

# Jesus and the End Time | The Lukan End Time Discourse

## Introductory Note

This End Time discourse document is a part of the End Time prophecy website titled *Jesus and the End Time*. In this document the writer shows and discusses End Time prophecies of Jesus that are described in the End Time or Olivet discourse of the Gospel of Luke in the King James Bible (or KJV Bible), a discourse which occupies verses 5 through 37 of chapter 21 of that Gospel. This discourse and its Matthean and Markan counterparts, the Matthean and Markan End Time Discourses, are intended to serve as expanded, stand-alone versions of other documents in which this website discusses prophecies that Jesus made on or near the Mount of Olives shortly before his arrest. Specifically, this document is intended to serve as a more complete and user friendly (text searchable, resizable, etc.) alternative to the web page version thereof that appears on the Home page of this website, and as an expanded but more narrowly focused alternative to the whole-Gospel version thereof that appears on its Table of Contents page.

In this document the writer presents the End Time teachings of Jesus by showing, in the order in which they appear in the Gospel of Luke, sets of texts that quote or describe prophecies and other teachings of Jesus about the End Time. To save time and space, the writer will refer to texts of these kinds as "End Time texts". He will also use this term because it is now a common practice for the popular apocalyptic literature and End Time prophecy websites to use short generic terms like "End Time" and "End Times" (and variants thereof like End-Time, End-Times, Endtime and Endtimes) instead of longer and/or more specific terms, such as the time of the end, the end of the world (the end of the age in the NRSV), the regeneration, the world to come, the Second Coming, the Eschaton, the Parousia, etc.

Importantly, all End Time texts which include verses copied from the KJV New Testament are followed by entries called Notes which cite and/or discuss other New or Old Testament texts that are related to them and, consequently, ought to be read and interpreted in conjunction with them. Especially important among texts of this kind are texts which include similar but differently worded accounts of things Jesus said on the same or similar subjects in other Gospels, or in other parts of the same Gospel. Other examples of texts of this kind include KJV Old Testament texts which underlie, support and help explain End Time prophecies of Jesus. Reading Bible texts of these kinds in conjunction with one another is also important because reading them in this way helps readers understand the End Times teachings or Eschatology of Jesus as a connected whole, and not just as sets of independent stand-alone units.

Surprisingly, neither the Lukan End Time Discourse nor the Gospel of Luke as a whole describes a Judgment or other trial-like proceeding of the kind that Matthew describes in chapter 25 of his End Time discourse. To help readers understand how the teachings of Jesus about the Day of Judgment in Matthew's Discourse may affect and be affected by the most nearly similar things he teaches about it in Luke's discourse, the writer includes herewith an extra set of Notes that discusses these subjects at length. See in this connection the Appendix titled *Comparative Notes on the End Time Judgment* that he includes at the end of this document. See also the discussion of the meaning of the word everlasting that he includes in the Auxiliary Sense File titled *Senses of the Word Everlasting*.

## Part 1: Luke 21:5 Through Luke 21:24

The writer divides the texts that make up the Lukan End Time Discourse into two parts: a first part that includes Luke 21:5 through Luke 21:24, and a second part that includes Luke 21:25 through Luke 21:37. One reason he divides this discourse in this way is that Luke 21:24 is a verse in which Luke finishes describing prophecies of Jesus about things that may occur well before the coming of the Son of man, while Mark 13:25 is a verse in which Luke begins describing his prophecies about things that will occur just before and as he comes. Another is that this division highlights the fact that Parts 1 and 2 of Luke's discourse together generally correspond to Part 1 of Matthew's discourse, and do not include any of the things Jesus says in Part 2 thereof. Unfortunately, these things include the Bible's clearest description of the Day of Judgment, and the only Bible verse that uses the words everlasting punishment as such, Matt. 25:46.

### **Luke 21:5-24**

**P 5** And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, **6** As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. **7** 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? **8** And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. **9** But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by. **10** Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: **11** And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. **12** But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. **13** And it shall turn to you for a testimony. **14** Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: **15** For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to

gainsay nor resist. 16 And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. 17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. 18 But there shall not an hair of your head perish. 19 In your patience possess ye your souls. 20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. 21 Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. 22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. 24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. [end par.]

- **V. 5-24** above generally correspond to Matt. 24:1-22 and Mark 13:1-20 of the Matthean and Markan discourses.
- Unlike the Matthean and Markan discourses, the Lukan discourse does not actually say that Jesus spoke it on the mount of Olives. Instead, Luke seems to suggest this by saying that he spoke it as some of those with him "spake of the temple" (**v. 5**) or beheld it (**v. 6**), and that at night he "abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives." (Luke 21:37).
- The words "there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." in **v. 6** are repeated, almost word for word, in v. 2 of Matt. 24:1-22 and v. 2 of Mark 13:1-20. These words seem to be an abbreviated form of the words spoken by Jesus in v. 44 of Luke 19:41-44. With the possible exception of Luke 23:27-31 (not included), the only arguably similar earlier statement that Jesus makes in the Gospels is v. 38 of Matt. 23:29-39, in which he says, "Behold, your house is left to you desolate."
- **V. 7** describes persons referred to as "they" asking Jesus, "when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?". Its Markan counterpart, v. 4 of Mark 13:1-20, is similar, but describes named disciples asking him privately, "when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?". Its Matthean counterpart, v. 3 of Matt. 24:1-22, on the other hand, describes "the disciples" coming to him privately and asking him, "when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?".
- The "sign" Jesus is asked about in **v. 7** seems to correspond to the sign of the Son of man in heaven that Jesus speaks about in v. 30 of Matt. 24:29-36. In the Markan and Lukan counterparts of that text, Mark 13:24-32 and Luke 21:25-37, only Luke describes Jesus speaking about "signs" (Luke 21:25), and describes them as signs in the sun, moon and stars.
- The first part of **v. 7** describes the disciples asking Jesus a question that seems to be generally similar to the question that one saint asks another in v. 13 of Dan 8:5-14. Interestingly, both **v. 6** and v. 11 of Dan. 8:5-14 involve statements about the temple (or sanctuary) being thrown (or cast) down. Other similarities between the End Time discourses and Dan. 8:5-14 are discussed in Notes included with v. 29 of Matt. 24:29-36 and v. 25 of Mark 13:24-32.
- **V. 8** makes generally the same point as v. 23 of Luke 17:20-25, and includes a similar warning about people who will make false claims about him. **V. 8** is also generally similar to Matt. 24:4-5 and Mark 13:5-6 of the Matthean and Markan discourses, except that it adds, "the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.". Unlike the Matthean and Markan discourses, however, the Lukan discourse does not include verses that correspond to Matt. 24:23-25 or Mark 13:21-23.
- **V. 9** describes Jesus telling his listeners not to be terrified when they hear of "wars and commotions" because "the end is not by and by.". This verse generally parallels Matt. 24:6 and Mark 13:7, which describe Jesus telling his disciples not to be troubled when they hear of "wars and rumours of wars" because "the end" is "not yet" (Matt. 24:6) or "shall not be yet" (Mark 13:7). Jesus' use of the words "the end" in **v. 9** is surprising. This is because all three of these verses describe Jesus answering a question about "the end" that he is asked only in the Matthean discourse, i.e., in Matt. 24:3. One possible explanation is that "the end" that Jesus speaks about in **v. 9** addresses the thought about the immediate appearance of the kingdom of God that Luke mentions in Luke 19:11.
- Jesus' use of "the end" in **v. 9** is also surprising because it is the only verse in the Lukan discourse (or, in fact, in the whole of the Gospel of Luke) in which Jesus uses these words as such. This is all the more surprising because Jesus uses the words "the end" as such three times in the Matthean discourse (Matt. 24:6, 24:13 and 24:14) and twice in the Markan discourse (Mark 13:7 and 13:13).
- **V. 9-11** generally correspond to Matt. 24:6-8 and Mark 13:7-8 of the Matthean and Markan discourses. All of Luke 21:10, Matt. 24:7 and Mark 13:8, for example, describe Jesus saying, "nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:". On the other hand, while **v. 11** ends with Jesus speaking about "fearful sights and great signs" from heaven, Matt. 24:7-8 and Mark 13:8 end with Jesus speaking about the beginning(s) of sorrows. These sights and signs may be the same as those that Luke mentions in v. 25 of Luke 21:25-37. See also v. 29 of Matt. 24:29-36 and v. 24-25 of Mark 13:24-32.
- Although **v. 10** describes Jesus using the word "kingdom", it seems to describe him using this word in a common or general sense in which it has little to do with the kingdom that the writer refers to as the End Time Kingdom (or kingdom of the End Times). In the Auxiliary Sense File titled *Senses of the Word Kingdom*, the writer describes the senses in which the KJV Bible uses the word "kingdom" and gives examples of verses that use it in these senses.

