

Matthew 10:17-23 & Luke 17:22-37: Same as in days of Noah and Lot – when will it be?
Besides the Olivet Discourse recorded in Matt. 24-25; Mk. 13 and Lu. 21, only the two passages above discuss the end time in the gospels. It is vital to study them as indeed with globalization, the world is reaching a level of affluence, like the days of Noah and Lot.

Summaries of relevant background information from related passages.

In 70 A.D. the temple is destroyed but a third temple will be rebuilt in the future, to be invaded by the antichrist. As dealt with in Lu. 21:20-28 one-page, in Lu. 21 it is mainly on the temple's destruction by Rome in 70 A.D. whereas Matt. 24-25 and Mk. 13 are on demise of the third temple. So in Matt. 24:3, the end of the age is mentioned and Mk. 13:4 states that it is when "all" things are fulfilled, while such statements are not in Luke. The antichrist's coming is prophesied in Matt. 24:15 and Mk. 13:14 as the appearance of the Abomination of Desolation, predicted by Daniel (Dan. 12:11). He will take over the temple and then comes the Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:21-22 and Mk. 13:19-20). Only after that will be the advent of Christ's second coming (Matt. 24:27 and Mk. 13:24-26).

Explaining the Passages

1. Lu. 17:22-37: In the Olivet discourse, the return of Christ is always depicted as a day in the singular (Matt. 24:36, Mk. 13:32). This is also supported by 1Thess. 5:2 and 2Pet 3:10. However in v22 and v26, Jesus speaks in plural, the days of the Son of Man. Note in v24, His second coming is still depicted in the singular as a day. So the days in plural must be referring to a period of time. Then in v26-28, this period, the days of the Son of Man is predicted to be similar to the days of Noah and the days of Lot (all in the plural). It is a period where there is much affluence and enjoyment of life. There is also much buying and selling resulting in prosperity. The implication is that these will distract the world from looking for His return. Thus it cannot be in the Tribulation which is a time of suffering and not affluence. Also it harmonizes well with v29-31 as it refers to Sodom's judgment. Note in v30, when applied to Christ's return, it is not stated as the coming of the Son of Man but just the revealing. Rightly so for the event in v31 is not His return but Jerusalem's invasion by the antichrist, when believing Jews are called to flee as in Matt. 24:16 and Mk. 13:14. Hence the period depicted as days of the Son of Man will end in the taking of Jerusalem and then comes the Tribulation. Another event depicted is in v34-37 but the "that" in v34, v31 is **distinctly different** in the Greek and so it is referring to a different day (or night). This is the rapture but again the Tribulation will only begin after that and those left behind in v37 will be like corpses hounded by vultures, as they suffer in the Tribulation. Since the days of the Son of Man is before the Great Tribulation, Christ in v22 appropriately tells his disciples that they will not see this period, neither the second coming in v23-24. What they will see is His suffering and rejection in v25.

2. Matt. 10:17-23: In v17-22 is clearly persecutions on Christ disciples and also they will be hated by all for His name sake (22). Then v23 commands them to flee when pursued and this will go on until His second coming. However the passage is very similar to Mk. 13: 9-13, almost word for word and it is clear in Mk. 13:14 that these will occur before the antichrist's invasion of Jerusalem. Thus they are on the same timeframe as the days of the Son of Man. Note also Mk. 13:10, the gospel being preached to all nations is already fulfilled. The strong implication is that these persecutions will be on the Messianic Jews and they need to be prepared as these intensify and also be ready to flee when persecuted.