

## **THIS WEEK'S STUDY: 12/20-21/2021 *Matthew Chapter 24:1-26***

**PLEASE NOTE WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED A PASSCODE TO JOIN THE STUDY!**

**MONDAY 7 PM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)**

**THE MONDAY NIGHT STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN CLASSROOM HS107, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!**

**MEETING ID# - 87858644763 Passcode: 087484**

Join Zoom Meeting -

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**Meeting ID: 878 5864 4763 - Passcode: 087484**

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**TUESDAY 7 AM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada).**

**THE TUESDAY MORNING STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN THE FAMILY ROOM, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!**

**MEETING ID# - 85309150746 - Passcode: 715340**

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Phil Twente [ptwente@gmail.com](mailto:ptwente@gmail.com) cell 714 425 9221 For Audio & notes from previous studies - [www.ptwente.com](http://www.ptwente.com)

## **OPENING PRAYER**

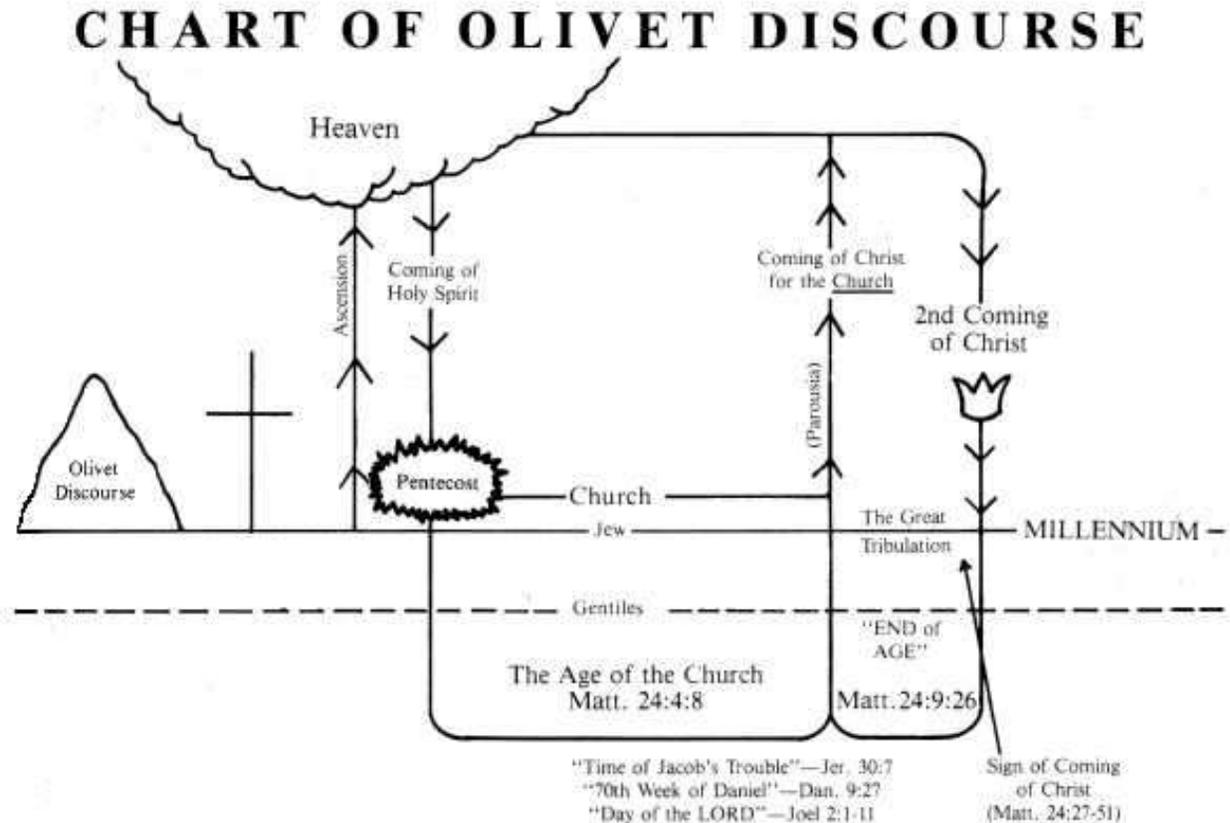
***Matthew Chapter 24:1-26 – The Olivet Discourse, Part 1***

