

# Matthew 24 Fulfillments Documented

*By Ed Stevens -- Then and Now -- April 14, 2013*

## INTRODUCTION

- A. To make any significant progress in interpreting Biblical prophecy, we are always forced to ask (and answer) two very critical questions:
  - 1. What does the Bible actually teach about the **TIME** of fulfillment?
  - 2. And what does it teach about the **NATURE** of fulfillment?
- B. This lesson will focus on the **NATURE** question, in relation to the Second Coming (or Parousia).
- C. In dealing with the **NATURE** issue, we will look not only at what Scripture says about it, but more especially at external **HISTORY**.
- D. Rest assured that I fully understand that, as Preterists, we hang our hat on what Scripture says about the **TIME** of Christ's return.
- E. We **KNOW** that the Second Coming occurred in AD 70, not because uninspired history **RECORDED** it, but because inspired Scripture **PREDICTED** it. And the Scriptures cannot be broken.
- F. We do not need history to prove that Christ returned in AD 70 at the very **TIME** and in the very **MANNER** He predicted. All we need is Scripture.
- G. If Scripture clearly teaches that Christ would return in that first century generation, then it **MUST HAVE HAPPENED**, regardless of any historical evidence to the contrary.
- H. The futurist may stack all the creeds and historical evidence in the world against it, but Scripture still stands, and it stands on the preterist side. If there ever seems to be a conflict between history and Scripture, we must remember that the fault never lies with Scripture, but rather with history itself, or our perception of history, or our misunderstanding of what Scripture actually teaches. It is true that history, rightly understood, always lines up with Scripture. History can never trump Scripture. Scripture always wins the contest.
- I. So why am I presenting historical evidence here, if it really cannot "prove" or "disprove" anything ultimately?
- J. History can neither validate nor refute Scripture, nor does it have any absolute authority behind it like Scripture does, but it still has value for the believer and for the Bible interpreter.
- K. Historical evidence, properly used, can serve at least two useful purposes:
  - 1. It encourages us by documenting the fulfillment of what we **KNOW** has occurred -- it adds concrete knowledge and courage of conviction to our abstract faith. It supports and reinforces our belief that these things did occur at the very **TIME** scripture said they would.
  - 2. And it provides a much deeper and richer understanding of what the prophecy was actually predicting when we see the **MANNER** in which it was fulfilled in history. So the historical and visible fulfillments help us understand the **NATURE** of fulfillment, as well as solidify our belief in the **TIME** of fulfillment.

- L. In keeping with this second purpose especially, I like what Dr. Charles Hill said in his chapter in Mathison's book about the value of history: [WSTTB, pp. 64-65, boldfaced emphasis is mine, EES]

...the Bible was not given in a vacuum; it is not devoid of a historical context. Therefore, the Bible ought to make sense *within* its historical environment, and (because it is true) it ought to make sense *of* its historical environment. It is not an abandonment of the divine authority of Scripture to inquire into this environment -- just the opposite! Those who seek to submit to the Scriptures as their only rule of faith and practice ought to use every instrument at their disposal in order to **understand the Scriptures better**. One of those instruments is the environment of ideas into which the gospel came; another is the environment of ideas that were inevitably formed and transformed by the gospel.

- M. So we can agree that history has some value for helping us understand Scripture better, and for encouraging us by documenting the fulfillments of Scripture.
- N. But this DOES NOT mean we are bound to accept just any and every tidbit of historical documentation that surfaces.
- O. There is a scriptural principle first introduced by Moses, and reinforced by Jesus and the Apostles, which defines exactly what kind of historical evidence is useful. It is only that which is "at the mouth of two or more reliable eyewitnesses." Notice that Moses and Jesus and the Apostles did not require "inspired" eyewitnesses, but rather simply a multiple number of reliable eyewitnesses.
- P. But even with multiple reliable eyewitnesses, uninspired historical testimony can NEVER overturn inspired Scripture. It can only support Scripture and help elucidate Scripture.
- Q. So, we will only be using the most historically-reliable information available, and only for the purpose of encouraging us in our belief that these things DID occur at the **TIME** they were supposed to, as well as enlightening us with a clearer understanding of the **NATURE** of their fulfillment.
- R. And the best way to do that is to tie it directly to the Biblical prophecies. We will deal with a number of different Biblical texts, but the focus of this first lesson will be on the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24 and its parallels (Mark 13, Luke 17 and Luke 21).
- S. A futurist like Tommy Ice might challenge us to prove that every single event predicted in the Olivet Discourse actually occurred by the time Jerusalem fell in AD 70. It would be a delight to take him up on that challenge, as well as issue the challenge for him to abandon his Pretrib Premillennialism if we CAN show that all those events did INDEED occur in the first century generation.
- T. We need to point out that Tommy Ice does not believe a single event mentioned in Matthew 24 has occurred yet. He believes every one of those things in Matt. 24 are still future. Ice knows that if he admits any of the events mentioned here in Matt. 24 were fulfilled in the first century, his goose is cooked, since it uses the phrase "all these things" repeatedly. So to be consistent, he HAS to push "**ALL THESE THINGS**" two thousand years into the future, including the dismantling of the temple spoken of in Matt. 24:2. But as we shall see, "audience relevance" does not allow that interpretative option.
- U. So, let's take a look at Matthew 24 in the context of Jewish, Roman, and Christian history in the first century to see if we can document the fulfillment of "ALL THESE THINGS" in the first century before AD 70.

## I. Notice Matt. 24:1-3 --

**Matt. 24:1** Jesus came out from **THE TEMPLE** and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the **TEMPLE BUILDINGS** to Him.

**Matt. 24:2** And He said to them, "Do you not see **ALL THESE THINGS**? Truly I say to you, not one stone **HERE** will be left upon another, which will not be torn down."

**Matt. 24:3** As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, **WHEN** will **THESE THINGS** happen, and what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

Which TEMPLE were Jesus and his disciples talking about? It was THAT temple in the first century, which was dismantled stone by stone at AD 70. Jesus was NOT talking about some rebuilt temple 2000 years into the future. Yet, in order for Tommy Ice's "all or nothing" interpretation to have any credibility, he would have to take the position that the temple and destruction mentioned here is another temple that will be built and destroyed again 2000 years or more in the future. Notice that the disciples were asking "**WHEN**" that first century temple would be dismantled stone by stone. They were NOT asking about the destruction of another rebuilt temple way off into the future. They wanted to know "**WHEN**" that first century temple which Jesus was pointing to, and which they were gazing at, would be destroyed. So unless we want to accuse Jesus of playing games with them in his answer, we have to assume that He answers their "**WHEN**" question in the following verses. "**WHEN**" does Jesus say "**ALL THESE THINGS**" (including the dismantling of that temple) would occur?

The answer is in Matt. 24:34 -- "in this generation." But Tommy Ice says that this verse is speaking of another generation two thousand or more years off into the future. This would mean that Jesus is giving an answer to a question that the disciples were NOT asking. They asked about the first century temple and "WHEN" it would be dismantled. But Tommy says Jesus doesn't deal with that temple's destruction in his answer. This basically puts Jesus into the position of playing games with the disciples. Tommy has painted himself into a corner with that interpretation.

**"But wait, there's more!"** Tommy is not through with his scripture-twisting tricks yet. He has another inconsistency in his interpretation of Jesus' answer to the "WHEN" question. Compare Matt. 23:36 to 24:34. Both verses use this same phrase "this generation." Ice admits that Matt. 23:36 is speaking of that first century generation, but then claims that Matt. 24:34 is speaking of a distant future generation. This forces the conclusion that another temple has to be built so that it can be dismantled again stone by stone (see Matt. 24:1-3) -- not very comforting to modern Jews. I wonder what they think of Tommy's idea of building the temple again just so it can be destroyed again! I'll bet they are real **warm and fuzzy** over that idea! **NOT!** The Premils are helping the Jews raise huge amounts of money to rebuild it, in hopes that it will hasten the fulfillment of its destruction and get them to the rapture sooner! I'm sure the thinkers among the Jews have "**mixed emotions**" about all that help the Premils are offering to rebuild the temple. You know what "mixed emotions" are? It is like watching your worst enemy drive over the cliff in your new Mercedes. "Mixed emotions."

But let's compare Matt. 23:36 with Matt. 24:34 to see if there is any validity to Ice's view.