- **V. 11** is the first verse of the Lukan discourse in which Jesus uses words like "heaven" and "heavens". These words may have any of the meanings they have when they are used in longer phrases like "the God of heaven", "the host of heaven", "the heaven of heavens" and "the kingdom of heaven", and apparent contractions thereof like "heaven", "the heaven" and "the heavens". In the accompanying Auxiliary Sense File titled *Senses of Words Like Heaven*, the writer describes the senses in which the KJV Bible uses words like these and gives examples of verses that use them in these senses.
- **V. 12-19** above seem to generally correspond to Mark 13:9-13, except that they do not include a verse that corresponds to v. 10 of Mark 13:1-20. **V. 12-19** also seem to roughly correspond to Matt. 24:9-13, except that they do not include verses that correspond to v. 11-12 of Matt. 24:1-22.
- Surprisingly, neither **v. 12-19** nor any other part of the Lukan discourse describes Jesus speaking about preaching the gospel in all the world (Matt 24:14) or publishing it among all nations (Mark 13:10), or about this preaching or publishing being associated with the coming of "the end". See in this connection Matthew's use of "*then* shall the end come" in Matt. 24:14 and Mark's use of the word "*first*" in Mark 13:10. Luke does, however, describe Jesus saying that repentance and the remission of sins should be preached among all nations at the time of his ascension, i.e., at v. 47 of Luke 24:44-51. See also Mark 16:15-16 and v. 8 of Acts 1:1-9.
- In **v. 12** and **16**, Jesus gives two warnings about persons who will betray his followers. A first (**v. 12**) refers only to "they", and a second (**v. 16**) refers to family and friends. The first warning generally corresponds to the first part of Matt. 24:9 and to Mark 13:9. The second roughly corresponds to Mark 13:12, but is not mentioned in Matthew's discourse. Jesus does, however, speak about betrayals by "one another" in Matt. 24:10. The betrayals by family members that Jesus speaks about in **v. 16** may, however, be related to the betrayals he speaks about in v. 35 of Matt. 10:34-36 and v. 37 of Matt. 10:37-42. See also v. 51-53 of Luke 12:49-53.
- The assurance Jesus gives in **v. 14-15** that those who are persecuted will be told what to say generally corresponds to the assurance he gives in Mark 13:11 of the Markan discourse, but is not mentioned in the Matthean discourse. Matthew does, however, describe Jesus giving an assurance of this kind in v. 19-20 of Matt. 10:5-23. Surprisingly, Mark 13:9-13 as a whole includes words similar to those included in v. 17-22 of Matt. 10:5-23, Matthew's description of the sending of the twelve to preach that "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." (v. 7). This is surprising because no words of this kind appear in Mark's or Luke's description of the sending of the twelve, Mark 6:7-13 and Luke 9:1-6, or in Luke's later description of the sending of seventy others, Luke 10:1-16.
- The words "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." in **v. 17** are repeated word for word in the first part of Mark 13:13, and almost word for word in the last part of Matt. 24:9. The latter verses, however, are followed, either immediately (Mark 13:13) or a few verses later (Matt. 24:13), by the words "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.", words that have no obvious counterparts in the Gospel of Luke. One explanation is that **v. 18-19** use phrases like "not perish" and "possess ye your souls" to mean substantially the same thing as the word "saved". See also how John uses the words "not perish" in v. 15-16 of John 3:14-18 and v. 27-28 of John 10:24-31, among others.
- While all of **v. 20**, Matt. 24:15 and Mark 13:14 describe Jesus using the word "desolation", only **v. 20** describes him using it to refer to the desolation of Jerusalem by unnamed armies. Matthew and Mark, on the other hand, both describe Jesus using this word in the phrase "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet", an apparent reference to the entity mentioned in v. 11 of Dan. 12:8-13. See also v. 13 of Dan. 8:5-14, Dan. 9:27 and Dan. 11:31.
- While the Lukan discourse does not describe teachings of Jesus about the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place (Matt. 24:15) or where it ought not (Mark 13:14), **v. 21** does include the saying that Matthew and Mark include right after these words, i.e., "Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains;". In Luke, however, these words follow **v. 20**'s saying about the desolation of Jerusalem, a desolation that Jesus speaks about again in **v. 24**. These verses, in turn, seem to be differently worded repetitions of v. 43-44 of Luke 19:41-44. See also v. 38 of Matt. 23:29-39.
- The words "Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains;" in the first part of **v. 21** are repeated, almost word for word, in Matt. 24:16 and in the last part of Mark 13:14. All statements of this kind seem to be based on v. 5 of Zech. 14:1-11. Unlike its Matthean and Markan counterparts, however, **v. 21** adds two more statements, a first that urges "them which are in the midst of it [i.e., Judaea]" to "depart out;", and a second that urges "them that are in the countries" not to "enter thereinto."
- The phrase "days of vengeance" in the first part of **v. 22** does not appear as such anywhere else in the New Testament. In addition, the similar phrase "day of vengeance" does not appear at all in the New Testament. Jesus' use of the words "that all things which are written may be fulfilled." in the last part of **v. 22**, however, suggests that he regarded these days (or this day) as having been the subject of End Time prophecies that appear in the Old Testament. The Old Testament texts Jesus may have had in mind when he spoke these words are discussed in the next Note.
- While the words "days of vengeance" are not used as such anywhere in the KJV Old Testament, the arguably similar words "day of vengeance" are used in three Old Testament verses, all of which appear in texts that involve End Time-like interventions in human affairs, i.e., v. 2 of Is. 61:1-11, v. 4 of Is. 63:3-9 and v. 10 of Jer. 46:9-12. Of these, v. 1-2 of Is.

61:1-11 are of special interest because Luke 4:16-21 describes Jesus applying v. 1 and part of v. 2 of Is. 61:1-11 to himself while reading from the book of Isaiah in the synagogue of Nazareth. In Luke 4:16-21, however, Luke describes Jesus stopping before reaching the part of Is. 61:2 that includes the words "day of vengeance". See also the vengeance that Jesus associates with the coming of the Son of man in Luke 18:7-8.

