

## **"The Olivet Discourse"**

### **Matthew 24-25**

#### **Part 19**

**Introduction:** Tonight as we come back to our study of the Olivet Discourse we are going to step right into where we stopped last week.

Now last week we were looking at Matthew 24:36-41 but before we step back into this section we need to get our minds wrapped around two points of concern which our Lord has from Matthew 24:32-25:46.

1. Expectation
2. Preparedness

These 2 thoughts will take us through the remaining teaching of our Lord in the Olivet Discourse. There is also something else which we need to keep in mind as we work our way through the remaining verses and that is the Matthew 24:32-25:46 are all connected to the return of Jesus Christ which He spoke of in Matthew 24:29-31.

Notice Matthew 24:29-31

So the verses following this passage all connect to our Lord's return and fall under the 2 points of either "expectation" or "preparedness".

The first Point we looked at was:

#### **I. Expectation**

**Notice Matthew 24:32-35**

I don't want to get back into this because we have already looked at this the last 2 weeks but just a reminder, this parable is to instruct

those who will be alive during the Great Tribulation that when they see all the signs which our Lord spoke of in Matthew 24:4-31 then they are to know that His return is near.

Then Jesus went on to speak on:

## II. Preparedness

Now Jesus will speak of the need to be prepared.

### **Notice Matthew 24:36**

He tells us here that no one knows the day or the hour. Now we must understand that the people who are alive during the tribulation will be able to tell by the signs that His return is very close but they will not know the exact day or the exact hour.

He will now continue on and He will point back to the people of Noah's day and how unprepared they were for the judgment of God which was the world wide flood.

### **Notice Matthew 24:37**

Here our Lord gives a warning. He says that many of the people in the great Tribulation will be just as the people were in Noah's day and that is unprepared.

### **Notice Matthew 24:38**

Here is a detailed description of what was happening in Noah's day. They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage. I told you last week that I believe there is a twofold meaning here.

1. They were going about their everyday business and they ignored all the warnings which God had given to them.

2. When Jesus says they were eating and drinking I believe the spiritual picture here is that they were living for the appetites of the flesh.

The people of Noah's day ignored all the warnings and the signs of the coming judgment. Noah warned them for 120 years as he built the ark and no doubt he employed many to help on the ark. Enoch prophesied about the coming judgment. Methuselah's name meant "when he dies it will come" which meant when he died the flood would come. Methuselah lived longer than anyone else (969 years) which was an extension of God's grace. Noah entered the ark and God kept the door open for another 7 days in which all the animals came into the ark.

### **Genesis 7:7-10**

*<sup>7</sup> And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood.*

*<sup>8</sup> Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth,*

*<sup>9</sup> There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah.*

*<sup>10</sup> And it came to pass **after seven days**, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.*

So the people of Noah's day ignored the warnings and the signs of the coming judgment and therefore billions died and went to hell.

Notice Matthew 24:39

This verse is so important when it comes to understanding the point which Jesus is making here. The flood of Noah's day came and took away those who were unprepared.

**Notice Matthew 24:39 again**

It was the ungodly who were swept away in the flood. The righteous were saved in the ark. Jesus then tells us it will be the same at the end of the Great Tribulation. This means that when the Lord returns there will be many who will be unprepared and they will be swept away in judgment.

**Notice Matthew 24:40-41**

When the Lord returns AT THE END OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION there will be 2 in the field and 1 will be taken and there will be 2 at the mill and one will be taken. This is not the rapture as I told you last week. Remember who was taken away in Noah's day it was the ungodly. It will be the same here. The ungodly will be taken and the righteous will be left on earth to enter the Kingdom of our Lord. Matthew 13 helps us to better grasp this.

**Matthew 13:47-50**

*<sup>47</sup> Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:*

*<sup>48</sup> Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.*

***<sup>49</sup> So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,***

*<sup>50</sup> And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.*

This is not the rapture because the rapture will happen before the Great Tribulation. This event happens at the end of the Great Tribulation.

There is so much more which we will consider about all of this but before we do I want to address some questions which I raised last week.