### Matthew 23:33-39

**Matt. 23:33** “**YOU** [plural] serpents, you brood of vipers, how will **YOU** [plural] escape the sentence of Gehenna?

**Matt. 23:34** “Therefore, behold, I am sending **YOU** [plural] prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them **YOU** [plural] will kill and crucify, and some of them **YOU** [plural] will scourge in **YOUR** [plural] synagogues, and persecute from city to city,

**Matt. 23:35** so that upon **YOU** [plural] may fall *the guilt of* all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom **YOU** [plural] murdered between the temple and the altar.

**Matt. 23:36** “**Truly I say** [Gr. AMEN legO humin] **to YOU** [plural], **all these things** [Gr. tauta panta] will come upon **this generation** [Gr. TEN GeNeaN TauTEN -- acc. case, object of prep.].

**Matt. 23:37** “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and **YOU** [plural] were unwilling.

**Matt. 23:38** “Behold, **YOUR** [plural] house is being left to **YOU** [plural] desolate!

**Matt. 23:39** “For I say to **YOU** [plural], from now on **YOU** [plural] will not see Me until **YOU** [plural] say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord!’”

### Matthew 24:32-36

**Matt. 24:32** “Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, **YOU** [plural] know that summer is near;

**Matt. 24:33** so, **YOU** [plural] too, when **YOU** [plural] see **all these things** [Gr. panta tauta] , recognize that He is near, *right* at the door.

**Matt. 24:34** “**Truly I say** [Gr. amEn legO humin] **to YOU** [plural], **this generation** [Gr. hE genea autE -- nom. case, subject] will not pass away until **all these things** [Gr. panta tauta] take place.

**Matt. 24:35** “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

**Matt. 24:36** “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

Do you see the problem with Ice's approach? The first century "audience relevance" is clear. Jesus is speaking in both texts to his contemporaries, people who were alive in that first century generation. Ice agrees with the first century application of Matt. 23:36, but denies it in Matt. 24:34. But look closely at the verse right before Matt. 24:34.

[Matt. 24:33] Jesus says that those very folks who were listening to him would **SEE "all these things" occur**. The "all these things" [Gr. panta tauta] is exactly the same in both verses (vv. 33 and 34). And remember this is Jesus' answer to the "**WHEN**" question of the

disciples back in verse 3 where they asked "**WHEN** will **THESE THINGS** happen." The "these things" that the disciples asked about included the dismantling of that first century temple that they were looking at (not some future rebuilt version of it).

The obvious conclusion is that "this generation" in Matt. 24:34 was the generation of people who would be alive when that particular temple that they were looking at would be destroyed. We know that temple was destroyed in AD 70. This forces the conclusion that the "generation" Jesus is talking about in Matt. 24:34 was his own contemporary generation. That is clearly the audience to whom he addressed these remarks. They would SEE "all these things" occur in their generation. Jesus was not speaking ambiguously to (or about) some other generation two thousand years off into the future. It would have had no relevance to the question of his disciples about the destruction of the temple they were looking at.

Well, did "that generation" SEE "all these things" occur within their lifetime? This is where historical documentation from the first century will be very useful. And I just happen to have a little bit of it down below. Let's look at it.

Note that each of the events listed in the following chart (**pages 6-11**) has a corresponding entry on **pages 12-26** where the full text of some of the best and most representative of the references are printed out for you to read.

	<b>PREDICTED EVENT</b>	<b>SCRIPT. REF.</b>	<b>FULFILLMENT</b>
1	" <b>not one stone</b> left upon another"	Matt. 24:2	Wars 7.1-3 (7.1.1) Wars 7.376 (7.8.7) Wars 7.115 (7.5.2) Wars 7.29-31 (7.2.1) & Footnote Adam Clarke and Barnes Notes cf. Wars 6:228 (6.4.1); 6.232 (6.4.2); 6.264-5 (6.4.7.); 6.316-7 (6.6.1); and 6.413 (6.9.1)
2	" <b>sign of your coming and the end of the age</b> "	Matt. 24:3	Wars 6.288-296 (6.5.3) Tacitus Hist 5.13 Yosippon ch. 87 Midrash Rab. Lament. 2:11 (Prologue 49-50) Wars 6.250 (6.4.5) --Revolution of Ages (Gk. <i>chronon periodois</i> – revolvings or rotations of the times, or the changing of the ages by the end of one age and the beginning of another)
3	" <b>many false Messiahs</b> ... showing great signs and wonders to mislead the elect"  (Theudas, Judas of Galilee, the Egyptian, Manahem, Eleazar b. Ananias, Simon b. Giora, John of Gischala, Eleazar b. Yair, Zealots, Sicarii, Bandits, Robbers, deceivers, et al)	Matt. 24:5, 24	Wars 2.433-434 (2.17.8) Wars 2.258-263 (2.13.4-5) Wars 2.652-654 (2.22.2) Wars 4.503-510 (4.9.3-4) Antiq 20.97-102 (20.5.1-2) Antiq 20.167-172 (20.8.6) cf. <b>Acts 5:36-37</b> (Theudas and Judas the Galilean); [cf. Antiq 17.271 (17.10.5) and footnote, Wars 2.56 (2.4.1); 2.118 (2.8.1)], <b>Euseb. 2.11.2-3</b> (Theudas); <b>Acts 21:38</b> (the Egyptian); <b>Euseb. 2.21.1-3</b> (the Egyptian); <b>Antiq 18.4,9,23</b> (18.1.1-6), [cf. Eleazar ben Yair at Masada -- Wars 7.252-254 (7.8.1)]
4	" <b>wars and rumors of wars</b> " <i>(inside Palestine)</i> Caligula tried to put altar in the Temple in AD 39; Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome in AD 49; Zealots were always trying to push for revolt	Matt. 24:6;	Acts 18:2; Wars Preface (1.4); Wars 2.184-187ff (2.10.1); Wars 2.264-265 (2.13.6); Antiq 20.177 (20.8.7); Antiq 20.184 (20.8.9); Antiq 18.6-8 (18.1.1); Euseb. 2.5.4—2.6.8

5	"nations rise against other nations" ( <i>outside Palestine</i> ) (Jews hoped that their comrades beyond the Euphrates would support them in their revolt)	Matt. 24:7	Wars 7.79 (7.4.2) Wars 6.341 (6.6.2) Wars 1:5 (Preface, sect. 2)
6	"famines" – starvation during the siege was so bad that one woman, Mary the daughter of Eleazar from the village of Bethzub, killed and ate her infant son (cannibalism).	Matt. 24:7	<b>Acts 11:28</b> (during reign of Claudius AD 44-48); <b>Euseb. 2.8.1</b> ; <b>Antiq 20.101</b> (20.5.2); <b>Antiq 18.8</b> (18.1.1) (during siege); <b>Wars 6.421</b> (6.9.3); <b>Wars 6.197-208</b> (6.3.3-4) (cannibalism during siege)
7	"great earthquakes"  See the list of all these in my First Century Events book.	Matt. 24:7, Lk. 21:11	J. Marcellus Kik ( <i>An Eschatology of Victory</i> , p. 93); Barnes Notes on Matt. 24:7; Clarke's Com.; Fourfold Gospel; <b>Wars 4.286-287</b> (4.4.5) (during war)
8	"plagues"	Lk. 21:11	<b>Fourfold Gospel</b> (Plague in Rome in AD 60); <b>Barnes Notes</b> ; <b>Wars 6.421</b> (6.9.3); plagues in Jerusalem during siege.
9	" <b>terrors and great signs</b> from heaven" -- "on the earth is distress of nations with perplexity" -- "men <b>fainting from fear</b> and expectation of things coming"	Lk. 21:11, 25-26	Wars 6.288-289 (6.5.3); Wars 6.296-299 (6.5.3); Yosippon ch. 87; Wars 4.286-287 (4.4.5); Wars 2.649-650 (2.22.1); Tacitus Hist. 5.13
10	"deliver you to <b>tribulation</b> " ...to the Sanhedrin... prisons... flogged in the synagogues... stand before governors and kings as a testimony" -- " <b>arrest you</b> and hand you over" -- "persecute you"	Matt. 24:9, Mk. 13:9-11, Lk. 21:12	The whole book of Acts, Paul's epistles, plus James, Peter, Jude, and John's epistles mention this persecution. John in Revelation says he was arrested during the tribulation.
11	" <b>kill you</b> "  Acts 7:54-60 (Stephen killed); Acts 12:1-2 (James brother of John was killed in AD 44);	Matt. 24:9	Euseb. 2.8.2; Antiq. 20.200 (20.9.1); Euseb. 2.23.1-4, 10-18 (James brother of Jesus killed); 2 Tim. 4:6; 2 Pet. 1:14-15
12	" <b>hated</b> by all nations"	Matt. 24:9	Acts 19 especially (Ephesus) Eusebius records this also

