

"The Olivet Discourse"

Matthew 24-25

Part 10

Introduction: As we continue our study of the Olivet Discourse we come to a very interesting study tonight in Matthew 24.

We have been looking at the "birth pains" which Jesus spoke of in Matthew 24:8.

Matthew 24:8

⁸ All these are the beginning of sorrows.

So far we have looked at 4 of the "birth pains".

A. Great deception. (Matthew 24:4-5)

B. Civil unrest. (Matthew 24:6-7a)

C. Great catastrophes (Matthew 24:7b) which include the 3 sets of judgments in Revelation.

D. Persecution. (Matthew 24:9)

This brings us to where we are tonight.

I. Jesus' Answer to the Disciple's Questions

Matthew 24:4-44

Part 7

Now the verses which we shall look at tonight will be verses which will give us great insight into life during the tribulation period. These verses will help us to see just how difficult life will be when the restraints are taken away from the demonic world.

E. Betrayal

Notice Matthew 24:10-12

These 3 verses paint a very frightening picture of life during the Great Tribulation period. On the surface we do not see the horror which will unfold but we will as we dig deep into these verses. Let us look at these verses one at a time.

Notice Matthew 24:10

This verse is connected with the previous verse so let us read the previous verse with this verse.

Notice Matthew 24:9-10

The picture which is painted with these words is that when the persecution of the tribulation begins then many will defect from the faith. Last week I told you that during the tribulation there will be many who will die for their faith in Christ. In Revelation 7 John saw a group who were killed for their faith and they were too many to number. The Bible tells us that the way of execution for those people will be beheading. Believers will be slaughtered on a daily bases for their faith. This should come as no surprise to us for after the rapture the world will be under the Kingdom of the Anti-christ which means anyone who stands for God will be hated and executed.

When the restraints are lifted from the demonic world and this persecution gets ramped up there are going to be people who are going to defect and even betray those who they know are believers.

Notice Matthew 24:10 again.

Many will see the cost of discipleship and they will be offended. In other words they will make the choice to deny Christ and in this verse we are told they will even betray others who are followers of Jesus Christ. These people will feel the heat of the persecution and they will decide they want nothing to do with Jesus or the persecution and then when they are pressured they will hand over those who they know who are followers of Jesus Christ to those who are carrying out the persecution. They will give locations of meeting places. They will give out names and addresses of those who are following Christ.

Now, I want you to understand that these people are not TRUE believers. They will be people who profess to be saved but are not. There will be false converts in the tribulation just like there are false converts today. It will be the heat of the persecution which will reveal their true identity. John wrote of them in his first epistle.

1 John 2:18-19

¹⁸ Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

There are false converts within the church today and it should be no surprise to us for they are planted there by Satan himself.

Matthew 13:24-30

²⁴ Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

²⁵ But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

²⁶ But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

²⁷ So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

²⁸ He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

²⁹ But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

The tares among the wheat are a picture of false converts which are placed in with true believers by the enemy. They exist today and they will exist during the Great Tribulation. It will be the "tares" who will betray the true "wheat" when the persecution gets heated up in the tribulation.

Back to our thoughts in Matthew again: if these people were true believers they would not turn from Christ nor would they betray true other believers.

John 8:31

³¹ Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, **If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;**

Jesus here tells those who believed on Him that a mark of a true believer is one who continues in His Word. Therefore we know those who defect during the tribulation will be false converts who have joined up with true believers. They will join in Bible studies, they will sing songs and they will even be involved in helping to reach others with the Gospel. But when it comes to standing for Christ when they roll out the guillotines or the swords they will run and when the pressure is on they will hand over those who are true believers.

Let me show you how far this betrayal will go in the Great Tribulation. Mark writes about the Great Tribulation in his letter also.

Mark 13:8-12

⁸ For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows.

⁹ But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.

¹⁰ And the gospel must first be published among all nations.

¹¹ But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.

12 Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.

In verse 12 Mark tells us the betrayal will find its way right into the individual families. Brothers will hand over brothers, fathers will hand over their children, children will hand over their parents and when these are handed over it will be for the purpose of execution. Luke also records this same Truth.

Luke 21:16-17

16 And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death.

17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.

When I look at all of this it makes me think of how difficult it will be to trust people in the tribulation. As I said those who betray the believers are not false converts but they will present themselves as true believers and it will not be until the persecution comes knocking on their door that people will know they were never truly saved. So for those in the tribulation who are saved they will have secret places to meet and worship but there will always be the question about those who desire to join them. Are they wheat or tares?

Now Jesus will take this same thought even further as we move on to the next verse. Before we get there however let me just explain there will be 3 reasons which will cause these false believers to walk away from following Christ and cause them to betray those who are true believers.

1. **The heat of the persecution. The cost of discipleship will be far greater than they will be willing to pay.**

That is what we see in Matthew 24:9-10.

2. **The deceit of false teachers.**

Notice Matthew 24:11

Those who are false converts will be easily deceived by false teachers. The world has many false teachers today but when the restraints are lifted from the demonic world the earth will see many more false teachers and they will be empowered by demonic forces. They will be masters at twisting the Scriptures in order to deceive people and lead them onto the path of destruction.

John records some information about one of the false teachers in Revelation. He will be the False Prophet.

Revelation 13:11-16

¹¹ And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

¹² And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

¹³ And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

¹⁴ And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

¹⁵ And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

¹⁶ And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

Let me show you something else which is very interesting about the deception during the Great Tribulation. I was searching the word "deceived" and noticed something in Revelation 18.

Revelation 18:21-24

²¹ And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

²² And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;

*²³ And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; **for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.***

²⁴ And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

This passage is referring to what we call "Commercial Babylon". This passage is a record of the fall of the world's economic system. But in the record of the fall of the economic system we are told how people are deceived and Revelation 18:23 tells us it will be by the "sorceries" that all men will be deceived. The word "sorceries" is the very word we

get our word "pharmacy" from. Let me show you the meaning of the word from the Blue Letter Bible.

There are 4 meanings for the word.

1. The use or the administering of drugs
2. Poisoning
3. Sorcery, magical arts, often found in connection with idolatry and fostered by it.
4. The deceptions and seductions of idolatry.

Let me just give you my opinion. False converts will defect because of persecution and many will follow after false teachers and here we are told many will turn away from following Jesus because they will be "intoxicated" by the lure of the world. Even today there are people who are "intoxicated" by the love of money and the love of things. Today we see people that have such a love for "stuff" of the world that it controls them just as drugs or alcohol would.

Conclusion:

There is yet another reason why the false converts will turn from Christ but we will look at that next week.

Life during the tribulation will be like nothing we have ever seen. People will desire to win the approval of the authorities and in so doing will hand over anyone they have to in order to preserve their own lives. We are not given any information about the civil authorities but we can just imagine how brutal the law enforcement will be for they will be under the control of the anti-christ.

You need to be sure of your salvation!