

"The Olivet Discourse"

Matthew 24-25

Part 2

Introduction: Last week we began to establish a foundation for the study of Matthew 24-25. In our study last week we looked at what inspired Jesus to teach the Truth we find in Matthew 24-25. The reason was seen in what Jesus had said at the end of Matthew 23 and the announcement which He had made to the city of Jerusalem.

Notice Matthew 23:37-39

Jesus told the inhabitants of the city that their house was now desolate. This meant they had rejected Jesus as the Messiah and now the glory of God had departed. The temple was now referred to as "their house" it was no long referred to as the "House of God". He then told them they would not see Him again until they would say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord". This would be spoken when Jesus returns to establish His Kingdom here on this earth.

Now, all of this information began to stir the minds of Jesus disciples. I told you last week they were "Kingdom minded men". Their focus was upon the coming Kingdom which was so often spoken of in the Old Testament. But that was not all that the Old Testament spoke of for the prophets also wrote of the Great Tribulation period.

Joel 2:1-3

*Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain:
let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD
cometh, for it is nigh at hand;*

² *A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.*

³ *A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.*

Then in Joel 3 we read these words:

Joel 3:18-20

¹⁸ *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth out of the house of the LORD, and shall water the valley of Shittim.*

¹⁹ *Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.*

²⁰ *But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation.*

So, in the book of Joel there is the prophecy of the Great Tribulation and the prophecy of the Kingdom Age. So, the disciples would have known of both of those prophecies and with that knowledge and the Words they had just heard Jesus speak there were now questions in their minds.

Notice Matthew 24:1

In their minds they are wondering about the Temple as well as other buildings in the city and what will happen to them when the Day of the Lord arrives.

But before they could ask a question Jesus gave them a prophecy about the Temple and the surrounding buildings.

Notice Matthew 24:2

This was fulfilled to the letter in 70 AD which we looked at last week. The fulfillment of this prophecy was so important with the teaching of Matthew 24-25. The fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy in 70 AD confirmed that what He taught in Matthew 24-25 would also be fulfilled to the letter. This prophecy then stirred the minds of the disciples and they ask 3 questions.

Notice Matthew 24:3

Here are the 3 questions which they asked Jesus.

1. When shall these things be?
2. What shall be the sign of thy coming?
3. What shall be the sign of the end of the age (world)?

Jesus did not answer the first question but he did answer the second and the third and His answers to these questions are what we find in Matthew 24-25.

This brings us to where we are tonight. There are 2 questions we shall consider tonight.

I. Where Does Matthew 24-25 fit into God's Timetable?

The reason I raise this question is because there are churches which teach everything we find in these 2 chapters have already been

fulfilled. That is completely inaccurate. All of the events which are recorded in Matthew 24-25 are yet future events.

We need to start by looking at the book of Daniel and the prophecy which was given to Daniel in chapter 9. It is a tremendous prophecy that includes what we shall study in Matthew 24-25. I want to break Daniel's prophecy down so that we can better get our minds wrapped around the meaning of the prophecy.

Now in what we are about to look at in Daniel the prophecy is spoken of unfolding in "weeks". We must understand that in this text the "weeks" are "weeks of years". Let me explain. In this prophecy each "week" is 7 years. Each day within the "week" represents a year. So when Daniel speaks of "70 weeks" that would be "70 weeks of years" which would be 490 years. There are 7 days in a week so if we multiply 7days X 70 weeks we get 490 days and each day represents a year so we have 490 years.

Daniel 9:24

²⁴ Seventy weeks [490 years] are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

This verse is very interesting. We are told that 70 weeks or 490 years are determined for the people of Israel and at the end of the 490 years there would be "everlasting righteousness". The "everlasting righteousness" is a reference to the Kingdom which Jesus will establish at the end of the Great Tribulation period.

Now as we move on to the next 3 verses we will see some details of this prophecy.

Daniel 9:25

²⁵ Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

Here we are told that from the command to rebuild the city of Jerusalem to the presentation of the Messiah (Jesus Christ) would be 7 weeks plus 60 (threescore) and 2 weeks. That adds up to 69 weeks of years and that equals 483 years. But when was the command given to rebuild the city and when is the presentation of the Messiah?

The command to rebuild the city was given to Nehemiah by Artaxerxes. The command was written in the letters given to Nehemiah.

