

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW – THE OLIVET DISCOURSE
YOUR KINGDOM COME...ON EARTH – Fall 2022

“...whoever reads, let him understand” Matt. 24:15b

Week 8 – Olivet Discourse – The Tribulation & Jesus’ Physical Second Coming
November 1, 2022

Matt. 24:3-8 - *Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”* ⁴ *And Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed that no one deceives you.* ⁵ *For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.* ⁶ *And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.* ⁷ *For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.* ⁸ All these are the beginning of sorrows. This is the first part of the birth pangs that will continue, increasing in intensity. This is the first part of the Tribulation.

Jer. 30:6-7 - *Ask now, and see, whether a man is ever in labor with child? So why do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in labor, and all faces turned pale?* ⁷ Alas! For *that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob’s trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.*

Rom. 11:25-26 - After the rapture of those “in Christ,” the blindness of Israel will be removed. Zech. 12:10 – God will pour out His Spirit on the Jewish people who are alive at the end of the Tribulation and they will mourn for Jesus. Jesus will physically return to earth.

Regarding Israel during the first half of the Tribulation, Charlie Dyer, VP under Chuck Swindoll at Dallas Theological Seminary, Provost and Dean of Education at Moody Bible Institute, and Professor at Large at Moody and host of The Land and the Book radio program has offered the following, “What is this ‘covenant’ that the antichrist will make with Israel? Daniel does not specify its content but he does indicate that it will extend for seven years. During the first half of this time, Israel feels at peace and secure, so the covenant must provide some guarantee for Israel’s national security.”

We need to realize that the Israel that will enter into the covenant with the antichrist is comprised of those Jewish people who are not yet believers, who were not taken up in the rapture.

The following, it appears, will take place during the second half of the Tribulation.

Matt. 24:9-14 - *Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake.* ¹⁰ *And then many will be offended (they will be entrapped; will be caused to fall away), will betray one another (will deliver one another up treacherously - hurting and deceiving the other person), and will hate (pursue with*

hatred) *one another* (the majority will turn from the faith (drawn into error). ¹¹ *Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.* ¹² *And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold* ¹³ *But he who endures* (remains; lives) *to the end shall be saved* (rescued; delivered). 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 (the end of the age) will come.*

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There will be widespread persecution and death. Many will fall away from their faith in God. The “gospel of the kingdom” that will be preached throughout the whole world is the announcement of the good news that the Kingdom of God was near! ...*and then the end will come* – the final excruciating birth pangs followed by deliverance!

Flashback to the middle of the Tribulation:

Matt. 24:15-19 - *Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand), ¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea (in Israel), flee to the mountains. ¹⁷ Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. ¹⁸ And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. ¹⁹ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!* Where did we read of the “abomination of desolation”? In Daniel 9:27.

”Abomination of desolation” referred to the desecration of the Second Temple (post-exilic temple - constructed after the Jews returned from Babylon) by Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria (Dan. 8:8-14) in the second century BC. (171-164 BC). Antiochus invaded Jerusalem, erected a statue of Zeus in the temple and sacrificed pigs on the altar. Abomination of desolation refers to an act of abomination (horror/ruin) which pollutes and defiles the Temple, rendering it unclean.

In Matt. 24:15 Jesus spoke to the disciples about a yet-future “abomination of desolation” BEYOND 70 AD – when the antichrist *who exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped so that he sits as God in the temple of God showing himself that he is God* (II Thess. 2:4). God is NOT present in the Third Temple/the Tribulation Temple! The antichrist will pollute and defile the Third Temple during the Tribulation. We need to know that the book of Revelation was written between 94 and 96 AD... after the Romans destroyed the city and the Temple in 70 AD.

The abomination of desolation that Jesus spoke of in Matt. 24:15 will occur in the middle of the Tribulation. Great persecution will break out because of the antichrist who will cause Israel to flee from the land.

Rev. 12:1-6 - Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars (representing Israel) ² Then being with child (Jesus), she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. ³ And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon (Satan)...⁴ His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. ⁵ She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron (Psa. 2:9 – Messiah Jesus). And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. ⁶ Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

Gen. 37:9-10 – Joseph told his brothers and his father, Jacob, of his dream. ‘I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me.’ ¹⁰ So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, ‘What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?’ When will this

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woman, who represents Israel, flee into the wilderness? Israel will flee during the second half of the Tribulation after the antichrist has broken the peace treaty with Israel and after the antichrist has set himself up in the temple to be worshiped. The nation of Israel must flee for safety into the wilderness – where she has a place prepared for her by God that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days. during the last 3.5 years of the Tribulation. Could this place be Petra? Who will feed Israel? (Rev. 12:6; Matt. 25:31-40).