**Jesus Predicts the Destruction of the Temple – (vs. 1-2); The Signs of the Times and the End of the Age - (vs. 3-14); The Great Tribulation – (vs. 15-28); (Part 2) - The Coming of the Son of Man - (vs. 29-31); The Parable of the Fig Tree – (vs. 32-35); No One Knows the Day or Hour - (vs. 36-44). The Faithful Servant and the Evil Servant – (vs. 45-51).**

## CHAPTER 24

**THEME:** The disciples ask Jesus three questions. He answers two about the sign of the end of the age and the sign of His coming. Matthew chapters 24 and 25, known as the Olivet Discourse, constitute the last of three major discourses in this Gospel. They are called major discourses because of their length, their content, and their intent. This discourse is also given to us in Mark, chapter 13 and in Luke chapter 21. In this Olivet Discourse, when Christ speaks of His coming, He is referring to His return to the earth to establish His Kingdom. The church is not in the picture. By the end of the age, the church will have been removed, and it will be the last days of the nation Israel. He is speaking about the Great Tribulation period and so labels it in this discourse.

A chart of the Olivet Discourse from J. Vernon McGee's commentary is shown below:



**Mat 23:38** See! Your house is left to you desolate;

**Mat 23:39** for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'BLESSED is HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'

### **Jesus Foretells Destruction of the Temple**

**Mat 24:1** **Then** (notice link to last chapter) Jesus *went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple.*

**Mat 24:2** *And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? **Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.**" (Mar 13:1-2) Then as He went out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!" [2] And Jesus answered and said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*

- **Mark tells us they were remarking at the great stones.** Herod was a little guy, but he was known for the great stones with which he built, the various buildings in Jerusalem. Today on the Temple Mount that Herod built, you can see stones that are eight feet thick, five feet high, forty-five feet long. They were covered with marble, covered with gold. Some of them weighing up to a hundred and sixty-five tons. The temple was not even at this time complete. The disciples were remarking at these huge stones. Jesus made a remarkable prediction.

- **Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.** What an amazing prediction! The disciples must have had a tough time actually conceiving of such a thing, these huge stones being thrown down! Yet, forty years later, Titus came in with the Roman troops and they destroyed the temple. According to the historian Josephus, when they had destroyed the temple, it was just as though there had never been a building there. *“Not one stone was left standing upon another.”* Just think how exact and profound Jesus’ prophecy is, that of a complete dismantling of Herod’s temple! How inconceivable this must have seemed to His disciples! What a predicting prophecy, which will come true in about 40 years! Today, when you look on the Temple Mount from atop the Mount of Olives, you can see that there is not a single stone on top of another of Herod’s temple! We can be assured if this prophecy was kept precisely, which it was, that all of the prophecies in this discourse will be kept, as well! When the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70, the first part of the Olivet Discourse was fulfilled.
- **Today when you go to Jerusalem and you go to the area of the Western Wall**, where the Jews still gather for prayer, there at the area where they are praying, you are actually standing some seventy feet above the floor of the Tyropoeon Valley where Jesus would have been walking. If you want to walk where Jesus walked to burrow seventy feet down to get to the Tyropoeon valley floor! This whole Western Wall area has been covered over. When the Romans destroyed the temple, they pushed these huge stones over , down into the Tyropoeon Valley, onto that roadway that went along the bottom of the valley. As these stones fell onto the roadway, they crushed the huge pavement stones of the road. Thus, you are about seventy feet of rubble and stones from the bottom of the Temple Mount from the Tyropoeon valley. As you are going up from the Dung Gate and up to the Temple Mount area itself, on the left-hand side, you can see the Western Wall with the Jews praying. On the right-hand side, they have done excavations on down to the road of the Tyropoeon Valley. They have left many of these stones just in disarray, in the position that they fell. We can visualize the destruction and the prophecy of Jesus, as remarkable as it was, it was literally fulfilled within forty years when Jerusalem was destroyed and the temple, this great temple built by Herod, was utterly razed to the ground.
- **Jesus and His disciples went** from that temple area, on across to the Mount of Olives. Jesus no doubt had a favorite place there where He would be with His disciples, sort of away from the noise of the city, which provided an opportunity to just pray with them and talk with them. We need to remember that in just that “prayer in the garden.” From that spot will be arrested.

