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THE GOSPEL OF JESUS

MAT 24:1-26

BUT THE END IS NOT YET

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Following along in our studies of THE GOSPEL OF JESUS:

1. Jesus has just taught His disciples a valuable lesson through the Widow's selfless giving of all that she had.
 - a) It was also a very practical application of **Matthew 22:34–40 (NKJV) — 34 But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. 35 Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, 36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" 37 Jesus said to him, " 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."**
 - b) And **Proverbs 3:5–6 (NKJV) — 5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.**
 - (1) As I said in the last teaching. The lesson about the Widow and her few pennies – is really not about money at all.
 - (a) And that is where we pick up this teaching – known as **THE OLIVET DISCOURSE**.

II. MATTHEW 24:1–2 (NKJV) — 1 THEN JESUS WENT OUT AND DEPARTED FROM THE TEMPLE, AND HIS DISCIPLES CAME UP TO SHOW HIM THE BUILDINGS OF THE TEMPLE. 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."

A. If there is anything that the Bible teaches us – it shows us that Jesus sees things that we do not and in ways that we do not.

1. He told us that in **Isaiah 55:8–9 (NKJV) — 8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. 9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.**
 - a) The disciples were praising the beauty of the temple:
 - (1) *This temple was originally rebuilt by Zerubbabel and Ezra ([Ezr 6:15](#)), but greatly expanded and improved by Herod. It was the center of Jewish life for almost a thousand years - so much so, that it was customary to swear by the temple ([Mat 23:16](#)), and speaking against the temple could be considered blasphemy ([Act 6:13](#)) - Guzik*

- (2) *The Jewish historian Josephus says that the temple was covered on the outside with gold plates, that were so brilliant that when the sun shone on them, it was blinding to look at. Where there was no gold, there were blocks of marble of such a pure white that strangers, from a distance, thought there was snow on the temple.*
Guzik
- (3) *Some 40 years after Jesus said this, there was a widespread Jewish revolution against the Romans in Palestine, and they enjoyed many early successes. But ultimately, Rome crushed the rebels. In 70 a.d. Jerusalem was leveled, including the temple...*
Guzik
- (4) *It is said that at the fall of Jerusalem, the last surviving Jews of the city fled to the temple, because it was the strongest, most secure building in the city. Roman soldiers surrounded it, and one drunken soldier started a fire that soon engulfed the whole building. Ornate gold detail work in the roof melted down in the cracks between the stone walls of the temple, and to retrieve the gold, the Roman commander ordered that the temple be dismantled stone by stone. The destruction was so complete that today they have true difficulty learning exactly where the temple was.* Guzik
- (a) As you might imagine this brings up a couple of questions in the minds of the disciples.

III. **MATTHEW 24:3 (NKJV) — 3 NOW AS HE SAT ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES, THE DISCIPLES CAME TO HIM PRIVATELY, SAYING, “TELL US, WHEN WILL THESE THINGS BE? AND WHAT *WILL BE* THE SIGN OF YOUR COMING, AND OF THE END OF THE AGE?”**

A. I think are pretty normal questions – don’t you? He then begins to speak of what is to come.

IV. **MATTHEW 24:4–26 (NKJV) — 4 AND JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID TO THEM: “TAKE HEED THAT NO ONE DECEIVES YOU. 5 FOR MANY WILL COME IN MY NAME, SAYING, ‘I AM THE CHRIST,’ AND WILL DECEIVE MANY. 6 AND YOU WILL HEAR OF WARS AND RUMORS OF WARS. SEE THAT YOU ARE NOT TROUBLED; FOR ALL *THESE THINGS* MUST COME TO PASS, BUT THE END IS NOT YET. 7 FOR NATION WILL RISE AGAINST NATION, AND KINGDOM AGAINST KINGDOM. AND THERE WILL BE FAMINES, PESTILENCES, AND EARTHQUAKES IN VARIOUS PLACES. 8 ALL THESE ARE THE BEGINNING OF SORROWS. 9 “THEN THEY WILL DELIVER YOU UP TO TRIBULATION AND KILL YOU, AND YOU WILL BE HATED BY ALL NATIONS FOR MY NAME’S SAKE. 10 AND THEN MANY WILL BE OFFENDED, WILL BETRAY ONE ANOTHER, AND WILL HATE ONE ANOTHER. 11 THEN MANY FALSE PROPHETS WILL RISE UP AND DECEIVE MANY. 12 AND BECAUSE LAWLESSNESS WILL ABOUND, THE LOVE OF MANY WILL GROW COLD. 13 BUT HE WHO ENDURES TO THE END SHALL BE SAVED. 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. 15 “THEREFORE WHEN YOU SEE THE ‘*ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION*,’ SPOKEN OF BY DANIEL THE PROPHET, STANDING IN THE HOLY PLACE” (WHOEVER READS, LET HIM UNDERSTAND), 16 “THEN LET THOSE WHO ARE IN JUDEA FLEE TO THE MOUNTAINS. 17 LET HIM WHO IS ON THE ROOFTOP NOT GO DOWN TO TAKE ANYTHING OUT OF HIS HOUSE. 18 AND LET HIM WHO IS IN THE FIELD NOT GO BACK TO GET HIS CLOTHES. 19 BUT**