Petra is the Gk. word for a city in Southern Jordan today. Bozrah is a city east of the Jordan River in the ancient nation of Edom (modern day Jordan). Bozrah is near the rock city of Petra. The rock in Petra is red and the city entrance (the siq) and interior have characteristics of a sheepfold. The only way in and out of the city is through a narrow passageway that extends for about a mile and can only be negotiated by foot or by horseback. *Bozrah* means “sheepfold.” An ancient sheepfold had a narrow entrance so that the shepherd could count his sheep. Once inside the fold, the sheep had more room to move around. Petra is shaped like a giant sheepfold, with its narrow passage opening up to a spacious circle surrounded by cliffs!

- Will all “Israel” flee into the wilderness or only those who are Jewish believers – “the remnant”? Micah 2:12-13 - I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together like sheep of the fold, like a flock in the midst of their pasture; they shall make a loud noise because of so many people. ... their king will pass before them, with the LORD at their head.
- Dan. 11:41 tells us that the antichrist will not be able to touch Edom, Ammon, and Moab (in Jordan [Petra is in Jordan])!

- Isa. 34:6 - *For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom*
- Isa. 63:1-4 - *Who is this who comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah (the sheep pen; could this be Petra as there is an extremely narrow entrance into Petra which could be protected by THE Shepherd - THE Shepherd Who lays His life down for the sheep [Jn. 10:11, 15b]), this One who is glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength? “I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.” ² Why is Your apparel red, and Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? ³ “I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples (the nations) no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, and trampled them in My fury; their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My robes. ⁴ For the day of vengeance is in My heart, and the year of My redeemed has come (God’s redemption of Israel [Zech. 12:10ff; Rom. 11:26 – all Israel will be saved])*





- Isa. 16:3-5 - *Hide the outcasts, do not betray him (Israel) who escapes. ⁴ Let My outcasts dwell with you, O Moab; be a shelter to them from the face of the spoiler (the antichrist). For the extortioner is at an end, (Satan is losing!) devastation ceases, the oppressors are consumed out of the land. (Satan will be defeated). ⁵ In mercy the throne will be established; and One will sit on it in truth, in the tabernacle of David, judging and seeking justice and hastening righteousness.* God appeals to Moab (in Jordan near Bozrah) for the protection of “My outcasts” (Israel). The context of this passage is a time

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of intense persecution and destruction which is followed by the rule and reign of the Messiah upon the throne of David (the Millennial Kingdom)!

- Jesus will come back to Edom towards the end of the campaign of Armageddon before He stands on the Mount of Olives outside of Jerusalem.

How PRECISE is this end times prophecy

Matt. 24:20-22 - *And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. 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.** ²² And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.* How could those days be shortened? Re: the Tribulation, Daniel speaks of

one week which equates to seven years which was told to Daniel from God through the angel Gabriel. It's a prophecy about the future. It's SET IN STONE!!!

"Shortened" cannot mean that the days will be decreased in number. The Gk. word for "shortened" means to terminate, curtail, to curb. It has been suggested that IF the INTENSE judgments were allowed to continue indefinitely, the human race would be totally destroyed. The Tribulation will not go on indefinitely.

Matt. 24:23-24 - *Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. ²⁴ For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. ²⁵ See, I have told you beforehand. ²⁶ "Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it. For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. NO ONE will miss the coming of the Son of Man.*

Matt. 24:29-31 - *Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰ Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (We see a visible appearance of the Son of Man, repentant Israel, and the triumphant return of the Messiah Jesus to rule and reign on the earth!) ³¹ And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect (Isa. 45:4) from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

Jesus will not arrive secretly. His return will be a clear, public event that will take place suddenly.

And, there is a gathering and not a scattering as there was in 70 AD.

Deut. 30:3-4 (NASB) - *Then the LORD your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you. ⁴ If any of your scattered countrymen are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back.*

The parables that follow in Matt. 24:32-51 all relate to the Second Coming and not to the rapture of the Church. The entire Olivet Discourse was given to Israel and relates to her persecution and Jesus' return at the end of the Tribulation.