### *Signs of the End of the Age*

**Mat 24:3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be?” (the answer to this question is recorded in Luke 21:20-24) And what will be the sign of Your coming, and (even) of the end of the age?”**

- **He sat upon the Mount of Olives, which has a magnificent view of the wall of Jerusalem and the whole Temple Mount.**
- **The disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be?”** The “these things” being the destruction of the temple that He had just prophesied. When is it going to happen? When is the temple going to be destroyed?
- **And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”** It is interesting that they are asking concerning the sign of His coming. At this point, they were really believing that the kingdom was still going to be immediately set up. So, the idea of Your coming, that is Your coming into Your kingdom, **The end of the age is the end of the world governments.** We are living in what the Bible terms the “time of the Gentiles.” It began with the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the Jews going into captivity. From that time the Jews did not really exist as a sovereign until 1948. They were always under the rule of some other power. Thus, this is what is known in the scripture as the “times of the Gentiles.” The whole, time frame of the Gentile world governing powers was laid out in the book of Daniel, both in the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream and the interpretation of Daniel’s vision. The whole Gentile world power kingdoms were laid out from the Babylonian kingdom to the final kingdom of a federation of ten national powers that will then be ruled by the antichrist.
- **They are asking Jesus the signs of His coming; the end of the age; and for the time of the destruction of the temple.** Therefore, in the intervening discourse by Jesus, which makes it difficult to completely understand, you have intertwined here prophecies of the events that will precede the destruction of the temple, along with prophecies that will be the signs of His coming and the end of the age! Jesus did not make a clear distinction always. So, they are intertwined prophecies, which regard the destruction of the temple, as well as prophecies that regard to the return of Jesus Christ.

- **So, first, When shall these things be?”—when one stone would not be left upon another? Second, “What shall be the sign of Your coming?”—The answer to this question is found in verses (*Mat 24:23-51*); and Third, “What shall be the sign? ... of the end of the world, the completion of the age?”** The answer to this question is found in verses (*Mat 24:9-22*). The Lord Jesus is going to answer these three questions. We refer to His answers the Olivet Discourse because it took place on the Mount of Olives.

***Mat 24:4 And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.***

- **Verses 4-8 are signs and warnings for those who live in a time leading up to the tribulation.**
- **Deception is something that Jesus is quite concerned with.** It is characteristic of this entire age. People being deceived by men who would offer themselves as the Messiah, who would declare themselves to be the saviors of the world. The Lord gives this word of caution because there will be much deception, especially during the Tribulation period when the Antichrist will appear.

***Mat 24:5 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.***

- **In verse eleven, Many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.** Then in verse twenty-four, *For there shall arise false Messiahs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*
- **In light of this warning of Jesus concerning the deception, it has to do basically with the coming of the antichrist and the false prophet** as is predicted in the book of Revelation chapter thirteen, and in Second Thessalonians chapter two. As we read these prophecies, (***Rev 13:14***) *And he deceives those who dwell on the earth—by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived.* Jesus said, Beware, let no man deceive you. He talks about the signs and wonders that they will be showing, that if possible, they would deceive the very elect, and here he is able to deceive by the miracles and the powers that he is doing.
- **In (*2Th 2:9-12*) The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, [10] and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. [11] And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, [12] that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.** The antichrist, when he comes, will have the powers of darkness working with him and he will be showing signs and lying wonders and will deceive all of those who will perish. The reason is because they did not have the love of the truth. In other words, God says, and you cannot blame Him, you do not want to believe the truth, then believe a lie. And He gives them over to be deceived.
- **Jesus warns three times concerning this very important sign.** The man who will come on the scene claiming to be Christ and having, it would appear, supernatural powers, the ability to do marvelous, wondrous feats that will astound the people and by those, deceive the people. And so that was a continued warning by Jesus through the message.