13	"many will <b>fall away</b> "	Matt. 24:10	2 Thess. 2:3 reminds them of the apostasy that was about to occur; Gal 5:1-4; 2 Tim 1:15; 4:10; Rev. 2:2-10 and 3:10; 2 Pet. 2:15; 2 Thess. 1:4; 2 Tim. 2:12; Heb. 3:12; 12:3; 1 Tim. 1:19; Jude 4-23; 1 Jn. 2:18-24
14	" <b>betray one another</b> " -- brothers, fathers, children will betray their brothers, parents, children, relatives and friends... and have them put to death"	Matt. 24:10, Mk. 13:12, Lk. 21:16	2 Cor 11:26; Gal 2:4; Acts 23:16; Antiq 18.8 (18.1.1); War 2.466 (2.18.3); Euseb. 2.25.2 Cf. War 4.310-311 (4.5.1)
15	" <b>hate one another</b> "	Matt. 24:10	2 Cor 11:26; Gal 2:4; Acts 20:29-30; Lk 6:22; 1 Jn. 2:9-11; 3:13-15; 4:20; Wars 7.262 (7.8.1); Antiq 18.7-8
16	"many <b>false prophets</b> ... showing great signs and wonders to mislead the elect"	Matt. 24:11, 24	cf. Acts 8:9-11; 13:6-8; 21:38; Wars 6.285-288 (6.5.2-3); Wars 2.258-262 (2.13.4-5); Antiq 20.169-170 (20.8.6); Euseb. 2.21.1; 3.8.1
17	" <b>lawlessness</b> is increased"	Matt. 24:12	Acts 23:1-3; Antiq 20:200-203 (20.9.1); War 7.253-273 (7.8.1); War 4.556-563 (4.9.10); 4.184 (4.3.10); Josephus says Zealots and religious leaders kept laws only selectively (if at all).
18	"most people's love will grow cold"	Matt. 24:12	Seven cities in Revelation had these characteristics already by the time it was written in AD 62-64
19	"the one who <b>endures to the end</b> shall be <b>saved</b> " Those who lived until the Parousia were saved from the wrath poured out on the Jews, and taken to be with Christ in the unseen spiritual realm.	Matt. 24:13; cf. Matt 10:22; Mark 13:13	Rom. 5:9; 1 Thess. 1:10; 2 Thess. 1:7; 1 Cor. 15:52-53; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Thess. 4:17; 1 Thess. 5:9-10; 2 Tim. 4:18; 2 Tim. 2:10; John 14:3; Matt. 24:31; 2 Thess. 2:1; Matt. 19:28; 2 Tim. 2:12

20	<p><b>"gospel preached in the whole world... to all the nations... then the end [of the age] will come"</b></p> <p><b>"in the whole world"</b> -- see Lk. 2:1; Acts 11:28; 19:27; Rev. 3:10; 12:9; and 16:14. cf. Antiq 15:387 (15.11.1)</p> <p><b>"to all the nations"</b> -- see Matt. 28:19; Mk. 13:10; Lk. 21:24; 24:47; Acts 10:35; Rom. 1:5; and Rom. 16:26; See also: Rom. 1:8; 10:18; and Col. 1:6, 23.</p>	Matt. 24:14	<p><b>Euseb. 2.3.1 and 3.8.11; 1 Clement 5:7; cf. Wars 6.442 (6.10.1)</b> "all the habitable earth"; <b>Antiq 8:297</b> (8.12.2) "the whole earth"; <b>Antiq 8:329</b> (8.13.4) "all over the habitable earth"; <b>Antiq 10:209</b> (10.10.4) "[Romans] dominion over all the earth"; Antiq 10:274 (10.11.7); Antiq 11:292 (11.6.13); Antiq 12:121 (12.3.1); Antiq 13:77 (13.2.4); Antiq 14:110 (14.7.2); Antiq 19:1 (19.1.1); War 1:426 (1.21.12); War 2:362 (2.16.4); <u>War 2:363 (2.16.4)</u>; War 2:388 (2.16.4); <u>War 4:262 (4.4.3)</u>; War 4.324 (4.5.2); War 5:17 (5.1.3);</p>
21	<p><b>"abomination of desolation... standing in the Holy Place" -- "standing where it should not be" - - "Jerus. surrounded by armies"</b></p> <p><b>Florus</b> brought Roman armies into Jerusalem to seize all the Temple gold - see the detailed explanation of this in my <i>First Century Events</i> book (Apr 66)</p> <p>cf. Wars 2:210 (2.11.3) the Romans considered it abominable when blood of their countrymen was shed in their pagan temples.</p> <p>Josephus tells how the blood of priests and common people was shed inside the Temple. [Wars 5.11ff (5.1.3)]</p>	Matt. 24:15, Mark 13:14 Lk. 21:20	<p>Wars 4.201-203 (4.3.12) Wars 4.215 (4.3.13) Wars 4.242 and 4.261-262 (4.4.3); Wars 4.313 and 318 (4.5.1); Wars 4.437 (4.7.6); Wars 4.151 (4.3.7) and 4.388 (4.6.3); Wars 4.558-565 (4.9.10); Wars 5.442-445 (5.10.5); Wars 6:316 (6.6.1); Wars 6.428 (6.9.4); Wars 4.163,171,181-183 (4.3.10); Wars 7.262-270 (7.8.1); Antiq. 20:166 (20.8.5); Antiq 20.165 (20.8.5) -- The <b>Sicarii</b> murdered in the temple, thus polluting it. <u>Wars 5:17 (5.1.3)</u>; Wars 2.455 (2.17.10) -- "abomination" used in reference to Priest Eleazar's murder of Roman garrison on Sabbath. Euseb. 3.5.4 and 3.7.4-9</p>
22	<p><b>"those in Judea will flee to the mountains"</b> -- acc. to Eusebius, Christians had fled from Judea a few years before the war</p>	Matt. 24:16-20	<p>Wars 2.556 (2.20.1); Too late to flee later, see Wars 4.565 (4.9.10); Euseb. 3.5</p>

23	"woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are <b>nursing babies</b> in those days... your flight not be in winter or on a <b>Sabbath</b> "	Matt. 24:19-20	Euseb. 3.7.1-2 Wars 6.201-213 (6.3.4); Nursing mother slew infant son for food in the famine during the siege; Antiq. 13.252 (13:8.4) - no travel on Sabbath
24	" <b>great tribulation</b> ... such as has <b>never occurred in the past</b> , nor ever will again in the future" --	Matt. 24:21	Wars Preface 1, 4 (1:1, 1:11-12); Wars 5.442 (5.10.5); Wars 6:429 (6.9.4) Euseb. 2.26; 3.6
25	" <b>tribulation cut short</b> for the sake of the elect" Cut short by the outbreak of the war, and the Rapture shortly afterwards. Jews had to turn their attention to the war effort.	Matt. 24:22, Mk. 13:20	Cestius left unexpectedly, allowing refugees to flee -- Jews began war prep. Wars 2.531 (2.19.4) Wars 2.539-540 (2.19.6) Wars 2.556 (2.20.1)
26	"days of vengeance.. that all things written will be fulfilled" -- "great <b>distress</b> and wrath" -- "fall by the <b>sword</b> ... <b>led captive</b> into all the nations... Jerusalem <b>trampled under foot</b> by Gentiles"	Lk. 21:22-24	Wars 2.650 (2.22.1); Wars 6.193-219 (6.3.3-5); Wars 6.413-435 (6.9.1-4); Wars 6.428-442 (6.9-10); Wars 7.1-3 (7.1.1) Euseb. 3.7.4-9
27	"coming of the Son of Man" will not escape their notice, just like lightning which flashes from east to west	Matt. 24:27	Wars 5.266-274 (5.6.3) plus footnotes -- "here comes the son" Wars 6.288-300 (6.5.3); Euseb. 3.8.5; Tacitus Hist. 5.13 Yosippon ch. 87
28	"wherever the corpse is, there the <b>eagles [Roman armies] will gather</b> "	Matt. 24:28	Wars 6.369 (6.7.2) Wars 3.123 (3.6.2); Wars 6.316-317 (6.6.1)
29	"immediately after the tribulation... sun darkened, moon gives no light, stars fall from the sky" -- "signs in sun and moon and stars"	Matt. 24:29, Lk. 21:25	Cities being burned caused smoke to darken the sun and moon. Astrological phenomenon were also seen above Jerusalem. Wars 6.288-300 (6.5.3); Euseb. 3.8.5; Tacitus Hist. 5.13 Yosippon ch. 87
30	"(demonic) powers of the heavens will be shaken" (Satan thrown down - book of Rev.)	Matt. 24:29	Wars 6.288-300 (6.5.3); Euseb. 3.8.5; Tacitus Hist. 5.13

