

Jesus Introduces Us to End-Time Prophecy

Introduction

In the Gospels of **Matthew 24**, Mark 13 and Luke 13:34, 35; 17, 19 and 21, Jesus gives us the “**outline**” of how the “end” will come. Intriguingly – Jesus also shares **two** “ends” of time:

1. The **end** of the Jewish nation (Matthew 24:3-21)
2. The **end** of the world (Matthew 24:3-35)

When **two** or sometimes more **meanings** are given in **one** prophecy, God has a very special message for us to know. This is called a “dual” prophecy. That’s what we will be studying here.

Usually, dual prophecy is meant for two groups of people: **one**, for those of the ancient past when it was given, **the other** for those just before Jesus comes again.

Background to Jesus’ End-Time Prophecies

Jesus had just pronounced a “curse” on the Jewish leaders (Matthew 23) – sometimes called the “seven woes.” **Then** He ended the discourse with these words:

“Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

“Behold, your house is left unto you desolate (Matthew 23:36-38; cf. Luke 13:34-35).



A Biblical “**generation**” here is considered to be approximately 40 years. In 70 A.D., exactly 40 years after Jesus gave this prophecy, over one million Jews were slaughtered. The temple was burned and the end of the Jewish nation came – it was “**desolate!**”

Then – as Jesus started to leave the temple area:

“Do you see all these things?” he asked (speaking of the beautiful temple).



“Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down” (Matthew 24:2).

That Temple became a Metaphor for Christ’s End-Time Prophecy

The Temple was the center of worship. It was where God “met” His people. It represented His church. God said apostasy was in that church.

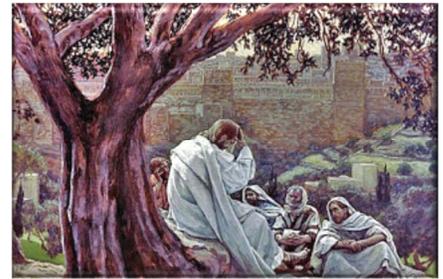
1. No matter how much I love my people –
2. My mercy will end and justice or punishment will come.

Indeed:

586 B.C. – Solomon’s Temple was destroyed – perhaps the most magnificent building of the ancient world. Another temple was built in 516 B.C.

70 A.D. – Just as Jesus had predicted – that temple was destroyed. The interior was covered with 22 tons of gold!

At the end of time (now) Christianity will apostatize. God calls it “Babylon.” It will be destroyed (Revelation 16:19). We’ll be studying about that!



The disciples were stunned! That temple had stood for over 500 years (516 B.C. to 70 A.D.). In their dismay they posed three questions to Jesus (Matthew 24:3):

1. **When** shall these things be? (**timing** question)
 2. **What** shall be the **sign** of thy coming? (**event** question]
 3. **What** shall be the **sign** of the end of world? (**event** question)]
- They assumed that the destruction was when Jesus would return and the end of the world would come.

Before Jesus really answered these questions, He opened six special thoughts about last-day prophecy (Matthew 24:4-7):

1. There will be events that can be seen (specific things we can observe!):
 - a. ***“when ye see these things come to pass, know ye”*** (Luke 21:31)
 - b. ***“watch, or I’ll come as a thief”*** (Revelation 3:3)
“watch – be ready” (Matthew 24:42-44, 48-50)] There is something that can be observed!
2. ***“Take heed that no man deceive you”*** (Matthew 24:4). **Why?** Five times in Matthew 24 Jesus said that false Christs would arise. What does that mean? There would be false teachers claiming to represent Christ and try to interpret prophecy. **That** is one of our issues.

3. “Wars” by themselves are not a sign of the end (Matthew 24:6).
4. **When you see the signs I’m going to give to you begin, “*lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.*” I’ll then be coming within one generation – approximately 40 years (Luke 21:28, 31-32).**

Jesus Now Begins the End-Time Prophecy (recall there will be two “end times”)

“For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows” (Matthew 24:7-8).