***Mat 24:6 And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled*** (alarmed, startled, terrified); ***for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.***

- **They, of course, did have the wars, the rumors of wars.** The Roman troops came. They besieged Jerusalem. They destroyed Jerusalem, but Jesus said, the end of not yet. “What will be the time of the end?” is one of the questions. This is not the end. This is the destruction of Jerusalem and all but not the end.
- **But the end is not yet.** False prophets, as well as wars and rumors of wars, characterize the whole of the present age, but will escalate toward the end. (***2Ti 3:13***) *But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.*

***Mat 24:7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.***

- **In the Greek this would suggest a worldwide state of war.** Nations and kingdoms involved. Those we have had too in this century, World War I and World War II. There are a lot of troubled spots in the world today. We have so many places that are ready to erupt. World wars will be a sign.
- **Famines, pestilences, earthquakes.** We see pictures and hear stories of famines through Africa. Relief programs sending relief and we have just experienced that tragedy in the area of Africa where we sent in our troops to try to somehow help these people and supply them with food, but how the whole thing just fell apart and now we are moving out and the problem is the same as it was before we entered.

- **It is famines, pestilences,** the world has made tremendous advancements in medical science. We have miracle drugs, it is marvelous how the scientists have been able to develop so many marvelous drugs and ways by which we can prevent certain, what used to be, deadly plagues from destroying vast amounts of people. However, COVID has become a worldwide issue for the past two years. Variants are continuing. Governments around the world are perplexed, often using the pestilence as an excuse to exercise their control and power over the people. Fear from pestilences is worldwide, seemingly at the highest level that can be remembered.
- **Earthquakes in various places!** In California, earthquakes have been occurring throughout our lifetime. It seems like their frequency, worldwide, is increasing, that there is a general adjustment of the plates or whatever and we are finding more faults all the time. Earthquakes in various places. Also, tornadoes seem to be increasing.
- **This appears to be referring to these days,** in which we are living. It is interesting how that those of the present world view are trying to blame fundamental Christians for the antagonisms and the problems in our society because we believe the Bible and are dogmatic as far as what is right and what is wrong. When we say that a group of people are wrong for living a particular lifestyle, then we are encouraging hate crimes. We have been categorized as terrorists and as such, a threat to society.
- **This is happening in China and other nations today.** They are fearful Christians outnumbering communists.. China is continuing purging Christians, seeing them see them as a threat to communism in China. "Hated of all nations for my name's sake." Jesus said, Do not marvel if the world hates you, they hated Me. The Bible says to be friends with the world is to be an enemy of God. We need to watch out, this shaking of hands and when the world is patting you on the back, you better repent and ask God what is wrong with you. Where are we compromising? If we stand for Biblical truth, the world's going to hate you for it.

**Mat 24:8** All these are the beginning of sorrows (birth pangs).

- **Sorrows.** The word means "birth pangs." Two things are characterized in birth pangs. Those are the frequency, which decreases in intervals between contractions and the intensity of the contractions, which increases! Famines, earthquakes, and conflicts have always characterized life in a fallen world; but by calling these things "the beginning" of labor pains, Jesus indicated that things will get notably and remarkably worse at the end of the era as these unique tribulations, signal the coming of Messiah to judge sinful humanity and set up His millennial kingdom.

## The Beginning Of The Tribulation With Its Signs

**Mat 24:9** "Then they will deliver you (who is the "you"? It is Israel and tribulation saints) up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.

