

11 The Kingdom of God - The Olivet Prophecy

The disciples asked two questions, though they may not have realised how separate they were:

Q1 When will the temple be destroyed?

Q2 What signs will there be of Jesus' coming and of the end of the world?

The temple was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70 following a terrible war, but we still await the fulfilment of the second part - the return of Christ to the earth. Jesus answers both questions, but it is not always clear which of his words apply to which question. It is worth trying to understand how his answers apply, however, as a pattern emerges which can be helpful.

One of the Old Testament tests for a prophet was whether his prophecy came true. This was not much help to the prophet's contemporaries if the prophecy took 1000 years to be fulfilled. That may explain why many prophecies had a short term fulfilment as well as a long term one.

Put a cross in the right hand columns to show which question Jesus is answering (or both).

Matthew 24	Mark 13	Luke 21	Q1	Q2
4 Jesus answered: "Watch out that no-one deceives you. 5 For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ, and will deceive many. 6 You will hear of wars and rumours of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. 7 Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. 8 All these are the beginning of birth-pains.	5 Jesus said to them: "Watch out that no-one deceives you. 6 Many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he'; and will deceive many. 7 When you hear of wars and rumours of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. 8 Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth-pains.	8 He replied: "Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he', and 'The time is near.' Do not follow them. 9 When you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away." 10 Then he said to them: "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. 11 There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven.		
9 "Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me.	9 "You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will	12 "But before all this, they will lay hands on you and persecute you. They will deliver you to synagogues and prisons, and you will be		

Matthew 24	Mark 13	Luke 21	O1	O2
<p>10 At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, 11 and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. 12 Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold,</p>	<p>stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them. 10 And the gospel must first be preached to all nations.</p>	<p>brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. 13 This will result in your being witnesses to them.</p>		
	<p>11 Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit. 12 "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death.</p>	<p>14 But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. 15 For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict. 16 You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death.</p>		
<p>13 but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.</p>	<p>13 All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.</p>	<p>17 All men will hate you because of me. 18 But not a hair of your head will perish. 19 By standing firm you will gain life.</p>		
<p>14 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.</p>	<p>(10 And the gospel must first be preached to all nations.)</p>			
<p>15 "So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand--</p>	<p>14. "When you see 'the abomination that causes desolation' standing where it does not belong--let the reader understand--</p>	<p>20. "When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near.</p>		
<p>16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17 Let no-one on the roof of his house go down to take anything out of the house. 18 Let no-one in the field go back to get his cloak.</p>	<p>then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 15 Let no-one on the roof of his house go down or enter the house to take anything out. 16 Let no-one in the field go back to get his cloak.</p>	<p>21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. 22 For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written.</p>		

Matthew 24	Mark 13	Luke 21	Q1	Q2
<p>19 How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers!</p> <p>20 Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath.</p>	<p>17 How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers!</p> <p>18 Pray that this will not take place in winter,</p>	<p>23 How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers!</p>		
<p>21 For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now--and never to be equalled again.</p> <p>22 If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.</p>	<p>19 because those will be days of distress unequalled from the beginning, when God created the world, until now--and never to be equalled again.</p> <p>20 If the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would survive. But for the sake of the elect, whom he has chosen, he has shortened them.</p>	<p>There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people. 24 They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.</p>		
<p>23 At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it.</p> <p>24 For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect--if that were possible.</p> <p>25 See, I have told you ahead of time.</p>	<p>21 At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it.</p> <p>22 For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and miracles to deceive the elect--if that were possible.</p> <p>23 So be on your guard; I have told you everything ahead of time.</p>			
<p>26 "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.</p> <p>27 For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.</p> <p>28 Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather.</p>				

Matthew 24	Mark 13	Luke 21	O1	O2
<p>29 "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."</p>	<p>24. "But in those days, following that distress, " the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; 25 the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken."</p>	<p>25 "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. 26 Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken.</p>		
<p>30 "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.</p>	<p>26 "At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.</p>	<p>27 At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."</p>		
<p>31 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.</p>	<p>27 And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.</p>			
<p>32. "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. 33 Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door.</p>	<p>28. "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. 29 Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door.</p>	<p>29. He told them this parable: "Look at the fig-tree and all the trees. 30 When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. 31 Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.</p>		
<p>34 I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. 35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.</p>	<p>30 I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. 31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.</p>	<p>32 "I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. 33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.</p>		

Matthew 24	Mark 13	Luke 21	Q1	Q2
<p>36 "No-one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.</p>	<p>32 "No-one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.</p>			
<p>37 As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.</p>	<p>33 Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come.</p>	<p>34 "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.</p>		
<p>38 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;</p>	<p>34 It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.</p>	<p>35 For it will come upon all those who live on the face of the whole earth.</p>		
<p>39 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.</p>				
<p>40 Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.</p>				
<p>41 Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.</p>				
<p>42 "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.</p>	<p>35 "Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back--whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the cock crows, or at dawn.</p>			
<p>43 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.</p>	<p>36 If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping.</p>			
<p>44 So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.</p>	<p>37 What I say to you, I say to everyone: "Watch!"</p>	<p>36 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."</p>		

Why are there four gospels?