

Episode #441 The Revolt Against the Kingdom 3 – The Consummation of the Eon

I. The long and glorious kingdom of God on earth in the future will end with a test of all Adamkind to reveal if we have learned to love and serve God from the heart. Many will pass this test, but some will fail. The result of their failure will be that they will revolt against the kingdom. We are examining this strange period of time and seeing what the Bible says about it.

II. Matthew 24:3. The conclusion of the kingdom of God.

- A. This passage is close to the end of the Lord's ministry. He had already explained the kingdom to His disciples, including its secrets. Now, the disciples want to know about the conclusion of the kingdom.
- B. Verse 3. The disciples ask the Lord Jesus two questions.
 - 1. What will be the sign of His coming? Yet this makes little sense, since they did not seem to understand that He was leaving, John 13:33, 36.
 - a. "Coming" is a poor translation of the Greek *Parousia*. This word means a personal presence, but it was used in the technical sense of a presence because of who you are and what you do.
 - b. Christ was present with them, but not as the King of God's Kingdom. What they were asking was when He was going to take this position?
 - 2. When will be the end of the age? Yet this is not a good translation.
 - a. "End" is the Greek *sunteleia*. "End" does not fully convey the idea. It refers to an expected or desired end, a consummation. A pregnancy may end in a miscarriage or an abortion, but it only consummates in a birth. A courtship may end in a breakup, but it only consummates in a wedding and marriage. So this end is a consummation.
 - b. "Age" is the Greek *aion*. Its basic idea is of that which flows. The time when God flows out to the world to make it the way He always intended it to be, often called "the kingdom of God," is also called "the eon." It does not end, but it consummates in the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and His Parousia presence on earth. This is what they were asking about: not the end of this wicked eon we live in, but the consummation of the kingdom eon.
- C. The consummation of the eon is the "harvest" of Mark 4:29. Matthew 13:36-40 reveals the "harvest" and the "consummation of the eon" are the same.
- D. The Lord gave an open and honest answer to this question. Yet every sign He gave is meaningless unless we recognize that the government of God takes control of the earth in a premillennial kingdom before the revolt against the kingdom takes place. Nothing is a sign that has been going on for untold centuries already!
- E. Under God's government, there will be no false christs, no wars or rumors of wars, no famines, no earthquakes, and no pestilences. They will be gone for many centuries, and when they reappear again, it will be a great sign. It will indicate God's wrath being kindled "but a little," as in Psalm 2.

III. Matthew 24:4-8. The signs the Lord gave.

- A. Verse 4. Notice that the Lord implies that the disciples will be alive to experience the things He is talking about! This makes sense if there is a premillennial kingdom coming before the tribulation period. These men will have been raised from the dead to take their place in it. Yet this makes no sense without such a period.

- B. Verse 5. In the almost 2000 years since Christ said this, there has been a constant stream of false christs. If this is what the Lord meant, it was no sign at all. During the long period of God's government, no one would dare to claim such a thing, and if any dared, he would immediately be dealt with most severely, Heb. 2:2. One of the things that will start the tribulation is the removal of God's restraints, II Thessalonians 2:7. Then, these will start to appear again. Then, this will be a great sign.
- C. Verse 6. Wars and rumors of wars. These will have ended in the premillennial kingdom, Isaiah 2:4. When they start up again, this will be a great sign. (Note: here end is Greek *telos*, which really means the end. The rebellion does not consummate!)
- D. Verse 7. Elaborating on the wars with a list of bad things. When governments fight, there is "cold war." When nations fight, it erupts into "hot war." Notice that natural disasters start happening, which indicates they have not been happening before this. Many have difficulty believing that the earth will enjoy a time when these things will not be present. Believe it or not, this is what God says.
- E. Verse 8. These are called the "beginning of sorrows," not just the course of this evil age. At this crucial time, they will start to reappear. This signals the beginning of a time of testing, the revolt of some men, and the conclusion of this stage of the kingdom. The Lord was not such a foolish prophet as to give as signs things that have always been and will always be!

IV. Matthew 24:9-14. Instructions for that time.

- A. Verse 9. The twelve apostles, who will have been some of the most beloved men on earth during God's kingdom, will be hated and persecuted by the rebels!
- B. Verse 10. Many will not be able to handle this after centuries of peace, and will start to hate and betray one another. A revival of very sad things!
- C. Verse 11. Not just false christs, but also false prophets will arise at this time.
- D. Verse 12. During the premillennial kingdom, men on earth will have learned about the self-sacrificing, *agape* love of God. Yet these frightening events will cause the love of many in the kingdom to grow cold!
- E. Verse 13. Matthew 24 covers a short period. The one who endures to the end of it shall be saved. This does not tell us how to be saved, and it has nothing to do with men in the kingdom, but only during this short period. "Saved" here means preserved and blessed, and how they are blessed we can find in Revelation 2:7,11,17, 26, 27; 3:5,12,21; 21:7. These seven blessings will be given to one who overcomes!
- F. Verse 14. This "gospel of the kingdom" will be heralded in the whole inhabited earth. What gospel is that? Matthew 24! It will be proclaimed. It will let people know how they are to behave. Some might die for their faithfulness to Christ. But they will be raised at His Parousia, and their reward for faithfulness will be great!

V. Conclusion: The long and glorious kingdom of God on earth in the future will end with a test of all Adamkind on earth that results in a rebellion against God's authority. This comes before God's long kingdom eon consummates in His glorious return and personal presence on earth for a thousand years. The glorious conditions of the kingdom will disappear for a time, as men start to rebel and nature itself goes back out of order. This will result in many people losing their loyalty to God's kingdom and its ways. But those who endure throughout this time to the end will be greatly blessed. May we learn much from God's perfect plans for the future!