31	" <b>sign of the Son of Man</b> will appear in the sky" [SIGNS]	Matt. 24:30	Yosippon ch. 87 Wars 6.288-300 (6.5.3); Euseb. 3.8.5; Tacitus Hist. 5.13
32	"all the tribes of the land will <b>mourn</b> "	Matt. 24:30	Wars 2.649 (2.22.1); Wars 2.455 (2.17.10)
33	" <b>see the Son of Man coming</b> on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory" -- "Son of Man will be revealed" [PAROUSIA]	Matt. 24:30, Lk. 17:30, Lk. 21:27	Yosippon ch. 87 Wars 6.288-300 (6.5.3); Euseb. 3.8.5; Tacitus Hist. 5.13
34	"He will <b>send forth His angels</b> with a <b>great trumpet</b> and they will <b>gather together His elect</b> from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other" [RAPTURE]	Matt. 24:31, Mk. 13:27	Wars 6.288-300 (6.5.3); Euseb. 3.8.5; Tacitus Hist. 5.13 Yosippon ch. 87 This was the rapture.

# Full Text of References Listed on Pages 6-11

From The Works of Flavius Josephus, Complete and Unabridged.

New Updated Edition, translated by William Whiston, A.M.

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1. **War 7.1** (7.1.1) Now, as soon as the army had no more people to slay or to plunder, because there remained none to be objects of their fury (for they would not have spared any, had there remained any other such work to be done) Caesar gave orders that they should now **demolish the entire city and temple**, but should leave as many of the towers standing as were of the greatest eminency; that is, Phasaelus, and Hippicus, and Mariamne, and so much of the wall as enclosed the city on the west side.

**War 7.2** (7.1.1) This wall was spared, in order to afford a camp for such as were to lie in garrison; as were the towers also spared, in order to demonstrate to posterity what kind of city it was, and how well fortified, which the Roman valor had subdued;

**War 7.3** (7.1.1) but for all the rest of the wall, it was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that **dug it up to the foundation**, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited.

**War 7:376** (7.8.7) Where is this city that was believed to have God himself inhabiting therein? It is now **demolished to the very foundations**; and hath nothing but that monument of it preserved, I mean the camp of those that have destroyed it, which still dwells upon its ruins;

**War 7.115** (7.5.2) a great deal of which **the Romans dug up**; but the greatest part was discovered by those who were captives, and so they carried it away, I mean **the gold and the silver**, and the rest of that most precious furniture which the Jews had, and which the owners had treasured up underground, against the uncertain fortunes of war.

**War 7:29** (7.2.1) And now Simon, thinking he might be able to astonish and delude the Romans, put on a white frock, and buttoned upon him a purple cloak, and **appeared out of the ground in the place the temple had formerly been**.

**War 7:30** (7.2.1) At the first, indeed, those that saw him were greatly astonished, and stood still where they were; but afterward they came near to him, and asked him who he was.

**War 7:31** (7.2.1) Now Simon would not tell them, but bade them call for their captain; and when they ran to call him, **Terentius Rufus**, who was left to command the army there, came to Simon, and learned of him the whole truth, and kept him in bonds, and let Caesar know that he was taken.

**Whiston Note on War 7:31** (7.2.1) --

This **Terentius Rufus**, as Reland in part observes here, is the same person whom the Talmudists call Turnus Rufus; of whom they relate, that "**he ploughed up Zion as a field**, and made Jerusalem become as heaps, and **the mountain of the house as the high**

places of a forest;” which was long before foretold by the prophet **Micah (3:12)**, and quoted from him in the prophecies of **Jeremiah (26:18)**.

**Adam Clarke’s Comments on Matt. 24:2** – “Maimonides, a Jewish rabbin, in Tractate Taanith, c. 4, says, “That the very **foundations of the temple were dugged up**, according to the Roman custom.” His words are these: “On that ninth day of the month Ab, fatal for vengeance, the wicked Turnus Rufus, of the children of Edom, **ploughed up the temple**, and the places round about it, that the saying might be fulfilled, Zion shall be ploughed as a field.” This Turnus, or rather Terentius Rufus, was left general of the army by Titus, with commission, as the Jews suppose, to destroy the city and the temple, as Josephus observes.”

**Barnes Notes on Matt. 24:2** – “Maimonides, a Jewish writer, has also recorded that “Terentius Rufus, an officer in the army of Titus, with a ploughshare tore up the foundations of the temple,” that the prophecy might be fulfilled, “Zion shall be ploughed as a field,” Micah 3:12.”

2. **War 6:250** (6.4.5) but, as for that house, God had for certain long ago **doomed it to the fire**; and now **that fatal day was come**, according to the **revolution of ages**; it was the tenth day of the month Lous [Ab], upon which it was formerly burnt by the king of Babylon;

**War 6.288** (6.5.3) Thus were the miserable people persuaded by these **deceivers**, and such as belied God himself; while they did not attend, nor give credit, to **the signs** that were so evident and did so **plainly foretell their future desolation**; but, like men infatuated, without either eyes to see, or minds to consider, did not regard the denunciations that God made to them.

**War 6.289** (6.5.3) Thus there was **a star resembling a sword**, which stood over the city, and **a comet**, that continued a whole year.

**War 6.290** (6.5.3) Thus also, before the Jews’ rebellion, and before those commotions which preceded the war, when the people were come in great crowds to the feast of unleavened bread, on the eighth day of the month Xanthicus [Nisan], and at the ninth hour of the night, **so great a light** shone round the altar and the holy house, that it appeared to be bright day time; which light lasted for half an hour.

**War 6.291** (6.5.3) This light seemed to be a good **sign** to the unskillful, but was so interpreted by the sacred scribes, as to **portend those events** that followed immediately upon it.

**War 6.292** (6.5.3) At the same festival also, a heifer, as she was led by the high priest to be sacrificed, **brought forth a lamb** in the midst of the temple.

**War 6.293** (6.5.3) Moreover, the eastern gate of the inner [court of the] temple, which was of brass, and vastly heavy, and had been with difficulty shut by twenty men, and rested upon a basis armed with iron, and had bolts fastened very deep into the firm floor, which was there made of one entire stone, was **seen to be opened of its own accord** about the sixth hour of the night.

**War 6.294** (6.5.3) Now, those that kept watch in the temple came hereupon running to the captain of the temple, and told him of it: who then came up thither, and not without great difficulty, was able to shut the gate again.

**War 6.295** (6.5.3) This also appeared to the vulgar to be a very happy **prodigy**, as if God did thereby open them the gate of happiness. But the men of learning understood it, that the **security of their holy house was dissolved** of its own accord, and that the gate was opened for the **advantage of their enemies**.

