

# Chapter Eleven

## The Olivet Discourse-Part One

Matthew 24:1-51; Mark 13:1-37; Luke 21:5-37

### THE RELEVANCE OF PROPHECY

“In our day, Bible prophecy has become irrelevant in the eyes of many. Man believes he already has all the answers through science and human intellect. Many think the Bible is just a book of old tales drummed up by bored old men who call themselves prophets, teachers, and apostles. Is this the case? Is the Bible just a book of old stories?

One has to wonder why there is such an animosity against the Bible by so-called "learned people" today. Could it be that many choose to believe science over Yahweh simply because they don't want to evaluate themselves by the Word of Yahweh? Maybe they are afraid of what they might find.

Prophecy proves the Bible. The surety of prophecy gives one a sense of stability in an otherwise unstable world. Prophecy makes the Bible come alive; it makes one step back and say, "Wow, what I just saw on the 10:00 news is right here prophesied in the Book of Revelation!"

How could men thousands of years ago write about the calamities we see today? How did they know Persia was going to fall to Greece? How did they know Jerusalem was going to be a hotbed in the latter days?"<sup>1</sup>

### THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

You can hardly teach on the book of Revelation, without teaching from the Old Testament book of Daniel, and then tying these two books together by the teachings of Christ on the Mount of Olives, which is known as the Olivet Discourse. This is found, as mentioned above, in **Matthew 24**, **Mark 13**, and **Luke 21**.

We have to look at all three passages because they all give us different information that fits together like a well-constructed puzzle. If we leave one piece out we'll have an incomplete picture.

The Olivet discourse is one of the most important chapters in the bible, when it comes to end time prophecies, because it provides us with not only the final discourse of the Lord Jesus, but

---

<sup>1</sup> Yahweh's Restoration Ministry, Copyright 1999-2010, [http://www.yrm.org/ten\\_toes.htm](http://www.yrm.org/ten_toes.htm)

also His most extensive teaching on the end times. It reveals His heart of crucial Old Testament prophetic passages concerning Israel and the nations, especially when He mentions a passage from the book of Daniel. The “Olivet Discourse” is an overview of the end times that Jesus shared with His disciples.

Before studying the “**opening of the seals**” of Revelation Chapter 6 and continuing on with the rest of the book, we have to look at the past before we can move forward. We must remember that all revelation is given by God. As stated above we will now look at the conversation that Jesus had with His disciples in the “**Olivet Discourse**”.

**John MacArthur** states “that if properly interpreted, it enables the Church to distinguish itself from **national Israel** in the end times. Much confusion has resulted from a failure to understand the fulfillment of the Olivet discourse with Israel (rather than with the Church).

“The Olivet discourse has been debated over and over and is frequently misunderstood, mostly because we are viewing it through our preconceived theological viewpoints or some other scheme. Thus we make the message appear complex and mysterious.

Let us not forget who the disciples were, they were not educated men but hard working people like you and me. Jesus was not out to confuse them any more than he is out to confuse us. Jesus purpose of the Olivet discourse was to give them understanding and clarity so they could pass this knowledge on to future generations.”<sup>2</sup>

**2 Timothy 2:15(NKJV)** <sup>15</sup>Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

**2 Timothy 3:16-17(NKJV)** <sup>16</sup>All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, <sup>17</sup>that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

**2 Timothy 4:2-5(NKJV)** <sup>2</sup>Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. <sup>3</sup>For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; <sup>4</sup>and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. <sup>5</sup>But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

**Acts 17:10-11(NKJV)** <sup>10</sup>Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night

---

<sup>2</sup> *MacArthur's New Testament Commentary: Matthew 24-28* Copyright © 1989 by The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago Electronic Edition STEP Files Copyright © 1997, Parsons Technology, Inc., PO Box 100, Hiawatha, Iowa. All rights reserved

to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. <sup>11</sup>These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily *to find out* whether these things were so.

## I. Introduction

I. A challenging passage in the Bible is Jesus' discourse on the Mount of Olives...

A. Given shortly after He left the temple with His disciples.

B. Recorded in **Mt 24:1-51; Mk 13:1-37; Luke 21:5-36**

C. Commonly referred to as "**The Olivet Discourse**"

1) Our focus will be primarily on Matthew's account - **Mt 24:1-51**

II. The difficulty is noticed when one considers the diversity of interpretations offered...

A. Some maintain that it is entirely about events preceding the Lord's second coming

B. Others say that it is entirely about events related to the destruction of Jerusalem which occurred in 70 A.D.

C. Yet others believe it contains reference to both of these events

III. Even those who say it refers to both events differ as to when a particular event is being described in Matthew's account...