Nehemiah 2:7-9

⁷ Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;

⁸ And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

⁹ Then I came to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me.

The presentation of the Messiah happened on what we refer to as Palm Sunday.

Luke 19:41-42

⁴¹ And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,

⁴² Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

So, from the day the commandment was given to Nehemiah to rebuild the city until the triumphal entry was exactly 69 weeks of years or 483 years. The reason why Jesus wept over the city was because they should have known this prophecy and then calculated the very day He would arrive.

Now as we go to the next verse in Daniel we get even greater details about his prophecy.

Daniel 9:25-26a

²⁵ Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

²⁶ And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself:

Here we see that after the Triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem He would be "cut off". This meant that He would be killed. This is a reference to His death on the cross. Then the verse continues to give us even more information.

Daniel 9:26b

and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

Here we see that the people of the PRINCE that SHALL come will bring great destruction to the city. But who is the PRINCE that SHALL come? This is the anti-christ and all of those who receive his mark and worship him. This prophecy has now taken us into the Great Tribulation. Now Daniel continues his thoughts on the anti-christ.

Daniel 9:27

²⁷ And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

Here we are able to see that the anti-christ will confirm a covenant for 1 "week". That is a 7 year period.

Let's pull all of this together now. Daniel said that from the commandment to rebuild the city of Jerusalem until the establishment of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ here on this earth would be 70 "weeks" which is 490 years. But we are more than 490 years beyond the commandment which was given to Nehemiah. That commandment was given in 455 B.C. and so we are around 2469 years beyond that so what happened?

The 490 years were not consecutive years. There was a gap which Daniel could not see. The gap would happen after the death of Jesus

Christ and before the reign of the anti-christ. The gap is the church age which we are living in now.

There was 483 years from the commandment given by Artaxerxes until Jesus would enter Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. That has been fulfilled. But there is still 1 "week" of 7 years remaining. That is the 7 year period of the Great Tribulation which is yet to come but is ever drawing closer.

Daniel 9:27

²⁷ And he [the anti-christ] shall confirm the covenant with many for one week [7 years]: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

That 7 year period is recorded in Matthew 24-25. The 2 chapters we are about to study focus upon the Great Tribulation period which will last for 7 years. These 2 chapters cover the 70th week of Daniel.

II. What Part Does the Church Have in Matthew 24-25?

The church has no part in the Great Tribulation period at all. We will not be on the earth when the events of Matthew 24-25 unfold. Now, we will see the world begin to go in the direction of the events described in Matthew 24-25. We are currently able to see the changing of the world system as it prepares to enter the kingdom of the anti-christ. There are many things that are unfolding so that the New World Order can be in place under the anti-christ.

But we will not be here. Now I know that some teach the church will be raptured in the middle of the Great Tribulation and some teach we will

be raptured at the end. But I am convinced the Bible teaches the rapture of the church before the Great Tribulation period begins.

Daniel 9:24

²⁴ Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

The angel told Daniel that the 70 weeks were determined on his people which would be the nation of Israel. That includes that last 7 years which is the tribulation.

Let me explain something. God worked with the nation of Israel and even brought their King to them but they rejected Jesus. God has now set aside the nation of Israel and He is gathering a bride for His Son. We are that bride, we are the church. When the church is complete He will gather us together and take us to the Father's house.

John 14:1-3

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

² In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

This gathering will happen at the rapture. When the rapture happens the 70th week of Daniel begins and God will then work with the nation of Israel again. He only works with one group at a time. Daniel tells us

the 70 weeks are for HIS PEOPLE not for the church. Let me show you a verse from Revelation.

Revelation 7:4

⁴ And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

These 144,000 Jewish men that have never been married will be the missionaries of the Great Tribulation to carry the Gospel to the entire world. They will preach the Gospel because the church will not be here. There would be no need for these missionaries if the church would be on the earth.

Conclusion:

The events we will study in Matthew 24-25 will be a description of the most severe time ever to come on the earth. But if you are saved you will not be here.

When Jesus disciples sat with Him on the Mount of Olives and they ask the 3 questions which led to the teaching of the Olivet Discourse they had no idea the church age would even exist. They were focused upon the Kingdom Age. Therefore, when they ask about the end of the world (age) they are referring to the 70 weeks of Daniel and Jesus answer points only to the 70th week of Daniel. There is no mention of the church in these 2 chapters. The church was unknown to His disciples at this time.