**War 6.296** (6.5.3) So these publicly declared, that **this signal foreshowed the desolation** that was coming upon them. Besides these, a few days after that feast, on the twenty-first day of the month Artemisius [Jyar],

**War 6.297** (6.5.3) a certain **prodigious and incredible phenomenon** appeared; I suppose the account of it would seem to be a fable, were it not related by those that saw it,

**War 6.298** (6.5.3) and were not the events that followed it of so considerable a nature as to **deserve such signals**; for, before sunsetting, **chariots and troops of soldiers** in their armor were seen

**War 6.299** (6.5.3) **running about among the clouds**, and surrounding of cities. Moreover at that feast which we call Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner [court of the] temple, as their custom was, to perform their sacred ministrations, they said that, in the first place, they **felt a quaking**, and **heard a great noise**,

**War 6.300** (6.5.3) and after that they heard a **sound as of a great multitude**, saying, "Let us remove hence."

### **Tacitus, Histories, Bk 5, Sec. 13**

**Prodigies had occurred**, which this nation, prone to superstition, but hating all religious rites, did not deem it lawful to expiate by offering and sacrifice. There had been seen **hosts joining battle in the skies**, the fiery gleam of arms, **the temple illuminated by a sudden radiance from the clouds**. **The doors of the inner shrine were suddenly thrown open**, and a voice of more than mortal tone was heard to cry that the Gods were departing. At the same instant there was a **mighty stir as of departure**.

### **Sepher Yosippon (A Mediaeval History of Ancient Israel)**

Translated from the Hebrew by Steven B. Bowman.

Excerpts from Chapter 87 "Burning of the Temple"

For one year before **Vespasian** came, a single great star shining like unsheathed swords was seen over the Temple. And in those days when the sign was seen it was the holiday of Passover and during that entire night the **Temple was lit up and illuminated like the light of day**, and thus it was **all seven days of the Passover**. All the sages of Jerusalem knew that it was a **malevolent sign**, but the rest of the ignorant people said that it was a benevolent sign.

*...Now it happened after this that there was **seen from above over the Holy of Holies for the whole night the outline of a man's face**, the like of whose beauty had never been seen in all the land, and his appearance was quite awesome.*

Moreover, in those days were seen **chariots of fire and horsemen, a great force flying across the sky near to the ground coming against Jerusalem and all the land of Judah, all of them horses of fire and riders of fire**. When the holiday of Shavu'oth came in those days, **during the night the priests heard within the Temple something like the sound of men going and the sound of men marching in a multitude going into the Temple, and a terrible and mighty voice was heard speaking: "Let's go and leave this House.**

3. **War 2.258** (2.13.4) There was also another body of **wicked men** gotten together, not so impure in their actions, but more wicked in their intentions, who laid waste the happy state of the city no less than did these murderers.

**War 2.259** (2.13.4) These were such men as **deceived and deluded the people under pretense of divine inspiration**, but were for procuring innovations and changes of the government, and these prevailed with the multitude to act like madmen, and **went before them into the wilderness**, as **pretending that God would there show them the signals of liberty**;

**War 2.260** (2.13.4) but Felix thought this procedure was to be the beginning of a revolt; so he sent some horsemen and footmen, both armed, who destroyed a great number of them.

**War 2.261** (2.13.5) But there was an **Egyptian false prophet** that did the Jews more mischief than the former; for he was a cheat, and **pretended to be a prophet** also, and got together thirty thousand men that were **deluded by him**;

**War 2.262** (2.13.5) these he led round about **from the wilderness** to the mount which was called the Mount of Olives, and was ready to break into Jerusalem by force from that place; and if he could but once conquer the Roman garrison and the people, he **intended to domineer over them** by the assistance of those guards of his that were to break into the city with him,

**War 2.263** (2.13.5) but Felix prevented his attempt, and met him with his Roman soldiers, while all the people assisted him in his attack upon them, insomuch that, when it came to a battle, **the Egyptian** ran away, with a few others, while the greatest part of those that were with him were either destroyed or taken alive; but the rest of the multitude were dispersed every one to their own homes and there concealed themselves.

**War 2:264** (2.13.6) Now, when these were quieted, it happened, as it does in a diseased body, that another part was subject to an inflammation; for a company of **deceivers and robbers** got together, and **persuaded the Jews to revolt**, and exhorted them to assert their liberty, inflicting death on those that continued in obedience to the Roman government, and saying, that such as willingly chose slavery ought to be forced from such their desired inclinations;

**War 2:265** (2.13.6) for they parted themselves into different bodies, and lay in wait up and down the country, and plundered the houses of the great men, and slew the men themselves, and set the villages on fire; and this till all Judea was filled with the effects of their madness. **And thus the flame was every day more and more blown up, till it came to a direct war.**

**War 2:652** (2.22.2) But as for the Acrabbene toparchy, **Simon, the son of Gioras**, got a great number of **those that were fond of innovations** together, and betook himself to **ravage the country**; nor did he only harass the rich men's houses, but tormented their bodies, and appeared openly and beforehand to affect **tyranny in his government**.

**War 2:653** (2.22.2) And when an **army was sent against him by Ananus**, and the other rulers, he and his band **retired to the robbers that were at Masada**, and staid there, and **plundered the country of Idumea** with them, till both Ananus and his other adversaries were slain;

**War 2:654** (2.22.2) and until the rulers of that country were so afflicted with the multitude of those that were slain, and with the continual ravage of what they had, that the **raised an army**, and **put garrisons into the villages**, to secure them from those insults. And in this state were the affairs of Judea at that time.

**War 4.503** (4.9.3) And now there arose another war at Jerusalem. There was a **son of Giora, one Simon**, by birth of Gerasa, a young man, not so cunning indeed as **John [of Gischala]**, who had already seized upon the city,

**War 4.504** (4.9.3) but superior in strength of body and courage; on which account, when he had been driven away from that Acrabattene toparchy, which he once had, by Ananus the high priest, he came to those robbers who had seized upon Masada.

**War 4.505** (4.9.3) At first they suspected him, and only permitted him to come with the women he brought with him into the lower part of the fortress, while they dwelt in the upper part of it themselves.

**War 4.506** (4.9.3) However, his manner so well agreed with theirs, and he seemed so trusty a man, that he went out with them, and ravaged and destroyed the country with them about Masada;

**War 4.507** (4.9.3) yet when he persuaded them to undertake greater things, he could not prevail with them so to do; for as they were accustomed to dwell in that citadel, they were afraid of going far from that which was their hiding-place;

**War 4.508** (4.9.3) but he, affecting to tyrannize, and being **fond of greatness**, when he had heard of the death of Ananus, left them, and went into the mountainous part of the country. So **he proclaimed liberty to those in slavery, and a reward to those already free, and got together a set of wicked men from all quarters.**

**War 4.509** (4.9.4) And as he had now a **strong body of men about him**, he overran the villages that lay in the mountainous country, and when there were still more and more that came to him, he ventured to go down into the lower parts of the country,

**War 4.510** (4.9.4) and since he was now become formidable to the cities, many of the **men of power were corrupted by him**; so that his army was no longer composed of slaves and robbers, but a great many of the populace were **obedient to him as their king.**

**Antiq. 20:97** (20.5.1) Now it came to pass, while Fadus was procurator of Judea, that a certain magician, whose name was **Theudas**, persuaded a great part of the people to take their effects with them, and follow him to the river Jordan; **for he told them he was a prophet**, and that he would, by his own command, divide the river, and afford them an easy passage over it;

**Antiq. 20:98** (20.5.1) and many were deluded by his words. However, Fadus did not permit them to make any advantage of his wild attempt, but sent a troop of horsemen out against them; who, falling upon them unexpectedly, slew many of them and took many of them alive. They also took **Theudas** alive, and cut off his head, and carried it to Jerusalem.

**Antiq. 20:99** (20.5.1) This was what befell the Jews in the time of Cuspius Fadus's government [AD 44-46].

**Antiq. 20:100** (20.5.2) Then came Tiberius Alexander as successor to Fadus [AD 46-48]; he was the son of Alexander the alabarch of Alexandria; which Alexander was a principal person among all his contemporaries, both for his family and wealth: he was also more

eminent for his piety than this his son Alexander, for he did not continue in the religion of his country.

**Antiq. 20:101** (20.5.2) Under these procurators **that great famine happened in Judea [AD 46]**, in which queen Helena bought corn in Egypt at a great expense, and distributed it to those that were in want, as I have related already;

**Antiq. 20:102** (20.5.2) and besides this, **the sons of Judas of Galilee were now slain**; I mean of that **Judas who caused the people to revolt**, when Cyrenius came to take an account of the estates of the Jews [AD 6], as we have shown in a foregoing book. The names of those sons were **James and Simon**, whom Alexander commanded to be **crucified**;

**Antiq. 20:167** (20.8.6) These works, that were done by the robbers, filled the city with all sorts of impiety. And now these **impostors and deceivers** persuaded the multitude to **follow them into the wilderness**,

**Antiq. 20:168** (20.8.6) and pretended that they would **exhibit manifest wonders and signs**, that should be performed by the providence of God. And many that were prevailed on by them suffered the punishments of their folly; for Felix brought them back, and then punished them.