**1. How do we harmonize the taking away of the unsaved in Matthew 24:40-41 with the Battle of Armageddon?**

If the unsaved are taken away in judgment in Matthew 24:40-41 then why were not the soldiers of Revelation 19 who fight against the Lord in the Battle of Armageddon taken away? How do these 2 events blend together?

Let me show you the return of Jesus Christ first.

**Revelation 19:11-13**

*<sup>11</sup> And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.*

*<sup>12</sup> His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.*

*<sup>13</sup> And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.*

Now let me show you the battle.

**Revelation 19:17-21**

*17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;*

*18 That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.*

*19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.*

*20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.*

*21 And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.*

The kings of the earth and their armies will gather to fight against the return of Jesus Christ and everyone who is part of the army fighting against the Lord will be killed.

Now this battle takes place the moment Jesus returns from heaven.

So what about Matthew 24:40-41?

I believe that Matthew 24:40-41 happens at the same time or immediately after the Battle of Armageddon. Let us remember that not all the unsaved people on the earth will be a soldier in the army

which fights against the return of the Lord. Some will be soldiers but many will not be. But what we need to keep in mind is that when the Kingdom is established there will be no unsaved people enter it. So all the unsaved people must die before the Kingdom.

Here is something to think about. Jesus fights the battle of Armageddon but those who are "taken" in Matthew 24:40-41 are "taken" by the angels.

### **Matthew 13:49**

*<sup>49</sup> So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,*

Therefore, it could be that while the Lord is fighting the Battle of Armageddon the angels are "taking" the unsaved away.

### **2. What does it mean in Matthew 24:40-41 when we are told they are "taken"?**

Now we need to understand this question. We have been so influenced by the teaching of the rapture that when we read this we instantly think that the people who are taken are "snatched away" just as the believers will be in the rapture. The problem with that is really twofold:

#### **1. The word "taken" here is not the same word as is used to describe the rapture.**

According to the Blue Letter Bible the word "taken" means simply "to take".

The word used in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 speaking of the rapture means "to seize or to catch quickly away".

### **1 Thessalonians 4:17**

*<sup>17</sup> Then we which are alive and remain shall be **caught up** together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

### **2. The second problem is if they were raptured away where were their bodies taken to?**

We know that all unbelievers will be resurrected at the Great White Throne and they will stand before the Lord to be judge.

### **Revelation 20:12-13**

*<sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

*<sup>13</sup> And the **sea gave up the dead** [those who were buried at sea] which were in it; and **death** [the grave] and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.*

So what happens to those who are taken? I believe it is very simple, they die and their body is left on the earth and their soul goes to hell until the Great White throne judgment. Remember the 10<sup>th</sup> plague on Egypt when Pharaoh refused to allow Israel to leave?

### **Exodus 11:1-7**

*And the LORD said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether.*

<sup>2</sup> *Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver and jewels of gold.*

<sup>3</sup> *And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people.*

<sup>4</sup> *And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt:*

<sup>5</sup> *And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts.*

<sup>6</sup> *And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more.*

<sup>7</sup> *But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.*

I believe it will be very much like what happened in Egypt when the Lord returns. Those who are soldiers will die in the Battle of Armageddon and those who are not soldiers and are unsaved will die just as the first born did in Egypt. Now let me show you one more verse that will support the fact that their bodies will be left here on this earth and their souls taken to hell.

Let me take you to the Battle of Armageddon again.

### **Revelation 19:17-18**

*17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;*

*18 That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, [now the next phrase seems to describe a different group of people who will die during this same time] and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.*

### **Conclusion:**

There is yet another question which we need to ask, "How does all of this harmonize with Matthew 25:31-41?"

### **Notice Matthew 25:31-41**

This is the judgment of the sheep and the goats. The sheep are the saved and the goats are the lost. How does this work with what we just looked at? You will find this very interesting but we will wait until we get to Matthew 25 because I really desire to look closely at the judgment of the sheep and the goats known as the Judgment of the Nations.

Next week I want to come back and look closer at the verses which we looked at tonight and last week.