

FF Notes for Episode 18 – Olivet Discourse Part 3

Song segment from “Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burnin’” by Rev. Gary Davis also performed by the band Hot Tuna

Matt 24:34-35. Truly is say, this generation shall not pass.... Heaven and earth will pass away but not my words... It could as easily be saying “this generation” or “that very generation.” The disciples/hearers would have probably thought he meant during our lifetime. Jesus wanted them to think that. He has wanted every generation of believers to take this seriously. “All these things” and they haven’t all happened.

Preterist - one who holds that the prophecies in the Bible about the End Times have already been fulfilled.

Preterist would say this came to pass with the destruction of Jerusalem. This has been a long debate about what is past and what is future. Low hanging fruit. Sometimes prophecies are fulfilled in part and more fully at a later time.

Answering Preterism

- Was the abomination of desolation then?
- Were there false christs with great signs?
- Was there the greatest tribulation that ever was or will be?
- Were there the cosmic disturbances?
- Did Jesus come on the clouds for all to see?

Matt 24:36-39. **Days of Noah**

No one knows the day or hour. **What day, what hour?** 26:42 the day your Lord will come. It must refer back to 24:30, 31, 37.

Simple interpretation—low hanging fruit

People going on with normal life not thinking anything big was about to happen.

Utter destruction and the end of an age was upon them.

Two groups of people: scoffers who were not ready, believers who were ready.

That’s how it will be right before Jesus gathers the elect and the wrath comes on those who were not ready. The clear message is to be ready!

Matt 24:40-44 **One taken the other left**

He says clearly that the point is to watch and be ready. The “night” of those days will be dark, don’t get tired and sleep. Watch. The bottom line is the same as the Noah analogy: good things happen to those who are ready... bad things happen to those who are not ready. **So be ready!**

Ironic that a cornerstone of the pre-trib doctrine is imminence. Pre-trib would say this section is not to the church but to those left behind, the tribulation saints. Yet they use this saying that no one knows the day or hour. Here, Jesus means the day or hour of the gathering in Matt 24:31, which pre-trib believes is more than 3 ½ years after the rapture. The point of that is like the fig tree, you will know the season, so WATCH. If the rapture could happen any day with no prior signs, what are we watching for?

Notice how strongly connected 1 Thess 5:1-8 is connected with this message. Right after describing the rapture in 1 Thess 4, Paul says:

- No need that I write you. Because they knew about the Day of the LORD from the prophets and the words of Jesus.
- Day of the LORD comes like a thief in the night. Jesus says that here. Right after the gathering in Matt 24:31, the Day of the LORD comes on those who were not ready.
- Peace and safety, like the people in the days of Noah thought.
- Don't be in darkness, don't slumber—Watch. This is exactly what Jesus says here.
- These connections are strong evidence that the gathering of Matt 24:31 is the same gathering or rapture as 1 Thess 4:16,17.

Matt 24:45-51.

Some believers I know read this and think, these people are losing their salvation and I can't lose my salvation, so this is some different group of people. They are in Jesus's time so this must refer to people who are under the law and are saved by works and not by grace.

The first thing we should be thinking is what does this tell us about what the will of the Lord Jesus is! His standards for how his followers should live do not change, other than keeping the law, which is not at issue here. We should not be thinking about how we can excuse ourselves from what this is saying. We should think, how can I and how should I apply what the Lord Jesus Christ is saying, not why should I ignore what he is saying.

This is a downside of the dispensational teaching that there is some theoretical future group of "tribulation saints" who are "left behind" after the rapture, which occurs before any of these difficulties happen. Then we are left to explain why the Lord Jesus has different standards for that theoretical group than for the church now who is saved by grace. It can't be that so-called "tribulation saints" will be saved by keeping the law, because "by the deeds of the law, no flesh shall be saved". We believe that our works cannot save us, only by the savior dying in our place to take away our sins are we saved. Is there going to be some future group that didn't believe in Jesus before the rapture, but when the secret rapture happens, they are going to be able to save themselves by works? Whereas mature believers who have had their lifetime to learn of him in relative freedom could not be saved by their own works. This theory just does not make sense on a number of levels.

The message of all these parables is to be watchful and finish faithful at his return. That should be our main focus. We'll come back to talk about the consequences and who is receiving the consequences, but our spiritual heart and minds should be saying, "my Lord and Savior is giving me very important instructions here. I'm going to pay attention and obey what he is telling me."

24:51. If you're cut in pieces, can you be assigned a place? Can you weep and gnash your teeth? So the proper understanding is that the slave would be beaten... punished. We can't relate to slavery so that sounds awful to us, but then it was culturally accepted and expected. A parable like this has one major point. The point here is that the Lord will be displeased if we are not watching.

25:1-13. Parable of the 10 Virgins – Oil in your lamp

The low hanging fruit of this parable that is clear to understand is that the 5 wise had something that the 5 foolish did not have. It is not transferable. If you are not ready, someone who is ready cannot give you theirs. You must have your own. You must be ready!

25:13 is the punchline—the main point of the parable. Again the point is emphasized—watch because you don't know the day and hour. We know that to be ready, we must have believed and received salvation through Jesus Christ. When we believe we receive the Holy Spirit, which is often symbolized by oil. That interpretation does not entirely fit, because someone may have been saved and not be watching. Our Lord is telling us here that he values watching and joyfully being ready to greet the bridegroom. A biblical understanding of the end-times helps us be prepared to be among those who do not apostatize, who do not slumber. We will be ready to participate in those events and be obedient to what our Lord Jesus wants us to do. Another teacher I heard recently thinks the oil symbolizes intimacy with our Lord Jesus. Whether or not that is the exact interpretation, intimacy with Christ would be very good oil to have in our lamps if we are alive when all these things come to pass.

WATCH is at odds with imminence teaching. I beseech you, brothers and sisters, heed this message of WATCH. Please do not blow it off thinking this does not apply to me. Maybe these teaching sessions have not persuaded you. Maybe you still think pre-trib makes more sense. If you believe that this does not apply directly to you, can you see the seriousness with which Jesus is presenting this admonition to watch? Please pray and meditate on what the Savior does want you to know about this.

Parable of the talents is very familiar to us.

Matt 25:22-23. Message is that our faithfulness here in this life is determining what we will be doing in the kingdom when it comes.

Matt 25:25-30. The worthless servant doesn't really know the master at all. He thought more about his own fear than the will of the master.

Matt 25:31-33. **Parable of Sheep and Goats.** Is this saying that an individual who does good deeds will have eternal life and someone who doesn't do good deeds will go to the lake of fire? That would be salvation by works. This says Jesus is separating the nations. This is more likely about judging nations not judging individuals. Lord Jesus will rule and judge the nations.

In these parables Jesus himself tells we will see a different side of him at the return.

Conclusions from the parables

- The testing of the end times will sort out those who are ready from those who are not.
- The kingdom will be a blessing for those who prepare themselves.
- Those who are ready will be rewarded and given responsibility in the kingdom.
- Those not ready will experience wrath and/or punishment
- We who are saved should WATCH with endurance (hupomeno), which is empowered by the Spirit of God in us.

How should we live in light of all of this? We see the stage set. Do we buy food and guns and ammunition and set up strongholds to try to ride it out as safely as we can? Wouldn't that be like the servant who buried the talent? We want to get in the game! This is the Superbowl. Would an NFL player call in sick for the Superbowl so he'd be safe and comfortable? We want to be embracing this plan. Be like Daniel. We want what our Lord and Savior wants. We want to be giving our all in a way that is pleasing to him. Church leaders should be meeting and envisioning how they will operate in these last days.