

"The Olivet Discourse"

Matthew 24-25

Part 32

Introduction: Tonight in our study of the Olivet Discourse we have come to the final passage. In this passage we will see what is known as the "Judgment of the Nations" in Matthew 25:31-46. Now there are several points I need to make about this section before we actually begin to look closely at the verses.

1. The Timing of the Judgment.

Notice Matthew 25:31

This verse is very important because it tells us when this judgment will take place. We are told here in this verse that this judgment will happen when Jesus comes with all of His holy angels and sits upon His throne. This is after the Great Tribulation at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom.

Notice what John writes about the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 19:11-14

¹¹ 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.

¹² 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.

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

¹⁴ And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

In verse 14 John writes about the **armies** which follow Jesus. This would be the army of saints and the army of angels. Notice what Zechariah writes.

Zechariah 14:4-5

⁴ And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

*⁵ And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: **and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.***

Jude 1:14

*¹⁴ And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, **Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,***

Now let me show you what Jesus said about His return in Matthew 16 and in Mark 8.

Matthew 16:27

*²⁷ For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father **with his angels**; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.*

Mark 8:38

³⁸ *Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.*

From all of these verses we can see that when Jesus returns it will be with His angels and His saints. Therefore the context of Matthew 25:31-46 is at the end of the Great Tribulation when Jesus returns to the earth to set up His Kingdom.

2. The reason Jesus taught this passage.

In order to grasp the reason for the teaching of this passage we need to back up into Matthew 24. The root of this teaching really starts in Matthew 24 when Jesus told about His return at the end of the Great Tribulation.

Matthew 24:30-31

³⁰ *And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

³¹ *And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

Following this revelation which Jesus gave He then began to talk about the need for preparedness.

In Matthew 24:32-35 He used the parable of the fig tree to show the need to watch the signs. In Matthew 24:36-41 Jesus pointed back to the flood of Noah's day to show how many people were unprepared

when the flood came and He connected the unpreparedness of those people with those who will be alive when He returns after the Great Tribulation. In Matthew 24:42-51 He spoke about the need to be watching at all times and serving at all times. Then in Matthew 25:1-30 He spoke 2 parables which taught the very same thoughts. The Parable of the Virgins shows the need to be prepared while watching and waiting. The Parable of the Talents shows the need to act upon the spiritual Truth which God has given or serving. In both of those parables there is a warning to those who are not prepared.

Then we come to the passage before us and we see that all of His teaching was leading up to this judgment. The Judgment of the Nations is the reason why those at the end of the tribulation need to be ready when Jesus returns. This is the climax of the Olivet Discourse! When we studied the Sermon on the Mount we saw that it ended in a climax when Jesus spoke of the 2 gates. The Olivet Discourse also ends in like fashion. When Jesus returns all opportunities for salvation will be gone. Death brings an end to all chances to be saved and so does Jesus return at the end of the Great Tribulation.

3. The harmony of this judgment and the Battle of Armageddon.

I need to show you how we can understand this judgment in relation with the Battle of Armageddon. Let me show you the battle in Revelation 19 which takes place when Jesus returns.

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.

Here we see those who fight against Christ at the Battle of Armageddon are the **ARMIES OF THE ANTI-CHRIST**. Now in Matthew 25:31-46 we will see unsaved people who will NOT be a part of the anti-Christ's army. The Battle of Armageddon is fought immediately at the return of Christ and the Judgment of the Nations will take place at the end of the 75 days following the Great Tribulation. There will be approximately 75 days separating the two events.

4. The subjects of the Judgment.

Notice Matthew 25:31-32

The "nations" here refer to the "Gentile Nations". These will be all of the Gentiles who survive the Great Tribulation and are alive when Jesus returns to the earth. This will not be the Church because the

Church will be raptured away before the tribulation. Let me give you a chronological list of the events which are yet to happen on God's calendar.

- a. The Rapture - This will happen when the bride of Christ is complete.
- b. The Tribulation - This 7 year period will start shortly after the rapture of the church.
- c. The Revelation of the anti-Christ with his peace promise for Israel - This will be after the rapture at the beginning of the tribulation.
- d. The breaking of the peace treaty and the self glorification of the anti-Christ - This will happen 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ years into the tribulation.
- e. Great Tribulation such as the world has never known - This will begin 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ years into the tribulation period when the peace treaty is broken.
- f. The return of Jesus Christ with His saints to the earth to set up His Kingdom - This will happen at the end of the 7 year tribulation period.
- g. The Battle of Armageddon - This will take place immediately upon the return of Christ.
- h. The resurrection of the Old Testament saints and the Tribulation saints - This is spoken of by John in Revelation 20:4-6. This will happen before the Judgment of the Nations.

Luke 13:24-30

²⁴ *Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.*

²⁵ When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

²⁶ Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

²⁷ But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

²⁸ There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.

²⁹ And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

- i. The Judgment of the Nations - This will happen within 75 days after the return of Jesus Christ.
- j. The entrance into the Kingdom of our Lord - This will follow the Judgment of the Nations and the resurrection of the Old Testament saints and the Tribulation saints.

Now during the Great Tribulation there will be many people who will die. Let me show you some verses which will give us some insight into the loss of life during this time.

Revelation 6:7-8

⁷ And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

⁸ *And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.*

Here we see that when the 4th seal is opened $\frac{1}{4}$ of the world's population will die. Today there are about 7.2 billion people in the world. So if $\frac{1}{4}$ died today that would be 1.8 billion.

Revelation 9:16-18

¹⁶ *And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.*

¹⁷ *And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.*

¹⁸ *By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.*

Here we see that when the 6th trumpet sounds that 1/3 of the population will be killed. That means that another 1.8 billion people will die. Just within these 2 plagues there will be over $\frac{1}{2}$ of the world's population killed.

Revelation 7:9-14

⁹ *After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;*

¹⁰ *And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*

¹¹ *And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,*

¹² *Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*

¹³ *And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?*

¹⁴ *And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, **These are they which came out of great tribulation,** and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

Here is a group of people in heaven so great that John tells us no man could number them. They are people who were saved and martyred for their faith in the Great Tribulation.

Revelation 20:4

⁴ *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: **and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands;** and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

Here again John sees those who had died during the Great Tribulation for their faith in Christ.

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.

This is the battle of Armageddon and we are not told how many die in the battle but it seems to be a great number.

Revelation 14:20

²⁰ And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

The blood from the battle will run as deep as the bridle on a horse (4.5 feet deep) and will flow 180 miles long. That takes a great number of people to get that much blood. There is about 1.2 gallons in each of us.

Conclusion:

The point I want you to see is that billions will die during the *Great Tribulation*. But there will also be many who will survive and they will be the subjects of the Judgment of the Nations. So in *Matthew 25:31-46* we will look at the Judgment of the *Gentile* survivors of the *Great Tribulation*. Now that leaves us with several questions, "What about the Jews who survive the *Great Tribulation*?" I must ask, "When will they be judged?" We will see next week that the Jews will also be judged at this same time but we must go elsewhere in the Bible to find the Old Testament passage which speaks of the Judgment of the Jews.

Next week we will get into the verses and look closely at the Judgment.