

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW – THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

YOUR KINGDOM COME...ON EARTH – Fall 2022

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

Week 7 – “Then they shall know that I am the LORD”

October 25, 2022

Please turn to the references that I’ve noted...those without the verses written in the handout.

Luke 19:11-13

Jesus, on His final trip to Jerusalem for Passover, in a parable, told those who had gathered with Him...who thought that the kingdom of God would immediately appear... that He was not giving them the kingdom at that time. Jesus told of a nobleman who would be leaving for a far country to receive a kingdom and then return. The nobleman gave ten servants one mina each (equating to three months’ wages) and told them to do business until He returned. Jesus used this parable to dispel any rumors that the time of the kingdom on earth had arrived.

The first 69 weeks (483 years) of the 70 Weeks Prophecy bring us to Jesus, Messiah the Prince, riding into Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey, when He was hailed as King of Israel. When Jesus told Jerusalem that He had wanted to gather them but they were not willing (Matt. 23:37-39), He had already presented Himself as “Messiah the Prince.” (prince means “ruler”).

Luke 19:37-44 -

Jesus prophesied judgment upon Israel. He told the people that the Romans would destroy Jerusalem and the Temple (2nd). The people along with their children would be leveled to the ground...**because you did not know the time of your visitation.**

Jesus’ visitation had been revealed in the book of Daniel approx. 550 years ahead of Jesus’ triumphal entry. He was appointed to enter Jerusalem on the 10th day of Nisan, “Lamb Selection Day” (Ex. 12:3-7). The 70 Weeks Prophecy holds much significance. God desires that we understand all Scripture!

After the 69 weeks, after Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, we understand that there’s a GAP (duration unknown) BEFORE the 70th week in Daniel’s prophecy which speaks of the Tribulation.

The “gap” includes...

- Jesus’ death, resurrection, ascension,
- PENTECOST – the Holy Spirit descends and indwells believers in Jesus.
- Destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 AD.
- NOTE: there are approximately 38 years between Jesus’ crucifixion/death/resurrection and the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 AD. We so clearly see a GAP in the succession of the 70 weeks. The flow of the 70 weeks is broken.

- AND In God's prophetic/future timeframe, the GAP continues until...the 70th week where we read of "the" antichrist ("the prince who is to come") will confirm

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(in the Hebrew [*gabar*] – he will make strong]) a covenant with the many/Israel which launches "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7) – the Tribulation.

The Church is not within the first 69 weeks of the 70 Weeks Prophecy and we do not find the Church in the 70th/final week.

In explaining the arrival of Jesus' first coming from Dan. 9:26, we can share that history documents the destruction of Jerusalem and the 2nd Temple by the Romans in 70 AD – approx. 38 years following Jesus' crucifixion. The OT proclaims that the Messiah had to come BEFORE 70 AD! AND, Rabbis have taught that "If Israel was worthy, the Messiah would come in the clouds. If Israel was not worthy, the Messiah would come on a donkey!" (Talmud: Sanhedrin 98a)

The purpose of the book of Daniel:

- To assert that the God of Israel is sovereign, even over the powerful nations that surrounded the Jewish people. God's chosen nation had been conquered and dispersed by a mighty empire that did not acknowledge God. Would Babylon's rule remain forever over Israel? Had God forgotten His promises? Daniel was inspired to write that Babylon would fall to another empire, which in turn would fall to yet another great kingdom, and another, and another (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, antichrist's kingdom). History would continue in this pattern until God judged all the Gentile empires and established His everlasting rule.
- To look forward to the day when God would restore Israel. Israel was indeed suffering punishment for its disobedience. Israel would suffer under Gentile powers until the end of the Tribulation (Rev. 11:1-2). The time is coming when God will gather His children to Him again. He would establish His messianic kingdom which would last forever. God's promises of ultimate restoration are sure!

The Biblical term "last days" does not always refer to the same thing. "Last days" and "last times" can refer to the current Church Age, or those phrases can refer to the future culmination of God's plan for Israel. How do we know the difference? We know the difference from understanding the context of the passage we are reading and to whom the passage is written.

END TIMES TERMS (NASB)

We must distinguish between the "last days" of the Church Age (Christendom) and the "last days" of Israel's Tribulation. Look up the verses w/ references only.

ISRAEL

“latter days”

- Deut. 4:30 – Moses is addressing Israel, *When you are in distress and all these things happen to you, in the latter days you will return to the LORD your God and listen to His voice.*
- Deut. 31:29 - *For I know that after my death you will behave very corruptly and turn from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will confront you in the latter days, because you will do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger with the work of your hands.*

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- Jer. 30:24 - *The fierce anger of the LORD will not turn back until He has performed and accomplished the intent of His heart. In the latter days you will understand this, consider it.*
- Daniel 2:28 - *However, there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in the latter days. This was your dream and the visions in your mind while on your bed.*
- Daniel 10:14 - *Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the latter days, because the vision pertains to the days still future.*

“last days”

- Isa. 2:2 – Millennial Kingdom - *Now it will come about that in the last days the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; and all the nations will stream to it.*
- Jer. 23:20
- Eze. 38:16
- Hos. 3:5
- Micah 4:1
- Acts 2:17

“last day”

- John 6:39-40, 44, 54
- John 11:24
- John 12:48

“latter years”

- Eze. 38:8 – War of Gog and Magog - *After many days you will be visited. In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword and gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely.*

“time of the end”

- Daniel 8:13-17
- Daniel 12:9 - *And he said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.”*

“end of time”

