

Talks – 2012 and the End Times – myfishbites.com

2012 The Movie

This talk was written about the 2012 movie that was about the world ending in 2012. In case you haven't noticed, the world hasn't ended yet... There's still Bible predictions (called 'prophecies') that haven't happened yet!

Intro – Please Read

This talk has loads of Bible reading and loads of complex content. It won't work with younger teens at all and is aimed at older young people, 20s and adults.

This talk explores a number of areas. We don't claim to have the absolute truth, this is just what we feel God has revealed through study! Please note there are many different views about the end times. You may not agree with some of this but that's great – the purpose of Bible Study is partly to challenge you to do your own study to decide what you believe.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2012_phenomenon (Accessed May 2019)

The 2012 phenomenon comprises a range of eschatological beliefs that cataclysmic or transformative events will occur on December 21, 2012, which is said to be the end-date of a 5,125-year-long cycle in the Mayan Long Count calendar. Various astronomical alignments and numerological formulae related to this date have been proposed, but none have been accepted by mainstream scholarship.

A New Age interpretation of this transition posits that during this time, Earth and its inhabitants may undergo a positive physical or spiritual transformation, and that 2012 may mark the beginning of a new era. Others suggest that the 2012 date marks the end of the world or a similar catastrophe. Scenarios posited for the end of the world include the Earth's collision with a passing planet (often referred to as "Nibiru") or black hole, or the arrival of the next solar maximum.

Scholars from various disciplines have dismissed the idea that a catastrophe will happen in 2012, stating that predictions of impending doom are found neither in classic Maya accounts nor in astronomy.

Mainstream Mayanist scholars state that the idea that the Long Count calendar "ends" in 2012 misrepresents Maya history. The modern Maya, on the whole, have not attached much significance to the date, and the classical sources on the subject are scarce and contradictory, suggesting that there was little if any universal agreement among them about what, if anything, the date might mean.

Astronomers and other scientists have rejected the apocalyptic forecasts, on the grounds that the anticipated events are precluded by astronomical observations, or are unsubstantiated by the predictions that have been generated from these findings. NASA has compared fears about 2012 to those about the Y2K bug in the late 1990s, suggesting that an adequate analysis should preclude fears of disaster.

What does the Bible say about the end times?

The Bible has a lot to say about the end times. Unlike any other source, the Bible prophecies have been 100% accurate, 100% of the time!! 300 prophecies were exactly fulfilled in Jesus alone.

There is a lot of content here. This is our attempt at looking at the end times and then just some of what we believe from the Bible will happen right at the end of time!

Matthew 24.3-43

As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"

Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains.

"Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

"So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand— then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let no one on the roof of his house go down to take anything out of the house. Let no one in the field go back to get his cloak. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible. See, I have told you ahead of time.

"So if anyone tells you, 'There he is, out in the desert,' do not go out; or, 'Here he is, in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather.

"Immediately after the distress of those days
" 'the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light;
the stars will fall from the sky,
and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'

“At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

“Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

“No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

Luke 21.25-36

“There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

He told them this parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees. When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.

“I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

“Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap. For it will come upon all those who live on the face of the whole earth. Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.”

So what do we know about the end times from Matthew and Luke?

We must remember first of all, that Luke 21 up to verse 24 was Jesus responding to his disciples about when the temple would be destroyed. He predicted persecution from the Jewish authorities, betrayal, people hating the disciples of Jesus because of Jesus. It also talks about the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. We'll see later that this is a separate event to the one prophesied in Matthew 24 and actually happened in AD70.

Matthew 24 refers to the end times and return of Jesus. But we see many similarities between what happened to the Jewish believers up to AD70 (and beyond) and what Jesus says will happen in the end times. So we have deliberately only included Luke 24 from verse 25 because of this.

1. Many people will come claiming to be the Christ – the anointed one. We know that this has already happened, with many cults and other religions being distortions of the one true Christ – Yeshua (Jesus). Matthew 24 even lets us know that people will come pretending to be Jesus, doing great signs and wonders and miracles, even deceiving Christians.

ACTION – We have to be really careful not to be deceived. To do this, we must know the Bible and know God really well by obeying him!

