

"The Olivet Discourse"

Matthew 24-25

Part 6

Introduction: Tonight in our study of the Olivet Discourse we have come back to the Words of our Lord which He spoke to His disciples on the Mount of Olives concerning the 70th week of Daniel. Jesus teaching of the Olivet Discourse was His answer to the questions which 4 of His disciples had asked. Let me show you what Mark writes.

Mark 13:2-4

² And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

³ And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately,

⁴ Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?

Mark tells us that it was just 4 disciples which came to Jesus privately. Matthew however gives us more details about their questions.

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 disciples asked 3 questions but Jesus only answered 2 of the 3. He focused upon the signs of His coming and on the end of the age. This is what we have been looking at in our study of Matthew 24-25.

I. Jesus' Answer to the Disciple's Questions

Matthew 24:4-44

Part 3

The past 2 weeks I have told you that a key verse in understanding this first section is Matthew 24:8.

Notice Matthew 24:8

Jesus is answering the question about His coming again to establish His Kingdom. Here in this verse Jesus speaks of the "birth pains" which will happen as the Great Tribulation begins following the rapture of the church. These "sorrows" or "birth pains" will begin in the start of the tribulation period and will become more frequent and increase with more intensity as the 7 year period progresses.

We have been looking at the "birth pains" and we have seen several so far.

1. The Great Deception

Notice Matthew 24:4-5

I don't want to get back into this but I do want to remind you that when the rapture of the church takes place the restraints will be removed from the demonic world. This will allow these events to happen at a higher level of severity than we can imagine.

The deception which Jesus speaks of here will be fueled by demonic powers and as Jesus says in Matthew 24:5, MANY will be deceived.

II. Civil Unrest

Notice Matthew 24:6-7a

Here we see that there will be wars and those wars will be national wars. This can also be seen in Revelation 6 and the opening of the seal judgments.

Revelation 6:3-4

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 wars which Jesus speaks of in Matthew 24 will be the result of peace being taken from the "EARTH". I emphasize the word "earth" because it is important for us to know it will not just be certain areas from which peace will be removed. It will be global, even in the small secluded communities. This will all eventually lead to a world war.

III. Great Catastrophes

Notice Matthew 24:7b

Here Jesus tells of 3 catastrophes which will unfold starting in the beginning of the tribulation period.

1. Famines
2. Pestilences
3. Earthquakes

Last week we started to look at these 3 in detail.

A. Famines

The famines which Jesus speaks of here are also recorded in the seal judgments.

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.

Last week I told you that in the tribulation it will take a full day's wages just to buy enough food for 1 man for 1 day. The more people there are in the family the more difficult life will be. If there are 4 people and only 1 can work then people are going to die of starvation. If we consider how peace will be taken from the earth and add that thought to the famines then we can only imagine how savage people will become as they and their families begin to run out of food.

B. Pestilences

This most likely refers to diseases which will be the result of the wars and the death which will occur during the wars. I believe we can get a picture of this in the seal judgments.

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 1/4th of the world's population will die because of the wars, the famines, death (which many believe refers to the pestilence) and the beasts of the earth. The beasts of the earth could refer to a couple of things. They could refer to wild animals during the tribulation period. I believe they could also refer to people who will be controlled by demons during the Great Tribulation. Some would disagree and say that the word "beast" refers to animals. But that is not always the case in the Bible. The anti-christ is referred to as "the beast" and he will be a man.

Revelation 13:1

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.

Possibly the "beasts of the earth" are people who are demon controlled and used as instruments of God to execute judgment upon the unsaved of the Great Tribulation. The word "beast" may be used to describe their character and their actions under the control of the demons.

Let me show you something about the rider on the pale horse and the one who followed him.

Revelation 6:8

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 in this verse 1/4th of the population dies. That today would be almost 2 billion people. But I believe that the 2 billion people who will die at this time are all unsaved people. The rider on the horse is Death and he is followed by Hell. Then we see that power was given them over 1/4th part of the earth. Now we know that Death and Hell have no power over those who belong to God so those who die here must be almost 2 billion unsaved people.

Now let us get back to the thought in Matthew 24 again. Many will die because of sickness and disease during the tribulation.

C. Earthquakes

The earthquakes which will happen during the tribulation will be far greater than anything our world has seen before. In the book of Revelation we are told of several of those earthquakes and with them we can see some of the future catastrophes.

Revelation 6:12

¹² And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

Here is the first earthquake which is mentioned in the tribulation. We see from John's words that this is a "great" earthquake. We also see that after this earthquake the sun becomes black like sackcloth and the moon becomes as blood or it has a red appearance.

This information is very important. This darkening of the sun and the red color of the moon are the results of volcanic eruptions. This great earthquake will be so strong it will cause the volcanoes to erupt which will fill the sky with volcanic ash and it will darken the sun and as the moon is viewed through the ash it will appear to be red.

Now some people would say that will not affect those on the east coast of the US but I say it will. There is a volcano under Yellowstone National Park that is estimated to be the size of Los Angeles California. It is believed that if it ever erupts (and it will) most life to the east of it will not survive. That is the area we live in.

Let me show you the strength of this earthquake in the beginning of the tribulation.

Revelation 6:13-14

¹³ And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

¹⁴ And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

These verses contain so much information about the tribulation. We see in verse 13 that John tells us the "stars of heaven" fell to the earth. Now stars are much larger than our planet. The sun is a star and is about 1 million times the size of earth. So, for stars to fall on the earth would destroy the earth. But I also know that with God all things are possible. But let me show you a verse then I will give you something to consider.

Revelation 1:1

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

The word "signified" means "to give a sign". When John wrote this he only had 1st century language to describe what he saw, which is still future to you and me. Therefore when John saw something which he did not have a word for he would use signs and symbols to describe it.

The stars falling to the earth could be missiles which John would not have had a word for. This could be the results of the wars and they could be nuclear missiles.

Revelation 6:13-14

¹³ And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

¹⁴ And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

This was very likely a mushroom cloud from a nuclear explosion. But let's get back to the earthquake. It will be so strong it will move EVERY island and mountain out of its place. I used to wonder how that could possibly happen until the earthquake in Indonesia. It happened on December 26, 2004. It was believed to have the energy of 23,000 Hiroshima type atomic bombs. The island of Indonesia was moved 100 feet. The water in the wells in the state of Virginia lowered several feet. There were 230,000 people who died as a result of that earthquake.

That earthquake will not compare with the earthquakes of the tribulation. Let me show you one more.

Revelation 16:17-20

¹⁷ And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

¹⁸ And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

¹⁹ And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

²⁰ And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

This is the very last earthquake that will happen but it will be far more severe than any others that have ever happened. Now with all of these earthquakes will be tsunamis which will destroy cities and many people. In Indonesia the waves from the earthquake exceeded 95 feet when they came to shore. The waves are what killed most of the 230,000.

Conclusion:

We must stop here for tonight. Let me just say that you need to be sure of your salvation. The Words of Jesus will come to pass and our world is headed toward the kingdom of the anti-christ at a high rate of speed. If you are not saved and the rapture happens you will walk right into the Great Tribulation period. It will be there that you will die and be plunged into the fires of hell.