- **Now, in verses 9-14, the Lord begins to speak of the first three and one-half years of the time of tribulation.** You and I are living in the "age of the church" or the "age of the Holy Spirit," as some people like to speak of it. The Bible divides the world today into three groups of people: the Jews, the Gentiles, and the church of God (*1Co 10:32*). In this age God is calling out a people to His name from both Jews and Gentiles to compose the third group, the church. It is this third group which will be taken out of the world at the time of the Rapture. Then the seven year Tribulation Period will begin. I believe that this verse speaks of this beginning.
- **The Bible supports the time of the Rapture prior the tribulation period.** (known as the "pre-tribulation position. Three reason for this position, include:
  - **First, the New Testament teaches for us as Christians is that we are not appointed for God's wrath.** (*1Th 5:9*) *For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.* The Bible teaches that repeatedly and the whole, seven-year Tribulation period, is God's wrath.
  - **Secondly the Rapture of the church is intended to be a comfort,** concerning Christians. (*1Th 4:17-18*) *Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. [18] Therefore comfort one another with these words.* How would going through the first half, or even the whole Tribulation period as a Christian, be a comfort to me? We should not confuse the 144,000 Jewish evangelists with the church.
  - **Thirdly is the imminence! That is the idea that the Rapture could occur anytime. We told in the Scriptures to "watch and be ready!"** (*1Th 5:6*) *Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.* Only the Pre-Trib position allows us to look at the Rapture of how it is described in the Scriptures as something that could happen at any time. Neither the Mid-Trib or the Post-Trib position could meet this requirement.

**Mat 24:10** *And then many will be offended* (caused to stumble), **will betray one another, and will hate one another.**

- **Josephus, a historian at about the time and shortly after the time of Christ,** gives a very graphic and vivid account of the destruction of Jerusalem, the war with the Jews and the destruction of Jerusalem. He describes the conditions in the city of Jerusalem when it was under siege by the Romans.
- **We see there of many being offended, betraying one another, and hating one,** coming to pass literally. The pillaging, the destruction, the killing, the gangs, all of the things that were taking place in Jerusalem when it was under siege. According to Josephus, more Jews were killed by the Jews themselves than were killed by the Roman troops!
- **Many will be offended,** "caused to stumble." This suggests that professing believers who fall away and even turn against "one another" in shocking acts of spiritual treachery. Those who fall away in such a manner give evidence that they never were true believers.

**Mat 24:11** *Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many* (worldwide spiritual deception).

**Mat 24:12** *And because lawlessness will abound* (be multiplied), **the love** (agape form used) **of many will grow** (passive) **cold.** (2Th 2:3a) *Let no one deceive you by any means. (Joh 13:35) By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."*

- **A world that is abounding in iniquity.** Although we are hoping and praying for a worldwide revival. There is no assurance in the Scriptures that this will occur in the church. At the time of the coming of Christ, iniquity will be abounding on the earth, just as it was in the times of Noah. When the body politic gets so weak that it cannot purge the poisons from its system, the body is ready to die. When there comes such a weakness in the judicial system that it can no longer bring judgment against evil, and no longer is bringing judgment against evil; because evil must be judged when man fails in the judgment of evil, then God steps in and He judges the evil. That is the way it was in the time of Noah. Everyone was doing what was right in his own eyes. Thus, God intervened, and God judged, which likely will be the case again. Man is not judging evil, so God will step in and will judge evil. That is what the Great Tribulation period is all about. It is God's judgment against evil. As they cry to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, hide us from the face of the land, for the day of His wrath has come and who shall be able to stand? **Lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.**" How much lawlessness is now occurring throughout the world?
- **Sin has never been more available than it is now.** All types of perverted sin is being accepted in our society today. First, the homosexuals and the lesbians sought and have received acceptance by the general society. The next who are attempting now for general acceptance are the pedophiles. They are beginning to demand that they be accepted and that we begin to accept older men with young boys, twelve and thirteen, nine and ten, or whatever is the fixation in the pedophile's mind, the age that he likes. They have their own magazines and web sites. They have their own types of lobbying programs just like the homosexual community did and they are working for acceptance. Acceptance of evil. A sick society that cannot purge the poisons from its system.
- **The love (agape) of many will grow (passive) cold.** We need to be reminded and be on guard today, as we see lawlessness being multiplied, that our love does not grow cold! Note it is in the passive tense. It can happen to us without our causing our love to grow cold! May we be careful not to look at the lost, who are given over to lawlessness and think, let them continue in their wickedness and go to hell. They deserve it! May we remember to daily ask the Lord to fill us with His Holy Spirit!