The truths relating to the rapture of the Church are revealed in the NT.

NOTE: Addendum on following two pages.

QUESTIONS

Share your V8 moments with one another.

What impacted you most? WHY?

What did this lesson teach you about GOD?

Are you better understanding the big picture of Scripture?

How does Matt. 24 fit into the big picture?

Share the questions you have with one another.

Summarize the Tribulation!

Think of people with whom you'd like to share this lesson.

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

Reread Week 8's handout with the Bible references.

Jot down your observations and questions.

Continue to compile answers you have found in Scripture to your questions.

Share what impacted you in this lesson with at least one person.

Read Week 9's handout when you receive it.

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW – OLIVET DISCOURSE

Week 8 – Olivet Discourse – The Tribulation & Jesus' Physical Second Coming

ADDENDUM

In interpreting Jesus' illustrations which follow, according to understanding the context, Jesus' illustrations must relate to His physical Second Coming as He continues to speak to Israel. The teachings that Jesus shared within the illustrations and past Biblical history speak to watchfulness and preparedness.

Parable of the Fig Tree

Matt. 24:32-33 - *Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. ³³ So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!*

Parallel passage in Luke 21:29-33 - *Then He spoke to them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. ³⁰ When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near. ³¹ So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near.* I'm suggesting that Jesus was using a natural illustration. Because the fig tree and all non-evergreen trees bring forth new leaves late in the spring, the budding of the leaves is evidence that summer is near. And so, those living in the Tribulation, seeing the signs that have been prophesied, will know that the physical Second Coming of the Messiah is near. Jesus assured that when these signs appeared as He foretold (the abomination of desolation, followed by great tribulation, followed by signs in the heavens), His return to the earth would follow.

While the prophecy is absolutely certain of fulfillment re: the Second Coming, the specific day/hour of the Second Coming is not revealed, although the approximate time will be known by those living in the Tribulation (42 mos. following mid-Trib. is the same as 3.5 years and 1,260 days following mid-Trib.).

Jesus likened those future days in which the signs will unfold to the days of Noah. Noah announced a coming judgment and offered people a way of escape from it. Heb. 11:7 – by preparing the ark, Noah condemned the world. The people ignored Noah's warnings of judgment and went on occupying themselves with their normal course of life. They were "eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage" (Matt. 24:38) right up until the very day Noah entered the ark. And the people were swept away in judgment. So it will be in the Tribulation.

Matt. 24:36-44 - *But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. ³⁷ But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ³⁸ For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and did not*

know until the flood came and took them all away (in judgment), so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ⁴⁰ Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴² Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour (the exact hour) your Lord is coming. ⁴³ But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

Addendum –

pg. 2

In Matt. 24, Jesus speaks of His second coming at the end of the tribulation. Paul calls it “the day of the Lord” in I Thess. 5. This is a day of divine retribution featuring astronomical upheaval and the visible “sign of the Son of Man” in the heavens (Matt. 24:29-30). Jesus said it will happen “after the tribulation of those days” (verse 29), a description that distinguishes this event from the rapture which happens before the tribulation.

Just as a thief catches a household by surprise, Jesus will catch the unbelieving world by surprise when He returns in judgment. People will be “eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage” (verse 38), just as if they have all the time in the world. But then, before they know it, Judgment Day will be upon them (verses 40–41). Paul puts it this way: “While people are saying, ‘Peace and safety,’ destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape” (1 Thess. 5:3).

The believer does not fear this swift and sudden judgment; the “thief in the night” will not catch us by surprise. Christians are in a separate category: “But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief” (1 Thess. 5:4). It is only those in darkness who will be taken unawares, and we “are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness” (verse 5). Praise the Lord, “God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (verse 9).

Jesus ended the Olivet Discourse with four parables. The first one concerns a wicked servant whose master punishes him upon his return home (Matt. 24:45-51). The next, the Parable of the Ten Virgins, encourages readiness and watchfulness (25:1-13). The third parable, relating the story of three servants and their use (or misuse) of finances, teaches faithfulness in view of the fact that God’s servants must give an account of themselves one day (25:14-30). Jesus ended His discourse by telling the Parable of the Sheep and Goats, which pictures the dividing of the saved from the unsaved at the end of the tribulation before the commencement of Christ’s millennial reign (25:31-46).