2. There will be wars, rumours of wars, nation will fight nation, kingdom will wage war on kingdom, there will be famines, earthquakes, pestilences, revolutions and “fearful events and great signs from heaven.” Matthew tells us that these are just the beginning of the ‘birth pains’. When you’re having a baby, there are pains that warn you the baby is on the way. These signs will be warnings to us! Can anyone look around and say these things aren’t happening today? They really are! And it seems that these things are happening more frequently – and not just because we’ve got a global media that lets us know about stuff quickly!

ACTION – These things will happen, but they will not be the end.

3. There will be persecution of Christians across the world. People will be killed and imprisoned, and even be betrayed by friends and family (just like Judas did to Jesus). Christians will also betray other Christians and because the world will get so evil, the love of some Christians will grow cold and just won’t exist any more, they’ll deny their faith. This started to be fulfilled in AD64 under Emperor Nero and has been increasing in recent times, even in the West. But God tells us not to worry at all, that he will give us his words and that we won’t lose out at all – his reward for us is so incredible!

ACTION – God tells us not to worry, but to stand strong and firm to the end (this means no matter what happens we stay loyal to God). Our reward will be stunning – beyond what we can imagine!

4. Israel will have to make a 7 year covenant with peace with the anti-Christ. The anti-Christ as we’ve seen above will also be known as the ‘lawless one’. Why will Israel do this? Well, many in Israel believe that Jesus was not the Messiah promised, but instead there will be

another Messiah yet to be revealed. One of this person's assets will be that they will be a 'man of peace'. The antiChrist is likely to pretend to be a man of peace. Except we know from Daniel 9.27 that half way through his agreement, he will break it and then set up his throne in the temple and bring great evil. Another reason is that the 'beast' will appear to have died and risen from the dead – tricking some into thinking he is the Messiah (which he is not), Revelation is all about the one true Messiah – Yeshua – Jesus Christ the son of God (Yahweh).

There will then be a worldwide assault against Israel in the last days, with all nations having rejected Israel. This is hinted at in the Old Testament as well in places like Zechariah 11.16 as well as more specifically in Ezekiel 38 and 39. This will be a terrible time of trouble with none like it, but Israel will be saved out of according to Jeremiah 30.7.

This will take place after a mass re gathering of the Jewish people to Israel. Before 1948, many people including Christians believed that this could never happen. But God moved miraculously and in just one day in 1948, Israel was re-born – just as the Bible said it would be (Deuteronomy 30.3, Ezekiel 34.11-13 among other places).

So there will be a huge amount of Jewish people who will return (as has been happening). In Luke, Jesus said to the disciples, "Look at the fig tree and all the trees. When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near." This is one of the prophecies that people believe speaks about the rise of nationalism across the globe or about how the nations will reach the limit of their evil.

Many people also believe that there will be many people saved in Israel – huge numbers turning to Jesus. Jesus himself seems to hint this in Luke 13.34-35 (emphasis on verse 35) where he says, "*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it! Behold, your house is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you will not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'*"

ACTION – Watch what happens in Israel.

5. There will be terrifying signs in the heavens, in space and in the skies. Matthew 24 tells us that, "*the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.*" Luke 21 tells us that, "*There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken.*"

This will happen right before Jesus returns. We've seen some of this happen in our lifetimes, but there will be much more to come!

ACTION – Don't be afraid. Psalm 91 tells us that people may fall around us, but we will be left standing. God is in charge, he will not forget you. Make sure you live in a way that is always right with God.

6. Be on guard – "Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a

trap. For it will come upon all those who live on the face of the whole earth. Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.”

ACTION – The Bible tells us that we must always be ready. Just as a thief comes at night time to burgle, so we must be ready because only God knows the time and the hour he will return. However, we do know that the time will not be quite yet, as many of the things above have not yet happened. Be ready, stay in prayer. Get knowledge – that way you won't be surprised when these things happen and you can stand and stay strong for God.

7. Finally, we know that we will be with God if we love him and have accepted Jesus in our lives as the way and the truth. Matthew 24 says, “At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.”

ACTION – The Bible reassures us that when Jesus comes we will definitely know about it! There's no way you can miss it when Jesus returns! Dead people rising up, Jesus coming in the skies with thunder – you are not going to miss this when it happens!! (See Revelation 4 for a picture of God in heaven).

Matthew 24.14

And never forget Matthew 24.14 which tells us:

“And this good news of the kingdom (the Gospel) will be preached throughout the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then will come the end.”