- While **v. 22** describes Jesus using the words "days of vengeance" to describe the time he speaks about, the most nearly similar verses of the Matthean and Markan discourses, Matt. 24:21 and Mark 13:19, describe him using very different words. Specifically, Matthew 24:21 describes him speaking about a time of "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time," while Mark 13:19 describes him speaking about days of "affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation...unto this time,". These longer statements may be based on Dan. 12:1, part of which reads, "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time:". Another possibility is v. 7 of Jer. 30:4-17, a possibility that is supported by the apparent End Time significance of Jer. 30:18-24.
- The words Jesus uses in the last part of **v. 22**, "that all things which are written may be fulfilled.", seem to be related to the words he uses in v. 32 of Luke 21:25-37, "This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.". See also the words he uses in the most nearly similar Matthean and Markan verses, v. 34 of Matt. 24:29-36 and v. 30 of Mark 13:24-32.
- The words Jesus uses in the last part of **v. 22** also seem to generally parallel the words that disciples use in last part of the question they ask him in v. 4 of Mark 13:1-20, "[what shall be the sign when] all these things shall be fulfilled?". See also the words that Jesus uses in v. 44 of Luke 24:44-51, "that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.".
- The words "But woe unto them that are with child...in those days!" in **v. 23** are repeated, almost word for word, in Matt. 24:19 and Mark 13:17 of the Matthean and Markan discourses. In Luke, these words appear just after the verses that mention flight to the mountains (**v. 21**) and days of vengeance (**v. 22**). In Matthew and Mark, these words are separated from the verse that mentions flight to the mountains by two other verses, one that refers to him which (or that) is on the housetop (Matt. 24:17 and Mark 13:15) and one that refers to him which (or that) is in the field (Matt. 24:18 and Mark 13:16). While no statement of either of these kinds appears in Luke's End Time discourse, statements of both of these kinds do appear elsewhere in Luke's Gospel; see v. 31 of Luke 17:26-37.
- Neither **v. 5-24**, nor any other part of the Gospel of Luke, includes a verse that corresponds to Matt. 24:20 of the Matthean discourse or to Mark 13:18 of Markan discourse, both of which describe Jesus urging those in Judaea to pray that their flight not be in winter. In addition, only Matt. 24:20 of the Matthean discourse describes Jesus urging them to pray that their flight not be "on the sabbath day:".
- In the last part of **v. 23** and first part of **v. 24**, Jesus speaks about distress, slaughter and captivity in ways that seem to apply only to "the land" [i.e., Judaea (**v. 21**)] and "this people.". In the most nearly similar verses of the Matthean and Markan discourses, Matt. 24:22 and Mark 13:20, on the other hand, Jesus speaks about days so perilous that "no flesh" should be saved, but adds that God will shorten these days "for the elect's sake". One explanation for these differences may be found in Luke 18:7-8, in which Jesus suggests that there is a relationship between the coming of the Son of man and God's avenging "his own elect, which cry day and night unto him".
- The prophecy of Jesus in **v. 24** that "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles," seems to be a differently worded version of the prophecies he makes in **v. 6** and **20**, and an abbreviated version of the prophecy he makes in Luke 19:41-44.
- In spite of differences in wording, the events Jesus prophesies in **v. 20-24** and their Matthean and Markan counterparts seem to parallel parts of the "day of the Lord" prophecy of Zech. 14:1-11. The flight to the mountains he speaks about in **v. 21**, Matthew 24:16 and Mark 13:14, for example, seems to parallel that mentioned in Zech. 14:5, while the desolation and treading down of Jerusalem he speaks about in **v. 20** and **24** seems to parallel that mentioned in Zech. 14:2. In addition, the fulfilling of the "time of the Gentiles" in **v. 24** seems to involve a divine intervention like that mentioned in Zech. 14:3. Finally, Zech. 14:1-11 describes these events as associated with the coming of the Lord (Zech. 14:5) and the establishment of the Lord's kingship (or kingdom?) "over all the earth:" (Zech. 14:9), events that seem to correspond to the coming of the kingdom of God that Jesus speaks about in v. 31 of Luke 21:25-37. See also the coming of the summer or "it" that he speaks about in v. 32-33 of Matt. 24:29-36 and v. 28-29 of Mark 13:24-32.

#### Historical Note on the Destruction of Jerusalem:

Because Jerusalem was compassed and destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D., it is not clear today whether **v. 20** and **24** are prophecies of Jesus that were fulfilled by the destruction of 70 A.D., or are prophecies of Jesus that will be fulfilled by another destruction of Jerusalem that will take place at some time in the future.

### **Part 2: Luke 21:25 Through Luke 21:37**

This is the second of the two parts into which the writer divides the Lukan End Time Discourse. In Part 2 Luke begins by describing prophecies of Jesus about signs in the heavens and other things that men will see just before the coming of the Son of man (v. 25-26). He then briefly describes the things that will happen as he comes (v. 27) in words similar to those used in Matthew's and Mark's discourses (Matt. 24:30 and Mark 13:26). Thereafter, Luke says things

about the fulfillment of these prophecies before 'this generation' passes away that generally parallel those said by Matthew and Mark. Unlike Matthew or Mark, however, Luke closes his discourse with short and cryptic prophecies of Jesus about a Day of Judgment which is like a snare that will 'come on' all men on the face of the earth (v. 35), and which will cause some to 'stand before the Son of man' (v. 36). As a result, it is reasonable to think of the Lukan discourse as including an account of the Judgment that is more specific than that included by Mark, but less specific than that included by Matthew.

### **Luke 21:25-37**

**P 25** And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; **26** Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. **27** And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. **28** And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. **29** And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; **30** When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. **31** So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. **32** Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. **33** Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. **P 34** And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. **35** For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. **36** Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. **37** And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives.

- **V. 25-36** above generally correspond to Matt. 24:29-36 and Mark 13:24-37 of the Matthean and Markan discourses.
- The End Times teachings of Jesus about signs in the sun, moon and stars in **v. 25** may be a differently worded version of his teachings about great signs from heaven in the last part of v. 11 of Luke 21:5-24 above. Only v. 30 of Matt. 24:29-36, however, describes his teachings about the sign of the Son of man appearing in heaven.
- The things Jesus says about "distress of nations, with perplexity;" in **v. 25** may be related to the things he says about wars and commotions in v. 9 of Luke 21:5-24 above. Similarly, the things Jesus says about men's hearts failing them for fear in **v. 26** may be related to the things he says about fearful sights in v. 11 of Luke 21:5-24.
- Unlike **v. 25**, which describes Jesus prophesying that there shall be signs in the sun and in the moon and in the stars, Matt. 24:29 and Mark 13:24 of the Matthean and Markan discourses describe him prophesying that the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light. If **v. 25** is regarded as only a more broadly worded form of the latter, then it is supported by the same prophecies that support the latter, i.e., v. 10 of Is. 13:6-15, v. 7 of Ezek. 32:3-10, v. 10 of Joel 2:1-11 and v. 15 of Joel 3:9-21. If **v. 25** is considered by itself, however, it may also be supported by v. 23 of Is. 24:17-23, v. 30-31 of Joel 2:28-32, v. 9 of Amos 8:7-10 and v. 6 of Zech. 14:1-11.
- The prophecy of Jesus that the powers of heaven shall be shaken (**v. 26**) generally parallels his prophecy in Matt. 24:29 that the powers of the heavens shall be shaken, and his prophecy in Mark 13:25 that the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. These prophecies of Jesus all seem to allude to a shaking of the kind mentioned in v. 13 of Is. 13:6-15, v. 10 of Joel 2:1-11, v. 16 of Joel 3:9-21, v. 6 of Hag. 2:1-9 and v. 21 of Hag. 2:20-23.
- In spite of the above-discussed similarities between **v. 25-37** and their Matthean and Markan counterparts, neither **v. 25-36** nor any other part of the Gospel of Luke describes Jesus teaching that the stars shall fall from heaven (Matt. 24:29) or that the stars of heaven shall fall (Mark 13:25). As a result, these parts of the Matthean and Markan discourses may be related to the End Time prophecies of v. 4 of Is. 34:1-12 and v. 10 of Dan. 8:5-14 in ways that the Lukan discourse is not.
- **V. 27** is the first verse of the Lukan discourse in which Jesus uses the phrase "the Son of man" in a sense that is of End Time interest. In the accompanying Auxiliary Sense File titled *Senses of Phrases Like Son of Man*, the writer describes the senses in which the KJV Bible uses phrases of this kind (a son of man, the son of man, etc.) and gives examples of verses that use them in these senses.
- The prophecies of Jesus about the coming of the Son of man in **v. 27** are repeated, almost word for word, in v. 30 of Matt. 24:29-36 and in v. 26 of Mark 13:24-32. See also v. 31 of Matt. 25:31-46. All of these prophecies seem to be related to the coming of "one like the Son of man" mentioned in v. 13-14 of Dan. 7:9-14. These prophecies about the Son of man may also be related to "the likeness as the appearance of a man" mentioned in v. 26 of Ezek. 1:26-28.
- The prophecies of Jesus about the coming of the Son of man in **v. 27**, v. 30 of Matthew 24:29-36, v. 26 of Mark 13:24-32 and v. 31 of Matt. 25:31-46 seem to be related to the prophecies he makes in v. 28 of Matt. 16:24-28, v. 38 of Mark 8:34-9:1 and v. 26 of Luke 9:23-27. See also v. 41 of Matt. 13:36-43, v. 27 of Matt. 24:23-28, v. 37 and 39 of Matt. 24:37-51 and v. 26-30 of Luke 17:36-37. See also, however, the prophecy he makes in v. 23 of Matt. 10:5-23.
- The words Jesus speaks in **v. 27** are similar to those he speaks at v. 64 of Matt. 26:62-66 and v. 62 of Mark 14:60-64, i.e., during his trial before the high priest, except that he there adds the words "sitting on the right hand of power,". In Luke's account of his trial before the elders of the people, chief priests and scribes (Luke 22:66-71), Jesus does not say

