The Olivet Discourse

Prelude to Discussion

- The Body of Christ (the church) does not exist at this time
- The Apostles are Galileans (Jews) and have a Jewish perspective with their questions
- The Abrahamic Covenant (Pic) – God to redeem a remnant of His inheritance
- The Disobedience Cycle (Pic)
- The Purpose of the Tribulation Period
    - In General
    - Specific insight from Gabriel (Dan 9:24)
        - *"To finish the transgression"*
        - *"To make an end of sins"*
        - *"To make reconciliation for iniquity"*
        - *"To bring in everlasting righteousness"*
        - *"To seal up vision & prophecy"*
        - *"To anoint the Most Holy"*
- Correlation with the Prophetic Books of the OT
    - Zechariah (14)
    - Joel (3)
    - Daniel (7; 9;12)

Common Problems with the Interpretation

- Which Abomination is Referenced (Antiochus IV; Antichrist) – the *AC* is the correct answer (see slide #10 – Dan 9:27)
- Time of the Temple's destruction
    - A.D. 70 by the Romans – (correct answer – ref vs. 34)
    - ??? A.D. by the Lead of the Antichrist – (no – the Temple not destroyed by the AC)
- Tribulation or Rapture of the Church?
    - Matt 24:40-41 – (Tribulation is correct answer)
        - The Rapture precedes the Tribulation Period (1 Thess 4:13-17)
        - Those Raptured meet the Lord in the air – (this event is *not* a public one)
        - The description beginning in vs. 30 says, "all the nations will morn" [at the sign of the Son of Man in the sky]
    - Luke 17:34-37 explains *where* those who are "taken" go

Historical Backdrop: Jesus and the twelve had just left the City of Jerusalem after Jesus' condemnation of the religious leaders. From there they walked to the Mount of Olives.

I. Where is the Mount of Olives?
   a. ½ - ¾ miles northwest from the walls of Jerusalem

II. What events in the **OT** mention Mount Olivet?
   a. When David flees from Absalom (2 Sam 15 1-30)
   b. Zechariah' prophecy concerning the Day of the Lord includes the Lord standing on the Mount of Olives and splitting them in two, from east to west (Zech 14:1-4)

III. What events during Jesus' ministry mentioned **Mount of Olives**?

a. From there, Jesus had two of his disciples borrow a donkey and her colt for His entrance into Jerusalem (Matt 21:1-5)
b. After the He spoke to His twelve about the future and ate with them at the Last Supper, Jesus and the twelve went there. It was there that Jesus foretold of Peter's denial of Him (Mark 14:26)
c. On His way to Jerusalem on the Donkey & Colt and as they approached the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began praising Him (Luke 19:37)
d. On the night before His passion, Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane which is at the foot of Mount Olivet.
e. Before He forgave the adulterous woman in the Temple courts, He had visited the Mount of Olives.

The Discourse

Questions asked of Jesus

"When will *this* happen?" ("this" = the Temple's destruction – see **Section I**)

"What will be the *sign of your coming*"

"What will be *sign of the end of the age*?"

I. THE TEMPLE: Jesus comments on the Temple's destruction as they walk past it

a. When was this event fulfilled?

i. ***Jesus was proclaiming it to be fulfilled*** in A.D. 70 (by the Romans under Titus)

ii. What about Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria?

1. He only *desecrated the Temple in 167 B.C.*

iii. Will a 3rd Temple ever be rebuilt?

1. Since its destruction in A.D. 70, it has never been rebuilt
2. During the Tribulation Period a 3rd Temple will be built as proclaimed in Daniel 9:25 *("…it will be rebuilt again with plaza and moat, even in times of distress (ed. Tribulation Period")*
3. There has to be one for the AC to desecrate it
    a. There has to be one for his worship center as he claims to be the Messiah

II. AN OVERVIEW OF THE TIMES PRECEEDING HIS RETURN: Jesus' Response…

Matt 24:4-8

There will be:

i. Deception

1. Many false "messiahs" will deceive many (the church has been raptured; until some become believers and help others avoid deception….)

ii. **Unusual Global Events** affecting *all* peoples – the *beginning* of "*birth pangs*":

1. Wars and rumors of wars
2. Nations will rise against other nations
    a. Def: "*Nations*"
3. Kingdoms will rise against other kingdoms
    a. Def: "*Kingdoms*"
    b. Famines & earthquakes

Matt 24:9-14

iii. **Events affecting Believers**

1. Handed over to be persecuted and killed
2. Hated by **all nations will be involved** *(not as it was in Jesus' time)*
3. Deny their faith
4. Betray and hate one another

iv. Events affecting Everyone

1. More false prophets will appear & deceive
2. Increased wickedness will cause brotherly love to grow cold for most

v. However…

1. Those who stand firm (in their belief) to the *end of the age* will be **saved**

NOTE on Verse 13:

"But the one who endures to the end will be saved."[NRSV] Only Jesus' faithful followers will enter God's kingdom. The stress in this verse is not on endurance, but on salvation; the verse offers both a promise and a warning. "The end" refers to the consummation of the kingdom at Christ's return. This became a precious promise to believers who were struggling during intense persecution throughout the history of the church.