A. Some say that **verses 4-28** refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, and **verse 29** begins the discussion about the Lord's second coming (cf. J. W. McGarvey, *The Four-Fold Gospel*)

B. Others contend that **verse 35** begins talking about the second coming.

C. Others say Jesus switches back and forth throughout the discourse

Jesus gave details about the prophesied destruction of the temple, which took place in 70 A.D. but then the Lord reached beyond the prophecy of the temple, to the time of the end of the age, when He would return to set up His earthly kingdom. Apparently, the disciples wanted to know more about the time of the end, because later, as they were walking out to the Mount of Olives

with Jesus, they asked the questions again about the temple, in addition to the questions about the time of the end.<sup>3</sup>

“To properly understand the Olivet discourse we must travel back in time and **look at the historical setting in which it was given**, and not only that, but what was the mindset, basic hopes and aspirations of the Jewish people of that day.

**I.** They were under foreign rule for many centuries. (Babylon, Medo-Persians, the Greeks, and finally the Romans)

**II.** The Jews had great hope for the future.

**III.** In the minds of the Jewish people of that day, the time was right for His coming, they were under the Roman oppression, so they were looking for that liberator.

**IV.** They longed to be free. They yearned for Rome to be overthrown and Israel to be a free nation once again.

**V.** What the Jews failed to understand or had no knowledge of, was that His coming was to be in two parts. The first time was to offer Himself as a sacrifice for the world's sin and the second time to establish His millennial kingdom on earth.

**VI.** The Jewish people were not really looking for an inward deliverance from sin but for an outward deliverance from the political oppression.

**VII.** The O.T. prophets saw the Messiah's coming and the establishing of His kingdom as a single event. They knew nothing of the **church age** as we know it now. It was a mystery to them.

*Romans 16:25-26 (NKJV)* <sup>25</sup> Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of **the mystery kept secret since the world began** <sup>26</sup> but now has been made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures has been made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith—

*Ephesians 1:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> having made known to us **the mystery of His will**, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself,

*Ephesians 3:1-6 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles-- <sup>2</sup> if indeed you have heard of the **dispensation of the grace of God** which was

---

<sup>3</sup> Amy Van Gerpen, The Olivet Discourse - The End Times According To Jesus, <http://www.trackingbibleprophecy.com>, All rights reserved.

given to me for you, <sup>3</sup> how that by revelation He made known to me **the mystery** (as I have briefly written already, <sup>4</sup> by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in **the mystery of Christ**), <sup>5</sup> which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: <sup>6</sup> **that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel,**

*Ephesians 3:9-11 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> and to make all see what *is* the fellowship of **the mystery**, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; <sup>10</sup> to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly *places*, <sup>11</sup> according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,

*Colossians 1:25-27 (NKJV)* <sup>25</sup> of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, <sup>26</sup> **the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.** <sup>27</sup> To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

**VIII.** According to **Luke 19:11** the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately.

*Luke 19:11 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because **they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately.**

**IX.** Even after the resurrection they still had the same expectations. Before his ascension into heaven the last question they asked him "Lord is it at this time you are restoring the kingdom to Israel." Acts 1:6

*Acts 1:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"<sup>4</sup>

If we read **Isaiah 61:1-11** we see that the disciples saw only a single coming, comprised of a sequence of events. Jesus gave them a clue that His coming would be in two parts when He read this portion of scripture at the temple. He stopped in the middle of verse two and proclaimed that this scripture was fulfilled today in their hearing. **See Luke 4:18-21.**

---

<sup>4</sup> *MacArthur's New Testament Commentary: Matthew 24-28* Copyright © 1989 by The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago Electronic Edition STEP Files Copyright © 1997, Parsons Technology, Inc., PO Box 100, Hiawatha, Iowa. All rights reserved