**Mat 24:13** *But he* (tribulation saints) **who endures to the end** (of the tribulation period) **shall be saved.**

- **We are to endure to the end!** One may ask, but what about those that do not endure to the end? There is no promise for them. There is only a promise for the one who will endure to the end!
- **The people who persevere are the same ones who are saved, not the ones whose love grows cold.** This fact does not suggest that a person's perseverance secures salvation. Scripture teaches precisely the opposite. God, as part of His saving work, secures a believer's perseverance. True believers "are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation." The guarantee of one's perseverance is built into the new covenant promise.
- **The warnings and pleas are among the means God uses to secure this perseverance in the faith.** We notice the warnings and the promises often appear side by side. For example, (**Jud 1:21, 24**) *keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. [24] Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.* When Jude urges believers, "keep yourselves in the love of God," he immediately points them to God, "who is able to keep you from stumbling!"

**Mat 24:14** *And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.*

- **What will be the time or signs of the end of the world?** One of them will be the gospel will be preached as a witness unto all nations. God is fair and God will give every man an opportunity and chance to repent, *(2Pe 3:9) The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.* The message of the kingdom will be preached to all nations. Again, man may fail but God's Word will not fail. As a church, we may fail to take the Gospel into all the world. It may be that it is impossible to go into certain parts of the world with the Gospel and it may be that we will fail. If the church fails, God is going to send His angels to preach the Gospel into all of the nations of the world.
- **It's told in (Rev 14:6-7)** *Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—[7] saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."* Angels proclaiming the Gospel in all the world, flying through the midst of heaven and challenging men to fear God, give glory to God, worship Him, the One who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and the fountains of water. No one is going to say, "I didn't hear!" We see the everlasting Gospel will be preached to all of the world as a witness by the angels, and then shall the end come. That is, it.

### ***The Abomination of Desolation***

**Mat 24:15** *"Therefore when you see the 'ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads (people saved during the tribulation), let him understand),*

*(2Th 2:3-4) Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, [4] who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*

- **That is a challenge by Jesus, you read it, now He challenges you, understand it.** Understand what is referred to as the *abomination of desolation* that was spoken of by Daniel the prophet. To understand it, let us go back to Daniel chapter nine, remembering that Jesus commands you to understand it, so let us see if we can.
- **In chapter nine, we have the seventy, seven-year periods** that are determined upon the nation of Israel. Sixty-nine of those seventy years will transpire between the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, to the coming of the Messiah. It is true that from the time of the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem by Artaxerxes, 445 B.C. to the coming of the Messiah was 483 years. That leaves one seven-year period remaining. The Messiah will be cut off, Daniel prophesied. The people will be dispersed. That took place. Jesus was cut off, crucified. The Jews were dispersed. That was the stopping of God's timeclock, so to speak, because the Jew is God's timeclock. Prophecy centers around Jesus Christ and the Jewish nation. With the Jews dispersed, the timeclock was stopped and will not be started again until God begins to deal with the Jews once more at the beginning of this final seven-year period.
- **Concerning the seventieth week, (Dan 9:25-27)** *"Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined. [27] Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week, He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."*
- **After the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off, but not for Himself.** He will not receive the kingdom. The people of the prince that shall come will destroy the city, which was Titus and the Roman troops. Jesus said, not one stone of the sanctuary will be left standing on another. The end of the people shall be a flood or dispersion, to the end of the war, or age, desolations are determined. Now the prince of the people, the antichrist, shall come. It is now going on into the future some 2,000 years. The antichrist will confirm the covenant with many for this final seven-year period, In the middle of that seven-year period he shall cause the sacrifice and the offerings to cease.
- **The temple is going to be rebuilt.** Probably this covenant that he makes, will grant to them the rights of the rebuilding of the temple. He will be hailed by many as the Messiah, though Jesus warns of these false prophets and false Messiahs, not to be deceived. But, they are going to be deceived, because they have not

the love of the truth. Because they did not have the love of the truth, God gives them over to a strong delusion, to believe the lie of the antichrist. They will rebuild their temple and begin again the daily sacrifices and prayers. But at the middle of this seven-year period, after the temple worship has been reinstated, this man of sin will come to the temple of God and demand that they stop the sacrifices and the prayers!