**Antiq. 20:169** (20.8.6) Moreover, there **came out of Egypt** about this time to Jerusalem, one that said **he was a prophet**, and advised the multitude of the common people to go along with him to the Mount of Olives, as it was called, which lay over against the city, and at the distance of five furlongs.

**Antiq. 20:170** (20.8.6) He said farther, that he would show them from hence, how, at his command, the walls of Jerusalem would fall down; and he promised that he would procure them an entrance into the city through those walls, when they were fallen down.

**Antiq. 20:171** (20.8.6) Now when Felix was informed of these things, he ordered his soldiers to take their weapons, and came against them with a great number of horsemen and footmen, from Jerusalem, and attacked the Egyptian and the people that were with him. He also slew four hundred of them, and took two hundred alive.

**Antiq. 20:172** (20.8.6) But the Egyptian himself escaped out of the fight, but did not appear any more. And again the robbers stirred up the people to make war with the Romans, and said they ought not to obey them at all; and when any persons would not comply with them, they set fire to their villages, and plundered them.

4. **War Preface 1:4** (20.11.3) Now at the time when this great concussion of affairs happened, the affairs of the Romans themselves were in **great disorder**. Those Jews also, who were for innovations, then arose when **the times were disturbed**; they were also in a flourishing condition for strength and riches, insomuch that the affairs of the east were then exceeding tumultuous, while some hoped for gain, and others were afraid of loss in such troubles;
5. **War 7:79** (7.4.2) for when they saw the Roman government in a **great internal disorder**, by the continual changes of its rulers, and understood that every part of the habitable earth under them was in an **unsettled and tottering condition**, they thought this was the best

opportunity that could afford itself for themselves to make a sedition, when the **state of the Romans was so ill**.

6. **Acts 11:28**; famine during reign of Claudius (AD 44-48);

**Antiq. 20:101** (20.5.2) Under these procurators **that great famine** happened in Judea, in which queen Helena bought corn in Egypt at a great expense, and distributed it to those that were in want, as I have related already;

**War 6:421** (6.9.3) the greater part of whom were indeed of the same nation [with the citizens of Jerusalem], but not belonging to the city itself; for they were come up from all the country to the feast of unleavened bread, and were on a sudden shut up by an army, which, at the very first, occasioned so great a straitness among them that there came a pestilential destruction upon them, and soon afterward such a **famine**, as destroyed them more suddenly.

**War 6:197** (6.3.3) Moreover, their hunger was so intolerable, that it obliged them to chew everything, while they gathered such things as the most sordid animals would not touch, and endured to eat them; nor did they at length abstain from **girdles** and **shoes**; and the very **leather which belonged to their shields** they pulled off and gnawed:

**War 6:198** (6.3.3) the very **wisps of old hay** became food to some; and some gathered up **fibers**, and sold a very small weight of them for four Attic [drachmae].

**War 6:199** (6.3.3) But why do I describe the shameless impudence that the famine brought on men in their eating inanimate things, while I am going to relate a matter of fact, the like to which no history relates, either among the Greeks or Barbarians! It is horrible to speak of it, and incredible when heard.

**War 6:200** (6.3.3) I had indeed willingly omitted this calamity of ours, that I might not seem to deliver what is so portentous to posterity, but that **I have innumerable witnesses** to it in my own age; and, besides, my country would have had little reason to thank me for suppressing the miseries that she underwent at this time.

**War 6:201** (6.3.4) There was a certain woman that dwelt beyond Jordan, her name was **Mary**; her father was Eleazar, of the village Bethesub, which signifies the House of Hyssop. She was eminent for her family and her wealth, and had **fled away to Jerusalem with the rest of the multitude, and was with them besieged** therein at this time.

**War 6:202** (6.3.4) The other effects of this woman had been already seized upon; such I mean as she had brought with her out of Perea, and removed to the city. What she had treasured up besides, as also what food she had contrived to save, had been also carried off by the rapacious guards, who came every day running into her house for that purpose.

**War 6:203** (6.3.4) This put the poor woman into a very great passion, and by the frequent reproaches and imprecations she cast at these rapacious villains, she had provoked them to anger against her;

**War 6:204** (6.3.4) but none of them, either out of the indignation she had raised against herself, or out of the commiseration of her case, would take away her life; and if she found any food, she perceived her labors were for others, and not for herself; and it was now become impossible for her anyway to find anymore food, while **the famine** pierced through

her very bowels and marrow, when also her passion was fired to a degree beyond the famine itself; nor did she consult with anything but with her passion and the necessity she was in. She then attempted a most unnatural thing;

**War 6:205** (6.3.4) and snatching up her son, who was a child sucking at her breast, she said, "O, thou miserable infant! For whom shall I preserve thee in this war, this famine, and this sedition?"

**War 6:206** (6.3.4) As to the war with the Romans, if they preserve our lives, we must be slaves! This famine also will destroy us, even before that slavery comes upon us: yet are these seditious rogues more terrible than both the other.

**War 6:207** (6.3.4) Come on; be thou my food, and be thou a fury to these seditious varlets and a byword to the world, which is all that is now wanting to complete the calamities of us Jews."

**War 6:208** (6.3.4) As soon as she had said this she slew her son; and then roasted him, and ate the one half of him, and kept the other half by her concealed.

**War 6:209** (6.3.4) Upon this the seditious came in presently, and smelling the horrid scent of this food, they threatened her, that they would cut her throat immediately if she did not show them what food she had gotten ready. She replied, that she had saved a very fine portion of it for them; and withal uncovered what was left of her son.

**War 6:210** (6.3.4) Hereupon they were seized with a horror and amazement of mind, and stood astonished at the sight; when she said to them, "This is mine own son; and what hath been done was mine own doing! Come, eat of this food; for I have eaten of it myself!"

**War 6:211** (6.3.4) Do not you pretend to be either more tender than a woman, or more compassionate than a mother; but if you be so scrupulous and do abominate this my sacrifice, as I have eaten the one half, let the rest be reserved for me also."

**War 6:212** (6.3.4) After which, those men went out trembling, being never so much affrighted at anything as they were at this, and with some difficulty they left the rest of that meat to the mother. Upon which the whole city was full of this horrid action immediately; and while every body laid his miserable case before their own eyes, they trembled, as if this unheard-of action had been by themselves.

**War 6:213** (6.3.4) So those that were thus distressed by the famine were very desirous to die; and those already dead were esteemed happy, because they had not lived long enough either to hear or to see such miseries.

7. **War 4:286** (4.4.5) for there broke out a prodigious storm in the night, with the utmost violence, and very strong winds, with the largest showers of rain, with continual lightnings, terrible thunderings, and **amazing concussions and bellowings of the earth**, that was in an **earthquake**.

**War 4:287** (4.4.5) These things were a manifest indication that some destruction was coming upon men, when the system of the world was put into this disorder; and anyone would guess that these wonders **foreshowed some grand calamities that were coming**.

**J. Marcellus Kik:** "And as to earthquakes, many are mentioned by the writers during a period just previous to 70 A.D. there were earthquakes in Crete, Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Samos, Laodicea, Hierapolis, Colossae, Campania, Rome, and Judea. It is interesting to note that the city of Pompeii was much damaged by an earthquake...Feb. 5, 63 AD" (*An*

*Eschatology of Victory*, p. 93). See also Dr. Lardner, in his *Collection of Ancient Jewish and Heathen Testimonies to the Truth of the Christian Religion*, first published 1764–'67, also in vol. vi. of his Works, ed. by Kippis, London 1838.

**Barnes Notes on Matthew 24:7** -- Many of these [earthquakes] are mentioned as preceding the destruction of Jerusalem. Tacitus mentions one in the reign of Claudius, at Rome; and says that, in the reign of Nero, the cities of Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colossae, were overthrown; and the celebrated Pompeii was overwhelmed, and almost destroyed by an earthquake, **Annals, 15, 22**. Others are mentioned as occurring at Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, and Samos.