**Isaiah 61:1-11 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> **"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; <sup>2</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, <sup>3</sup> To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."** <sup>4</sup> **And they shall rebuild the old ruins, They shall raise up the former desolations, And they shall repair the ruined cities, The desolations of many generations.** <sup>5</sup> Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, And the sons of the foreigner *Shall be* your plowmen and your vinedressers. <sup>6</sup> But you shall be named the priests of the LORD, They shall call you the servants of our God. You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, And in their glory you shall boast. <sup>7</sup> Instead of your shame *you shall have* double honor, And *instead of* confusion they shall rejoice in their portion. Therefore in their land they shall possess double; Everlasting joy shall be theirs. <sup>8</sup> "For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery for burnt offering; I will direct their work in truth, And will make with them an everlasting covenant. <sup>9</sup> Their descendants shall be known among the Gentiles, And their offspring among the people. All who see them shall acknowledge them, That they *are* the posterity *whom* the LORD has blessed." <sup>10</sup> I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks *himself* with ornaments, And as a bride adorns *herself* with her jewels. <sup>11</sup> For as the earth brings forth its bud, As the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth, So the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

**Luke 4:18-21 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> **"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."** <sup>20</sup> **Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. <sup>21</sup> And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."**

## II. Setting The Stage

### I. The Words Of Jesus In The Temple...

#### A. His parables depicting Israel's rejection of Him, and its consequences

##### 1) The parable of the two sons - Mt 21:28-32 (cf. v.31-32)

**Matthew 21:28-32(NKJV)** <sup>28</sup>“But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go, work today in my vineyard.’ <sup>29</sup>He answered and said, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he regretted it and went. <sup>30</sup>Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. <sup>31</sup>Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said to Him, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you. <sup>32</sup>For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw *it*, you did not afterward relent and believe him.

### 2) The parable of the wicked vine dressers - Mt 21:33-46 (cf.v.42-45)

**Matthew 21:33-46(NKJV)** <sup>33</sup>“Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. <sup>34</sup>Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. <sup>35</sup>And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. <sup>36</sup>Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. <sup>37</sup>Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ <sup>38</sup>But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.’ <sup>39</sup>So they took him and cast *him* out of the vineyard and killed *him*. <sup>40</sup>“Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?” <sup>41</sup>They said to Him, “He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease *his* vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons.” <sup>42</sup>Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: *‘The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord’s doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes’*? <sup>43</sup>“Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. <sup>44</sup>And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.” <sup>45</sup>Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them. <sup>46</sup>But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet.

### 3) The parable of the wedding feast - Mt 22:1-14 (cf. v.7-9)

**Matthew 22:1-14(NKJV)** <sup>1</sup>And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: <sup>2</sup>“The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, <sup>3</sup>and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. <sup>4</sup>Again, he sent out other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle *are* killed, and all things *are* ready. Come to the wedding.”’ <sup>5</sup>But they made light of it and went their ways,

one to his own farm, another to his business. <sup>6</sup>And the rest seized his servants, treated *them* spitefully, and killed *them*. <sup>7</sup>But when the king heard *about it*, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. <sup>8</sup>Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. <sup>9</sup>Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.’ <sup>10</sup>So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding *hall* was filled with guests. <sup>11</sup>“But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. <sup>12</sup>So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. <sup>13</sup>Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, <sup>£</sup>take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ <sup>14</sup>“For many are called, but few *are* chosen.”

## B. His condemnation of the scribes and Pharisees

### 1) Who would fill up the measure of their fathers' guilt – Mt 23:29-32

**Matthew 23:29-33(NKJV)** <sup>29</sup>“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, <sup>30</sup>and say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.’ <sup>31</sup>“Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. <sup>32</sup>Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers’ *guilt*. <sup>33</sup>Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?”

### 2) Who kill, crucify, scourge, and persecute the prophets, wise men, and scribes He would send to them - Mt 23:33-34

**Matthew 23:33-34(NKJV)** <sup>33</sup>Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? <sup>34</sup>Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: *some* of them you will kill and crucify, and *some* of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city,

### 3) Upon whom the blood of all the righteous would come, upon that very generation – Mt 23:35-36

**Matthew 23:35-36(NKJV)** <sup>35</sup>that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. <sup>36</sup>Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.



### C. His lamentation over Jerusalem

#### 1) The city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her.

**Matthew 23:37a (NKJV)**

<sup>37</sup> "O Jerusalem,  
Jerusalem, the one who  
kills the prophets and  
stones those who are sent  
to her!...

2) The  
city  
unwilling  
to accept  
the love  
shown  
her.

**Matthew 23:37b (NKJV)**

<sup>37</sup> ... How often I wanted  
to gather your children  
together, as a hen gathers  
her chicks under *her*  
wings, but you were not  
willing!