- **Looking at another side, is the warning against deception.** (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4) *Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, [4] who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.* The antichrist comes and sits in the temple of God and shows that he is God, demanding to be worshipped as God. This is the abomination which will bring the great tribulation. Desolation, when the world will be made desolate by the wrath and the judgment of God. This is the trigger, this is the straw that breaks the camel's back. This is the last blasphemy of man that God will tolerate. It is over! God's judgment now will fall in a heavy hand upon the world when this event takes place, when this man of sin, the son of perdition, comes to the rebuilt temple, stops the daily prayers and sacrifices, sets himself up in the holy of holies, and declares that he is God.
- **Back to Daniel, (Dan 12:11-12)** *"And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be 1,290 days. [12] Blessed is he who waits and comes to the 1,335 days.* From the time that this takes place, the abomination of desolation, that is, the antichrist standing in the temple, declaring himself to be God, demanding to be worshipped as God, it will be 1,290 days until Jesus comes in clouds of glory to establish God's kingdom upon the earth.

**Mat 24:16** *"then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.*

**Mat 24:17** *Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house.*

- **Then let those who are in Judea flee:** These are warnings seem to specifically address Israel. Judea, housetops, and Sabbath, with the Jew's limitation on travel, all speak to a Jewish environment.

**Mat 24:18** *And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.*

- **In other words, get, get fast, go!** Do not try and take anything with you! Just get out of there! This is the warning. When you see this take place, then flee. Now according to (Rev 12:14) *But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.* He will transport them to the wilderness place that God has prepared for them, where God will take care of them, watch over them, protect them, for three-and-a-half years until the whole Great Tribulation period is over.
- **Isaiah speaks about it in, (Isa 26:20)** *Come, my people, enter your chambers, And shut your doors behind you; Hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment, Until the indignation is past.* This is now going into the future. It does not have anything to do with the church at this point. These are signs of the second coming of Jesus Christ. We believe the church will already have been raptured and out of the scene.

**Mat 24:19** *But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!*

- **This reveals His great care and concern for mothers and little children.** It will be a time when one should not have children.
- **It is believed that there will be a great population explosion** at the beginning of the Great Tribulation. The fact that this earth is becoming more heavily populated with people in our day may be another evidence that we are approaching the end of the age.

**Mat 24:20** *And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.*

- **While this would not bother Gentiles, it would be most difficult for the Jews,** who are not to travel more than a short distance on the Sabbath. This is another proof that Christ is speaking directly to the Jewish people. These are people who are observing the Sabbath day, which is Saturday. We Gentiles do not go to church on the Sabbath but on Sunday because our Lord rose from the dead on that day.

**Mat 24:21** *For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

- **The world has never seen anything to equal this.** Never in the history of man has there been anything to equal what is going to transpire when God begins to judge the world in righteous judgment because of all of the things that man has done in rebellion and in defiance against God from the time of Adam to the present day; but it is culminating in our society. You are seeing it. You are being exposed to it. It is imperative that you stand against it if you are going to escape these things that are going to come to pass upon the earth. Great tribulation such as the world has never seen before or will ever see again.

**Mat 24:22** *And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's* (not the church, but those redeemed during the tribulation period) *sake those days will be shortened.*

- ***But for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.*** It is important that we define who the elect are that Jesus is talking about because here is where a great deal of difficulty comes in understanding Bible prophecy. For there are those who identify the elect as the church of God. If the elect in this case be the church of God, then there is convincing argument for the church being here during the Great Tribulation. Though that does not really coincide with the nature of God.
- ***Those days will be shortened.*** If the afflictions of this time were to continue, "no flesh would be saved." That is, no one would survive. But "*for the elect's sake*", so that the redeemed people do not suffer more than they can bear, the time is "*shortened*," meaning held short of total destruction. Both (**Dan 7:25**) and (**Rev 12:14**) suggest that the actual length of time the beast will be permitted to terrorize the world is fixed at three and one-half years.