**Clarke's Commentary on Matthew 24:7** -- ...earthquakes, there were several in those times to which our Lord refers; particularly one at Crete in the reign of Claudius, one at Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Samos. **See Grotius**. One at Rome, mentioned by **Tacitus**; and one at Laodicea in the reign of Nero, in which the city was overthrown, as were likewise Hierapolis and Colossae. See **Tacit. Annals lib. xii. and lib. xiv**. One at Campania, mentioned by **Seneca [Ad Lucilium Epist. Morales]**; and one at Rome, in the reign of Galba, mentioned by **Suetonius** in the life of that emperor. Add to all these, a dreadful one in Judea, mentioned by **Josephus (Wars 4.286)** accompanied by a dreadful tempest, violent winds, vehement showers, and continual lightnings and thunders; which led many to believe that these things portended some uncommon calamity [AD 68]:

**Fourfold Gospel** (Harmony of the Gospels by McGarvey and Pendleton) comments on Matthew 24:7 – Great natural disturbances would constitute the third sign. That these preceded the destruction of Jerusalem, there is abundant historic evidence. **Alford** enumerates the earthquakes as follows: 1. A great earthquake in Crete, AD 46 or 47. 2. One at Rome when Nero assumed the manly toga, A.D. 51. 3. One at Apamæa in Phrygia, mentioned by **Tacitus**, A.D. 53. 4. One at Laodicea in Phrygia, A.D. 60. 5. One in Campania, A.D. 62 or 63. There were an indefinite number of **famines** referred to by Roman writers, and at least one **pestilence** during which thirty thousand perished in Rome alone. All these signs are mentioned by unbelieving writers such as **Josephus, Tacitus, Suetonius, Philostratus, and Seneca**, who speak of them because of their importance and not with any reference to the prophecy of Christ.

Earthquakes in Crete (AD 47), Rome (AD 51), Apamaea (AD 53), Laodicea (AD 61 or 65). Seneca mentioned quakes in Turkey (incl. Smyrna) (in AD 65). [Seneca *Ad Lucilium Epist. Morales*]

8. **War 6:421** (6.9.3) the greater part of whom were indeed of the same nation [with the citizens of Jerusalem], but not belonging to the city itself; for they were come up from all the country to the feast of unleavened bread, and were on a sudden shut up by an army, which, at the very first, occasioned so great a straitness among them that there came a **pestilential destruction** upon them, and soon afterward such a famine, as destroyed them more suddenly.

9. (same as #2)

10. Book of Acts and Paul's Epistles document this extreme persecution (the great tribulation). In the book of Revelation, John says the tribulation was already in progress and he was a victim of it by being put in exile on the island of Patmos.
11. The book of Acts shows Stephen and James (John's brother) being killed by the Jews. Josephus talks about James (the brother of Jesus) being killed by the Jews in AD 62. At the same time James was arrested, Josephus says that some other companions of James there in Jerusalem were arrested. This may have been when John was arrested and sent to exile on the Roman prison island of Patmos, where he wrote the book of Revelation in AD 63, and shortly afterwards suffered martyrdom in the Neronian persecution (AD 64). Both Peter and Paul in their final books (2 Peter and 2 Timothy) say that their martyrdom was imminent, which were written right after the Neronian persecution broke out. The great tribulation was underway (AD 62-66).
12. Acts and the epistles of Paul show this extremely hateful treatment of Christians. Eusebius records a lot more of it.
13. Gal. 5:1ff and 2 Thess. 2:1ff show that this apostasy was already happening. The book of Acts shows it, and the books of Hebrews and Revelation both warn against this apostasy that was already happening. The last few NT books to be written are full of warnings about apostasy and exhortations to endure to the End.
14. The book of Acts and other NT epistles show this very kind of betrayal. Apostle Paul was a part of the Jerusalem hierarchy before he became a Christian. All his relatives and friends and associates turned their back on him and tried to kill him, except for his nephew who informed him of a plot on his life.
15. There were even Christians (the Judaizers) who did spiteful things against their fellow Christians. Paul said that his imprisonment had been made much more difficult by the jealousy and bitterness of the Judaizers, and other (false) brethren who had sneaked in to spy out their freedoms in Christ. Paul told the Ephesian elders that from among their own selves false teachers and betrayers would arise.
16. **War 6:285** (6.5.2) A **false prophet** was the occasion of these people's destruction, who had made a public proclamation in the city that very day, that God commanded them to get up upon the temple, and that there they should receive **miraculous signs** of their deliverance.  
**War 6:286** (6.5.2) Now, there was then a **great number of false prophets** suborned by the tyrants to impose upon the people, who denounced this to them, that they should **wait for deliverance** from God: and this was in order to keep them from deserting, and that they might be buoyed up above fear and care by such hopes.  
**War 6:287** (6.5.2) Now, a man that is in adversity does easily comply with such promises; for when a such a **seducer** makes him believe that he shall be delivered from those miseries which oppress him, then it is that the patient is full of hopes of such deliverance.

**War 6:288** (6.5.3) Thus were the miserable people persuaded by these **deceivers**, and such as belied God himself; while they did not attend, nor give credit, to **the signs that were so evident** and did so plainly foretell their future desolation; but, like men infatuated, without either eyes to see, or minds to consider, did not regard the denunciations that God made to them.

17. Josephus says the robbers, Sicarii, Zealots, seditious factions, and even High Priests kept laws only selectively (if at all). Both civil laws and religious laws were trampled underfoot by the Zealots in their attempt to throw off the Roman yoke. They demanded that the Christians keep every jot and tittle, but the Zealots especially felt they were above the law.

**War 7:262** (7.8.1) They were the Sicarii who first began these transgressions, and first became barbarous towards those allied to them, and left no words of reproach unsaid, and no works of perdition untried, in order to destroy those whom their contrivances affected.

**War 6:408** (6.8.5) a city that had been liable to so many miseries during the siege, that, had it always enjoyed as much happiness from its first foundation, it would certainly have been the envy of the world. Nor did it on any other account so much deserve these sore misfortunes, as by producing such **a generation of men as were the occasions of this its overthrow.**

18. Seven cities in Revelation already had these characteristics by the time it was written in AD 62-64. And Apostle Paul reminds all of the churches to whom he wrote his epistles not to lose their passion that they had expressed toward Christ at the beginning of their conversion. The corrupting influence of the world took its toll on the churches as they fell under more and more persecution and tribulation.

19. Those who lived and remained (endured) until the Parousia were rescued (raptured) before the wrath was poured out upon the apostate Jews.

20. cf. Rom. 1:8; 10:28; 15:18f; 16:26; Col. 1:6, 23;

**[Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. 2.3.1]** Thus, under the influence of heavenly power, and with the divine co-operation, **the doctrine of the Saviour, like the rays of the sun, quickly illumined the whole world;** and straightway, in accordance with the divine Scriptures, **the voice of the inspired evangelists and apostles went forth through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.**

**[Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. 3.8.11]** But Vespasian did not rule the whole world, but only that part of it which was subject to the Romans. With better right could it be applied to Christ; to whom it was said by the Father, "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth for thy possession." At that very time, indeed, the voice of his holy apostles **"went throughout all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."**

21. **War 4:201** (4.3.12) As for the dead bodies of the people, their relations carried them out to their own houses; but when any of the zealots were wounded, he went up into the temple, and defiled that sacred floor with his blood, insomuch that one may say it was **their blood alone that polluted our sanctuary**.

**War 4:202** (4.3.12) Now in these conflicts the robbers always sallied out of the temple, and were too hard for their enemies; but the populace grew very angry, and became more and more numerous, and reproached those that gave back, and those behind would not afford room to those that were going off, but forced them on again, till at length they made their whole body to turn against their adversaries,

**War 4:203** (4.3.12) and the robbers could no longer oppose them, but were forced gradually to **retire into the temple**; when Ananus and his party fell into it at the same time together with them.