anything about cloud(s), and states only that the Son of man shall sit on the right hand of the power of God (Luke 22:69). Examples of Bible verses that illustrate how it couples the words "right hand" with references to God include 1Kings 22:19 and 2Chron. 18:18, and the following verses from Psalms: Ps. 16:11; 20:6; 63:8; 80:17; 110:1 and 5; 138:7 and 139:10. Among the latter, Ps. 110:1 is of special interest because all three Synoptic Gospels describe Jesus discussing this verse with the Pharisees and scribes. See Matt. 22:41-46, Mark 12:35-37 and Luke 20:41-44.

- The Son of man that **v. 27** describes as coming in a cloud seems to correspond to the "one like the Son of man" that **v. 13-14** of Dan. 7:9-14 describe as coming with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of days and being given dominion, glory and a kingdom. While Daniel does not explicitly describe the Son of man as the judge of the Day of Judgment, Jesus does seem to do so in Matt. 25:31-46 of the Matthean discourse, although he there refers to the judge as "the King". Mark also does not describe the Son of Man as the judge of the Day of Judgment, although he refers to this day as such in **v. 11** of Mark 6:7-13. **V. 36** above also suggests that the Son of man will be this judge, but does not explicitly say so.
- Surprisingly, while **v. 27** and the corresponding parts of the Matthean and Markan discourses describe Jesus saying that the Son of man shall come in a cloud (or in the clouds) "with power and great glory.", none describes him saying that the Son of man shall come in or with his kingdom, like Matt. 16:27-28 does. One possible explanation is that his coming in his kingdom (or in his kingship) is implied by the words "with power and great glory." in **v. 27**. Another is that **v. 25-37** do describe Jesus speaking about the Son of man coming in his kingdom, but describe him doing so by telling the parable of **v. 29-32**, rather than by implying it in **v. 27**. See in this connection the writer's discussion of the meaning of the words "summer" and "it" that appears in a Note included with **v. 29-32** below.
- **V. 27** refers to the persons who see the coming of the Son of man only as "they", i.e., the men whose hearts **v. 26** describes as failing them for fear. Mark 13:26 of the Markan discourse also refers to these persons only as "they", but does not describe their reaction to what they see. Matt. 24:30 of the Matthean discourse refers to these persons as "all the tribes of the earth" and says that they will mourn. Of these, Matt. 24:30 is of special interest because it seems to echo **v. 4** of Is. 40:1-11, which speaks of the glory of the Lord and says, "all flesh shall see it together:". Notice in this connection that John the Baptist quotes from **v. 3** of the latter text in Matt. 3:1-6/3, Mark 1:1-11/3 and Luke 3:1-9/4, and that Luke 3:1-9/6 describes John adding, "And all flesh shall see the salvation of God."
- **V. 28** has no counterpart in the Matthean and Markan discourses. Jesus does, however, make a statement that begins with very similar words in **v. 31**, and that does have counterparts in these discourses at Matt. 24:33 and Mark 13:29.
- Surprisingly, **v. 25-36** above do not describe the Son of man sending angels to gather his elect, like Matt. 24:31 and Mark 13:27 do. See also **v. 41** of Matt. 13:36-43 and **v. 49** of Matt. 13:47-50. The absence of a statement about gathering angels in the Lukan discourse is all the more surprising because Luke describes Jesus teaching that the Son of man would come in the glory of the holy angels in **v. 26** of Luke 9:23-27. It is possible, however, that Jesus had a similar idea in mind when he used the word "snare" in **v. 35**.
- Since the kingdom of God that Jesus speaks about in **v. 29-32** corresponds to the summer (or "it") he speaks about in Matt. 24:32-34 and Mark 13:28-30, it seems clear that all of these texts relate to the kingdom of God. This, in turn, raises the question of how this kingdom is related to the kingdom of the Son of man that Jesus speaks about in Matt. 16:28. One possibility is that Jesus thought that the Son of man would sit on the throne of the kingdom of God or, in other words, have God as his kingly overlord\* or suzerain. See in this connection **v. 32** of Luke 1:26-33 in conjunction with **v. 5** of 1Chron. 28:2-8. This possibility may also explain the teachings of Jesus about the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power (or the power of God). See, for example, **v. 64** of Matt. 26:62-66, **v. 62** of Mark 14:60-64 and **v. 69** of Luke 22:66-71 in conjunction with **v. 1** of Ps. 110:1-7. \* Special Note: **V. 7** of 2Kings 16:5-12 is an example of a verse in which a Jewish king, Ahaz, acknowledges the overlordship of another king, Tiglath-pileser, by speaking of himself as his son.
- Jesus' saying about all being fulfilled in **v. 32** would seem to convey essentially the same idea as his saying about "all these things" being fulfilled in Matt. 24:34. See also his saying about the fulfillment of "all things which are written" in Luke 21:22. It seems unclear, however, how these fulfillments are related to the fulfillment of all things that Jesus says were written "concerning me" in the Scriptures in **v. 44** of Luke 24:44-51, or to the accomplishment of all the things he says were written "concerning the Son of man" by the prophets in **v. 31-33** of Luke 18:31-34.
- The End Times teachings of Jesus described in **v. 31-32** are generally similar to those described in their Matthean and Markan parallels, Matt. 24:33-34 and Mark 13:29-30. With the possible exception of **v. 32**, all of these verses suggest that Jesus taught that the Son of man would come in the way described in **v. 27** before the passing away of the generation of people that lived when he spoke these words. This idea seems to be confirmed by Matt. 16:28, Mark 9:1 and Luke 9:27, which describe Jesus saying that some standing here shall "not taste of death" till they "see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." (Matt. 16:28), "have seen the kingdom of God come with power." (Mark 9:1) or "see the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:27). Because the Son of man did not come in this way before the passing away of that generation of people, these verses have long presented interpretation difficulties for those who believe that Jesus will come in this way in the future. Because it is impossible to thoroughly discuss these difficulties in a document of this kind, the writer will here include only a few basic Notes that discuss what Jesus probably meant when he used the key phrases that appear in these verses.

The most important of these include: these things (or all these things), till all be fulfilled, and this generation.

