

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW – THE OLIVET DISCOURSE
YOUR KINGDOM COME...ON EARTH – Fall 2022

“...whoever reads, let him understand” Matt. 24:15b

Week 2 – The Foundation of End Times Prophecy

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Lessons link – Scottsdale Bible Church Women’s Bible Study

The Gospel of Matthew...Your Kingdom Come (Fall 2022)

The significance of end times is understanding God’s heart and His remaining faithful to His promises to Israel which impact the world...and God’s faithfulness to the promises that He has made to the Church...Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus.

John 1:12-13 - *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right (the authority) to become children of God (to belong to God), to those who **believe** (trust) in His name (ALL Who Jesus is): who were born (given life), not of blood (this is life from above – being born again), nor of the will of the flesh (not through what is of the flesh which is sinful), nor of the will of man (not of our own doing/not by works of our own), but of **God**.*

“received” – to take to oneself, to take what is offered – Jesus...His gift of forgiveness...as our own...not to refuse what has been offered to us, not to reject.

I Cor. 15:1-4 - *Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,*

John 3:16 - *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

We acknowledge Who Jesus is and who we are (NOT GOD; we are sinners [Eccl. 7:20; Isa. 64:6])...and what He has done...we can cry out to Him and say, “Jesus, Messiah, Redeemer, LORD, God, God the Son, have mercy on me a sinner.”

The promises that God has made to the Church...

The rapture – John 14:1-3; I Thess. 4:16-17; I Cor. 15:51-52.

Our resurrection – because Jesus was raised to life, we will be raised (I Cor. 6:14; II Cor. 4:14; Rom. 8:11; Eph. 2:6; Col. 3:1; Col. 2:12....)

The judgment seat of Christ – receiving rewards or loss of rewards based on how we have lived for Him, how we have served or not served Him (I Cor. 3:9-15; II Cor. 5:9-10)

The marriage of the Lamb – The Church is the Bride and Jesus is the Bridegroom (Rev. 19:7-9).

Our ruling and reigning with Jesus in the Millennial Kingdom (II Tim. 2:12).
End times allows us to understand the Big Picture of Scripture.

2

And, as we continue to ask questions, I'm praying that God will give us the faith to accept His eternal plan because of Who He is. And, that at the end of the study we can proclaim with joy, "I am satisfied in my God"!!

Understanding end times and the message it conveys to mankind – warning some and encouraging others – can give us purpose – in sharing and impacting lives for all eternity! This is a that outlasts our lives!! Impacting others is a purpose that has ETERNAL VALUE

One of the themes of Scripture: the glory of God!

Habakkuk 2:14 tells us that in the Millennial Kingdom – *the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea!!*

God's desire is for the world to know Him! Eze. 38:23; Eze. 39:7-8 (cross reference)

The glory of God is God's desire!

THE FOUNDATION OF END TIMES PROPHECY IS TO VINDICATE GOD – TO DEFEND, DEMONSTRATE, PROVE, TO SHOUT TO THE WORLD - WHO HE IS AND WHAT HE HAS SPOKEN...WHAT HE HAS PROMISED.

If you were asked to explain end times, where IN SCRIPTURE would you begin? Think with me about ETERNITY PAST! Where would we find proof for the end times from ETERNITY PAST?

Jesus came the first time...to die for our sin. (Gen. 3:15; Psa. 16:10; Psa. 22; Isa.53; Psa. 22).

BECAUSE Jesus died and rose...He MUST return physically to earth to fulfill all the promises God gave to Israel through the unconditional covenants concerning the land (Israel does NOT have ALL the land that God promised to them in Gen. 15:18-20), the Messiah/the Seed to sit on King David's throne and rule from Jerusalem, and the blessings which will be poured out in the Millennial Kingdom (Deut. 30:1-10)

Jesus must return to fulfill the promises God made to the Church (rapture verses; guarantee of resurrection [] and His prophecies re: Jesus' physical Second Coming!

How is God vindicated?

REVELATION 1:1-3 - *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place.*

We have been invited, by being given this book of Revelation, to grasp the relationship between God the Father and God the Son. Revelation, that has been viewed as fearful, torturous, foreboding to so many, opens with more than a glimpse...it opens

with a BEHOLDING – a fixed gazing on the love between the God the Father and God the Son.

