

“The Spirit and The Kingdom – Pt. 4”

I sense in my spirit that 2024 must be a year of conquering fear in our lives. For the Lord has powerful visitations of His Spirit to place upon us for the manifestation of His Kingdom, that it might be on Earth as it is in Heaven. So with that thought in mind, let's dive into God's Word and discover more about Who He is to us and how that will impact us.

Be aware when men boast of great things that man has accomplished and take great pride in (i.e. built, records set, richest person, etc.). Stay focused on God for those things are transient, but God's Spirit & Gospel of the Kingdom are without end. The first group alone is sinking sand; the second, God's Spirit & Word, are rock. Let's build and encourage others to build upon the Rock, for **Matt. 7:24-25 TPT** says, *“Everyone who hears my teaching and applies it to his life can be compared to a wise man who built his house on an unshakable foundation. 25. When the rains fell and the flood came, with fierce winds beating upon his house, it stood firm because of its strong foundation.”*

Jesus' disciples were enamored with the beauty of Herod's temple in Jerusalem. as found in **Matt. 24:1-2 TPT**. So Jesus prophetically instructed them (v. 2). Later, this then generated three questions from them (v. 3): *“When will these things happen?; and what supernatural sign should we expect to signal your coming (Gr. Parousia = presence); and the completion of this age? The rest of this chapter is an answer to their questions. **SFLB note** on vv. 1-51: “These topics are interwoven and sometimes it is difficult to determine which event is being described. This difficulty is partially resolved with the realization that most prophecy is capable of both a near and a remote fulfillment. **Jesus uses the tragic events surrounding the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 as a picture of conditions preceding His own return.** One should bear this in mind throughout the chapter.”*

Matt. 24:4-5 TPT *“Jesus answered, “At that time deception will run rampant. So beware that you are not fooled! 5. For many will appear on the scene claiming My authority or saying about themselves, ‘I am God’s Anointed,’ & they will lead many astray.”* **SFLB note on 4-14:** *“In warning the disciples against false signs, Jesus sketches the prevailing conditions of their present age down to the very end and states their continuing task. There will be religious deception, social and political upheavals, natural calamities, disloyalty, and persecution – all of which are precursors of the end times. In the midst of the difficulties, the Lord’s followers are to persevere in spreading the gospel.”* These conditions apply to our day & our lives. Let’s take courage & spread the Gospel of the Kingdom.

The Breaking Apart of the World’s System

Matt. 24:6-8 *“You will hear of wars nearby and revolutions on every side, with more rumors of wars to come. **Don’t panic or give in to your fears, for the breaking apart of the world’s systems is destined to happen. But it won’t yet be the end; it will still be unfolding. 7. Nations will go to war against each other and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be terrible earthquakes – seismic events of epic proportions, horrible epidemics and famines in place after place. 8. This is how the first contractions and birth pains of the new age will begin!”** TPT note: “Although it is possible to translate this “the end of the world,” the Hebraic mind-set of the end of days is a transition into a new age of the Messiah’s coming when all things will be restored.”*

Persecution of Believers

Matt. 24:9-11 TPT *“You can expect to be persecuted, even killed; for you will be hated by all the nations because of your love for Me. 10. Then many will stop following Me and fall away (Aram.: “Many will stumble” (or take offense), and they will betray one another & hate one another.*

11. *And many lying prophets will arise, deceiving multitudes and leading them away from the path of truth.”*

Matt. 24:12-14 TPT *“There will be such an increase of sin and lawlessness (“lawlessness/wickedness” 2 Thess. 2:7) that those whose hearts once burned with passion for God and others will grow cold. 13. But **keep your hope** (Strong’s “endure [suffering]”) to the end and you will experience life and deliverance. 14. Yet through it all, **this joyful assurance of the realm of heaven’s kingdom** will be proclaimed all over the world, providing every nation with a demonstration of the reality of God. And after this the end of this age will arrive.” Share heaven’s joy!*

Let’s Have Fearless Faith

In dealing with fear this year, let’s remember Who God is to us! **Psa. 27:1-3 TPT** *“The Lord is my **revelation light** to guide me along the way; He’s the source of my **salvation** to defend me every day. I fear no one! I’ll never turn back and run from you, Lord; surround and protect me.*

*2. When evil ones come to destroy me, they will be the ones who turn back. 3. My heart will not be afraid even if an army rises to attack. I know that You are there for me, so I will not be **shaken**.”* Let’s declare these truths often, for God’s **strength, light & salvation** lessen our need for fear! ***“I fear no one!”***

Selwyn Hughes wrote these words, “Their Days Are Numbered”, on **2 Thess. 2:8 HCSB**, *“The lawless one will be revealed. The Lord Jesus will destroy Him with the ...brightness of His coming.”* “Ezekiel the prophet, speaking centuries ago of the impermanence of anything not founded on kingdom values, said, *“Doom has gone out. The rod [of wickedness] has blossomed; arrogance has bloomed”* (Ezk. 7:10). Note the telltale steps: doom appears, sin blossoms, and pride has budded. And the fruit of all this? Dissolution and decay. When speaking of a prominent figure who will arise in the last days and challenge the authority of God’s wisdom, Moffat refers to him in his translation as “the Lawless One, the doomed One” (2 Thess. 2:3). Those who break the laws of God’s kingdom, which are written into the very

nature of things, are doomed. Perhaps not to-day, nor tomorrow, but inevitably, anything at is against God's kingdom is destined to destruction. It carries within itself the seeds of its own dissolution and decay."

The Book of Exodus is about a **movement** of God's people out of Egypt, led by a man named Moses. The Book of Joshua is about a **man** who leads God's people into the Promised Land & who prefigures Messiah.

Josh. 1:6-9 NKJV are particular for us today, "6. **Be strong and of good courage**, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. 7. Only **be strong and very courageous** that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you: do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. 8. The Book of the Law shall not depart **from your mouth**, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have good success. 9. Have not I commanded you? **Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.**"

The word "strong" is Heb. *chazaq*, and means "be strong, valiant, courageous, manly, strengthened, established, firm fortified, obstinate, mighty. As when David encouraged himself (lit. "made himself strong") in the Lord (1 Sam. 30:6 NKJV "Now David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved (lit. "bitter"), every man for his sons and his daughters. But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.").

Saints, let's go to the Lord not only in prayer, but in remembrance of all that He has done for us (i.e. communion). Let's also declare "from your mouth" Who the Lord is and Who He is to us! Then He will make our way prosperous, and then we will have good success. **Just don't be afraid!**

Phil. 1:25 TPT. Testimony of Kazim, with a gun to his head, “If you want to shoot me, do it. I will happily accept being killed. But remember, if this is not God’s will, you cannot kill me.”