

Eschatology, Session 4: Last Days According to Jesus; 7/16/2025

-Preview of study and calendar.

Session 5: Partial Preterism; 7/23/25

-Most of what is considered future things was already fulfilled in 70AD with the destruction of the temple and associated siege and aftermath.

*lay out evidence for the historical case from Josephus and others

-The exception is the bodily return of Christ and final judgement (the next thing on the eschatological calendar other than the continuing and expanding reign of Christ among the nations [postmill]).

Session 6: The Case for the Early Dating of Revelation; 7/30/25

-Evidence

-Purpose: Divorce of Israel

Session 7: Millennial Issues Part 1 (Rev 20); 8/6/25

-Premillennial (dispensationalism) and Historic

*all tribulation and rapture issues/questions are a subset of this

*Late Great Planet Earth and other nonsense

*Israel and American Politics

Session 8: Millennial Issues Part 2; 8/13/25

-Amillennial: now/not yet

-Postmillennial: hope of the nations

Session 9: Final Things; 8/20/25

-The Resurrection of the Dead

-The Great White Throne Judgement

-The Judgement Seat of Christ

-The New Heavens and New Earth

TODAY:

Review:

Hermeneutics is the science of **interpreting** the Bible.

All of Scripture and especially prophecy, must be interpreted in light of the person and work of Christ. This is called a “Christocentric” approach, which is used by us in the Reformed camp.

Literal hermeneutics were intended to combat liberalism.

However, an overly literalistic hermeneutic is not Biblical and leads to **strange ideas** (intricate timelines, rapture, alliances with modern Israel, fear of the future.)

Note: Indebtedness to The Last Days According to Jesus by RC Sproul.

Introduction:

Passages in the Gospels that deal with “end times.”

What did **Jesus** say about His coming?

What about the signs?

What was the point of this discourse?

I. The primary passages where Jesus talks about the future are **Matt 24, Mark 13, and Lk 21.**

-They are known as the “Olivet Discourse.”

-Context: Jesus is getting ready to be crucified

II. Jesus said His coming would be “soon” and in “this generation.**”**

-Definition of “Parousia”: coming or **arrival.**

-Matt 16:28, some disciples not tasting death until the kingdom comes.

-Matt 10:23 “But when they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.”

-Matt 24:34 “This generation” refers to those in the **immediate** proximity to Him.

-Matthew 26:64 “You [the high priest] will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven.”

-Revelation 1:1, “things which must soon take place”.

*The “coming of the Son of Man” is a judgment event in **AD 70**, **not** the final return, (Isaiah 19:1).

III. What about the **signs**?

Table 1.1
Signs of Jesus’ Coming and of the End

	Matt. 24:	Mark 13:	Luke 21:
False christs	5	6	8
Wars and rumors of wars	6	7	9
between nations and	7	8	10
between kingdoms	7	8	10
Famines	7	8	11
Pestilences, troubles	7	8	11
Earthquakes	7	8	11
Persecution of Christ’s disciples	9–10	9, 11–13	12–17
Apostasy of professing Christians	10		
False prophets	11		
Lawlessness	12		
Gospel preaching worldwide	14	10	
Abomination of desolation	15	14	20
Great tribulation, distress	21	19	23

Heavenly Signs in Matthew 24 and Old Testament Parallels

Reference Text in LSB	Old Testament Parallel	Parallel Text	Context and Significance
Mat 24:29 “The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light”	Isaiah 13:10 “For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light; the sun will be dark when it rises, and the moon will not shed its light.”	Judgment on Babylon (Isaiah 13:1–22).	Both passages use darkened sun and moon to symbolize divine judgment on a nation. Sproul () argues Mat 24:29 refers to AD 70 Jerusalem’s fall, echoing Isaiah’s imagery for catastrophic divine intervention.
Mat 24:29 “The stars will fall from heaven”	Isaiah 34:4 “And all the host of heaven will wear away, and the sky will be rolled up like a scroll; all their hosts will also wither away as a leaf withers from the vine.”	Judgment on Edom and nations (Isaiah 34:1–17).	Falling stars signify cosmic upheaval tied to God’s judgment. In Mat 24, this may symbolize Jerusalem’s destruction, per Sproul, or a future cosmic event (futurist view).
Mat 24:29 “The powers of the heavens will be shaken”	Joel 2:10 “Before them the earth quakes, the heavens tremble, the sun and the moon grow dark, and the stars lose their brightness.”	Day of the Lord (Joel 2:1–11).	Shaking heavens indicate divine intervention. Mat 24:29 likely uses this imagery for AD 70 (Sproul), aligning with Joel’s depiction of God’s judgment.