Here is the list:

1. Wars
2. Famines
3. Pestilences
4. Earthquakes
5. Celestial signs (Luke 21:11)

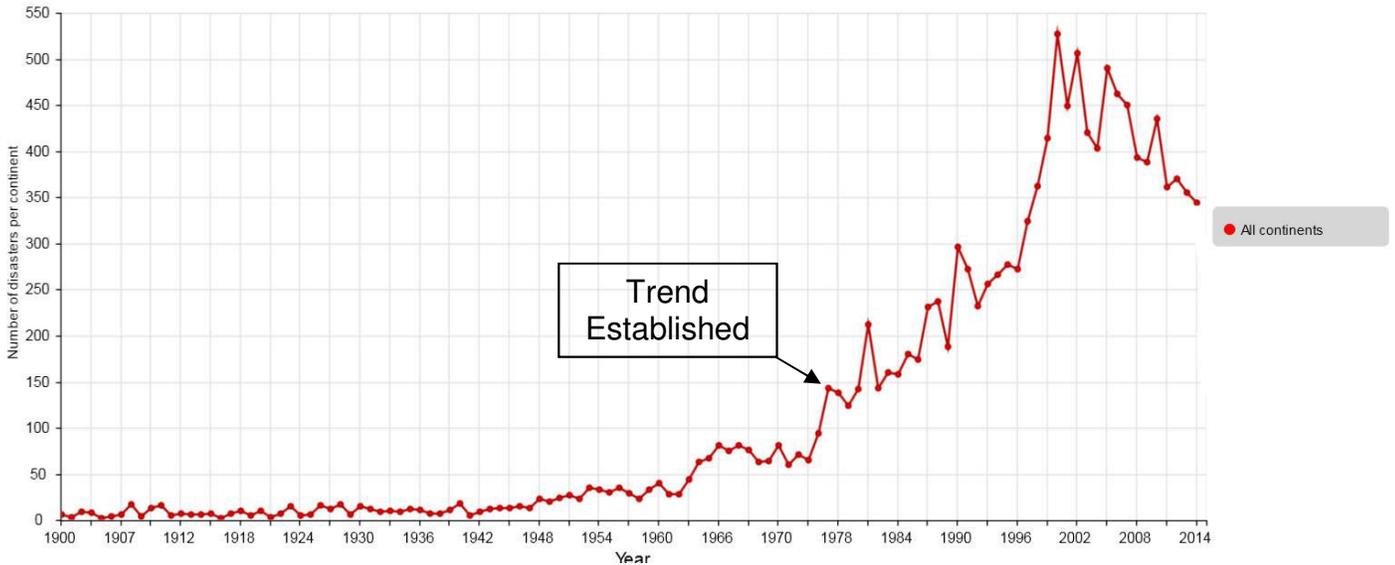
“When these things begin to come to pass, then look up” (Luke 21:28).

Something profound was noted in Matthew 24:8 above. These things would be the “beginning of sorrows.” What it really is saying in the Greek: This will begin and move forward like a “lady in labor.”

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contractions become more frequent 2. Contractions become more firm 3. Then the baby comes | } | <p>From Luke we then have a Second Coming of Jesus statement:
“Look up” – your redemption is near.</p> |
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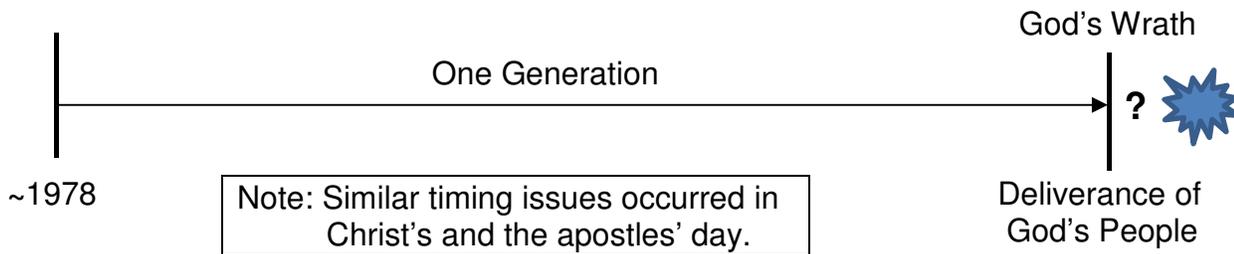
Question:

Is there any data that monitors these signs in our day? IF there is, we can apply that one-generation (approximately 40-years) principle to us!



