

Olivet Discourse Part 2 Luke 21:5 - 9

Ch. 21:5 And while some were talking about the temple, that it was adorned with beautiful stones and votive gifts, He said, 6 “As for these things which you are looking at, the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another which will not be torn down.” 7 And they questioned Him, saying, “Teacher, when therefore will these things be? And what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?” 8 And He said, “See to it that you be not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’ and, ‘The time is at hand’; do not go after them. 9 “And when you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end does not follow immediately.” 10 Then He continued by saying to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, 11 and there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven.

We are studying the Olivet discourse. This is a lengthy prophecy concerning future things brought on by incidents at the end of the final week of Jesus public ministry.

The nation as represented by the religious and political leaders has rejected their Messiah. They are plotting His demise. They want Him dead. Sooner than later.

A second group is represented by the masses, the multitude who want Him to be their Messiah on their terms. They have ushered Him into Jerusalem at His triumphal entry, shouting Hosanna's. They want Him to be King. On their terms. They want a messiah who will restore Israel to glory and who will be able to depose Rome.

But He seems to be powerless against the powers that be and the Romans, and indeed He doesn't seem to be interested in a restored Israel. He doesn't seem to be a conquering messiah at all. In fact He has pronounced wholesale judgement against Israel.

After a week of conflict in the temple grounds these folks are getting disillusioned with their would be messiah. If He's not going to rise up and overthrow the Romans and take back Israel's sovereignty, what good is He. Who needs Him? In a few hours this group will shout "Crucify Him, Crucify Him.

His final words to corporate Israel are a pronouncement of desolation. Jerusalem will not become the world capitol they envision. According to Him, Jerusalem and indeed all Israel will become an empty lonely desolated place. An uninhabited place. A waste land. An empty place. A ghost town.

His final words to the nation of Israel, in the hearing of all, are;
37 *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. 38 “Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! 39 “For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me until you say, ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!’”*

And then He leaves the room. Your house is being left to you a waste place. A deserted uninhabited place. And then He exits. And His stunned disciples are looking across the ravine at the temple complex, remarking on it's beauty and Jesus tells them, it's all coming down. Not one stone will be left upon another. It's all coming down. Shocking statement.

In their minds, according to their pre-conceived notions of what the scripture indicates about Messiah's rule over the whole earth, somehow Messiah must accede. Somehow He must be elevated to the throne of dominance.

He just announced Israel is going to be a ghost town and He has receded. He's going away from their idea of Messiah. Not towards it. He pronounced desolation on them and He has withdrawn. What in the world? It's all coming down?? What happens between now and the day when you DO come and accede the thrown.

We looked at 3 questions they posed at this point in time recorded for us by Matthew. *“Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”*

The antecedent of *these things* in the question when will these things be is the destruction of the temple. It's all coming down? When? And the next question is what will be the sign of your coming?

We began to talk about their questions in context of the events last week. What will be the sign of your coming. Parousia. Remember, they don't have any idea of a second coming of Jesus. That isn't a figment in their imaginations. He's there. What they are asking is when will He accede the throne of Israel. When will He restore Israel and set up His kingdom.

A Parousia is a coming into power. It's an accession of power and authority. A parousia of a conquering King is when he sets up his throne, his authority, his reign. That's what they're asking. The problem is: They're thinking too small.

They're thinking Messiah is going to knock off Rome and set up His reign in Israel. That's much too small. **Jesus is going to knock off Satan and set up His reign over this planet.**

They're picturing some kind of conflict and battle with Rome and Jesus acceding the throne of Israel. He's going to describe a conflict with Satan over this world and His throne will be over the entire earth.

When will these things be? What will be the sign of your parousia? And of the end of the age? Jesus is going to approach these questions in a negative format. Why? In Matthew's account Jesus will tell them;

36 *“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.* Exact times and days and hours isn't available to us. God in His sovereignty has told us, that information isn't going to be disclosed. He expects His called out ones, His elect, to be ready at all times.