Reference Text in LSB	Old Testament Parallel	Parallel Text	Context and Significance
Mat 24:30 “The sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky”	Daniel 7:13 “I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven one like a Son of Man was coming.”	Vision of divine authority (Daniel 7:13–14).	The “sign” in Mat 24:30 may be Christ’s vindication (AD 70, per Sproul) or a visible sign at His return (futurist view). Daniel’s “Son of Man” links to divine judgment and kingship.
Mat 24:30 “They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky”	Isaiah 19:1 “The oracle concerning Egypt. Behold, the LORD is riding on a swift cloud and is about to come to Egypt.”	Judgment on Egypt (Isaiah 19:1–25).	Cloud-coming signifies God’s judgment in OT. Sproul interprets Mat 24:30 as Christ’s symbolic coming in judgment on Jerusalem (AD 70), not a literal return.

Notes

- **Matthew 24 Context:** The heavenly signs in Mat 24:29–30 follow the “tribulation” (vv. 4–28) and signal the “coming of the Son of Man,” interpreted as Jerusalem’s destruction (AD 70, partial preterist view) or the second coming (futurist view).
- **Old Testament Imagery:** The parallels use apocalyptic language to depict divine judgment, not necessarily literal cosmic events, supporting Sproul’s view that Mat 24 reflects AD 70 fulfillment ().
- **LSB Translation:** The LSB’s literal rendering (e.g., “sky” for *ouranos*, “sign” for *sēmeion*) preserves the vivid imagery, aligning with OT parallels.
- **Scholarly Support:** Sproul (*The Last Days According to Jesus*) and others (e.g., N.T. Wright) link Mat 24’s signs to OT judgment motifs, while futurists (e.g., John MacArthur) see them as future literal events.

Literal vs Literary:

-Literal hermeneutics try to save the Bible from liberals but end up making matters worse because they set a trap for themselves regarding Jesus' predictions about His coming. They must spiritualize his claims to come "soon" and "in this generation." The irony of dispy literal hermeneutics is they spiritualize terms like "**generation**" to mean future events or the Jewish race while holding to literalism for things that should be understood according to their literary genre. They use literal over literary except when convenient.

-They then double down and create all kinds of wacky and strange interpretive conclusions about the future including geopolitical decisions regarding foreign policy such as unconditional support of the modern nation-state of Israel. This has historically not been the case.

-Partial Preterism fixes the problem of the (so called) failed prophecy of Jesus beautifully and aligns with the beliefs of historic Christianity better.

-PP is the belief that most of the predictive language in the NT was fulfilled in 70AD while still believing in another future **bodily return** of Christ (1Thes 4:13-18; Rev 20:4ff), bodily resurrection (1Cor 15), and judgement (Rev 20:11-15).

IV. The point of the Olivet Discourse: to point to the end of the **Jewish Age** (Matt 24:3).

"I am convinced that the substance of the Olivet Discourse was **fulfilled in AD 70 and that the bulk of Revelation was likewise fulfilled in that timeframe....** (T)here was a **parousia** or coming of Christ, they maintain that it was **not the parousia**. That is, **the coming of Christ in AD 70 was a coming in judgment on the Jewish nation**, indicating **the end of the Jewish age** and the fulfillment of a day of the Lord. Jesus really did come in judgment at this time, fulfilling his prophecy in the Olivet Discourse. But this was not the final or ultimate coming of Christ. The parousia, in its fullness, will extend far beyond the Jewish nation and will be universal in its scope and significance. It will come, not at the end of the Jewish age, but at the end of human history as we know it. It will be, not merely **a day of the Lord, but the final and ultimate day of the Lord**. Partial preterists understand that there are nuances to biblical terminology regarding the coming of Christ and the day of the Lord, nuances that make it possible and necessary to speak of **more than one event** that encompasses all these things at once." RC Sproul The Last Days According to Jesus p169-170. Emphasis mine.

Summary:

1. The main texts in the gospels for an understanding of eschatology focus on Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21.
2. Jesus said that His coming would be “soon” in “this generation.” His prediction was fulfilled in 70AD with the destruction of the **temple**.
3. He used apocalyptic figurative language to describe the immanent **judgement** of the Jews.
4. The point of this discourse was to indicate **the end** of the Jewish age.
5. The future bodily return of Christ, resurrection, and judgement are still to come. There is really nothing else that needs to happen before then (contra dispys).
6. This position is called “partial Preterism.”

Next week we will look at the extra Biblical evidence for a partial preterist position.