

FF Notes for Episode 11 - Matthew 24 – Olivet Discourse Part 1

The Olivet Discourse (the OD), as it is called because he is on the Mt. of Olives talking to his disciples.

Matt 23:37-39. Jesus longs for Jerusalem, the city of the king. Shouldn't we care about what our Lord cares about and long for what he longs for?

We covered pre-trib Dispensationalism before this because it puts a certain spin on the Olivet Discourse. I was taught this is not an age of grace teaching, so Jesus was not teaching the Mystery. Under the assumption that the whole Grace Administration time period is the mystery revealed to Paul, that means that the rapture is part of that mystery of the church, and the rapture would carry away the church independent of the events Jesus is describing here. Therefore, the OD is describing events for the "tribulation saints" who are "left behind" after the rapture.

WE NEED TO MEASURE OUR BELIEFS ABOUT THE SYSTEM OF DISPENSATIONS OR ADMINISTRATIONS AGAINST WHAT THE WORD OF GOD SAYS, WHAT JESUS CHRIST SAYS, AND NOT DISTANCE OURSELVES FROM WHAT HE SAYS BECAUSE WE WERE TOLD WE MUST ASSUME THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO BORN AGAIN CHRISTIANS IN THE AGE OF GRACE.

I'm going to point out a number of reasons why I do believe this is for the body of Christ. If you don't agree, that's ok. There are some good reasons why sincere people with good Bible knowledge believe that, and we will look at those reasons. God can still give you greater understanding about this important sermon of Jesus as we look at it closely together.

Who is Jesus talking to? His disciples who need to know details about his coming, his parousia, and the end of the age. It seems far-fetched right off the bat to assume that he is talking to some future group of Christ-followers (so-called "tribulation saints") that he hasn't even identified. How would believers reading this for the next 2,000 year know this, without a dispensational theologian to tell them what to think? That would certainly be mysterious, bordering on deceptive. We must always put the text of what the Word is saying above our dispensational system rather than exalting our system and squeezing the text to agree with it. As we go through this, we will look at the pronouns Jesus uses to tell us what things apply to what group of people.

In John 14 – 17, Jesus is talking to the same group of people during the same week about the comforter coming, about love, etc. We read and teach that as being directly applicable to the church today. Why should we see this as different? Why should we say that the Olivet Discourse is to Jews saved by works and minimize its significance to the church?

Many will come in my name saying I am the Christ. Many leaders will come in his name saying I am anointed.

24:3-5. The first thing Jesus mentions is “see that no one leads you astray...” That means deception will be a big problem. If we, the church, do not take all he said to heart, then we are more easily deceived.

Remember Jeremiah. The revelation from God that J spoke was that the Babylonian captivity was going to happen and those who didn't resist would survive. That was kind of negative. The false prophets whom the king liked were speaking lies that sounded more positive. 'The Lord our God is with us. He will protect us, and we need to fight against the Babylonians'. The point as this relates to the OD is that Jesus is not pulling any punches laying out the negs of what will happen. There will be deceivers who will say, 'Don't listen to those crazy end-times people. They're negative. God will bless us, and we will live abundantly until the rapture and we don't have to worry about this stuff.'

24:6-8. Nation against nation. Ethnos. Ethnic strife. Always wars, famines, earthquakes. Must be a concentration. Where does the Bible guarantee that the Rapture is before this? Beginning of birth pangs. Something starting that will run its course until complete. This is letting us know the Day of the LORD is near. As we covered in Episode 7, Isaiah 13 & 1Thess 5 both say the DOTL is like birth pains. Don't be afraid. Don't be alarmed. We know this is coming and trust the Word. Covid 19 a little preview. Iraq war cost \$1Trillion. The government is spending \$4 Trillion on Covid? Will it help the church if we say this is negative; don't think about it? If we are afraid to read it and talk about it, how prepared is the church to experience it? Which will better prepare the church? Avoiding the subject or teaching that this is the necessary home stretch before our Lord comes, triumphs over the forces of evil and finally rules in righteousness over a restored earth?

24:9-14 The world gets even more rotten and the love of most grows cold. He who endures to the end shall be saved.

That would be works. Endures is hupomeno (v), which is enabled by the presence of God in Christ in us. Enduring to the end is still works—looks like hard work. Later, in Ephesians salvation that came on Pentecost is completely by grace, not of works. Also can know that we have received eternal life salvation because we have the earnest of the spirit and we are sealed unto the day of redemption. Can someone who has received that, lose it?

This problem kept me convinced for years that this OD cannot be addressing the church.

What it means it he who endures and survives to the end, when Jesus comes in 24:29-31, will be rescued out of the great tribulation in which many believers are being martyred.

24:15-22. There is the abomination of desolation, which we know is the midpoint of the 70th week. Then begins the Great Tribulation and martyrdom. It is centered around Jerusalem and Judea. We do not know what the extent of it will be in the USA. It is cut short before the end of the 70th Week.

What cuts it short? The gathering of the elect in 24:29-31, which is clearly near the cosmic disturbances of the 6th seal. "Gather" is the same Greek root word at "gathering together" in 2 Thess 2:1.

What Can We Know For Sure?

Before His Kingdom is established on earth will be times of greatest deception under the antichrist.

Greatest tribulation ever under the antichrist. God will cut it short.

Many will fall away. Jesus warns his followers to stay faithful. He promises rewards to those who are faithful and consequences to those who are not.

Jesus confirms the authority of Daniel's prophecy.

There is a gathering event after the 6th seal. The Rapture?