- Turning first to the phrase "these things", it will be seen that Jesus seems to use this phrase in **v. 28** and **31** simply to refer back to the things he just mentioned, including the coming of the Son of man in a cloud (**v. 27**) and signs in the sun, moon and stars (**v. 25**). He also seems to use this phrase in the same way in earlier and later parts of the Lukan discourse, such as Luke 21:9 and Luke 21:36. See also v. 48 of Luke 24:44-51. Jesus also uses the phrase "these things" in much the same way in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. Interestingly, while the Synoptic Gospels describe Jesus using both the phrase "these things" and the phrase "all these things", Matthew and Mark typically describe Jesus using "all these things" while Luke typically describes him using "these things". As a result, it seems unlikely that these phrases alone are responsible for the above-mentioned interpretation difficulties.
- Turning next to the phrase "till all be fulfilled" at the end of **v. 32**, the situation is less clear. This is because this phrase may be only a variant of its Matthean or Markan counterparts, "till all these things be fulfilled." (Matt. 24:34) or "till all these things be done." (Mark 13:30), that Luke abbreviated by dropping the words "these things". On the other hand, it may mean that Luke intended what Jesus said at this point to apply not just to the fulfillment of the things he mentioned earlier in his discourse, but also to the fulfillment of all Bible prophecies about the End Time. Unfortunately, while the former possibility is supported by the fact that both Matthew and Mark repeatedly describe Jesus saying "these things" and "all these things", the latter is supported by the fact that Luke elsewhere describes sayings of Jesus, such as v. 22 of Luke 21:5-24 and v. 44 of Luke 24:44-51, in which he refers to all of the things written in the Scriptures. One example of an End Time prophecy that falls within the meaning of Luke's broader phrase, but not within the meaning of Matthew's and Mark's narrower phrases, is the prophecy of a restoration to Israel of a king of the house of David. See, for example, 2Sam. 7:12-16, Ps. 132:8-18, Is. 9:1-7 and Jer. 33:19-26, among others.

### **The Meaning of *This Generation***

- Turning next to the words "this generation" in **v. 32**, one encounters what is arguably the most problematic phrase in the End Time discourses. One reason is that **v. 32** and its Matthean and Markan counterparts, Matt. 24:34 and Mark 13:30, all begin with almost the same words: "Verily, I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all...". Another is that Jesus' use of "you" with "This generation" suggests that he is using these terms to refer to the same people, i.e., the people to whom he is speaking. As a result, if **v. 32** accurately reflects what Jesus said at this point and is interpreted literally, it seems to say that the Son of man will come in a cloud (**v. 27**) while at least some of those people were still alive, an idea that seems to be confirmed by Matt. 16:28, Mark 9:1 and Luke 9:27. In order to deal with the difficulties associated with the fact that the Son of man has not yet come in this way, some Christians offer non-literal interpretations that avoid them. One is that "this generation" means the Jews as a people, regardless of when or where they live. Another is that "this generation" means the generation of people that is alive when **v. 25-28** are fulfilled. Rather than spend time discussing the merits of interpretations like these, the writer will now simply point out and discuss examples of other texts in which Jesus uses phrases like "this generation", especially those in which he uses them in combination with words like "you" and "ye".
- To begin with, the three Synoptic Gospels make clear that the phrase "...I say unto you, This generation shall" in **v. 32** is one example of a type of phrase in which Jesus uses the word "generation" with the words "you" (or "ye"), "this" and "O" when directly addressing a group of people. Examples of other verses of this type include "Why doth this generation seek after a sign? Verily I say unto you..." (Mark 8:12) and "Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation." (Matt 23:36). Examples of verses of this type that do not use the word "this" include "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things?" (Matt. 12:34) and "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you?" (Matt. 17:17). An example of a verse of this type that uses "we" rather than "you" or "ye" is Matt. 12:38-39: "...we would see a sign from thee. 39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign;". From these examples, it seems reasonable to conclude that, when Jesus uses "generation" in these ways, he uses it as a non-repetitious substitute for the word "you" (or "ye" or "we") that tactfully leaves open to interpretation when he is speaking narrowly about all of the persons who are then physically present, and when he is speaking broadly about some, many or all of the persons who are alive at that time, but who may or may not be then physically present.
- In addition to including texts that use the word "generation" in the ways described above, the Gospels include texts that use it the same way we use it today. Examples of Gospel texts of this kind include Matt. 1:17, "So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations;" and Luke 1:50, "And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.". See also Luke 16:8, "...the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.". Curiously, however, the Gospel of John does not include even one verse that uses any form of the word "generation".
- For the sake of completeness, the writer will now include some examples of KJV Old Testament texts that use the word "generation". Examples of this kind that are shown in the accompanying document titled *Old Testament Auxiliary Text Files* include: v. 10 of Judg. 2:6-10, "and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord,."; v. 18 of Ps. 102:13-28, "This shall be written for the generation to come:."; v. 8 of Is. 53:1-12, "who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living:." and v. 20 of Joel 3:9-21, "But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation.".

- If the above-discussed facts and inferences about the meaning of 'this generation' are correct, it would be reasonable to think that the prophecies of Jesus about the coming of the Son described in **v. 27** above, in **v. 30** of Matt. 24:29-36, and in **v. 26** of Mark 13:24-32 (among others) failed to come to pass and, consequently, are false prophecies within the meaning of **v. 22** of Deut. 18:20-22. Ominously, **v. 20** of the same text says that prophets who claim to speak in God's name words which God did not command them to speak shall be put to death. As a result, one cannot dismiss out of hand that the possibility that one of the reasons the Jewish authorities wanted to put Jesus to death was the non-fulfillment of Son of man prophecies of the kind Matthew describes Jesus making in **v. 23** of Matt. 10:5-23.
- The prophecy of Jesus about the passing away of heaven and earth in **v. 33** is repeated, word for word, in **v. 35** of Matt. 24:29-36 and **v. 31** of Mark 13:24-32. This passing away seems to correspond to that mentioned in **v. 25-26** of Ps. 102:13-28, **v. 4** of Is. 34:1-12, **v. 6** of Is. 51:1-11, **v. 17** of Is. 65:6-25 and **v. 22** of Is. 66:15-24. Interestingly, the two last-cited verses from Isaiah speak about new heavens and a new earth. It is possible that this "new earth" is what Jesus had in mind when he described his teachings about the world to come in **v. 32** of Matt. 12:31-32, **v. 30** of Mark 10:28-31 and **v. 30** of Luke 18:28-30, and his teachings about the regeneration in **v. 28** of Matt. 18:27-30.
- **V. 33** is the last verse in which the words of the Lukan discourse generally parallel those of the Markan discourse. One reason is that the closing verses of the Lukan discourse do not include a verse, like **v. 32** of Mark 13:24-32, that describes Jesus saying that the day of the coming of the Son of man is known only to the Father. See also **v. 36** of Matt. 24:29-36. Another is that the closing verses of the Lukan discourse describe Jesus saying things about the Son of man that he does not say in the closing verses of the Markan discourse. See in this connection the Notes associated with **v. 34** and **36** below. These differences explain why the writer keeps the closing verses of the Lukan discourse (**v. 25-37**) together as parts of a single text, but separates the closing verses of the Markan discourse into two texts, Mark 13:24-32 and Mark 13:32-37.
- **V. 33** is also the last verse in which the words of the Lukan discourse generally parallel those of the Matthean discourse. This is because **v. 33** and its Matthean counterpart (**v. 35** of Matt. 24:29-36) appear just before the points where the Lukan and Matthean discourses begin to unfold very differently. Specifically, **v. 33** appears just before the verses in which Luke describes Jesus warning his followers to be watchful (Luke 21:34 and 36), saying a few more things about "that day" (the day that the Son of man comes) and then ending his discourse. **V. 35** of Matt. 24:29-36, on the other hand, appears near the middle of the Matthean discourse, which describes Jesus pointing out similarities between the coming of the Son of man and the days of Noe (**v. 37-39** of Matt. 24:37-51), telling a parable about wise and evil servants (**v. 42-51** of Matt. 24:37-51), and then continuing through all of chapter 25 of the Gospel of Matthew before ending his discourse.
- Jesus' warning in **v. 34** above against being so preoccupied or drunk as to be unawares on "that day" (the day when the Son of man comes) seems to roughly correspond to **v. 48-50** of Matt. 24:37-51 of the Matthean discourse and to **v. 45-46** of Luke 12:35-48. Other Gospel texts in which Jesus seems to use the words "that day" to refer to the day when the Son of man comes include: Matt. 24:23-28/36 and 26:19-30/29; Mark 13:24-32/32 and 14:16-26/25; Luke 6:20-25/23 and 10:1-16/12; and John 16:19-28/23 and 26, among others.
- **V. 34** and **36** above begin with almost the same words as **v. 33** and **35**, respectively, of Mark 13:32-37. Unlike the latter, however, **v. 34** and **36** do not end with words which say that the time of the coming of that day (Mark 13:32-33) or of the time when the master of the house cometh (Mark 13:35) is unknown. Instead, after condemning surfeit (overindulgence) and drunkenness, **v. 34-36** describe Jesus teaching that that day shall come as a snare on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth (**v. 35**), and that those present should watch and pray always that they may be accounted worthy to escape "all these things" that shall come to pass and "stand before the Son of man." (**v. 36**).
- The coupling of the words "escape" and "all these things" in **v. 36** suggests that these words refer to things Jesus speaks about in earlier verses, e.g., Luke 21:11 and **v. 25-26** above. They may also refer to the fire and brimstone that Jesus says will rain down on and destroy people on "the day when the Son of man is revealed." (**v. 28-30** of Luke 17:26-37).
- Although **v. 37** is made up of words written by Luke, and not words spoken by Jesus, the writer includes it as a part of the Lukan discourse because it is a verse which suggests that this discourse is associated with the Mount of Olives.

