

THE HARMONY OF THE OLIVET

DISCOURSE – PART 3

By Kevin Lea
 Pastor, Calvary Church of Port Orchard, WA.
www.calvarypo.org

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 Matthew, [Matthew 24:15-22](#), and Titled: *Olivet Discourse – Part 3*
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The Lord Jesus gave some of the most detailed prophecies of future events just a couple days before His crucifixion. This teaching by Jesus was recorded in Matthew 24-25, Mark 13, and Luke 21. Theologians refer to these sections of scripture as the *Olivet Discourse* because Jesus spoke these prophecies while on the Mount of Olives.

There has been much confusion and debate about this discourse over the centuries. Much of the mystery has been removed with the rebirth of the nation of Israel, but views about who is being addressed and the timing of the events are still debated by sincere Christians.

After 35 years of pondering the different views and arguments, I feel it is time to contribute some thoughts in the form of this commentary. I have put the three passages from the three Apostles' writings side by side (using the New King James) so the entire context of Jesus words can be more easily compared and discerned.

This week we are reviewing Matthew 24:15-22 with an emphasis on how world history could progress to the point where these prophesies (Jews living in Israel, observing Sabbath, sacrificing in a rebuilt temple that will be defiled by the Antichrist) could be fulfilled when the current world situations makes these things impossible to even imagine.

MATTHEW 24	MARK 13	LUKE
15 "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), 16 "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17 "Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. 18 "And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. 19 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 "And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. 21 "For then there will be	14 "So when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not" (let the reader understand), "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 15 "Let him who is on the housetop not go down into the house, nor enter to take anything out of his house. 16 "And let him who is in the field not go back to get his garment. 17 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 18 "And pray that your flight may not be in winter. 19 "For in those days there	Luke 17:31 "In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. 32 "Remember Lot's wife. 33 "Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.

<p>great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.'</p>	<p>will be tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of creation which God created until this time, nor ever shall be. 20 "And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days.'</p>	
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Whatever actually happens to fulfill the "abomination of desolation," it is clear from the warnings of Jesus that those Jews living in Israel at the time will need to immediately leave Jerusalem and Judea in order to escape a slaughter. If they take the time to go to their houses, they will be killed. Therefore, the urgency is such that they are to pray that the abomination does not occur on the Sabbath. This would mean the Jews will become increasingly observant of the Sabbath law as the last days approach. Luke chapter 17:31-33 is included here even though Luke was recording a teaching that Jesus was giving shortly before the Olivet discourse, but is harmonious to what Matthew and Mark record Jesus also taught on the Mount of Olives.

For the sake of conjecture, assume the following has occurred to get to this point (as history unfolds, any errors in the following are the result of my lack of understanding of God's word and not on the prophecies themselves):

(1) A future war in the Middle East results in the fulfillment of Psalm 83 and Isaiah 17. Psalm 83 talks about (using modern names) Lebanon, Jordan, Gaza and Saudi Arabia being burned as "the fire burns the woods, and as the flame sets the mountains on fire." Isaiah 17 speaks of future war were Damascus is destroyed and ceases to be the capitol of Syria. At the same time, Israel's northern military bases are destroyed, and Israel's strength is greatly weakened. This results in all of Israel's **immediate**, Arab, Muslim neighbors being destroyed (apparently as a result of Israel using nuclear weapons).

(2) Then (possibly soon after the Psalm 83 and Isaiah 17 wars), the Arab/Muslim nations that surround those nations destroyed by Israel, come to invade and destroy Israel behind the leadership of Russia, as prophesied in Ezekiel 38-39 (possibly as a result of Israel's weakened military might after suffering the blows from Syria and because Israel has expended her weapons on the immediate neighbors). It is clear from Ezekiel 38 that the other nations of the world do not offer to come to Israel's defense as the invading armies approach. This means something must happen to remove America's pro-Israel influence in the Middle East. It might even mean that other nations have also been destroyed as a result of a larger scale nuclear exchange when the nuclear Jeanie was let out of the Middle East bottle.

