

THE HARMONY OF THE OLIVET

DISCOURSE – PART 5

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Pastor, Calvary Church of Port Orchard, WA.

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Matthew 24:22-28
Olivet Discourse – Part 5
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Matthew 24:22 "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.'	Mark 13:20 "And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days.'	
For the sake of conjecture, assume the following has occurred to get to this point (as history unfolds, any errors in the following are the result of my lack of understanding of God's word and not on the prophecies themselves):		
(1) The church will be raptured some time before: (a) the antichrist being revealed to the world, as he fully establishes his power over the ten-nation global government (2 Thes 2), and (b) before peace is taken from the world resulting in one forth of the world population being killed (Rev 6). After the church is taken, God will be again dealing specifically with Israel (the Christian church is never mentioned after Revelation chapter 3). (2) Possibly before (1) above, but likely a part of peace being taken from the world (Rev 6), a future war in the Middle East results in the fulfillment of Psalm 83 and Isaiah 17. Psalm 83 talks about (using modern names) Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Gaza and Saudi Arabia and Egypt being burned as "the fire burns the woods, and as the flame sets the mountains on fire." See teachings on Isaiah 17: https://youtu.be/cAMmnXojb8Q, and Psalm 83: https://youtu.be/g5HzmbfJAN8		
(3) Then (possibly soon after the Psalm 83 and Isaiah 17 wars), the Arab/Muslim/Russian "second tier" nations that surround Israel's immediate neighbors which were recently destroyed by Israel will come to invade and destroy Israel behind the leadership of Russia, as prophesied in Ezekiel 38-39 (possibly as a result of Israel's weakened military might after suffering the blows from Syria and because Israel has either expended her weapons on the immediate neighbors or has been disarmed). It is clear from Ezekiel 38 that the other nations of the world do not offer to come to Israel's defense as the invading armies approach. This means something must happen to remove America's pro-Israel influence in the Middle East. It might even mean that other nations have also been destroyed as a result of a larger scale nuclear exchange when the Nuclear Jeanie was let out of the Middle East bottle. See Timing of the Gog/Magog War Youtube teaching: https://youtu.be/w3vhfZHMMmk		

(4) As the invading armies approach the mountains of Israel, God intervenes on Israel's behalf and destroys the armies, as described in Ezekiel 38 and 39. Ezekiel 39 prophesies that from that day forward, God will again pour His spirit on the house of Israel. It is possible that these wars over the course of months or years will result in one forth of the world's population being killed and will thus fulfill the first four horseman of the apocalypse (Revelation 6).

(5) As the world's survivors reel from the destruction caused by the fulfillment of Psalm 83, Isaiah 17 and Ezekiel 38-39, Revelation 6, a man raises to power with a plan to put an end to wars in general and the Middle East conflict specifically. The globalization process is accelerated and culminates in a seven-year covenant where Israel is allowed to realize her millennia's-long dream to reestablish temple worship, including animal sacrifices. This may be what Isaiah refers to as the covenant with death (Isaiah 28:17-22 – discussed above). I believe this compromise toward the Jews will be the result of a global recognition of Israel's miraculous preservation during two separate conflicts, each of which should have wiped her off the map. The world will know that this could only have happened as the result of divine intervention. Israel will experience a revival back to God but not toward their true Messiah, Jesus, yet.

The enforcement of this covenant will signal the beginning of the last seven-year portion of Daniel's 490-year prophecy, as discussed earlier. The plan will include allowing the Jews to rebuild their temple in Jerusalem (Revelation 11:1-2), to reinstate animal sacrifice (Dan 9 and 12) and to enforce Sabbath observance (Jesus). This plan will be so favorable to the Jews that they will be deceived into thinking that the man behind its inspiration is none other than the promised messiah (but in fact, he will be the antichrist whom Jesus warned them about). Jews from around the world will all flock to Israel to complete the fulfillment of the O.T. prophets about the re-gathering of Jews to the land, and the whole world will be saying "Finally! Peace and safety throughout the world!" But their joy and hopes will soon be dashed as the Antichrist brings death to the world 3.5 years into the seven year Tribulation. Then 1Thes 5:3 will be fulfilled: "For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape."

It should be noted that during the first 3.5 years of human peace and safety under the global government, the world will be experiencing unprecedented judgments from God as recorded in the trumpet judgments of Revelation 8-9. Peace and safety will also be excluded from those who were left behind after the rapture but have become "tribulation saints" by trusting in Jesus as their savior. These tribulation saints will be hunted down and killed as part of the scourge to remove those who do not go along with the global religion of the antichrist.

(6) Three and a half years into the seven-year peace plan; the Antichrist will show his true colors and will commit the abomination of desolation. Some think it is at this time that someone attempts to assassinate him, but he recovers from a deadly wound.

Rev 13:3 - And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast [Antichrist]. 4 So they worshiped the dragon [Satan] who gave authority to the beast [Antichrist at this time will be possessed by Satan]; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" 5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months [for another 3.5 years, which is when Jesus returns and judges the antichrist (Revelation 19:20)].

Zech 11:17 "Woe to the worthless shepherd, Who leaves the flock! A sword shall be against his arm And against his right eye; His arm shall completely wither, And his right eye shall be totally blinded."

(7) When the Antichrist miraculously recovers from his deadly wound, he goes on a demonically possessed rampage against the Jews. Those Jews who heeded Jesus' warning to flee Judea when they see the abomination of desolation will have already taken their families to the wilderness. They realize they were deceived into thinking their messiah was the Antichrist, and now, in repentance, they are following the teachings of their true Messiah, Jesus. The Antichrist will try to annihilate these fleeing Jews, but God miraculously defends them.