Jesus isn't returning until the Gospel has been preached to the whole world, to every nation, tribe and tongue. Revelation 5.9-10 supports this saying:

“And [now] they sing a new song, saying, You are worthy to take the scroll and to break the seals that are on it, for You were slain (sacrificed), and with Your blood You purchased men unto God from every tribe and language and people and nation.”

The whole world has not yet heard the Good News of Jesus – there are still tribes and tongues out there. Ask God what he wants you to do, to help make that happen.

2 Thessalonians 2.1-12

Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come. Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for (that day will not come) until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things? And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendour of his coming. The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

In this part of the Bible, Paul says that certain things will happen before the end times. We know that there will be all kinds of alarming prophecies and predictions – people will say crazy stuff (like the world is going to end in 2012 for example!!) People will say that Jesus has returned (some Christians even believe this, saying that Jesus came to earth in AD70 when Jerusalem was destroyed. This is total rubbish as we know Jesus will only return once at the end of time, plus there's no mention of this happening in the Old Testament or New Testament, or historically!!) We also know that some Christians will possibly be tricked into believing wrong things – Paul says make sure you're not one of them!

We know that God will destroy the man of lawlessness (a person who is given power by Satan himself). God will destroy him with the 'breath of his mouth' and the 'splendour of his coming'. It shows how powerful God (through Jesus coming back to earth) really is. Just the breath from his mouth will destroy the evil one and his kingdom.

Sometimes we think it's unfair that people who don't know God are judged and will then go to hell (it isn't a pleasant thought but we must read the Bible for what it says not what we want it to say! God is absolutely holy, absolutely perfect, absolutely just and will judge absolutely fairly.) Jesus talks about hell more than the kingdom of God! But 2 Thessalonians gives us a clue and this can be paralleled right back to the Old Testament and Pharaoh. In the time of the plagues we find that at the start, it was Pharaoh that refused to let the Israelites. He made the decision. But over time, God hardened his heart because Pharaoh had already decided to reject God. The same thing will happen in the end times – people who deliberately reject God despite knowing the truth will be sent a delusion and will delight in being evil. Just one look around you shows you this is already happening, although isn't complete. Scary!

Man of Lawlessness, The Beast(s) and the Dragon

We know from 2 Thessalonians 2 that the 'man of lawlessness' will be revealed. Who is this? From the Greek, we know that he will be someone who will be unrighteous, un-Godly, wicked, will violate God's law. But for more, we have to go and visit Revelation 13...

From Revelation 13, it appears that there will be 2 figures on the stage of world history. The first 'beast' will be given his authority by the 'dragon'. The 'dragon' represents Satan. The beast was also given great power and did signs and wonders. He will fool many as he will have a fatal wound healed (notice the parallel with Jesus). Men will worship the dragon

and also the beast. The beast will blaspheme God and his people, speaking evil and proud words. He will have power to wage war against God's people and to conquer the world in war. All the inhabitants of the earth (i.e not God's people) will worship him.

Then another beast will arise out of the earth and have 2 horns like a lamb (again notice the parallel with Jesus. And note that Jews often believe that the Messiah will have 2 sides – that of a conqueror and that of peace.) The second beast will cause all the earth to worship the first beast and will perform many miraculous signs and wonders (see Matthew 24 where Jesus prophecies this kind of thing). This beast will then kill all those who do not worship the beast and everyone will receive a mark on their right hand or forehead so they cannot trade or live without it. This is where the infamous number '666' comes from. Quite what it means is uncertain – but the Bible does tell us that, *“This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man's number. His number is 666.”* (Revelation 13.18).

But when we go to Revelation 14 and beyond, plus 1 Thess 2, we find out that this is not the end...

The end and the new beginning

Revelation 20.7-15 and 2 Thessalonians 2 show us the kind of thing that will happen to Satan at the end of time. After he causes havoc and gathers (Gog & Magog – people argue about who this is and what it means, but is probably an alliance of nations against Jerusalem and parallels the destruction that Jesus prophecies in Matthew 24). At that moment, fire comes down from heaven and destroys these armies against Jerusalem. The devil is thrown into a lake of fire, to join the beast and the false prophet. Then everyone comes before God's throne in heaven and are judged according to what is written in heaven's records (note that everything you do is recorded in heaven!) If you are a believer in Jesus, your name is 'written in the Lamb's book of life' and you will be rewarded according to what you have done for Jesus and in the world.

