

"The Olivet Discourse"

Matthew 24-25

Part 5

Introduction: Last week in our study of the Olivet Discourse we started into the prophetic teaching of Jesus in Matthew 24. We started into the first section of the outline which we looked at last week.

I. Jesus' Answer to the Disciple's Questions

Matthew 24:4-44

Part 2

Now one key verse which helps us to see when these events are unfolding is Matthew 24:8.

Matthew 24:8

⁸ *All these are the beginning of sorrows.*

The word "sorrows" means "birth pains". Birth pains come right before the baby is born. They do not come at the beginning or in the middle but they come at the end of the pregnancy.

This verse connects to one of the questions which the disciples asked in Matthew 24:3.

Matthew 24:3

³ *And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?*

The question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming" is directly related to the word "sorrows" which means "birth pains" in verse 8. The "birth pains" which Jesus speaks of in Matthew 24 will take place right before His coming to the earth at the end of the Great Tribulation.

So what we have starting in Matthew 24:4 are a list of birth pains which will begin at the start of the 7 tribulation period. The birth pains will start out very slowly and then as time progresses they will become more frequent and will increase with intensity just as it is with a woman who starts into labor. Now while verse 4 starts after the rapture of the church this does not mean that we will not see the beginning of these "sorrows". The earth is groaning in pain even today.

Romans 8:19-22

¹⁹ For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

²⁰ For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,

²¹ Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

*²² For we know that **the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain** together until now.*

The EARTH is groaning for the day when it will be delivered from the curse which will be at the introduction of the Kingdom Age and the Kingdom starts at the end of the Great Tribulation. But the groans of the earth are not the same as the "birth pains" which Jesus speaks of in Matthew 24. The "groans" of the earth and all its inhabitants are the result of being in bondage and slavery. The earth and all life on the

earth are under the curse and when Jesus sets up His Kingdom the curse will be lifted.

In Romans 8:22 we are told that the "groans" are felt "now". The "birth pains" will happen to announce the second coming of Jesus and they will begin when the rapture of the church happens.

Now last week we started to look at the different birth pains which Jesus said would happen.

1. The Great Deception

Notice Matthew 24:4

Here in this verse Jesus warns that the 70 week of Daniel will be a time of great deception.

Last week I told you that at this present time the Holy Spirit is holding back the demonic forces. When the rapture happens the restraints will be lifted and evil will be far worse than we can ever begin to imagine.

2 Thessalonians 2:7-8

⁷ *For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth [hinders] will let [hinder], until he be taken out of the way.*

⁸ *And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:*

Here we see the Spirit of God is restraining the demonic forces at this present time but when He is removed then Satan will be free to reveal his masterpiece who will be the Anti-christ.

Notice Matthew 24:5

Here is the reason why the inhabitants will need to be on guard. Many will come and claim to be Jesus and they will deceive many. These false Christs will have frightening demonic powers with which they will deceive many.

Matthew 24:23-24

²³ *Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.*

²⁴ *For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*

All of this deception will eventually reach the pinnacle in Satan's masterpiece who will be the Anti-christ. Last week we started to look at him and I want to take that look a little further tonight. Let us consider some thoughts about the Anti-christ.

a. **He will be a man given over to satanic power.**

Revelation 13:1-2

And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

The sea here is the sea of humanity.

² *And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.*

This is another result of the restraints being lifted from the demonic forces.

Daniel 8:23-24

²³ *And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.*

²⁴ *And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.*

Here in Daniel we get some interesting information about the Anti-christ. We see that he will understand "dark sentences". This means that he will be in contact with the demonic world. His ways will be the ways of darkness but they will be clouded with deception.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-10a

⁹ *Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,*

¹⁰ *And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish;*

b. He will rule over the entire world.

Revelation 13:7

⁷ *And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.*

c. He will be a counterfeit of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 13:3

³ And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

From this verse it appears the Anti-christ will receive a deadly wound and then the wound will be healed. This will cause the entire world to follow after him. This event is Satan's imitation of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Satan will use this event to lead many people down the path of destruction.

These are just a few points about the Anti-christ. We will gather more as we work our way through this study.

2. Civil Unrest

Notice Matthew 24:6-7

Here we see that people will hear of wars and rumors of wars. Nation will rise against nation. Now we hear of these today but the wars and the rumors of the wars in the Great Tribulation will be of a greater magnitude than what we see in our day today. In verse 7 we are told the wars will be national wars. Nation will rise against nation.

Let us understand again the source of these wars will be the demonic powers from which the restraints will be removed.

Let me take your mind a little deeper into verse 6. Think about what it will be like during the tribulation period when these wars will break out. Many people will be living in fear and then the rumors of wars will take all the peace from their minds. People who are into conspiracy theories will play on the minds of people every single day. There will be no peace for those who are left behind for the tribulation.

Last week I told you that what we see here in Matthew 24 is a parallel with Revelation 6.

Revelation 6:1-4

And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

² And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

Last week we looked at verse 2 and we saw the rider on this white horse is the Anti-christ. He comes on the scene in a peaceful way. He has a bow but he has no arrows.

³ And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

⁴ And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

The 2nd seal magnifies what we are looking at in Matthew 24:6. The rider on this horse is given power to take away peace from the earth. We are also told here that there was given to this rider a GREAT sword. That means that the loss of life during the tribulation will be devastating.

This will all reach a climax in a world war.

Zechariah 14:1-2

Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.

² *For I will gather **all nations** against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.*

3. Great Catastrophes

Notice Matthew 24:7b

Jesus mentions 3 means by which the catastrophes will come:

- A. Famines
- B. Pestilence
- C. Earthquakes

Before we consider these we need to notice the 3 words at the end of the verse for they are very important. We are told these events will take place in "divers places". That means they will not be isolated events. They will be global events.

If we look at Revelation 6 again we can see how catastrophic these events will be.

A. Famines

Revelation 6:5-6

⁵ *And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.*

⁶ And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

The 3rd rider has a pair of balances in his hands. That means that something will be measured out and that something is food. In verse 6 we are told that a person will be able to buy a "measure of wheat" for a penny and "3 measures of barley" for a penny. The penny spoken of here is equal to a day's wages. A "measure of wheat" is the amount of food to sustain 1 person's life for a day. The "3 measures of barley" is also what is needed to sustain life for a day and it takes 3 measures of barley because it is less nutritious than wheat.

So the picture here is this: the famines will be so severe that it will take a full day's wages just to buy enough food to sustain 1 person for the day. If there are 4 or 6 in the family then people will starve to death due to these famines. Then on top of all of that consider how savage people will become when they begin to run out of food.

Conclusion:

We must stop here for tonight and next week we will continue at this same place. Let me leave you with a couple of thoughts. As believers we have so much to praise God for and one reason is we will not be in the Great Tribulation. The events which we are looking at here in Matthew are in the beginning and as I told you before the deeper into the tribulation we look the more severe the catastrophes.

Revelation 3:10

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The Olivet Discourse

¹⁰ Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, **I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world**, to try them that dwell upon the earth.