We are to live in the anticipation that the coming of Jesus can happen at any moment. Therefore, live in readiness. But He will tell His disciples, and us also what the parousia is not going to look like.

8 And He said, "See to it that you be not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time is at hand'; do not go after them.

There will be counterfeit "Christs". Counterfit Messiah's. Messiahs who claim to be Christ and who will say the time is now. I'm here.

I've been fascinated in recent years to learn that the religion of Islam has an eschatology that parallels christian eschatology! Except everything is inverted. They have someone called the Mahdi who parallels the person we call the anit-christ. And the Mahdi has a prophet who appears from heaven who is Isa. Jesus. Son of Mary. And Isa and the Mahdi will fight against Masih ad-Dajjal, the false messiah who is a liar.

Isa (Jesus) will come down from heaven with two angels who will bring him to the Minaret at Damascus. He then joins the Mahdi who is already here on earth to fight against Masih ad-Dajjal.

Do we put any stock in any of that? Well, in view of what Jesus just said in verse 8 of our passage; Yes. Their eschatology sounds exactly like what Jesus warns His disciples implicitly about. It's an exact inverse of what this book describes at the end.

Anti-christ will appear and lead the entire world astray. The whole world will follow anti-christ. He has a false prophet who can do miracles. Sounds like the Mahdi and Isa to me. Someone named Jesus will show up with miraculous powers. Sounds like a warning that Jesus just gave in vs. 8 will be totally relevant.

Vs. 8 "See to it that you be not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time is at hand'; do not go after them.

I am he and the time is at hand is exactly, exactly what the anti-christ aided by the false prophet will say. You've been warned.

Matthew expands on this statement of Jesus; Matt. 24:24 *“For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. 25 “Behold, I have told you in advance. 26 “If therefore they say to you, ‘Behold, He is in the wilderness,’ do not go forth, or, ‘Behold, He is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe them.*

The power of persuasion of this dynamic duo who command all the powers of Satan is so strong that the whole world will believe and follow the anti-christ. The only people who won't be fooled are God's own chosen and called out elect who belong to Him.

Why not? Miracles. Powers. False peace. This person has some kind of fatal wound to the head and rises from the dead. The whole world will be saying *who is like the beast? Who is able to wage war with him?* Listen to Revelation 13 and think again about the warning Jesus is giving His chosen ones, His called out elect. Talking about antichrist;

3 And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; 4 and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?” Rev. 13:3,4

The whole world is persuaded. Everyone. Even the elect, if that was possible. Why not? How do we differentiate. This person has powers that persuade the whole world. How will we know not to go after this messiah who supposedly rises again from a fatal head wound and does miracles. How will we know this isn't the messiah with all of these powerful persuasions?

Again, Jesus tells us, in the same context of what He has just said, but from Matthew's more complete account, listen to what Jesus says in regard to the

persuasion of false messiahs;

27 *“For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.*

They asked about the parousia. The entrance and accedance of the King to His throne. He says it isn't going to be some guy in some other land that makes persuasive claims. Does miracles. Supposedly comes back from the dead, a fatal head wound. It's not going to happen in some corner or the world

No the parousia of Jesus will be seen simultaneously by everyone on earth, and they won't need an internet connection like the whole world that gets sucked into the false messiah. You won't have to watch a screen when the real Messiah comes to claim His throne over the whole earth.

Every eye will physically see Him coming in the clouds with great glory. Revelation 1:7 says this; *BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen.*

The parousia of Jesus isn't going to be some pipsqueek in some other land doing miracles and making claims to be the messiah that the whole world will watch on a screen. No, the parousia of Jesus will be the firmaments opening, the heavens, the universes split opened and He will be seen by every eye on earth, coming in His glory, with all of His angels (and us, we'll be there) in terrifying glory for every eye to see at the same time.

Matthew 25:31 says; *When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, He will sit on His glorious throne.*

That's the parousia. That's the answer to the question the disciples asked as they sat on the slope of the mount of Olives and all seems confusing and lost to them as Jesus turns His back on Israel and then tells them all of this is going to be a ghost town, and emptiness. What you're looking at and impressed with is going to be torn down stone by stone.