#### Notes on the Ending of Luke's End Time Discourse

In spite of the similarities and differences between the End Times teachings of Jesus described in Luke 21:25-37 above and those described in the most nearly similar Markan text, Mark 13:24-37, both of these sets of teachings appear just before the ends of their respective discourses. As explained in connection with **v. 33** above, the most nearly similar verses of the Matthean discourse appear near the middle of that discourse, which continues not only through the end of chapter 24 of Matthew's Gospel, but also through all of chapter 25 thereof. To make these discourses easier to discuss in an orderly way in spite of these differences, the writer has divided each of them into two parts and explained his reasons for dividing them this way at the points where he first introduces them. For the Lukan and a Markan discourses, the result is two discourses each of which includes a Part 1 that discusses prophecies of Jesus about things that will happen before the coming of the Son of man, and a Part 2 that discusses his prophecies about things that will happen during or after his coming. For the Matthean discourse, the result is a discourse which includes a Part 1 that discusses prophecies of Jesus

that roughly parallel those mentioned in Parts 1 and 2 of the Lukan and Markan discourses, and a Part 2 that discusses prophecies of Jesus that are not mentioned in either of these discourses.

Unfortunately, neither Part of the Lukan discourse describes what is undoubtedly the most consequential of the prophecies of Jesus about the End Time Judgment: his prophecies about the trial-like Judgment proceeding he describes at the end of Part 2 of the Matthean discourse, Matt. 25:31-46. In order to help readers understand how these prophecies may affect the meanings of the most similar prophecies he makes in the Markan and Lukan discourses and other parts of their Gospels, the writer includes a special set of Notes that discusses the similarities and differences between these prophecies at length. These Notes are included below in the Appendix titled *Comparative Notes on the End Time Judgment*.

### **Appendix: Comparative Notes on the End Time Judgment**

Before specifically discussing the similarities and differences between the parts of the End Time discourses that describe prophecies of Jesus about the coming of the Son of man and the End Time Judgment, the writer wishes to point out that the Matthean discourse includes two texts in which Matthew describes the coming of the Son of man. The first, Matt. 24:29-36, appears at the end of Part 1 of the Matthean discourse, and describes his coming in almost the same words that Mark uses to describe it in Mark 13:24-32, near the end of Part 2 of his End Time discourse. Matt. 24:29-36 is also roughly similar to the description of the coming of the Son of man that Luke includes in Luke 21:25-33, near the end of Part 2 of his End Time discourse. The second and more consequential of Matthew's descriptions of the coming of the son of man, Matt. 25:31-46, appears at the end of Part 2 of the Matthean discourse, and includes a description of the End Time Judgment that is far more specific than any of those that appear elsewhere in the Synoptic Gospels, e.g., Matt. 13:40-42, Matt. 13:47-50 and Matt. 16:27-28. By dividing each of the three End Time discourses into two parts at these points, the writer hopes to make it easier for readers to clearly understand the structural relationships between them, and the things that the writer will be saying about them.

A first important difference between the Matthean, Markan and Lukan End Time discourses is that the Markan and Lukan discourses end without portraying Jesus describing an End Time Judgment of the kind he describes in Matt. 25:31-46 of Part 2 of the Matthean discourse. Specifically, the Markan and Lukan discourses end without describing Jesus saying anything about the Son of man (or King) engaging in a dialog with the persons he is judging, and without formally announcing his decisions about their fates. It even leaves the overall connection between the coming of the Son of man and the judgment of massive numbers of (or all) people to be inferred from the things Luke says about these being days of vengeance (v. 22) and being worthy to stand before the Son of man (v. 36). A more likely explanation for the fact that the Markan and Lukan discourses do not specifically describe these aspects of the Judgment, however, is that Mark and Luke regarded descriptions of these aspects of the Judgment as unnecessary because the Holy Scriptures as they knew them included many other descriptions of a Judgment that did not include descriptions of those aspects thereof.

Whatever the true explanation for the differences between Matthew's, Mark's and Luke's descriptions of the End Time Judgment may be, the fact is that the only allegedly inspired writings known in the time of Jesus that were later included in the KJV Old Testament include few\*, if any, descriptions of the procedural aspects of an End Time Judgment. They do, however, include many texts that describe the physical aspects of the implementation (or execution) of such a Judgment, even when they do not use the word "judgment" as such. Some examples of texts that describe God *executing* an apparently eschatological judgment include Ps. 9:13-18, Ps. 103:8-19, Ps. 146:1-10, Ezek. 5:7-15 and Mic. 7:8-10. Some examples of texts which describe God taking apparently eschatological punitive actions, but which do not use the word "judgment" as such include Ps. 97:1-10, Is. 13:6-15, Joel 2:1-11 and Mal. 4:1-6. Together, these texts appear to further illustrate and explain why the description of the Judgment included in Matt. 25:31-46 of Part 2 of Matthew's discourse is so different from those included in the other End Time discourses and in other parts of the Bible as a whole.

\* Special Comparative Note: One Old Testament text which describes a Judgment scene that some people may claim to be similar to that described in Matt. 25:31-46 is v. 11-24 of Ezek. 34:6-24. This is because v. 11, 17 and 22 thereof portray God judging between groups of 'cattle' brought before Him. Even this text, however, provides no information about the procedural aspects of this judging, and seems to have in mind an outcome that restores the kingship of David. On the other hand, this text is soon followed by Ezek. 37:1-14, which includes Ezekiel's famous prophecy about the resurrection of the whole house of Israel (Ezek. 37:11). As a result, a variety of different interpretations of these texts are possible.

A second important difference between Matthew's, Mark's and Luke's discourses is that Matt. 25:31-46 of Part 2 of Matthew's discourse describes a Judgment at which the judge, the Son of man (or King), explains the criteria he uses to separate people who are saved from people who are damned, while neither the Markan nor the Lukan discourse describes any Judgment criteria. In addition, while Matt. 25:31-46 of Matthew's discourse seem to describe judgment criteria that involve performing or not performing charitable works for the less fortunate, v. 40 and 45 thereof suggest that these works are treated *as if* they had been performed for Jesus or "the least of these my brethren". In the Gospel of Luke, on the other hand, the most nearly comparable text (Luke 16:19-31) not only does not appear in his discourse, it also describes the condemnation of a rich man as a result of his failure to perform for a poor neighbor charitable works of the kind called for

by "Moses and the prophets" (v. 29 and 31), without saying anything about Jesus or any of his brethren.