Rev 12:13 Now when the dragon [Satan] saw that he had been cast to the earth [losing the battle to have access to heaven], he persecuted the woman [Israel] who gave birth to the male Child [the Messiah, Jesus. Satan attempts this persecution against Israel by possessing the Antichrist and using him against the Jews]. 14 But the woman [Israel] was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place [believed to be the rock city of Petra, in Jordan], where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time [three and a half years], from the presence of the serpent [Satan possessing the antichrist]. 15 So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman [either literal flood of water or a flood of troops], that he might cause her [escaping Israelites] to be carried away by the flood. 16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. 17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ [those who during the tribulation period believe in the Jewish Messiah, Jesus, but were not among those fleeing to the wilderness and therefore not under complete protection by God].

At the end of the Tribulation period, Isaiah makes it clear that He comes first to Jordan to rescue these Jews who fled to the wilderness in obedience to Matthew 24.

Isaiah 63:1 Who is this who comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, this One who is glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength? — "I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save." 2 Why is Your apparel red, and Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? 3 "I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, and trampled them in My fury; their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My robes. 4 For the day of vengeance is in My heart, and the year of My redeemed has come. 5 I looked, but there was no one to help, and I wondered that there was no one to uphold; therefore My own arm brought salvation for Me; and My own fury, it sustained Me. 6 I have trodden down the peoples in My anger, made them drunk in My fury, and brought down their strength to the earth."

As a side note, it is clear that the Church must be gone before the abomination of desolation. Jesus is warning the Jews living in Israel to flee to the wilderness. But in His entire Olivet Discourse, Jesus never tells the Church what they are to do. If the Christian Church were still on the earth, why does Jesus not warn them? If Christians are still on the earth, what are they supposed to do when they see the Antichrist commit the abomination?

The answer must be that the church has been raptured and doesn't need to be warned. According to Revelation, many Jews and Gentiles will become believers during the tribulation period and will be killed for their faith, but they are never referred to as the church, and since they were not believers before the Rapture, they missed the opportunity to be spared the wrath of God which as it is poured out during the tribulation events.

In Revelation 3:10, Jesus promises the church of Philadelphia that He "will keep them from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth." Although the church of Philadelphia was a literal church at the time John the Apostle was given the vision of Revelation, many believe this promise of Jesus had a broader meaning, since the literal church of Philadelphia in John's day was never spared of a global time of testing. Therefore, it is believed that the church of Philadelphia actually symbolized the faithful Christian church in the last days, the church that would be raptured before the tribulation period begins.

Matthew 24:23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. 24 "For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 25 "See, I have told you beforehand. 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. 27 "For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be."	Mark 13:21 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'Look, He is there!' do not believe it. 22 "For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 23 "But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand."	Luke 17:22 Then He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. 23 "And they will say to you, 'Look here!' or 'Look there!' Do not go after them or follow them. 24 "For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day.
Matthew and Mark record this second warning to the last-days Jews to not believe in false messiahs. Luke recorded a similar teaching given to religious leaders who were questioning Him, as recorded in Luke 17:22-24 and included here for completeness. As stated earlier, this cannot apply to Christians, now or during the Tribulation, since Christians know that Jesus is the Messiah.		
Jesus is warning the tribulation period Jews not to accept a human messiah who forces them to put his name in their hand or forehead. John 5 seems to teach that many Jews will not heed this warning from their true Messiah, Jesus. <i>John 5:43 I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.</i>		
Jesus also makes it clear that His Second Coming will be like lightning in the sky. There will be no need for the Jew to wonder if their Messiah has come - it will be for the entire world to witness.		
Matthew 24:28 "For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together. Jumping ahead to Matthew 24:38 "For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 "and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 40 "Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41 "Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.		Luke 17:26 "And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27 "They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 "Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29 "but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. 30 "Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. 31 "In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. 32 "Remember Lot's wife. 33 "Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. 34 "I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. 35 "Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left.36 "Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left." 37 And they answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."

I have again included Jesus teaching in Jerusalem as recorded in Luke 17:26-37 and the Matthew text of chapter 24:38-41 since they help give the full context of Matthew's record of the Olivet Discourse teaching. These verses are possibly referring to the fact that if the Jews do not listen to Jesus' warnings about the Antichrist, and thus fail to flee to the wilderness of Jordan when the abomination occurs, then they will be rounded up (one taken, one left – 50%) and killed in the following persecution of the Antichrist. Jesus teaches that their dead bodies will be left outside for the vultures and eagles. Zechariah 13:8-9 teaches that only one third of the Jews are going to survive this time of Jacob's trouble.

There are other theories about what this very difficult passage is trying to teach, but it seems clear from the context that this cannot be talking about the rapture of the church, as some believe.

Jesus' teaching about "As in the days of Noah" also fits into this mid-tribulation timeframe. Those Jews who have embraced the antichrist as their messiah are living the good life. They have survived two wars of attempted annihilation of the Jews, the law of Moses is back in effect, their long dreamed of third temple is built and being used, and they have a contract with the global leader who has made it all possible. The recent horrors are past and the future looks bright. Then, in one day, their world comes apart when their "messiah" turns on them. The next three and a half years will then become **as in the days of Noah**, a time of **Jacob's trouble**, (for the Jews and the rest of the world).

Jeremiah 30:3 For behold, the days are coming,' says the Lord, 'that I will bring back from captivity My people Israel and Judah,' says the Lord. 'And I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.'" 4 Now these are the words that the Lord spoke concerning Israel and Judah. 5 "For thus says the Lord: 'We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. 6 Ask now, and see, whether a man is ever in labor with child? So why do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in labor, and all faces turned pale? 7 Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the **time of Jacob's trouble**, but he shall be saved out of it.