It's an impossible amount of information for ordinary men to process. Jerusalem a waste place. A desolation. Their religion and their temple a ghost town. An uninhabited place with the temple dismantled, gone. It's mind boggling to them. They cry out when? how? And He begins with a warning.

Don't get fooled by false messiahs. No matter how powerful. No matter they seemingly even defy death. No matter they do powerful miracles. None of that adds up to the parousia, the coming of Jesus to His throne. Every eye on earth will see the heavens opened and Jesus coming in the clouds with great glory. It will be unmistakable. Every terrified eye will see it all at the same time. That's the parousia of Jesus to His throne.

Isaiah cries out for this coming, this parousia in clear terms 700 years before Jesus spoke to His disciples. What Isaiah envisions and cries out to happen is exactly how Jesus describes His coming, His parousia to the disciples.

*Isa. 64:1 Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down,
that the mountains might quake at your presence—
2 as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
and that the nations might tremble at your presence!*

Don't be fooled by false messiahs. Jesus is going to rend the heavens . . . and come down! It isn't going to be some false messiah in some remote corner of the globe talking on a computer screen. Jesus is going to rend the heavens. He's going to tear open the heavens. It will be terrifying and every eye on earth will all be watching it at the same time.

Then He tackles the when question, and again, He doesn't give them a clear answer, only warnings about what isn't the time.

9 “And when you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end does not follow immediately.”

Beloved, there has never been a time on earth when there wasn't wars and disturbances. Ever. Satan runs the place. There is no peace. Satan is the oppressor. He hates humans. Do not be fooled. Satan attacks humans. He wants them dead.

He begins with the most helpless. The unborn. Wipe out as many unborn children as possible. In China that law that only allowed one baby per couple was diabolical. That came from the pit of hell. A whole country full of adult males with no wives to be had. All the girls were systematically murdered in the womb. Every 2nd, 3rd, 4th child per family systematically murdered.

And we're no better in the land of the free. We murder the babies so they don't interrupt our good time. Children are bad because they hinder our freedom to play. Adulthood is a bore.

Satan attacks the most helpless and then he pits one group against another group so that we murder each other. I was fascinated and brought low this week studying, for the first time, the massacre of the entire black community in Tulsa 100 years ago. Satan loves that. Pit a weaker group against a stronger group and let hatred and murder happen. Nothing could please Satan more.

Wars and disturbances are how Satan rolls. The ruler of this world pits man against man and kills as many as possible. Why? Because we are image bearers of God and Satan will do anything to stamp out the image bearers.

(Here's something I've been thinking about. It's politically correct to wear masks on your face that cover up the God given beauty of intelligence. Our faces radiate the glory of God's intelligence. If you can't kill the image bearers, cover up God's expression of intelligence that gives glory to Him? Think about it.)

Satan hates God and he hates God's creation. He hates and deforms in every possible way, the image bearers that were created to reflect glory back onto

God. Every diversion away from God's natural created order that detracts from God's image bearers giving Him glory is a win for Satan. Murder them and if you can't murder them get them to murder each other, and then if you can't have them do that, cause them to deviate from God's created order.

Hello? Is there a pattern here anyone see's?

9 “And when you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end does not follow immediately.”

Satan has caused wars and disturbances from the day Jesus said that until this day that we've gathered here this morning. And you can count on him continuing his wars and disturbances until Jesus rends the sky open and comes down.

Most of the disciples He is speaking to were alive when Rome marched in and crushed Jerusalem. They got to see with their own eyes the temple torn down. God gave the church 40 years to get it's roots down, and then he disbursed it over the whole earth. After 70 AD the church went in all directions. Paul had already begun his missionary journeys by that time.

Wars never cease. Disturbances never cease. God uses all of it providentially to accomplish His purposes in Satan's world until He comes to His throne here and rules. But wars and disturbances are generally not signs of His imminent return.

