prove people. Blessed are those who do what is right because it is right, and cursed are the hypocrites.

Naturally, there are many people who will live and die previous to the Second Advent, and so their moment of confrontation is not some far off time that they can see the signs of warning them of approach.

v51 The IV appends a verse citing a prophecy, or testimony, of Moses. There are numerous passages in the Law that use the formula "cut off from among his/their people" which are all associated with committing some flagrantly sinful act, cf. Exod. 31:14, Lev. 17:4-10, Lev. 18:29, Lev. 20:3-6, Num. 15:30. Thus, we would assume this is a general statement indicating the Lord will enforce the Law in its fullest extent at the Day of Judgement. While men imperfectly applied the Law on the earth, the Lord will perfectly apply it in Judgement. And when He does the wicked will be cut off from their people.

This is an interesting point as it places the ultimate fulfilment of the various punishments of the Law in the context of the Judgement Day, as opposed to the typical reading we use of the sinner being caught and punished on earth.

The ultimate punishment is that of being "cut off from among the people". Contrast this with Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, and Jacob who were all "gathered [un]to his people", cf. Gen. 25:8, Gen. 25:7, Gen. 35:29, Gen. 49:33.

Matthew 24 Parallel of KJV & IV Translations

KJV

1 And Jesus went out,
and departed from the temple:
and his disciples
came to him for

to shew him
the buildings of the temple.

2 And Jesus said unto them,
See ye not all these things?

verily I say unto you,
There shall not be left here

one stone upon another,
that shall not be thrown down.

3 And as he sat
upon the mount of Olives,
the disciples

IV

1 And Jesus went out,
and departed from the temple;
and his disciples
came to him for to hear him,
saying, Master,
show us concerning
the buildings of the temple;
as thou hast said;
They shall be thrown down
and left unto you desolate.
2 And Jesus said unto them,
See ye not all these things?
And do ye not understand them?
Verily I say unto you,
There shall not be left here
upon this temple,
one stone upon another,
that shall not be thrown down.
3 And Jesus left them and went
upon the mount of Olives.
4 And as he sat
upon the mount of Olives,
the disciples

came unto him privately,
saying, Tell us,
when shall these things be?

and what shall be
the sign of thy coming,
and of the end of the world?

4 And Jesus answered
and said unto them,
Take heed that no man deceive you.

5 For many shall come in my name,
saying,
I am Christ;
and shall deceive many.

6 And ye shall hear of wars
and rumours of wars:
see that ye be not troubled:
for all these things
must come to pass,
but the end is not yet.

7 For nation shall rise
against nation,
and kingdom against kingdom:
and there shall be famines,
and pestilences,
and earthquakes,
in divers places.

8 All these are
the beginning of sorrows.

9 Then shall they
deliver you up to be afflicted,
and shall kill you:
and ye shall be hated
of all nations for my name's sake.

10 And then shall
many be offended,
and shall betray one another,
and shall hate one another.

11 And many false prophets
shall rise,
and shall deceive many.

12 And because iniquity
shall abound,
the love of many shall wax cold.

13 But he that shall
endure unto the end,

the same shall be saved.

14 And this gospel of the kingdom
shall be preached in all the world
for a witness unto all nations;
and then shall the end come.

came unto him privately,
saying, Tell us,
when shall these things be
which thou hast said
concerning the destruction
of the temple,
and the Jews;
and what is
the sign of thy coming;
and of the end of the world?
(or the destruction of the wicked,
which is the end of the world.)

5 And Jesus answered
and said unto them,
Take heed that no man deceive you.

6 For many shall come in my name,
saying,
I am Christ;
and shall deceive many.

7 Then shall they
deliver you up to be afflicted,
and shall kill you;
and ye shall be hated
of all nations for my name's sake.

8 And then shall
many be offended,
and shall betray one another,
and shall hate one another.

9 And many false prophets
shall arise,
and shall deceive many.

10 And because iniquity
shall abound,
the love of many shall wax cold.

11 But he that
remaineth steadfast,
and is not overcome,
the same shall be saved.

15 When ye therefore shall see
the abomination of desolation,
spoken of by Daniel the prophet,

stand in the holy place,
(whoso readeth,
let him understand:)

16 Then let them
which be in Judaea
flee into the mountains:

17 Let him which is on
the housetop not come down
to take any thing
out of his house:

18 Neither let him
which is in the field
return back to take his clothes.

19 And woe unto them
that are with child,
and to them
that give suck in those days!

20 But pray ye
that your flight
be not in the winter,
neither on the sabbath day:
21 For then

shall be great tribulation,

such as was not since

the beginning of the world
to this time,
no, nor ever shall be.