EM-DAT: The OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database – www.emdat.be – Universite Catholique de Louvain, Brussels - Belgium

This graph shows that the frequency of natural disasters has increased since the **1977–1983** window (1978 – established).



Note: Similar timing issues occurred in Christ's and the apostles' day.

Jesus Continues with Sequenced Details

“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.

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

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

“And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold”
(Matthew 24:9-12).



Sometime after the “time of sorrows” begins, God’s people will enter a time of persecution. This will **test** how loyal we are to Jesus. Do you love Him enough to suffer for His sake?

It reminds us of what Jesus said in the beatitudes:

“Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake” (Matthew 5:11).

Then:

A time comes when people will hate each other with an intensity never known before. Love will turn “cold” with the wicked!

Then:

False teachers and preachers will arise. Remember what Jesus’ first warning was? “Don’t be deceived!”

Jesus has Much More to Tell Us

But – before He goes on, He gives to us a wonderful promise:

“But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved” (Matthew 24:13).

Now He answers one of their questions! – Key!

“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” (Matthew 24:14).

When the saving message of Jesus Christ has been heard by the whole world, the end arrives! Everyone will be given the chance, at the very end, to escape or to decide for Jesus.

- Did the gospel go to the world in the disciples’ day?
- Yes (Colossians 1:23).

Please note: Since this sign is ***at the very end***, we won’t know when that actually happens; therefore, it ***cannot be a “sign”*** with which we can warn people!!!



This is where the *first phase* of the prophecy ***“ends”*** for the Jewish people.

Verses 15-28 introduce very special prophetic thoughts or concepts that ***prepare everyone*** for the last part of both stories!

Verses 29-31 immediately surround the ***Second Coming*** of Jesus! That’s especially for us!

A warning in verses 15-20 talks about a horrible “abomination,” which will be covered in Study 3:

Jesus now addresses the signs related to the Second Coming (Matthew 24:21, 29-31)!



“For then [follows verses 15-20] shall be great tribulation [caused by that “abomination”], such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be” (verse 21).

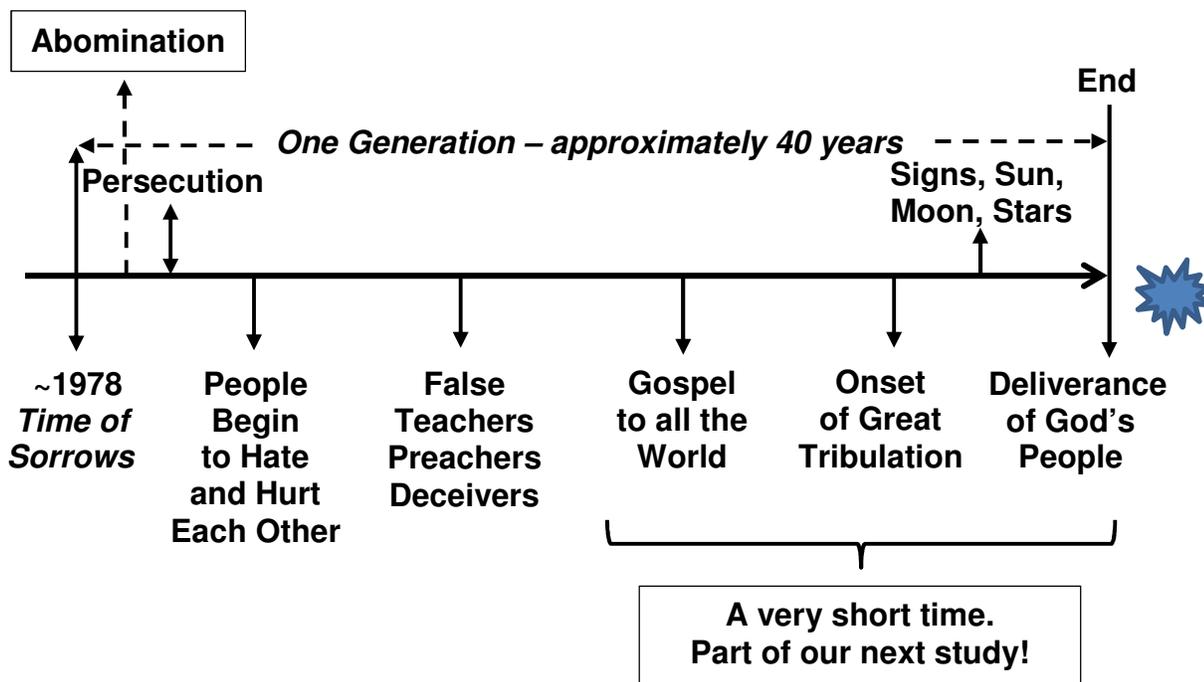
“Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken” (verse 29).