**Whiston's Note on War 4:203 above** -- It is worth noting here, that this Ananus, the best of the Jews at this time, and the high priest, who was so very uneasy at the **profanation of the Jewish courts of the temple by the zealots**, did not however scruple the profanation of the "court of the Gentiles;" as in our Savior's days it was very much profaned by the Jews, and made a marketplace, nay, a "den of thieves," without scruple, Matt. 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-17. Accordingly Josephus himself, when he speaks of the two inner courts, calls them both *hagia*, or holy places; but, so far as I remember, never gives that character of the court of the Gentiles. See Wars 5.356 (5.9.2) below:

**War 5:356** (5.9.2) Thus did the Romans spend four days in bringing this subsistence money to the several legions; but on the fifth day, when no signs of peace appeared to come from the Jews, Titus divided his legions, and began to raise banks, both at the tower of Antonia and at John's monument. Now his designs were to take the upper city at that monument, and the temple at the tower of Antonia; for **if the temple were not taken it would be dangerous** to keep the city itself. [i.e., implying that the Zealots were occupying the inner courts of the temple -- ees]

The city was surrounded back then. --

**War 6:428** (6.9.4) Now this vast multitude is indeed collected out of remote places, but the entire nation was now shut up by fate as in a prison, and the Roman **army encompassed the city** when it was crowded with inhabitants.

**Antiq. 20:166** (20.8.5) And this seems to me to have been the reason why God, out his hatred to these men's wickedness, rejected our city; and as for the temple, he no longer esteemed it sufficiently pure for him to inhabit therein, but brought the Romans upon us, and threw a fire upon the city to purge it; and brought upon us, our wives, and children, slavery, as desirous to make us wiser by our calamities.

22. **War 2:556** (2.20.1) After this calamity had befallen Cestius, many of the most eminent of the Jews swam away from the city, as from a ship when it was going to sink; Costobarus, therefore, and Saul, who were brethren, together with Philip, the son of Jacimus, who was the commander of king Agrippa's forces, ran away from the city, and went to Cestius.

23. Nursing mother who slew her infant son for food in the famine of the siege:

**War 6:201** (6.3.4) There was a certain woman that dwelt beyond Jordan, her name was **Mary**; her father was Eleazar, of the village Bethzub, which signifies the House of Hyssop. She was eminent for her family and her wealth, and had **fled away to Jerusalem with the rest of the multitude, and was with them besieged** therein at this time.

**War 6:202** (6.3.4) The other effects of this woman had been already seized upon; such I mean as she had brought with her out of Perea, and removed to the city. What she had treasured up besides, as also what food she had contrived to save, had been also carried off by the rapacious guards, who came every day running into her house for that purpose.

**War 6:203** (6.3.4) This put the poor woman into a very great passion, and by the frequent reproaches and imprecations she cast at these rapacious villains, she had provoked them to anger against her;

**War 6:204** (6.3.4) but none of them, either out of the indignation she had raised against herself, or out of the commiseration of her case, would take away her life; and if she found any food, she perceived her labors were for others, and not for herself; and it was now become impossible for her anyway to find anymore food, while **the famine** pierced through her very bowels and marrow, when also her passion was fired to a degree beyond the famine itself; nor did she consult with anything but with her passion and the necessity she was in. She then attempted a most unnatural thing;

**War 6:205** (6.3.4) and snatching up her son, who was a child sucking at her breast, she said, "O, thou miserable infant! For whom shall I preserve thee in this war, this famine, and this sedition?"

**War 6:206** (6.3.4) As to the war with the Romans, if they preserve our lives, we must be slaves! This famine also will destroy us, even before that slavery comes upon us: yet are these seditious rogues more terrible than both the other.

**War 6:207** (6.3.4) Come on; be thou my food, and be thou a fury to these seditious varlets and a byword to the world, which is all that is now wanting to complete the calamities of us Jews."

**War 6:208** (6.3.4) As soon as she had said this she slew her son; and then roasted him, and ate the one half of him, and kept the other half by her concealed.

**War 6:209** (6.3.4) Upon this the seditious came in presently, and smelling the horrid scent of this food, they threatened her, that they would cut her throat immediately if she did not show them what food she had gotten ready. She replied, that she had saved a very fine portion of it for them; and withal uncovered what was left of her son.

**War 6:210** (6.3.4) Hereupon they were seized with a horror and amazement of mind, and stood astonished at the sight; when she said to them, "This is mine own son; and what hath been done was mine own doing! Come, eat of this food; for I have eaten of it myself!"

**War 6:211** (6.3.4) Do not you pretend to be either more tender than a woman, or more compassionate than a mother; but if you be so scrupulous and do abominate this my sacrifice, as I have eaten the one half, let the rest be reserved for me also."

**War 6:212** (6.3.4) After which, those men went out trembling, being never so much affrighted at anything as they were at this, and with some difficulty they left the rest of that meat to the mother. Upon which the whole city was full of this horrid action immediately; and

while every body laid his miserable case before their own eyes, they trembled, as if this unheard-of action had been by themselves.

**War 6:213** (6.3.4) So those that were thus distressed by the famine were very desirous to die; and those already dead were esteemed happy, because they had not lived long enough either to hear or to see such miseries.

**No travel on Sabbath:**

**Antiq. 13:252** (13.8.4) And truly he did not speak falsely in saying so; for the festival, which we call Pentecost, did then fall out to be the next day to the Sabbath: **nor is it lawful for us to journey, either on the Sabbath day, or on a festival day.**

**Whiston Note:** The Jews were not to march or journey on the Sabbath, or on such a great festival as was equivalent to the Sabbath, any further than a Sabbath-day's journey, or two thousand cubits.

24. **War Preface 1:1** Whereas the war which the Jews made with the Romans hath been **the greatest of all** those, not only that have been in our times, but, in a manner, of those that ever were heard of; both of those wherein cities have fought against cities, or nations against nations
25. Cestius left unexpectedly, allowing refugees to flee -- Jews began war prep. Jews could no longer use Romans to kill Christians. Church fled to Agrippa and Roman cities where the church was protected (like Antioch).
- War 2:556** (2.20.1) After this calamity had befallen Cestius, many of the most eminent of the Jews **swam away from the city**, as from a ship when it was going to sink; Costobarus, therefore, and Saul, who were brethren, together with Philip, the son of Jacimus, who was the commander of king Agrippa's forces, **ran away from the city**, and went to Cestius.
26. Josephus records all these things in great detail. That is what his Wars books are mainly focused on.
27. We looked at these same references up in #2
28. **War 6:369** (6.7.2) Nor was there any place in the city that had no **dead bodies** in it, but what was entirely covered with those that were killed either by the **famine** or the **rebellion**; and all was **full of the dead bodies** of such as had perished, either by that sedition or by that famine.
- War 3:123** (3.6.2) Then came **the ensigns encompassing the eagle**, which is at the head of every Roman legion, the king, and the strongest of all birds, which seems to them **a signal of dominion**, and **an omen** that they shall conquer all against whom they march;
29. **See the references we read in #2**  
When cities were burned, the smoke darkened the sun and moon.

Astrological phenomenon were indeed seen above Jerusalem, as we noticed in the Josephus, Yosippon, Tacitus and Eusebius quotes under point #2.

30. We saw that Josephus records the angelic/demonic activity that was seen in the sky. Eusebius in both his Ecclesiastical History and his Theophania makes a big point about the demonic powers being subjugated by the work of Christ. (see the signs we mentioned in #2). The book of Revelation also mentions this angelic warfare and the casting down of the demonic forces at the time of the Parousia and the downfall of the Great Harlot City Jerusalem.
31. Same signs we mentioned in #2.
32. **War 2:649** (2.22.1) in all parts of the city, darts and all sorts of armor were upon the anvil. Although the multitude of the young men were engaged in exercises, without any regularity, and all places were full of tumultuous doings; yet the moderate sort were **exceedingly sad**; and a great many there were who, out of the prospects they had of the calamities that were coming upon them, **made great lamentations**.  
**War 2:455** (2.17.10) while men **made public lamentation** when they saw that such occasions were afforded for a war as were incurable; that the city was all over **polluted with such abominations**, from which it was but reasonable to expect some **vengeance** even though they should escape revenge from the Romans; so that the **city was filled with sadness**, and every one of the moderate men in it **were under great disturbance**, as likely themselves to undergo punishment for the wickedness of the seditious;
33. Same signs we discussed in #2
34. The angelic activity was seen in the sky, indicating that these events did occur as predicted. Same signs we discussed in #2. This seems to be a reference to the rapture, when the angels gathered the elect who had lived and remained until the End of the Great Tribulation.