

Worldwide Evangelism

Matthew 24:14

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

The Gospel Was Preached To The Whole World Before 70 A.D.

In the Olivet Discourse Jesus told His disciples the Gospel would be preached to the whole world before the end came. The New Testament confirms that these words of Christ were fulfilled before 70 A.D. during the lifetime of the disciples. Scripture interprets Scripture. The Gospel was preached to the known world, the Roman Empire.

When the Bible uses global language like "world" and "under heaven" it does not mean literally the entire earth, including China, Australia, South and North America. It means the known world at that time which was the Roman Empire. Consider these verses:

- *Luke 2:1 And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that **all the world** should be registered.*
- *Acts 2:5 And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, **from every nation under heaven.***
- *Acts 11:28 Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine **throughout all the world**, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar*
- *Acts 17:6 But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned **the world** upside down have come here too*
- *Acts 24:5 For we have found this man a plague, a creator of dissension among all the Jews **throughout the world**, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.*
- *Romans 1:8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of **throughout the whole world.***
- *Romans 10:18 But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed: "Their sound has gone out to all the earth, And their words **to the ends of the world.**"*
- *Colossians 1:5-6 because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, which has come to you, as it has also **in all the world**, and is bringing forth fruit, as it is also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth;*
- *Colossians 1:23f indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from **the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven**, of which I, Paul, became a minister.*

However interpreted, Paul made it clear that the words of Christ in Matthew 24:14 were fulfilled in his own time.

The Abomination of Desolation

¹⁵ *“Therefore when you see the ‘**abomination of desolation**, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (Matthew 24:15-18)*

The abomination of desolation was the Roman armies under General Titus destroying the Temple in A.D. 70. We can be sure of this by comparing Scripture with Scripture. Just look at the parallel passage in Luke.

²⁰ *“But when you see **Jerusalem surrounded by armies**, then know that its **desolation** is near. ²¹ Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. ²² For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.*

So the abomination of desolation is not the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem today. It was the destruction of Herod's Temple in the Jewish War of A.D.70. Also, if the great tribulation is a future global fire or if Christians are going to be raptured out, then why did Jesus say not to go in your house or back to get your clothes. This judgment in Matthew 24 is obviously a local judgment. If it were a global judgment what difference would it make where you were on earth, whether inside your house or on your roof top. Jesus is clearly telling the disciples to flee Jerusalem when they saw the armies approaching.

Greatest Tribulation Ever

Matthew 24:21

For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Jesus applied this verse to the destruction of Jerusalem in the Jewish War (66-70 A.D). This kind of symbolic language was common in the Old Testament whereas if it is taken literally it yields contradictions. For example compare the following two verses.

- 2 Kings 18:5 He (Hezekiah) trusted in the LORD God of Israel, **so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor who were before him.**
- 2 Kings 23:25 **Now before him (Josiah) there was no king like him, who turned to the LORD with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; nor after him did any arise like him**

How can Hezekiah and Josiah both be the most devoted kings of all time.?

- Exodus 10:14 And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt and rested on all the territory of Egypt. They were very severe; **previously there had been no such locusts as they, nor shall there be such after them.**
- Exodus 11:6 Then there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, **such as was not like it before, nor shall be like it again.**
- Ezekiel 5:9 And I will do among you what **I have never done, and the like of which I will never do again**, because of all your abominations
- Daniel 9:12 And He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; for under the whole heaven **such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem.**
- Daniel 12:1 "At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, **Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time.** And at that time your people shall be delivered,

Joel 2:2

A day of darkness and gloominess,

A day of clouds and thick darkness,

Like the morning clouds spread over the mountains.

A people come, great and strong,

The like of whom has never been;

Nor will there ever be any such after them,

Even for many successive generations

Eagles, Not Vultures

*For wherever the carcass is, there the **eagles** will be gathered together. (Matthew 24:28)*

Verse 28 in the original Greek reads eagles, not vultures. Many translations use the word vultures because they assume it is vultures. The eagle was the symbol for the Roman Empire. Therefore Jesus is using the symbol eagles to denote the Roman siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The carcass was apostate Israel which was void of life because they rejected Christ. The Greek word is "aetos" which means eagles, not vultures. Vulture is simply made up by modern translators. Matthew 24:28 can serve as a test for the accuracy of Bible translations.