“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” (verse 30).

“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” (verse 31).

Something God hates occurs (an “**abomination**”), **then** a time of “**tribulation**” begins, **then** celestial signs occur, **then** Jesus comes!

This is NOW! A graph related to our day looks like this!



Summary

We've seen the "gospel sign" of the end of the world. Now we have the "*sign*" of His coming – **the clouds**. Since these happen right at His coming, they won't be signs we can preach about to show it is near!

That means: There is only one question of the three that the disciples asked that has not been answered:

“**When** shall these things be?” – a timing question!

Jesus not only told us when but filled in other signs or events that make our understanding pristine. You will be surprised.

Many people feel that we shouldn't talk about time because Jesus said:

“But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only” (Matthew 24:36).

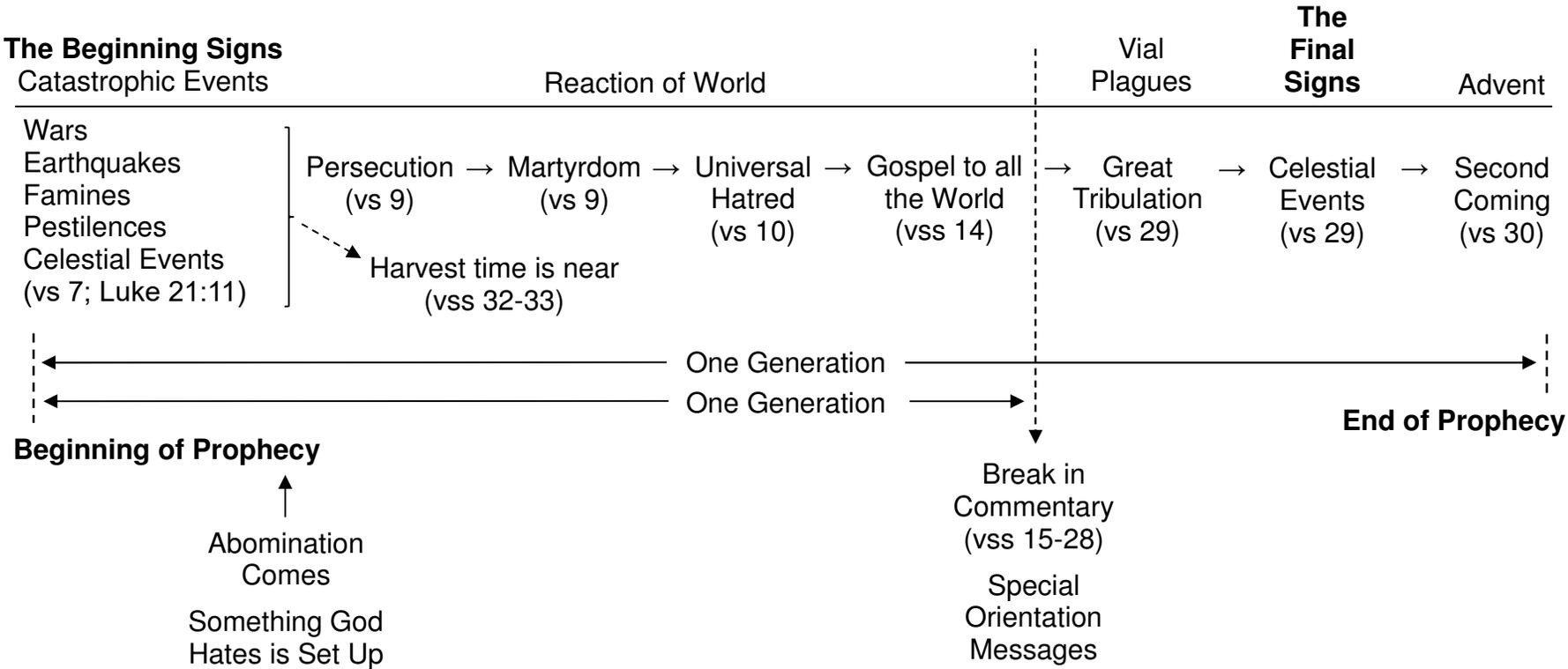
“Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come” (vs 42).

