

# Matthew 24:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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?

## Analysis

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The disciples' question 'what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?' follows Jesus' prophecy of the temple's destruction (vv. 1-2). They conflated three events: temple destruction (70 AD), Christ's second coming (future), and the age's consummation. Jesus' discourse addresses all three, requiring careful interpretation to distinguish near fulfillment (temple destruction) from future fulfillment (second coming). The disciples assumed these were one event; history proved otherwise.

## Historical Context

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The disciples asked from the Mount of Olives overlooking the temple. They couldn't conceive the temple's destruction apart from world's end—the temple represented God's presence with Israel. Jesus' answer includes both near prophecy (70 AD) and far prophecy (second coming), teaching vigilance for an uncertain time.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does recognizing Jesus' dual-fulfillment prophecy help interpret the Olivet discourse?
2. What does Jesus' teaching about uncertainty regarding His return teach about watchfulness?

## Interlinear Text

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Καθημένου δὲ αὐτῷ ἐπὶ τοῦ Ὄρους τῶν Ἐλαιῶν  
as he sat And unto him upon the mount of Olives  
G2521 G1161 G846 G1909 G3588 G3735 G3588 G1636

προσῆλθον αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ κατ' ιδίαν λέγοντες  
came unto him the disciples privately saying  
G4334 G846 G3588 G3101 G2596 G2398 G3004

Εἰπεν δὲ ήμιν πότε ταῦτα ἔσται καὶ τί τὸ σημεῖον  
Tell us when these things be and what shall be the sign  
G2036 G2254 G4219 G5023 G2071 G2532 G5101 G3588 G4592

τῆς σῆς παρουσίας καὶ τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος  
of thy coming and of the end of the world  
G3588 G4674 G3952 G2532 G3588 G4930 G3588 G165

## Additional Cross-References

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**Acts 1:7** (Parallel theme): And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

**Matthew 24:37** (Parallel theme): But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

**Matthew 13:49** (Parallel theme): So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,

**Matthew 21:1** (Parallel theme): And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,

**Luke 21:7** (Parallel theme): And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?

**Matthew 24:39** (Parallel theme): And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

**Matthew 24:27** (Parallel theme): 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.

**Hebrews 9:26** (Parallel theme): For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

**Matthew 28:20** (Parallel theme): Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

**Matthew 17:19** (Parallel theme): Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?