When the subject of the criteria that will be used to determine whether people are saved or damned is examined more carefully, it soon becomes clear that the criteria described in Matt. 25:31-46 differ not only from those described in the most nearly comparable text, Luke 16:19-31, but also from those described in many other parts of the Gospels as a whole. This is because the latter portray Jesus as describing many other criteria that can determine whether people will be saved or damned. Among these other criteria are: the righteousness he mentions in Matt. 5:17-20, the keeping of the commandments he mentions in Matt. 19:16-26, the love of God he mentions in Matt. 22:35-40, the avoidance of iniquity he mentions in Matt. 13:36-43 and 13:47-50, and the forgiveness of one another he mentions in Matt. 6:9-15 and Matt. 18:23-35. Thus, even without including the observance of the many other laws described in the Old Testament, it seems clear that Matt. 25:31-46 of Part 2 of Matthew's discourse describes the criteria that will be used at the Judgment in a way different from the ways in which many other parts of the Bible as a whole typically describe them.

A third important difference between Matthew's, Mark's and Luke's discourses is that Matt. 25:31-46 of Part 2 of Matthew's discourse describes a Judgment at which people of all nations (Matt. 25:32) will be gathered before the Son of man (or King) *en masse*, at one time and place, judged by him then and there, and then immediately sent to the places where they will be rewarded or punished. V. 24-32 of Part 2 of Mark's discourse, on the other hand, says that the Son of man will send his angels to gather his elect from wherever they are (Mark. 13:27), but then says nothing more about them. In addition, v. 25-33 of Part 2 of Luke's discourse say nothing about a gathering of any kind. And, while Part 2 of Luke's discourse does include two verses which say that this time will come as a snare on all them that dwell on the face of the earth (Luke 21:35), and that those who are worthy will stand before the Son of man (Luke 21:36), it says nothing about their being gathered as nations in one place at one time and being judged *en masse*. It does, however, say things about the nearness of the Kingdom of God and the redemption that comes with it (Luke 21:28-31), although it ends before saying anything about what happens when this Kingdom is actually present.

Strangely, in spite of the above-described differences between Part 2 of Luke's discourse (Luke 21:25-36) and the end of Part 2 of Matthew's discourse (Matt. 25:31-46), the end of Part 2 of Luke's discourse is generally similar to the end of Part 1 of Matthew's discourse (Matt. 24:29-36), with some verses corresponding to one another word for word. This strangeness is also indicated by the fact that the end of Part 1 of Matthew's discourse (Matt. 24:29-36) and the verses just before the end of Part 2 of Mark's discourse (Mark 13:24-32) are even more similar to one another than they are to those at the end of Part 2 of Luke's discourse. Together, these similarities and differences suggest that, while there is a common Scriptural basis for the first-occurring descriptions of the coming of the Son of man that appear in all three End Time discourses, there is no common Scriptural basis for the description for the coming of the Son of man that appears in Part 2 of Matthew's Discourse, Matt. 25-31-46. Thus, once again, Matt. 25:31-46 of Matthew's discourse describes the Judgment in a way different from the ways that other End Time discourses and other parts of the Bible as a whole describe them. .

A fourth important difference between Matthew's, Mark's and Luke's End Time discourses is that only v. 41 of Matt. 25:31-46 of Matthew's discourse uses the words 'everlasting fire' ('eternal fire' in the NRSV). Matt. 25:41 is also one of only two verses in the entire KJV Bible that use these words as such. (The other, Matt. 18:8, is immediately followed by a verse that treats these words as a synonym for the words 'hell fire' --- 'hellfire' in modern English.) Matt. 25:41 is also important because it goes on to say that this fire was "prepared for the devil and his angels.", and thereby suggests that Jesus believed that God created a place with hell fire to confine and punish a group of evil angels led by the devil. The problem with this idea is that the canonical books of the KJV Old Testament, including Genesis Chapter 6, do not say anything about angels who engage in a rebellion against God. An angelic rebellion against God is, however, described in parts of the non-canonical book now commonly known as 1Enoch, one of numerous non-canonical books that appeared among Jews between about 200 B.C. and 100 A.D. Thus, the things Jesus says in Matt. 25:41 suggest that he was familiar with at least some of these books, and that he based at least some of his ideas on them.

1Enoch is made up of a number of shorter "books" that are often referred to collectively as "the Enoch literature". These books, which were known to the Jews before and during the time of Jesus, include descriptions of a group of angels who rebelled against God and were cast out of heaven and into a burning valley beneath the earth. Those who wish to delve into this subject more deeply should know that, while no copies of these books survived within the Roman empire after about the fifth century, copies of Ethiopic translations thereof were found in Ethiopia in 1763 and are now available in English both in print and online. Of special interest among the shorter books that appear in 1Enoch are the books now commonly called "The Book of Watchers" and "The Similitudes (or Parables) of Enoch".

A fifth important difference between Matthew's, Mark's and Luke's End Time discourses is that only v. 46 of Matt. 25:31-46 of Matthew's discourse uses the words 'everlasting punishment' ('eternal punishment' in the NRSV). Matt. 25:46 is also the only verse in the entire KJV Bible that uses these words as such. These words are important because, if there is any fate worse than suffering an afterlife punishment by fire, it has to be suffering this punishment by fire, without end, forever, for all eternity, etc. Yet, in spite of its importance, this idea has a questionable basis in the canonical books of the Old Testament. One reason is that, although the Old Testament includes many texts that describe God punishing enemies

and evildoers, these texts typically describe Him punishing them *with* death, and not *after* death. Examples of some of the words the Bible uses in texts of this kind include: destroy, slay, perish, devour, consume, burn, and cut off, among others. In addition, these punishments are often followed by descriptions of aggravating circumstances that seem to be intended to intensify the fears they evoke. Examples of such aggravating circumstances include, for destroyed places, statements about their never being inhabited again or, for destroyed persons, statements about their dead bodies lying as dung on the ground, being tread upon, or otherwise treated with contempt. Because texts of these kinds are discussed at length in the web page and PDF documents titled *Notes on Everlasting Punishment*, the writer will not discuss them further here.

Surprisingly, the idea of an afterlife punishment by fire that continues without end forever has a questionable basis in the words that the KJV New Testament uses to describe this fate. Among the most important of these are the three key English words 'everlasting', 'eternal' and 'for ever' ('forever' in modern English). One reason these words are so important is that they are all English words that translate forms of the Greek root word 'aion', a broad general word that corresponds to English words or phrases like an "aeon" or "age" or, more generally, "a long period of time". Another is that, in both the Greek in which the New Testament was first written and in English, the word 'aion' (or 'age') is highly ambiguous. It can, for example, mean a period of time that is as long as the age of the dinosaurs or as short as the Jazz age; it can also mean a period of time that is immeasurably or indefinitely long, or even infinitely long. As a result, depending on which sense or meaning of the word 'age' a person favors, the words 'everlasting punishment' can mean either a punishment that is long but finite, or a punishment that is endless or infinitely long. Roman Catholic and conservative theologians have usually taken the view that the words 'everlasting punishment' mean a punishment that lasts an infinitely long time. The writer can recall reading that some liberal theologians take the opposite view, but has not yet done the research necessary to verify and document this. Because this subject is discussed at length in the document titled *Senses of the Word Everlasting*, the writer will not discuss it further here and, instead, end by including Fig. 1, which illustrates how forms of the Greek root word 'aion' underlie the three key English words used to translate them.