Your reward for serving God is found in Revelation 21. You will be with God forever, he will be the only light needed, he'll wipe away every tear, there will be no more death, grief, injury or evil. He will reward you for what you have done. We cannot imagine what God has in store for those who love him!!!

1 Thessalonians 4.13-17 – The dead shall be raised

John 5.28-29 (Amp) – Do not be surprised and wonder at this, for the time is coming when all those who are in the tombs shall hear His voice. And they shall come out—those who have practiced doing good [will come out] to the resurrection of [new] life, and those who have done evil will be raised for judgment [raised to meet their sentence].

1 Thessalonians 4.13-17 (Amp) – Now also we would not have you ignorant, brethren, about those who fall asleep [in death], that you may not grieve [for them] as the rest do who have no hope [beyond the grave]. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will also bring with Him through Jesus those who have fallen asleep [in death]. For this we declare to you by the Lord's [own] word, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord shall in no way precede [into His presence] or

have any advantage at all over those who have previously fallen asleep [in Him in death]. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a loud cry of summons, with the shout of an archangel, and with the blast of the trumpet of God. And those who have departed this life in Christ will rise first. Then we, the living ones who remain [on the earth], shall simultaneously be caught up along with [the resurrected dead] in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so always (through the eternity of the eternities) we shall be with the Lord!

What will happen to those alive and those in the graves at the end of time?

Well, Jesus lets us know that those in the tombs (the dead) will hear the voice of Jesus when he returns and come out of the tombs – all of them! Quite how this will happen I'm not sure as there have been so many people on the earth through history! But those who have done good (who are followers of Jesus) will have new life and those who have rejected God will go to judgement. The Greek word often translated 'rise' means 'to come out of, proceed, go forth.'

Paul adds more in 1 Thessalonians 4. We know that as Jesus died and rose again, so God will bring his people who have died back to life to be with him. Those who are alive when Jesus returns and those who have died will all enter his presence at the same time.

Jesus will not be missed when he returns to earth as we discovered above. First, the dead who are in Christ will be raised (be 'lifted up, stand up, raise up again'). Then those who are alive will at the same time be caught up in the air and clouds with the Christians who have been raised from the dead. From there we shall meet the Lord God! The Greek talks in terms of being 'caught up', 'taken away' and 'snatched up' to be with God – so it'll happen suddenly and dramatically.

Temple destroyed – 2 separate events

We have to recognise that Luke 21 and Matthew 24 are very similar. However, there are some key differences. For starters, the disciples asked Jesus, 'when will these things happen?' in both Matthew and Luke, but only Luke gives the answer up to verse 24. The disciples also ask 2 other questions: what will be the sign of your coming back (Jesus) and what will be the signs at the end of time.

This small difference is important, because Matthew 24 and Luke 21 appear to talk about one event when they speak about the temple being destroyed. However, these are not talking about the same event. Why? Because only Luke speaks about when will the stones of the temple in Jerusalem all be thrown down. Matthew doesn't cover the answer to this question, but only about Jesus returning and the end of time. Only Luke deals with an event that is before the end of time – therefore the destruction of the temple predicted in Luke is not the same event Jesus speaks about in Matthew. Jesus specifically tells us in Matthew 24 that what he's referring to is from Daniel.

Historical evidence also shows this – we know that in AD70, the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed when the city was burned by the Romans. However, the armies actually surrounded Jerusalem in AD66 then inexplicably stopped there until the destruction started. Many Christians who knew the words of Jesus actually escaped to the mountains.

We know this as there was a gap in the army attacking. During this time, many Christians escaped.

So we know that the destruction of the temple was an historical event. However, when Jesus answers the questions about the end times in Matthew, he tells us that the temple will be destroyed (quoting Daniel 9.27). If the temple has to be destroyed (and there currently is no temple), it logically follows that a temple must be built in order for it to be destroyed! Therefore, Matthew is referring to a different event to the one that actually happened in AD70 referred to in Luke. We also know from 2 Thessalonians 2.4 that the end times will see the 'son of perdition' setting himself up in the 'temple' of God.

At the same time, prophecy in the Bible often relates to separate events yet seems to be similar, so interpreting the Bible can be very hard work!

SIDE NOTE 1 – Two Time Periods in Matthew 24 and Luke 21.1-24

The two time periods appear to be different. In Luke 21.12, Jesus says that before there are earthquakes, famines and signs – “they will lay hands on you and persecute you. They will deliver you to synagogues and prisons...” Whereas in Matthew 24.9, the earthquakes and famines all happen. The Bible then says, “Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death..”

