

Lesson 6

The Last Days of Mosaic Worship

Matthew 24:14

"The awful catastrophe of the destruction of the Jewish theocracy must have produced the profoundest sensation among the Christians. It was the greatest calamity of Judaism and a great benefit to Christianity; a refutation of the one, a vindication of the other. It separated them forever. Henceforth the heathen could no longer look upon Christianity as a mere sect of Judaism, but must regard and treat it as a new, peculiar religion. The destruction of Jerusalem marks that momentous crisis at which the Christian church burst forth forever from Judaism, awoke to a sense of maturity, and in government and worship at once took its independent stand before the world. (Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. I, p. 404)

The New Testament prophecies "the end" of the Mosaic way of worship and Christ's Kingdom coming.

Mosaic Worship - In the Old Covenant, worship is more about religion & liturgy — based on the Law.

New Covenant Worship -Worship is primarily an internal attitude towards God (Rom. 12:1; I Cor. 6:19).

Mosaic Worship – Year after year atonement was made for Israel.

New Covenant Worship – The once and for all sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Heb. 9:11-14; 10:1-14).

Mosaic Worship - Manifestation of God's Presence in nature and miracles, signs and wonders

New Covenant Worship - Manifestation of spiritual gifts and the Holy Spirit (Rom. 11:17; John 4:23).

Mosaic Worship – A special covenant with the Jewish people among "all the nations of the world."

New Covenant Worship – "A great multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language" (Rev. 7:9).

The book (Gospel) of Matthew is commonly ranked as *first in time and order* among the writings of the four evangelists (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). The date for Matthew writing his Gospel ranges between **AD 38 to AD 68**, all authorities agree in maintaining, *that* Matthew was published at Jerusalem for the instruction of the Jews, before the disciples had left Judea to convert the Gentile world.

"First of all Matthew the Publican, surnamed Levi, published a Gospel in Judea in the Hebrew (Chaldee) Language, principally for the use of the Jewish Converts to Christianity" (Jerome in his Preface to his Commentary on Matthew).

The book (Gospel) of Mark is placed by Irenaeus, Augustin, Origen, Jerome, and Comas of Alexandria, next in order to Matthew. The church fathers believed Mark's Gospel *was written at Rome for the Jews and Gentiles there*, under the immediate direction and supervision of Peter. It was Peter, these church fathers say, who delivered Mark's gospel to the Jewish Church and confirmed it by his own authority.

"St. Mark accompanied St. Peter (I Pet. 5:13) and was so highly esteemed by him as to be called his son, in the same manner as Timothy is thus called by St. Paul 'my son'" (Marsh's Michaelis, Volume 4, Chapter 5, p. 203).

The book (Gospel) of Luke is, according to Origen, was commended by the Apostle Paul and "was written to correct the inaccuracies of the accounts of Christ, which were then in circulation, and to deliver to Theophilus a true and genuine document, in order to silence several idle stories which might have prejudiced Theophilus against the Christian religion" (Marsh's Michaelis Vol 4, p. 266, 267). Luke's

gospel was written before the Acts of the Apostles, as is evident from the beginning of the book of Acts.

“The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach until the day in which He was taken up” (Acts 1:1-2).

The book of Acts concludes with St. Paul's having resided two years at Rome (Acts 28:30), from which it seems evident that Luke was written shortly after that event. Luke wrote his Gospel before the Acts of the Apostles and Acts was not written "*before the end of the second year of St. Paul's imprisonment.*"

So it is obvious that Matthew, Mark, and Luke were written ***in the time of Peter and Paul***, who according to the early Church Father, sanctioned the writings of the Gospels of Mark and Luke. It is certain then that all three books must have been published previously to the destruction of Jerusalem, as both these Apostles died before the accomplishment of that awful event.

1. Paul was put to death during the first general persecution of the Christians at Rome under Nero A. D. 67. All the ancients with one voice agree that Paul was put to death at this time.
2. Peter also suffered death under this same persecution, as is certain from both written authorities and in full accord with the prediction of Christ. (John 21:18 and Acts 9: 16.)

Church father Sulpicius wrote: "*At that time Paul and Peter were condemned to death, the former was beheaded, Peter was crucified.*" (Sulpicius, *Several Histories*, Volume 2. P. 29.)

But as a further proof that Peter's death happened before the destruction of Jerusalem, we have only to refer to his second Epistle, which we shall find to have been written with an express view to prepare them to whom it is addressed to "*expect and earnestly to desire the coming of the day of the Lord,*" lest scoffers "*come in the last days saying, where is the promise of his coming*" (2 Pet. 3:3). The internal character of these books shows them written before Jerusalem's fall (see Matt. 11:41; 22:7; Luke 13:5; 13:9; Matt. 3:10).

The book (Gospel) of John may be the only book of the New Testament written after the destruction of Jerusalem. John wrote his gospel at Ephesus after the Destruction; as a supplement to confirm and establish his book of Revelation, which refers to the Jews and their City as they were then existing but predicted an imminent and soon destruction and the coming of Christ to destroy the Mosaic economy.

The three first Evangelists, when speaking of the apprehension of Jesus and his seizure by the servants of the High Priest respectively mention that one of them had his right ear cut off by the sword of a Disciple *whose name is not specified*: but ***John tells us plainly*** that it was Peter. At the time the former Gospels were published, Peter was alive, and the knowledge of this event might have brought him into some difficulty with those who espoused the cause of the servant; but when John wrote, Peter had been some time dead, and therefore no mischief could happen from the development.

The synoptic Gospels (**Matthew, Mark, and Luke**) were published in Judea with predictions of the destruction of the City of the Jews, but also the continuance of that desolation; for "*Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled*" (Luke 21:24).

John's gospel (post-AD 70) shows us plainly that Christ is the Living Word, the King of all kings, and the One who reigns over the nations.