When Pam's dad was a 12, 13, 14 year old youth, Hitler was invading Poland and bombing the stuffing out of England. And he was generally terrified by preachers telling him Hitler was obviously the anti-christ and the end was about to happen. That didn't drive him to Christ, it drove him away.

Maybe, just maybe when Jesus says; *9 “And when you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end does not follow immediately.”* it actually means it's not the end. Not yet. When you see the heavens rent open and mountains melting like wax, that's

the end.

But I'm pretty wimpy, and the beginnings of birth pangs scare me a lot. We've had it so easy here in the USA that almost anything the rest of the world has to deal with is upsetting to us. We can't even imagine a world where supply doesn't outpace demand. That scares us. Never mind wars and disturbances.

But now Jesus alludes to things that actually do point to the final conflict;

10 Then He continued by saying to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, 11 and there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven.

This is a time of accelerated occurrences of what has been the norm on this planet since Satan usurped the rule here. We've always had wars. We've always had conflict between nations and kingdoms. What happens is the birth pang effect.

Matthew 24:8 in the parrallel account at this exact spot in the dialogue adds; 8 *"But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs.*

The birth pang effect. We've always had wars. We've always had conflicts. We've always had plagues and famines and earthquakes. None of those things are signs of the end in themselves. But what happens during the tribulation period is those normative things will increase in size and duration and the spacing between events gets shorter.

More wars. Worse wars. More plagues. More famine. More earthquakes. And they get closer and closer together and the pain gets more fierce. If you're curious and want to expand on what Jesus says here in a sentence or two, you can get an expansion of all of this in the book or Revelation.

The 4 horsemen of the appocalypse. False peace. Famine. Disease. Death. Utimately before Jesus rends the sky open, a full 1/2 of the worlds population

will perish from the effects of wars, famines, disease, murders, plagues. Not pretty. Get ready and stay ready for the Master's shout to Come Up Here.

Jesus says *and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven*. Nearing the completion of the tribulation period, when God pours out the bowls of wrath, I believe asteroids perhaps will pummel the earth and send it into chaos. Then the lights will go out. Thick blackness. Darkness. Chaos. You do NOT want to be here.

And we believe the true church will not be here for these terrifying tribulations. We believe Jesus will remove His elect, His church when the church age is finished and Jacob's time of trouble begins.

We do live in exciting times. I believe that the time of the church's departure is drawing near. The apostasy in what calls itself the church is shocking. I believe that most of what claims to be the church of Jesus Christ will not leave in the rapture.

In Revelation 3:16 Jesus says of the lukewarm church; 16 *'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.*

That verse is a warning to a giant group of people who identify in some way with the name of Jesus but who have fallen short of real regenerative salvation. That vomiting of the church out of His mouth I believe happens at the rapture when Jesus will take regenerated Holy Spirit indwelt believers home with Him to be His bride in heaven along with all of the dead saints who will rise.

But the lukewarm folks who say they are christians but do not have the Word of God dwelling in them through His Holy Spirit are left behind. Vomited out of His mouth.

This is nothing new. Jesus told us there would be wheat and tares growing together. The wheat gets harvested and separated from the tares. The tares are rejected. Don't be a tare. Test yourselves to see that you are wheat.

Useful grain. Paul says to the church;

5 Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test? 2Cor. 13:5

As time draws ever nearer to the end of the church's time and the beginning of the 7 years of Jacob's trouble I believe we will see much confusion inside the church. Because so much of the so-called church is not transformed with a new life given by the indwelling spirit, the tares outnumber the wheat and the confusion inside the church with so-called christians fighting against real born again christians will be confusing and dis-heartening.

But the cure for some of that we will talk about next time. Persecution, if it comes, purifies the church. Persecution clarifies. Sad to think that the tares may join ranks with the world to persecute the true church. Don't be alarmed and confused when those who name the name of Jesus align with the world to harm the true church. I think we're going to be seeing that very soon.