Everlasting, Eternal and For Ever as Translations of Forms of the Word 'Age'	
<b>aion (αἰών) = an age, or long period of time</b>	
<u>English (KJV) Bible Phrase</u>	<u>Greek Phrase (Transliterated)</u>
Mattt 25:41: <b>everlasting</b> fire	pur <b>aionion</b>
Matt 25:46: <b>everlasting</b> punishment	kolasin <b>aionion</b>
John 3:15: <b>eternal</b> life	zoen <b>aionion</b>
Hebrews 9:12: <b>eternal</b> redemption	<b>aionian</b> lutrosin
Luke 1:33: over the house of Jacob <b>for ever</b>	epi ton oikon Iakob <b>eis tous aionas*</b>
John 6:51: he shall live <b>for ever</b>	zesei <b>eis ton aiona**</b>
*eis tous aionas = into the ages   **eis ton aiona = into the age	
Greek words are adapted from <i>The New Greek-English Interlinear New Testament</i>	
Image/Text Credit: <a href="https://www.jesusandtheendtime.com">https://www.jesusandtheendtime.com</a>	

**Fig. 1: The Role Played by Aion (Age) in the KJV New Testament**

Before he concludes his discussion of the similarities and differences between the ways that the three End Time discourses and/or the Bible as a whole describe the End Time Judgment, the writer wishes to point out two additional things about Part 2 of the Matthean discourse that may be important. One is that its location suggests the possibility that it was added to an early version of the Gospel of Matthew by persons who had copies of other writing(s) about the Day of Judgment which they thought were important, but which did not appear in their copy of his Gospel. Another is that Part 2 of Matthew's discourse has just the kind of literary structure a person would expect if it to have if it had been prepared for addition to the Matthew's Gospel at the point at which it now appears. While the evidence that supports these possibilities is necessarily circumstantial, the writer regards it as strong enough to be worth summarizing here.

Turning first to the location of Part 2 of Matthew's discourse, it is clear that, if this Part of Matthew's discourse were deleted in its entirety, the remaining part of his discourse would take on a form basically similar to those of Parts 1 and 2 of Mark's and Luke's discourses. Specifically, it would take the form of a short two-part description made up of a first section that describes things that will happen just before the coming of the Son of man (Matt. 24:1-28), and a second section that describes things that will happen during or after this coming (Matt. 24:29-36). In addition, many of the verses that appear in both the first and second sections of the resulting Matthean and Markan discourses are very similar to one another, and appear in about the same order. A number of verses that appear in both the first and second sections of the Lukan discourse are also similar to those of Matthew's and Mark's discourses, although several of these Lukan verses are

worded differently and appear in a different order. In neither of these sections, however, do any of these similarities or differences have anything to do with the presence or absence of Part 2 of Matthew's discourse.

Turning next to the literary structure of Part 2 of Matthew's discourse, this Part seems to have a beginning, middle and end of just the kind necessary to fit its second description of the coming of the Son of man and the Day of Judgment, Matt. 25:31-46, neatly between the end of its first description of the coming of these things, Matt. 24:29-36, and the first verse of Chapter 26 of the Gospel of Matthew. Specifically, Part 2 of Matthew's discourse begins with a few verses which describe what the coming of the Son of man is like, Matt. 24:37-39, and which seem to be a continuation of the text at the end of Part 1 of that discourse, v. 36 of Matt. 24:29-36. This, in turn, makes the transition between the end of one text and the beginning of the next seem to be a smooth and natural one. Also, since the first verse Chapter 26 of Matthew contains a reference back to a set of sayings that is identified only by fact it had just come to an end, this verse can be preceded by any of many different sets of sayings, provided that those sets of sayings are framed in a way that gives the impression that they have come to an end. Not surprisingly, the last part (Part 2) of Matthew's End Time discourse, Matt. 25:31-46, ends in just this way, namely, with a verse (v. 46) that appears to be the climax to which Part 2 of this discourse seems to be building: the appearance of the first and only occurrence of the words 'everlasting punishment' in the KJV Bible.

Even the long middle section of Part 2 of Matthew's discourse, Matt. 24:40 through Matt. 25:30, seems to fit into the above-described scenario. One reason is that this middle section keeps the first and second descriptions of the coming of the Son of man and the Day of Judgment (Matt. 24:29-36 and Matt 25:31-46) far enough apart to give the writer the room necessary to gradually transition between the relatively mild short description of these things included in the former text to the relatively harsh long description of these things included in the latter text. See, for example, Matt. 25:24, which portrays the wicked servant telling his lord that he knows he is "an hard man,". See also Matt. 25:29, which describes the lord casting the servant into outer darkness to weep and gnash his teeth simply because the servant failed to produce for him the gain he expected. In any case, without such a long middle section, the transition between Matt. 24:29-36 and Matt 25:31-46 would be much more abrupt and call for an explanation that could be difficult to provide.

### **Concluding Summary**

The significance of above-described similarities and differences between the Matthew's, Mark's and Luke's End Time discourses, and between them and the books of the KJV Old testament, may be summarized as follows:

- (1) All three End Time discourses begin with short, two-part descriptions of events that are associated with the coming of the End Time: a first part that describes the events that will occur before the coming of the Son of man, and a second part that describes the events that will occur during and after his coming.
- (2) In all three discourses the second of these short, two-part descriptions portrays the coming of the Son of man as either accompanied by a gathering of his elect by angels (Matt. 24:31 and Mark 13:27), or as like a snare that will come on all men that dwell on the face of the whole earth (Luke 21:35). None of these second short descriptions, however, goes on to describe the judging of the persons who are gathered or ensnared, a fact which suggests that their writers considered this judgment to be adequately described in other parts of the Jewish Holy Scriptures.
- (3) Only in Matthew's End Time discourse is this second short description followed by a much longer sequel that describes the gathering of all nations before the enthroned Son of man or King (Matt. 25:32), the separation of the blessed and the cursed accompanied by a dialog in which the King explains the criteria that he uses to separate them, and their immediate entry into the rewards and punishments he decrees for them. For those blessed of his Father, these include eternal life in a kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world (Matt. 25:34 and 46); for the cursed, these include everlasting punishment in an everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41 and 46).
- (4) There are many things about the above-described Matthean sequel that make it very different from or untypical of divine judgments described elsewhere in all three Synoptic Gospels or in the Old Testament. Matt. 25:41 even includes words that seem to be based on parts of the non-canonical book now often called 1Enoch.
- (5) The above-described Matthean sequel is located at a point between the end of Matthew's short description of the coming of the Son of man and the beginning of a new chapter that concerns itself with the events of the then fast-approaching feast of Passover. This, in turn, is a point at which an editor or redactor can easily insert any block of text which seems to continue Matthew's short description of the coming of the Son of man, and which is framed in a way that suggests that it comes to an end there.
- (6) All KJV New Testament occurrences of words like 'everlasting', 'eternal', and 'for ever' are translations of the highly ambiguous Greek root word 'aion', which is usually treated as a word that means a period of time that is long, or even unknowably or indefinitely long, but not infinitely long.

### **Proposed Conclusions**

Based on the foregoing summary of the similarities and differences between Matthew's, Mark's and Luke's End Time discourses and the KJV Old Testament texts that underlie them, the writer submits that there is a substantial amount of circumstantial evidence which supports some highly consequential conclusions about them. One is that the End Time

Judgment described in the text appearing in the last part of Part 2 of Matthew's End Time discourse, Matt. 25:31-46, is so unlike those described elsewhere in the Bible, and so suspiciously located, that it is reasonable to suspect that it was added to an early version of the Gospel of Matthew that did not include it. Another is that, even if it could be proven that at least Matt. 25:31-46 of Part 2 of Matthew's End Time discourse was present in the original Greek version of the Gospel of Matthew, its meaning in the KJV Bible would still depend on the correctness of the English translation of various forms of the highly ambiguous Greek root word 'aion'. Ironically, however, even if all of these questions were resolved in a way that negated traditional Christian teachings about the endlessness of the pains of hell, the result could actually enhance the credibility of the Bible's description of the teachings of Jesus about the End Time Judgment. This is because, as the writer points out in connection with many of the texts discussed in this website, there are good reasons for believing that Jesus taught that afterlife punishments should be great enough and long enough to reflect the seriousness of offenses for which God imposes them, but neither greater nor longer.

Copyright 2012-2018 Edward Jason  
All Rights Reserved