22 And except those days
should be shortened,
there should no flesh
be saved:
but for the elect's sake

those days shall be shortened.

12 When ye therefore, shall see
the abomination of desolation,
spoken of by Daniel the prophet,
concerning the destruction
of Jerusalem,

then ye shall
stand in the holy place.

(Whoso readeth
let him understand.)

13 Then let them
who are in Judea,
flee into the mountains.

14 Let him who is on
the housetop, flee, and not return
to take anything
out of his house.

15 Neither let him
who is in the field,
return back to take his clothes.

16 And woe unto them
that are with child,
and unto them
that give suck in those days!

17 Therefore,
pray ye the Lord,
that your flight
be not in the winter,
neither on the Sabbath day.

18 For then,
in those days,
shall be great tribulations
on the Jews,
and upon the inhabitants
of Jerusalem;

such as was not
before sent upon Israel,
of God,
since the beginning of their kingdom
until this time;
no, nor ever shall be
sent again upon Israel.

19 All things
which have befallen them,
are only the beginning
of the sorrows
which shall come upon them;
and except those days
should be shortened,
there should none of their flesh
be saved.

20 But for the elect's sake,
according to the covenant,
those days shall be shortened.

21 Behold these things
I have spoken unto you
concerning the Jews.

22 And again,

23 Then if any man
shall say unto you,
Lo, here is Christ,
or there;
believe it not.

24 For
there shall arise false Christs,
and false prophets,
and shall shew
great signs and wonders;
insomuch that,
if it were possible,
they shall deceive the very elect.

25 Behold,
I have told you before.

26 Wherefore
if they shall say unto you,
Behold,
he is in the desert;
go not forth:
behold,
he is in the secret chambers;
believe it not.

27 For as the lightning
cometh out of the east,
and shineth even unto the west;

so shall also
the coming of the Son of man be.

28 For
wheresoever the carcass is,
there will the eagles
be gathered together.

after the tribulation
of those days
which shall come upon Jerusalem,
if any man
shall say unto you,
Lo! here is Christ,
or there;
believe him not.

23 For in those days,
there shall also arise false Christs,
and false prophets,
and shall show
great signs and wonders;
insomuch that,
if possible,
they shall deceive the very elect,
who are the elect
according to the covenant.

24 Behold,
I speak these things unto you
for the elect's sake.

25 And ye also shall hear of wars,
and rumors of wars;
see that ye be not troubled;
for all I have told you
must come to pass.
But the end is not yet.

26 Behold,
I have told you before,
Wherefore,
if they shall say unto you,
Behold,
he is in the desert;
go not forth.

Behold,
he is in the secret chambers;
believe it not.

27 For as the light of the morning
cometh out of the east,
and shineth even unto the west,
and covereth the whole earth;

so shall also
the coming of the Son of man be.

28 And now I show unto you a parable.
Behold,

wheresoever the carcass is,
there will the eagles
be gathered together;
so likewise shall mine elect
be gathered
from the four quarters of the earth.

29 And they shall hear of wars,
and rumors of wars.

Behold,
I speak unto you
for mine elect's sake.

30 For nation shall

<p>29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:</p> <p>30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.</p> <p>31 And he shall send his angels</p>	<p>rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there shall be famine and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. 31 And again, because iniquity shall abound, the love of men shall wax cold; but he that shall not be overcome, the same shall be saved. 32 And again, this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come, or the destruction of the wicked. 33 And again shall the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, be fulfilled. 34 And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken. 35 Verily I say unto you, this generation, in which these things shall be shown forth, shall not pass away until all I have told you shall be fulfilled. 36 Although the days will come that heaven and earth shall pass away, yet my word shall not pass away; but all shall be fulfilled. 37 And as I said before, after the tribulation of those days, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken, then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn. 38 And they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. 39 And whoso treasureth up my words, shall not be deceived. 40 For the Son of man shall come, and he shall send his angels</p>
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with a great sound of a trumpet,
and they shall gather together

his elect from the four winds,
from one end of heaven
to the other.