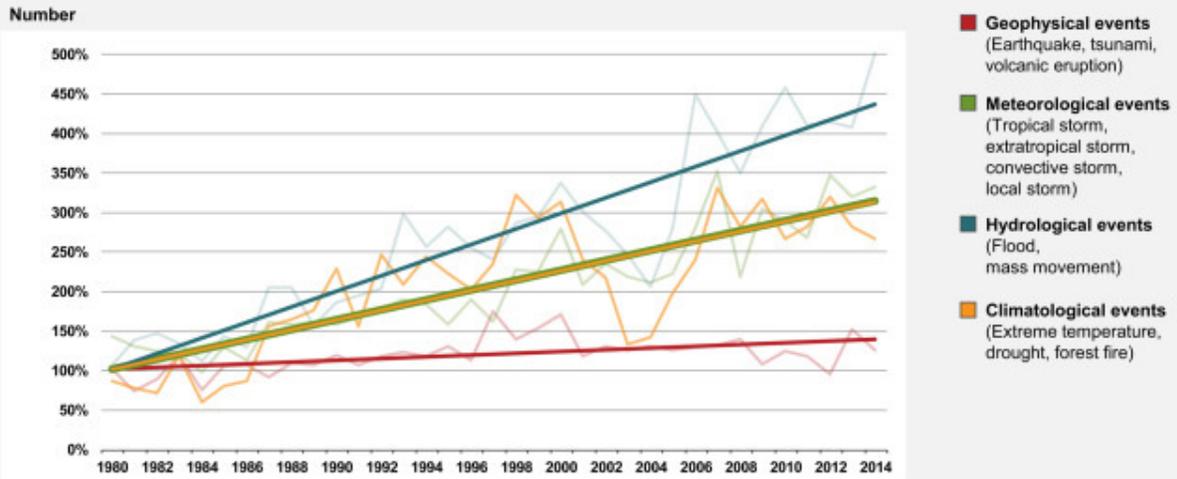
Note: Jesus gave us a very pointed parable about an “*evil servant*” who said that the “*Lord delayeth His coming.*” We aren't to say that!

If that is so, and Jesus said it, that means we will know very, very closely about that time! He even said that we would know when He is “*even at the doors*” (Matthew 24:33). That is what we are going to look at in our next study!

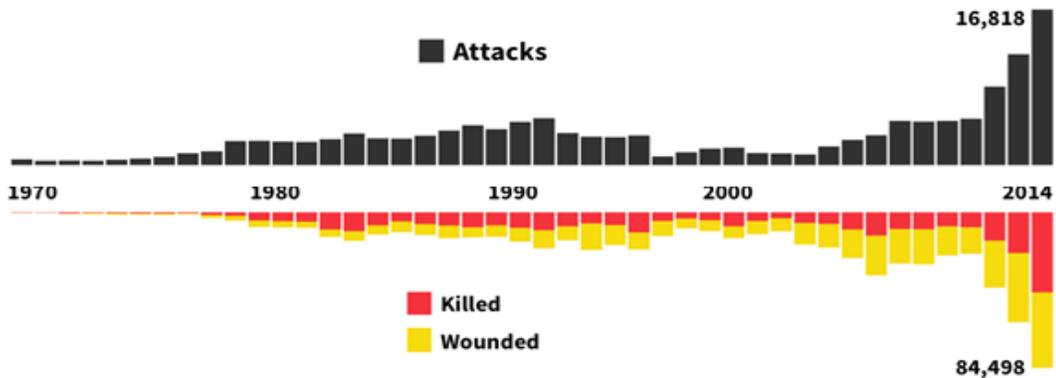
“Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors” (Matthew 24:32-33).

Matthew 24 – Prophetic Sequence





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