Here is the glorious gifting from God the Father to God the Son – a gifting of the Revelation of Jesus – of Who He is. In Revelation we see Jesus in His GLORY!

Why this gift? Jesus, in eternity past, offered to lay down His life, He offered to take on the role of a guilt offering. Isa. 53:10 - *But the LORD (JEHOVAH) was pleased to crush Him, (Jesus) putting Him to grief; if He (Jesus) would render Himself as a guilt offering,*

3

We saw Jesus in His humiliation in the Gospels which was prophesied in the OT (Psa. 22; Isa. 53....) In the book of Revelation we see Jesus in all His majesty. We see Him in His GLORY!

Because of Jesus, because of Who He is, because of His suffering, because of His humiliation, He MUST return in GLORY! (John 17:1-2)

And, when Jesus returns in GLORY, He will be visible to the entire human race.

Matt. 24:30 - *Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

Phil. 2:10-11 - *every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*

Let's further look at God's vindication! I had asked where do we see the beginning of end times in Scripture? Let's think about Genesis. Genesis provides us with the key to what God is planning.

Have you ever considered that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit knew love within the Godhead? God had to know love. God is love (I John 4:7-21). God created man to have a relationship with man. To create man in His own image. AND, God gave man dominion over the earth/every living thing. (Gen. 1:26-28). Dominion means to rule over, to nurture, to bring governance over. Man was created to rule the earth – Gen. 1:26; Psa. 8:3. Man would be God's representative -- co-ruler with God.

Man was placed in a physical paradise on earth – Gen. 2:8-17. Physical isn't bad – this is God's idea. God created a physical earth, planets, galaxies!!! God declared that all of it was very good (Gen. 1:31) – excellent, fantastic – not substandard, not second rate.

The original plan was ruined by sin. Sin caused man to lose his privilege, priority, and place. The ground was cursed and produced thistles and thorns. Man would know hard toil in working the ground. Woman knew birth pains. Man – man and woman – Adam and Eve were kicked out of Eden. Mankind was separated from God immediately.

God's plan/His goal: to restore/to reconcile. God has chosen to restore and reconcile His original plan. HE MUST. There is no Plan B, C, D...X, Y, Z. There is only Plan A!

This is the foundation for Biblical prophecy.

God has chosen to restore and reconcile His original plan. **The foundation for Biblical prophecy: GOD's restoring and reconciling everything that was lost. For God's credibility to be intact, everything must be restored. God's CHARACTER is at stake!**

What was LOST? **Everything!!!** Mankind's relationship with God was lost. AND, the earth was cursed! Both the earth and man groan for its/our creation (Rom. 8:20-23).

Because God is God – all will be restored and even enhanced! Jesus will be ruling and reigning on earth: Psalm 2; Psa. 110; Isaiah 9:6. Conditions on earth in the Millennial Kingdom after JESUS establishes His kingdom: Isaiah 11.

4

GOD IS IN THE PROCESS OF RESTORING HIS ORIGINAL PLAN FOR MAN
AND FOR THE WORLD.

THIS IS THE FOUNDATION OF BIBLICAL PROPHECY.

God has committed Himself to fulfill His unconditional/unilateral covenants (Heb. 6:13 – He swore by HIMSELF when He made the covenant w/ Abraham) .

HOW DO I KNOW GOD'S PLAN A CAN NEVER BE THWARTED? Deut. 30:1-6; Isa. 2:2; Isa. 9:6; Isa. 11; Isa. 54:4-8; Isa. 62:1-7; Jer. 31:31-36; Eze. 40-48; Dan. 9:24-27; Zech. 12:10; Zech. 4:4, 16-21; Luke 1:33-35; John 14; Rev. 20-22.

AND, re: man being given dominion...

Dan. 7:13-14, 27 - *"I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. ¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed. ... Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'*

Jesus will restore dominion to man in the kingdom of God. It will be restored to us! Should we understand this literally? Did you understand Jesus being born of a virgin literally? What about Jesus birth/incarnation in Bethlehem? Did that literally occur? Did Jesus literally perform miracles? Was Jesus literally crucified? Did Jesus literally rise from the dead?

If there's no Millennial Kingdom, what then do you do with all the promises God made to Israel through the Abrahamic Covenant, the Land Covenant, the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant? God's promises of the land, the Messiah seated on the

throne of David, and the covenant blessings will all be fulfilled in the Millennial Kingdom!