**Mat 24:23** *"Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it.*

**Mat 24:24** *For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible* (implication is that it is not possible), *even the elect.*

- **Jesus is giving to the disciples the signs of His coming again,** and the end of the world system of governments that are in rebellion against God. We remember in the book of Daniel as Nebuchadnezzar the king had a dream of the future of the world. The kingdoms and governments of man that would reign over the earth. This dream was in the form of a great image that necessitated the interpretation by Daniel, who told the king that the image with its different metals represented the various kingdoms that would rule. Beginning with the Babylonian kingdom and ending with the federation of ten nations that were related somehow to the Roman empire, iron and clay. When Nebuchadnezzar, while he was watching this image transfixed, he saw a stone come out of the mountains, not cut with hands and it smote the great image in its feet, or the final government of man, and the whole image, the world system, the world governments, collapsed. The stone grew into a mountain that covered the earth. In the interpretation that Daniel gave to the king, he told him that that stone was the time when the God of heaven would come and would reign over the earth, bring an end to the reign of man.
- **The disciples are wondering about this.** What will be the signs of the coming of Jesus Christ and the end of the worldly governments dominated by Satan and his rebellion against God? So as Jesus is giving them the signs, and we looked at many of them last week, now as we begin in verse twenty-four, He is speaking of the false Christs and the false prophets. In the Book of Revelation chapter thirteen, we are told about the false Messiah, he is called the beast. And there is with him this false prophet who causes the world to worship the beast.
- **This false prophet, doing miracles and wonders.** Jesus warns that there will be the false Christs, false prophets showing great signs and wonders. The antichrist, the false prophet will be able to do signs and wonders, miracles. Both Paul and John speak of their deceiving.

**Mat 24:25** *See* (behold!), *I have told you beforehand.*

- **It is true!** This is the third time that He is warned them about the false Christs and the false prophets who will deceive. Being forewarned, we have to think about that!

**Mat 24:26** *"Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it.*

- **Now, we come to the very coming again of Jesus Christ. Do not believe it.** No one should consider the claims of self-styled messiahs, because all of them are false. When Christ returns, no one will miss it! ***Look, He is in the desert*** - The Jews had formed the expectation that the Messiah would appear suddenly from some unexpected quarter; hence, many would be looking to desert places, expecting that He would come from them. Accordingly, most of the impostors and pretended prophets led their people into the deserts.
- ***Go not go out.*** Do not follow them; they will only deceive you.
- ***Is in the inner rooms!*** Concealed in some house, or some retired part of the city. Many would, doubtless, pretend that the Messiah was concealed there, and, either for the purpose of encouraging or deceiving the people, would pretend that they had discovered Him.

## **CLOSING SONG:**

***JOY TO THE WORLD*** – Isaac Watts (1719) – Handel - 2:12)

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come. Let earth receive her King. Let every heart prepare Him room  
And Heaven and nature sing, And Heaven and nature sing, And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing*

*Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ. While fields and floods, rocks, hills and  
plains*

*Repeat the sounding joy; Repeat the sounding joy; Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy*

*He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the nations prove The glories of His righteousness  
And wonders of His love, And wonders of His love, And wonders of His love, And wonders, wonders, of His  
love.*

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come. Let earth receive her King. Let every heart prepare Him room  
And Heaven and nature sing, And Heaven and nature sing, And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing!*

### **The Background of ‘Joy to the World’**

English hymn-writer Isaac Watts was the author of “Joy to the World,” a poem based on *Psalm 98* that was included in a poetry collection he wrote in 1719. The poem was never intended to be a Christmas song. It was over a century later, in 1836, that a man named *Lowell Mason* set the hymn to music. Mason was a Boston music teacher and the leading Presbyterian hymn composer in the United States. He published “Joy to the World” during the Christmas season, and that is how the song became associated with the holiday celebrating the birth of Jesus. “Joy to the World” is about when He comes again and rules in power and justice and mercy, when sin will finally be evicted, and all of humanity will bask in the glory of the Almighty’s righteousness.

## **CLOSING PRAYER:**

Assignment for next week: **Continue reading *Matthew Chapter 24*, that great prophecy chapter of the end times!**