

THE GOSPEL-TO-THE-WORLD WORK A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ON MATTHEW 24

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Mt 24:14 says: *"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations and then the end shall come."*

Let us analyze this verse. First, we know that gospel in Greek means the 'good news'. The gospel of the Kingdom is the good news not only of the coming of the Kingdom of God, but also what his Kingdom is all about and how people can enter into it. The gospel of the Kingdom of God includes all of God's word, his will and his way. This is what must be preached in all the world as a witness. Has this been done yet???

Some say this work has already been fulfilled by the Worldwide Church of God in the days of Herbert Armstrong. But the end has not come since that work has been accomplished and all the churches of God are now small and scattered. Because of this, many are concerned about when this great work WILL be done. And let's not forget the economic collapse of the United States that many are expecting. If this should occur, we will have all we can do to barely survive, much less think about producing an expensive worldwide gospel-preaching work. When you think about all that the message must be and all the places it must reach, the Gospel-to-the-world work is not a small undertaking. Who will do it, and when will it be done?

There is an answer to this question when you put the scriptures together properly. First notice the word END in Mat 24:14. When does the Bible say the END shall be? Mat 13:39 says, "The HARVEST IS THE END of the world and the reapers are the angels." Now look in Revelation and see when the HARVEST (which is the end) shall take place. Rev 14:14-20 describes the harvest. Here are the angels reaping just as it says in Mat 13. But read the whole chapter of Rev 14! What is the context? In verse 1 Jesus is standing on Mt Zion and the saints are with him. **SO AT THE TIME OF THE HARVEST WHICH IS THE END, CHRIST HAS ALREADY COME!** This understanding gives us a whole new perspective on Mat. 24!

Let us review the scriptures of Mat. 24 with this perspective...

Mat 24:1 And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.

Mat 24:2 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.

Note: Here Jesus gives the prophecy of the destruction of the temple

Mat 24:3 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?

Mat 24:4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

Mat 24:5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

Mat 24:6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

Mat 24:7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

Mat 24:8 All these are the beginning of sorrows.

Note: His disciples ask, "When shall these things (the destruction of the temple) be?" Jesus then says that deceptions, wars, famines, pestilences and earthquakes are the beginning of sorrows.

Mat 24:9 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.

Note: Here we see that the beginning of sorrows culminates in the Great Tribulation which is the affliction of the saints.

Mat 24:10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

Mat 24:11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

Mat 24:12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

Mat 24:13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

Note: These verses describe great offense, deception, and iniquity in the context of the tribulation

Mat 24:14 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.

Note: Here, as we saw above, is the END as compared with Rev 14:1,14-20 AFTER Christ returns. So these first 14 verses of Mat 24 have given us a general picture of the events from the beginning of sorrows through the tribulation and then to the end which is the harvest after Christ returns. The next verses then give us a more detailed survey...

Mat 24:15 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:)

Mat 24:16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

Mat 24:17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

Mat 24:18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

Mat 24:19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

Mat 24:20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day:

Mat 24:21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Mat 24:22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

Note: These verses give us a warning of what to look for just BEFORE the tribulation so you see how they could actually be inserted between verses 8 and 9.

Mat 24:23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.

Mat 24:24 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.

Mat 24:25 Behold, I have told you before.

Mat 24:26 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.

Mat 24:27 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.

Mat 24:28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

Note: These verses give us warning of what to look for DURING the tribulation and leading up to the coming of Christ.

Mat 24:29 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:

Mat 24:30 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.

Mat 24:31 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.

Note: Here we have the tribulation and afterwards the heavenly signs. In Revelation the corresponding scriptures would be 6:9-11 (the fifth seal or tribulation) and 6:12-17) the sixth seal or heavenly signs).

The four horsemen, (the first four seals) therefore, must take place before the tribulation or at the end of the beginning of sorrows (Mat 24:3-8). The four horsemen must be very great as in Rev 6:8 we see that they result in the death of 1/4 of human life on earth. The first horsemen who comes forth conquering and to conquer must be the Beast who will conquer the whole earth and then bring about the great tribulation and affliction of the saints.

Mat 24:32 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

Mat 24:33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.

Mat 24:34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

Mat 24:35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

Note: This is the conclusion

So now WHEN is the gospel to the world preached? It is preached just before the END comes (Mat 24:14) And when does the END come? The HARVEST is the end of the world. (Mat 13:39, Rev 14:14-20) Look in Rev 14 before the verses about the harvest to see when the Gospel is preached:

Rev 14:6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the EVERLASTING GOSPEL to preach unto them that dwell on the earth and TO EVERY NATION, AND KINDRED, AND TONGUE, AND PEOPLE, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory

to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

This is the gospel to the world spoken of in Mat 24:14. It was not preached by Worldwide. It will not be preached by any of us. It will be preached in all the world after Jesus has come by the first of the three angels before the harvest takes place.

CONCLUSION

We all have a work to do according to Mat 28:19 in baptizing and going out into all the world teaching everyone to observe all things that Christ commanded. But we need not worry that just because we are tiny and are not performing THE GREAT WORLDWIDE work prophesied in Mat 24, that we are NOT his work. Whether large or small, we are part of God's work.

Also we need not worry about how we can do something to unify the scattered churches and bring about the great worldwide work ourselves. For now we can see that Christ will send his angel to accomplish this after his return just before the end.