God delivering on His promises to Israel impacts the world as...

Gen. 12:3 – through the physical descendants of Abraham...*all the families of the earth will be blessed.*

Gen. 18:18 – God promised to make Abraham and his physical descendants an instrument of blessing for the world!

And so, the restoration to God’s original plan is the foundation of Biblical prophecy
Have you ever thought of end times in this way? THINK OF IT IN THIS WAY!!

THE FOUR WORDS THAT SUMMARIZE THE MESSAGE OF THE BIBLE

CREATION FALL REDEMPTION RESTORATION

The first chapter of the Bible which tells us of God’s original plan for the creation and man sets the stage for end times!

God Himself assures us of this elsewhere: “I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times

5

things not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose’” (Isa. 46:9b–10).

May we set our hearts to understand the entirety of Scripture!

Is this our desire?

QUESTIONS

Did you have a V8 moment? What was it?

Do you have any questions re: the verses used to explain coming to faith in Jesus?

What is the foundation of end times prophecy?

Why will God restore His initial/original plan for creation and man?

What are the four words which summarize the Bible?

Will this lesson change the way you live?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

Reread Week 2’s handout with Bible references.

Jot down observations and questions.

What might you share with someone this week re: what you learned?

Read the Chronology of End Times Events.

Peruse the End Times chart.

Read Week 3's handout when you receive it.

THE CHRONOLOGY OF END TIMES EVENTS

THE RAPTURE

The rapture of the church is the event in which God “snatches away” all those “in Christ” who have been placed into the body of Christ by the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus). I Cor. 12:13 - *For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.* God will resurrect all believers “in Christ” who have died, give them glorified bodies, and take them from the earth, along with all living believers, who will also be given glorified bodies at that time.

The rapture is described primarily in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18, 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, and in John 14:1-3. The rapture appears to be the next event in the eschatological timeline. The rapture is imminent; no other biblical prophecy needs to be fulfilled before the rapture happens.

The second coming of Jesus is in two “phases.” The rapture is to be distinguished from the physical second coming of Jesus. At the rapture, the Lord comes “in the clouds” to meet us “in the air” (1 Thessalonians 4:17). At the physical second coming, the Lord descends to the earth to stand on the Mount of Olives, resulting in a great earthquake followed by a defeat of God’s enemies (Zechariah 14:3–4).

The word *rapture* does not occur in the Bible. The term comes a translation of the Greek word *harpazo*. The Greek word *harpazo* (found in I Thess. 4:17) means seize by force; *snatch* up, suddenly and decisively; taken by an *open display* of force. The concept of the “carrying off” or the rapture of the Church is clearly taught in the NT and we see foreshadowings of the rapture in the OT (Enoch; Elijah).

FOLLOWING THE RAPTURE/IN HEAVEN:

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST/THE BEMA SEAT

Rom. 14:10–12 - *For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ....¹² So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.*

II Cor. 5:10 - ¹⁰*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

In context, it is clear that both passages refer to believers in Jesus, not unbelievers. The judgment seat of Christ, therefore, involves believers giving an account of their lives to Christ. Believers, when standing before the Judgment Seat of Christ (II Cor. 5:10), will be judged according to their works since coming to Jesus. This judgment does NOT determine whether they are saved or lost. That has already been determined by Christ's sacrifice on our behalf (1 John 2:2) and our faith in Him (John 3:16). Our sins – the sins of those who have placed their trust in Jesus – were judged at the cross. All of our sins are forgiven, and we will never be condemned for them (Romans 8:1).

This judgment will determine the reward or loss of reward for service on the part of each individual believer. Worthwhile eternally valuable activities will be rewarded (including motivation!); useless activities will suffer loss (I Cor. 3:15).

THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB

According to Revelation 19:7, the bride, (the Church/the body of Christ) has made herself ready. In Revelation 19:8 she is given fine linen which is said to be “the righteous acts of the saints.” The marriage (marriage ceremony) takes place in heaven after the Judgment Seat of Christ, directly before the second coming.