(3) As the invading armies approach the mountains of Israel, God intervenes on Israel's behalf and destroys the armies, as described in Ezekiel 38 and 39. Ezekiel 39 prophesies that from that day forward, God will again pour His spirit on the house of Israel. The church will be Raptured by this time, since God will be again dealing specifically with Israel. Israel will have a revival back to God (but not toward their true Messiah, Jesus, yet).

(4) As the world's survivors reel from the destruction caused by the fulfillment of Psalm 83, Isaiah 17 and Ezekiel 38-39, a man raises to power with a plan to put an end to the Middle East conflict. The peace process is accelerated and culminates in a seven-year peace treaty to end the Arab/Israeli hostilities between the survivors of these nations. The enforcement of this treaty will signal the beginning of the last seven-year portion of Daniel's 490-year prophecy, as discussed in the beginning earlier. The plan will include allowing the Jews to rebuild their temple in Jerusalem (Revelation 11:1-2), to reinstate animal sacrifice, to enforce Sabbath observance, and to recognize Israel land borders that are defensible. This plan will be so favorable to the Jews that they will be deceived into thinking that the man behind its inspiration is none other than the promised Messiah (but in fact, he will be the Antichrist whom Jesus warned them about). Jews from around the world will all flock to Israel to complete the fulfillment of the O.T. prophets about the re-gathering of Jews to the land, and the whole world will be saying "Finally! Peace and safety throughout the world!" But their joy and hopes will soon be dashed as the Antichrist brings death to the world. Then 1Thes 5:3 will be fulfilled: "For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape."

(5) Three and a half years into the seven-year peace plan; the Antichrist will show his true colors and will commit the abomination of desolation. Some think it is at this time that someone attempts to assassinate him, but he recovers from a deadly wound.

Rev 13:3 - And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast [**Antichrist**]. 4 So they worshiped the dragon [**Satan**] who gave authority to the beast [**Antichrist at this time will be possessed by Satan**]; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" 5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months [**for another 3.5 years, which is when Jesus returns and judges the antichrist (Revelation 19:20)**]. (NKJ)

(6) When the Antichrist miraculously recovers from his deadly wound, he goes on a demonically possessed rampage against the Jews. Those Jews who heeded Jesus' warning have already taken their families to the wilderness. They realize they were deceived into thinking their Messiah was the Antichrist, and now, in repentance, they are following the teachings of their true Messiah, Jesus. The Antichrist will try to annihilate these fleeing Jews, but God miraculously defends them.

Rev 12:13 Now when the dragon [**Satan**] saw that he had been cast to the earth [**losing the battle to have access to heaven**], he persecuted the woman [**Israel**] who gave birth to the male Child [**the Messiah, Jesus. Satan attempts this persecution by possessing the Antichrist and using him against the Jews**]. 14 But the woman [**Israel**] was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place [**believed to be the rock city of Petra, in Jordan**], where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time [**Three and a half years**], from the presence of the serpent [**Satan**]. 15 So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman [**either literal flood of water or a flood of troops**], that he might cause her [**Israel**] to be carried away by the flood. 16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. 17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring [**those who, during the tribulation period, believe in the Jewish Messiah, Jesus, but were not among those fleeing to the wilderness**], who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. (NKJ)

As a side note, it is clear that the Church must be gone before the abomination of desolation. Jesus is warning the Jews living in Israel to flee to the wilderness. But in His entire Olivet Discourse, Jesus never tells the Church what they are to do. If the Christian Church were still on the earth, why does Jesus not warn them? If Christians are still on the earth, what are they supposed to do when they see the Antichrist commit the abomination? The answer must be that the church has been raptured. According to Revelation, many Jews and Gentiles will become believers during the tribulation period and will be killed for their faith, but they are never referred to as the church, and since they were not believers before the Rapture, they missed the opportunity to be spared the tribulation events.

In Revelation 3:10, Jesus promises the church of Philadelphia that He “will keep them from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.” Although the church of Philadelphia was a literal church at the time John the Apostle was given the vision of Revelation, many believe this promise of Jesus had a broader meaning, since the literal church of Philadelphia in John’s day was never spared of a global time of testing. Therefore, it is believed that the church of Philadelphia actually symbolized the Christian church in the last days, the church that would be raptured before the tribulation period begins.