WOE TO THOSE WHO ARE PREGNANT AND TO THOSE WHO ARE NURSING BABIES IN THOSE DAYS! 20 AND PRAY THAT YOUR FLIGHT MAY NOT BE IN WINTER OR ON THE SABBATH. 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. 22 AND UNLESS THOSE DAYS WERE SHORTENED, NO FLESH WOULD BE SAVED; BUT FOR THE ELECT'S SAKE THOSE DAYS WILL BE SHORTENED. 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.

- A. Jesus doesn't really answer their first question: "Tell us, when will these things be?"
1. Prophecy is often like that. We want the exact year, month, day and time – but prophecy is often general and when it comes from the mouth of Jesus, it is always true.
 - a) By-the-way, Christians have been arguing over what these predictions actually mean for a very long time, but there are some things we can know – so let's look at it in sections.
 2. **Matthew 24:4–8 (NKJV) — 4 And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. 5 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. 6 And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. 8 All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.**
 - a) This is the time between Jesus' Ascension into heaven and his second coming.
 - (1) False christs', war and rumors thereof, famines, pestilences (pandemic), and earthquakes.
 - (2) I would even go so far as to say that we have seen all of these – past and present - **but the end is not yet**. They are the beginning of labor pains.
 3. **Matthew 24:9-14 (NKJV) — "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. 10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. 11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. 13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved. 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.**
 - a) Christians throughout history have both suffered and experienced great revival!
 - (1) I have been thinking a lot about Nero. *He used the absolute power he possessed to preserve himself at all costs. To Nero, the end always justified the means. When he burned Rome to the ground in July 64 AD and his heinous act became known, he (looked around) for a scapegoat to preserve the State—himself. "Not my fault. It's*

their fault.” And be blamed the Christians!

<https://earlychurchhistory.org/politics/tacitus-on-christians/>

- (2) Accordingly, an arrest was first made of all (Christians) who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, as of hatred against mankind. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired.” Tacitus, *Annals*, 15.44

(a) Sound familiar?

- (i) But the Lord will use all of this to witness to the world!
- (ii) **Revelation 14:6–7 (NKJV) — 6 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.”**
- (iii) ... **but the end is not yet.**

B. **Matthew 24:15 (NKJV) — 15 “Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand),**

1. This could be read as “The abomination that causes the desolation.”
 - a) The “holy place” is the Temple in Jerusalem.
 - b) In 168 BC, the Greek king Antiochus IV Epiphanes invaded Jerusalem and captured the city. He marched into the Jewish temple, erected a statue of the Greek god Zeus, and sacrificed a pig on the altar of incense.
<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/abomination-temple/>
2. The Apostle Paul gives us a little more information about the yet future fulfilment of this: **2 Thessalonians 2:3–4 (NKJV) — 3 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.**
3. **Daniel 12:11 (NKJV) — 11 “And from the time *that* the daily *sacrifice* is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, *there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days.***
 - a) That is 3 1/2 years! – So when the “man of sin”, “the son of perdition” is revealed and “the abomination of desolation is set up” – THEN AND ONLY then can Jesus’ return be figured out.
 - (1) And BTW – that has not happened.....yet.

V. CONCLUSION

- A. Because of these warnings and the 3 1/2 year timeframe – many Christians believe that they will go through the tribulation and some believe Christians will only go through ½ of it.

1. But we must not forget there are many other scriptures that assure us that the Lord will take us home before that:
 - a) **1 Thessalonians 4:16–17 (NKJV) — 16** For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. **17** 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.
 - b) **Matthew 24:36–44 (NKJV) — 36** “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. **37** But as the days of Noah *were*, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. **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. **42** Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. **43** But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. **44** Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.
- (1) Just be ready!