FOLLOWING THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH/ON EARTH:

THE RISE OF THE ANTICHRIST

After the church is taken out of the way (2 Thessalonians 2:7–8), a satanically empowered man will gain worldwide control with promises of peace (Rev. 6:1-2 – first seal...one who sat on a white horse with a bow and no arrows and a crown [laurel wreath not a diadem or a royal crown] on his head; Rev. 13:1ff – the beast (the antichrist) arises from the sea; Daniel 9:27 – the antichrist makes a covenant with the many). The antichrist will be aided by another man, called the false prophet, who heads up a religious system that requires worship of the antichrist (Revelation 19:20).

THE TRIBULATION

A period of seven years (Dan. 9:27) in which God’s judgment/wrath is poured out on the entire world (Rev. 6 through 18) - on sinful humanity – for rebellion against God (Zeph. 1:15, 17, 18; Joel 3:12-14; Rev. 6:16-17). The tribulation will occur on earth during the time that the Church is in heaven (Rev. 3:10). The tribulation is a time of intense trouble (Dan. 12:1). It is a time of intense evangelism (Rev. 7:9-17)! The Tribulation will be unprecedented in its affliction, and unprecedented in its evangelism. It will be culminated by the personal return of Jesus Christ to earth (Rev. 19). The Tribulation will begin with the signing of a peace treaty with Israel by the antichrist, the man of sin, the beast of Revelation 13 (Dan. 9:26-27).

THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

At the midway point of the seven-year Tribulation, the antichrist will break his covenant with Israel. The antichrist will set himself up in the Temple in Jerusalem exalting himself and demanding worship (Matt. 24:15; II Thess. 2:4). The remnant of Jewish people will flee into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God (Petra? Isa. 63:1 – Bozrah/Edom in the Jordan). “They” shall feed the Jewish people there for one thousand two hundred and sixty days – 3.5 years (Rev. 12:6). A great persecution breaks out against all those who believe in Christ (Daniel 12:11; Mark 13:14; Revelation 12:17).

THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON

At the end of the Tribulation, all the nations of the world will gather for war against Israel (Zech. 12:1-9; Zech. 14:1-3; Rev. 16:12-16) with the intent of destroying Israel. Armageddon means “Mount of Megiddo,” referring to a location approx. 60 miles north of Jerusalem. This is the site for the final battle of mankind prior to Jesus’ second coming. The battle of Armageddon involves multiple phases.

JESUS' PHYSICAL SECOND COMING

Jesus will return to earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords at His second coming. He will fulfill prophecy. He will proclaim the day of vengeance of our God (Isa. 61:2). He will engage in battle against those coming against Israel. The antichrist and the false prophet will be cast alive into the lake of fire. He will judge the Gentile nations. He will restore the nation of Israel (the 1/3 left). He will bind Satan. He will set up His kingdom on earth.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS

Christ will judge the survivors of the Tribulation, separating the righteous from the wicked as “sheep” and “goats” (Matthew 25:31–46). The righteous will enter the Millennial Kingdom in mortal bodies; the wicked will be cast into “everlasting punishment.”

THE BINDING OF SATAN

Satan will be bound and held in a bottomless pit for the next 1,000 years (Revelation 20:1–3).

THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

At Jesus' second coming, following Armageddon and the judgment of the nations, Jesus will establish His kingdom in Jerusalem. Jesus will reign from King David's throne in Jerusalem in the Millennial Temple for 1,000 years. The Millennial Kingdom will be a time of relative peace and prosperity on earth (Psa. 2; Isa. 11; Isa. 60-62; Revelation 20), and evangelism (Zech. 8:23). Animal sacrifices will be offered in a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem (Ezekiel 40–48; Mal. 3:3).

THE LAST BATTLE

At the end of the 1,000 years, Satan will be released from his prison (bottomless pit) for a short time. He will deceive the nations once again. A rebellion against the Lord will ensue; however, the rebellion will be quickly defeated (Revelation 20:7–10). Satan will be cast into the lake of fire, never to reappear.

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

All non-believers in the grave will be brought forth. All the wicked from all eras of history will be resurrected to stand before God in a final judgment (Revelation 20:11–15). The verdicts are read, and all of sinful humanity is cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14).

THE ETERNAL STATE

God completely remakes the heavens and the earth. It is at this time that God wipes away all tears and there will be no more curse, pain, death, or sorrow. The New Jerusalem descends from heaven, and the children of God will enjoy eternity with Him (Revelation 21–22).