32 Now learn a parable
of the fig tree;
When his branch is yet tender,
and putteth forth leaves,
ye know that summer is nigh:

33 So likewise ye,
when ye shall see
all these things,
know that it is near,
even at the doors.

34 Verily I say unto you,
This generation shall not pass,
till all these things
be fulfilled.

35 Heaven and earth
shall pass away,
but my words shall not pass away.

36 But of that day and hour
knoweth no man,
no, not the angels of heaven,
but my Father only.

37 But as the days of Noe were,
so shall also
the coming of the Son of man be.

38 For as in the days
that were before the flood

they were eating and drinking,
marrying and giving in marriage,
until the day that Noe
entered into the ark,

39 And knew not
until the flood came,
and took them all away;
so shall also
the coming of the Son of man be.

40 Then shall two
be in the field;
the one shall be taken,
and the other left.

41 Two women
shall be grinding at the mill;
the one shall be taken,
and the other left.

before him
with the great sound of a trumpet,
and they shall gather together
the remainder of

his elect from the four winds;
from one end of heaven
to the other.

41 Now learn a parable
of the fig tree:
When its branches are yet tender,
and it begins to put forth leaves,
ye know that summer is nigh at hand.

42 So likewise mine elect,
when they shall see
all these things,
they shall know that he is near,
even at the doors.

43 But of that day and hour
no one knoweth;
no, not the angels of God in heaven,
but my Father only.

44 But as it was in the days of Noah,
so it shall be also
at the coming of the Son of man.

45 For it shall be with them
as it was in the days
which were before the flood;
for until the day

that Noah entered into the ark,
they were eating and drinking,
marrying and giving in marriage,

and knew not
until the flood came
and took them all away;
so shall also
the coming of the Son of man be.

46 Then shall be fulfilled
that which is written, that,
In the last days,

47 Two shall
be in the field;
the one shall be taken
and the other left.

48 Two
shall be grinding at the mill;
the one taken
and the other left.

49 And what I say unto one,

42 Watch therefore:
for ye know not
what hour your Lord doth come.
43 But know this,
that if the goodman of the house
had known in what watch
the thief would come,
he would have watched,
and would not have suffered
his house to be broken up.

44 Therefore be ye also ready:
for in such an hour
as ye think not
the Son of man cometh.

45 Who then
is a faithful and wise servant,
whom his lord hath made ruler
over his household,
to give them meat in due season?

46 Blessed is that servant,
whom his lord when he cometh
shall find so doing.

47 Verily I say unto you,
That he shall make him
ruler over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant
shall say in his heart,
My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite
his fellow servants,
and to eat and drink
with the drunken;

50 The lord of that servant
shall come in a day
when he looketh not for him,
and in an hour

that he is not aware of,

51 And shall cut him asunder,
and appoint him his portion
with the hypocrites:
there shall be weeping
and gnashing of teeth.

I say unto all men;
Watch, therefore,
for ye know not
at what hour your Lord doth come.
50 But know this,
if the good man of the house
had known in what watch
the thief would come,
he would have watched,
and would not have suffered
his house to have been broken up;
but would have been ready.

51 Therefore be ye also ready;
for in such an hour
as ye think not,
the Son of man cometh.

52 Who then
is a faithful and wise servant,
whom his Lord hath made ruler
over his household,
to give them meat in due season?

53 Blessed is that servant,
whom his Lord when he cometh
shall find so doing;

54 And, verily I say unto you,
he shall make him ruler
over all his goods.

55 But if that evil servant
shall say in his heart,
My Lord delayeth his coming;

and shall begin to smite
his fellow servants,
and to eat and drink
with the drunken;

the Lord of that servant
shall come in a day
when he looketh not for him,
and in an hour

that he is not aware of,

and shall cut him asunder,
and shall appoint him his portion
with the hypocrites;
there shall be weeping
and gnashing of teeth.

56 And thus cometh
the end of the wicked according
to the prophecy of Moses,
saying,

They should be cut off
from among the people.

But the end of the earth
is not yet;
but bye and bye.

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