- Daniel 12:4
- Daniel 12:1-2

“end time”

- Daniel 12:9

“end of the age”

- Daniel 12:13
- Matt. 24:3

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THE CHURCH AGE – Christendom – including true believers and those who are not true believers (Matt. 13 [the wheat and the tares]; Acts 20:29; I Tim. 1:18-20; II Pet. 3:17; Jude vv 4, 12-13, 16-19)

“last days/last times/last hour”

- Heb. 1:2 - *as in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds. During Jesus’ first coming.*
- I Pet. 1:20 - *He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you. During Jesus’ first coming.*
- I John 2:18 - *Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. Not “the” antichrist; therefore, not the Tribulation timeframe.*

“later times”

- I Tim. 4:1 - *But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons. Apostasy within the Church.*

“last days”

- II Tim. 3:1-7 - *But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. ² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, slanderers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ holding to a form of godliness although they have denied its power; avoid such people as these. ⁶ For among them are those who slip into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses, ⁷ always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Self-absorbed.*
- II Tim. 4:3-4

- II Pet. 3:3-4 - *Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming scoffing at God.*

“last time”

- Jude 18 - *that they were saying to you, “In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts. Apostasy in the Church.*

Last days for Israel – Tribulation/Millennial Kingdom

Last days for the Church Age – apostasy

Nothing more must occur on God’s prophetic calendar/time clock for the Church. The next event is the rapture.

I Thess. 4:15-18 - *For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who*

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are asleep. 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 (I Cor. 12:13) 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. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

The rapture is imminent. It’s upon us. Jesus is in the process of coming (Rev. 1:7; Rev. 22:20). There are no signs before the rapture.

The rapture does not begin the Tribulation. The signing of the covenant between the antichrist and Israel begins the Tribulation (Dan. 9:27)

How will the antichrist make his way front and center? In Revelation 5:7 we read that Jesus will take from God the Father the scroll with 7 seals. Jesus will break the seals.

Revelation 6:1-2 - *Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, ‘Come and see.’ ² And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer. The first rider of the four riders of the Apocalypse is on a white horse. This rider is deceptive. Satan deceives (Rev. 12:9). Satan will empower the antichrist (Rev. 13). Jesus first told the disciples in His teaching on the Mt. of Olives, “Take heed that no one deceives you”?*

Why would the antichrist appear when the first seal is broken – at the start? To broker a treaty? Why? (Again, I’m thinking that the rapture has already occurred, and the Tribulation has not as yet been launched.)

Ezekiel 38 – the War of Gog and Magog - several nations will come against Israel. This is not Armageddon when all nations at the end of the Tribulation will come against Israel.

It appears that the main participants of this war will be Russia, Iran and Turkey who will form an alliance. Several allies will join them.

Eze. 38:1-6

Gog – title of the leader

Magog – ancestors – Scythians who settled north of the Baltic Sea in what is now Russia

Rosh – “chief”

Persia – Iran

Cush – Sudan, Ethiopia, possibly Eritrea in Africa (east of Sudan and north of Ethiopia)

Put – Libya, Algeria, Tunisia

Gomer, Meschech, and Tubal – Turkey (and possibly Germany and Austria)

Togarmah – Turkey, Armenia

“Far north” – Moscow is far north of Israel. What about the surrounding Arab countries surrounding Israel? Not one of the Arab nations immediately surrounding Israel is listed as participating in this campaign against Israel. Perhaps it’s because they’ve been crippled by a recent Arab-Israeli war. Perhaps. (Psa. 83; Isa. 17)

Eze. 38:8-13

Gog will be turned around by God and led out with his armies. Russia’s motive in invading Israel will be to take plunder and booty...to take Israel’s wealth (Eze. 38:12ff).

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There are nations that will not be in agreement with Russian, Iran, and Turkey and their allies. Sheba, Dedan (Saudi Arabia) and Tarshish (thought to be Spain) will be most vocal against the attack!

Israel will be living without walls. Israel will be dwelling “safely”? Safely can also mean securely, confidently. The IDF/Israeli Defense Force has always displayed confidence in themselves. And, dwelling safely may very well be the way of life in Israel following an Arab-Israeli war based on Psa. 83 in which Israel will be victorious.

Eze. 38:14-16 Israel will stand alone when this massive northern military coalition of nations invades from the far north. BUT GOD!!!

Eze. 38:18-23

God will intervene to preserve Israel and destroy the enemies attacking her. The Lord will bring about this invasion? Why?

The Lord clearly tells us that the nations will know and understand that this has happened by God’s hand. *Then they shall know that I am the LORD.*”

Following God’s powerful victory over the attackers, wouldn’t the world desire to make peace with Israel? What a seemingly perfect time for the antichrist to step onto the scene and solve all the problems by brokering a seven-year peace treaty with Israel (Dan. 9:27).

The great deceiver! The peace treaty initiated by the antichrist will launch the seven-year Tribulation (Dan. 9:27). The antichrist will craft this strong covenant with Israel... putting Israel under his thumb!!

QUESTIONS

What was new to you?

How are the pieces of the big picture of the Bible fitting into place?

What are your questions concerning the Week 7 lesson?

Why is this lesson entitled "Then they shall know that I am the LORD"?

Can you think of any people to share this with?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

Read through Week 7's handout w/ the references.

Follow the two charts you've received.

Read Eze. 39

Jot down observations and questions.

Continue looking for answers from Scripture.

Share this aspect of end times as it speaks to Israel with at least one person.

Read Week 8's handout when you receive it.