Clearly, Gentile believers and those who attend church will not be taken to synagogues. So these are clearly 2 different events in time. Secondly, Luke says persecution happens before all these natural disasters, whereas Matthew says persecution happens after natural disasters. Again it's clear these are pointing to 2 different events.

SIDE NOTE 2 – Arguments about the destruction of the temple

Some people argue that the temple will not need to re-built. The argument is round the use of Hebrew and Greek words used. In Daniel 9.26, Daniel uses the word 'sanctuary' when referring to the 'temple' people believe will need to be re-built. However the Hebrew word used is not the one for a physical temple. Instead it is the word from the Hebrew, 'qadash' meaning a sacred place or thing. However, to argue against this, the Hebrew words most commonly used for a temple seem to have a root in this word 'qadash', meaning that it is likely Daniel was referring to a physical temple.

It is then argued that in 2 Thess 2.4, the Greek word used for temple is 'naon' which is never used by Jesus when referring to a physical temple as a physical place. (For example in Luke 20.1, it says that Jesus taught in the temple – the Greek word for temple used is 'heiron', not 'naon'.) However, the argument falls down because 'naon' or 'naos' in Greek does mean a temple or a temple sanctuary. 'Hieron' also means a temple or sacred place. The difference between the two words according to Strong's Concordance is that hieros is, *"a sacred place, i.e. The entire precincts (whereas naos denotes the central sanctuary itself) of the Temple (at Jerusalem or elsewhere) — temple."* ([Click for more](#))

SIDE NOTE 3 – ‘This generation shall not pass away...’

In Luke 21.31-32, Jesus said this: Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near. *“I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.”*

Some people have asked what it means when Jesus said ‘this generation won’t pass away until all these things have happened.’ People ask because clearly those listening to Jesus in the flesh have long since died and yet these things Jesus spoke of have not happened. How can that be?!

Well, the word used translated ‘generation’ is the word ‘genea’ in Greek. This word means race, family, generation. So either Jesus was speaking about the Jewish people not passing away before these things happen (‘genea’ as race) – they have not yet passed away! Or, Jesus may have been referring to the people alive at the time that the signs were happening that he spoke about in the previous verses (‘the fig trees sprouting their leaves’ – a reference to the nations behaving more nationalistically or increased evil). So those things would be happen before the generation alive at that time passed away.

SIDE NOTE 4 – Isaiah 13

Isaiah 13 contains a prophetic revelation about the future. It’s really interesting how parts of Isaiah 13 seem to correlate closely with parts of Revelation and other parts of the Bible about the end times. We’ve picked out a few verses to illustrate (verses 9-15):

See, the day of the LORD is coming —a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger— to make the land desolate and destroy the sinners within it.

The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light. The rising sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light.

I will punish the world for its evil, the wicked for their sins. I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty and will humble the pride of the ruthless.

I will make man scarcer than pure gold, more rare than the gold of Ophir.

Therefore I will make the heavens tremble; and the earth will shake from its place at the wrath of the LORD Almighty, in the day of his burning anger.

Like a hunted gazelle, like sheep without a shepherd, each will return to his own people, each will flee to his native land.

Whoever is captured will be thrust through; all who are caught will fall by the sword.

We see from Isaiah a future event where ‘the day of the Lord’ is mentioned. (The word for day ‘yovm’ is the same one used in Genesis 1 for the days of the creation of the world). This is a day of rage and fierce anger, so it seems clear that this relates to God’s judgement. The word used for ‘land’ here is ‘ha’arezt’ which can be translated ‘earth’ and regularly is in the Bible. So this is something that will affect the whole earth or certainly a

large part of it. There will be a desolation in which the sinners of the world will be completely destroyed. This is clearly the end times.

A further piece of evidence which is more revealing comes in verse 10, which talks about the heavens and the constellations not showing their light. This is quoted by Jesus in Matthew 23.29 when talking about the end times. So, it is very clear this is about the end times with the return of Jesus and what will happen at that time. These verses give us even more depth and insight into what will happen. There's no doubt this will be an incredibly powerful and terrifying time – praise God for Jesus and the new life we have in him. We will be spared this terror, so let's press on and press in to God daily.