Enduring to the end does not earn salvation for us; it marks us as already saved. The assurance of our salvation will keep us going through times of persecution. While some will suffer and some will die, none of Jesus' followers will suffer spiritual or eternal loss.

Life Application Bible Commentary - Life Application Bible Commentary – Matthew

NOTE on Verse 14:

"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations and then the end will come." This does not necessarily mean that every last tribe must hear the gospel before Christ returns. But this was the disciples' mission—and it is ours. Jesus talked about the end times and final judgment to emphasize to his followers the urgency of spreading the Good News of salvation to everyone. Although persecution is inevitable, Jesus' followers must never give up in their mission to preach the Good News to all the nations and to get the Word of God to every language group. Jesus predicted a great missionary expansion to all the world before he would return.

By the time Matthew's readers would hear these words, Jesus' prediction had already begun to be fulfilled. Reaching all the nations occurred at Pentecost (Acts 2:5-11) and was spreading to all the world (Romans 1:5, 8; 15:19; Colossians 1:6, 23; 1 Timothy 3:16).

Life Application Bible Commentary - Life Application Bible Commentary – Matthew

III. Greater Details & Warnings to Those Not Raptured – Jesus continues…

Matt 24:15-25

a. When the Antichrist has broken his covenant, as Daniel prophesized…
   i. Do not waste time gathering your belongings
   ii. Great distress
      1. Unequaled from beginning of time (Matt 24:21-22
      2. Never to be equaled again (Matt 24:21)
      3. Those who believe and endure during this time and who do not die will enter the coming Millennial Age in bodily form

IV. Jesus' Second Coming Event – to be seen by those remaining on earth who were not raptured

Matt 24:26-31

After the distress of these days…(see also Joel 3:1-2;13-16; Rev 6:1-16;)

iii. Sun & moon darkened (Zech 14:6)
iv. Stars fall from sky
v. Heavenly bodies shaken (Joel 2:30-32)
vi. The sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky
1. A Public Event: All peoples in all nations will see and mourn (that HE really is the Messiah Returning for His Judgment and Reign
2. At that moment, He will gather the remaining believers to be with Him

V. The Lesson of the Fig Tree

As Noted

a. The Fig as used in scripture
i. Genesis 3:7 – *Man's attempt to cover our sin (fig leaf & the law)*
ii. Genesis 3:21 – *God's provision to redeem us from our sins (the animal sacrificed by God to provide the garments of skin)*
iii. 2 Kings 20:1-7 – *Healing Power*
iv. Hosea 9:10 – *When God found Israel*
v. Jeremiah 24:3-10 -- *A Remnant Promise*
vi. Mark 11:11-14 – *Spiritual Disappointment*

b. **A time for Decision; A Time for Action** – Matt 24:32-25 – *The Harvest is Near*
i. For the Lost – A very important choice
ii. For the Found – An Obligation to Witness

VI. The Coming Judgment – Christ's Second Coming

As Noted

a. The Audience
i. Jewish – Matthew 24:4-44
ii. Christians (the Church) -- Matt 24:45-51; 25:14-30
iii. Gentile Nations – Matt 25:31-46

b. Timing is Everything
i. Things to Remember
5. The Deluge: Noah
6. A Thief in the Night

VII. Remaining Watchful – Matt 24:36-44

As Noted

a. For the Undecided – Matt 24:36-44
b. For the Church – Mat 24:45-51; 25:14-30

VIII. The "Quick" & the "Dead"

a. **Which way will people choose?**
   i. **Ref: Abraham & Lazarus (Luke 16:22-31)**
   ii. **Jesus Christ (John 14:1-7)**

IX. Being Good Stewards of Our Spiritual Gifts

Matt 45-51

a. **The 2nd Coming will be the Acid Test for the Faithful Stewards**
   i. We have received at least one Spiritual Gift
      1. Have we been using them?
      2. Are we using them now while the Harvest is at hand?
   ii. How will Christ judge us on His Bema Seat?

Lessons Learned

- Be watchful for opportunities to bring others to Christ – the Harvest is near
- We will see increasing wickedness and natural disasters, but God has not abandoned us, we must not be discouraged
- Beware of false teachers and help guard those who do not recognize them
- God's righteous judgment; His Millennial Reign; the New Heaven & Earth; and Eternity is certain
- There is no greater opportunity and need for bringing others to Christ than this very moment
- *Carpe diem* (Seize the Moment) – Witness – Help fulfill the Great Commission