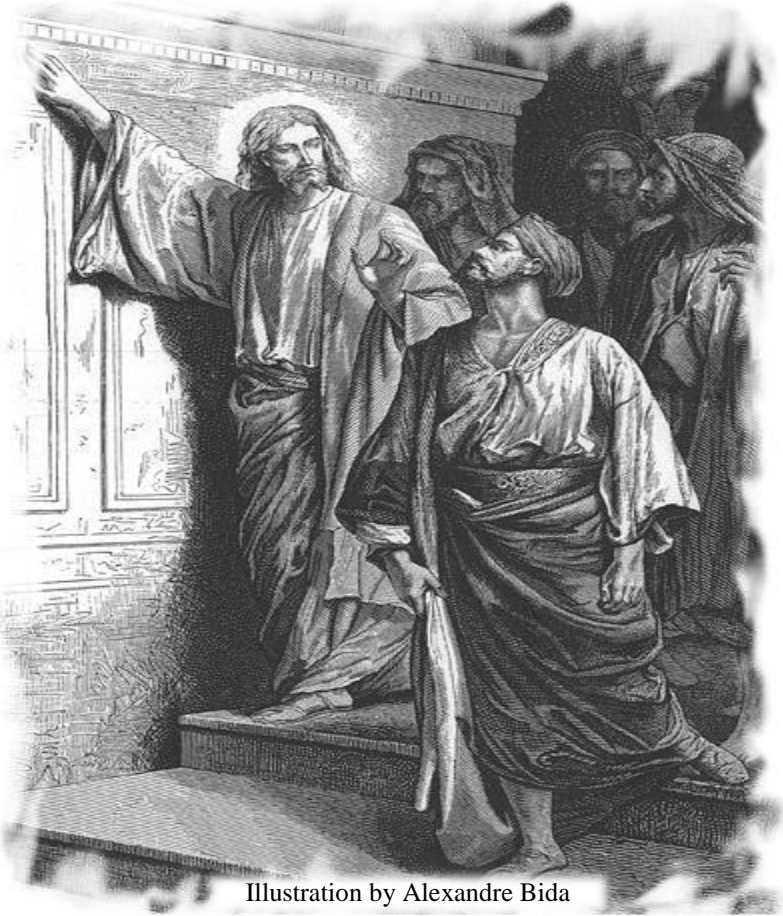


Illustration by Alexandre Bida

**Luke 19:41-42 (NKJV)**

<sup>41</sup> Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, <sup>42</sup> saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things *that make* for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. **(Ref. - Private)**

**John 1:11 (NKJV)** <sup>11</sup> He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

#### 3) Whose house would be left desolate

**Matthew 23:38-39 (NKJV)** <sup>38</sup> See! Your house is left to you desolate; <sup>39</sup> for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, '*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!*' "

**II. The Prophetic Words Of Jesus About The Temple... (Mt. 24:1-2; Mark 13:1-2; Luke 21:5-6)**

*Matthew 24:1-2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. <sup>2</sup> And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not *one* stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down." **(Private)**

*Mark 13:1-2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Then as He went out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings *are here!*" <sup>2</sup> And Jesus answered and said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not *one* stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down." **(Private)**

*Luke 19:43-44 (NKJV)* <sup>43</sup> For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, <sup>44</sup> and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation." **(Ref. - Private)**

*Luke 21:5-6 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said, <sup>6</sup> "These things which you see--the days will come in which not *one* stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down." **(Public)**

With the mindset of the Jews as discussed on **page 107-108** the disciples were probably a little confused by what Jesus was saying about the temple. Even though the disciples probably were not surprised by the prophecy of the fall of Jerusalem in **Luke 21:20-24**, because Jerusalem's destruction was foretold in **Zech. 14**. It is easy for us to see what Jesus was talking about because we are looking back in time. The destruction of the temple came in **70 A.D.** but Jesus was also looking at a more distant time when the temple would be destroyed in the end times, Jesus did not return in **70 A.D.** so the prophecy found in **Zech. 14** was for a future time when the temple would be destroyed.

*Zechariah 14:1-5 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Behold, the **day of the LORD** is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst. <sup>2</sup> For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. <sup>3</sup> Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle. <sup>4</sup> **And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley;** Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south. <sup>5</sup> Then you shall flee *through* My mountain valley, For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee As you fled from the

earthquake In the days of Uzziah king of Judah. **Thus the LORD my God will come, And all the saints with You. (Still Future)**

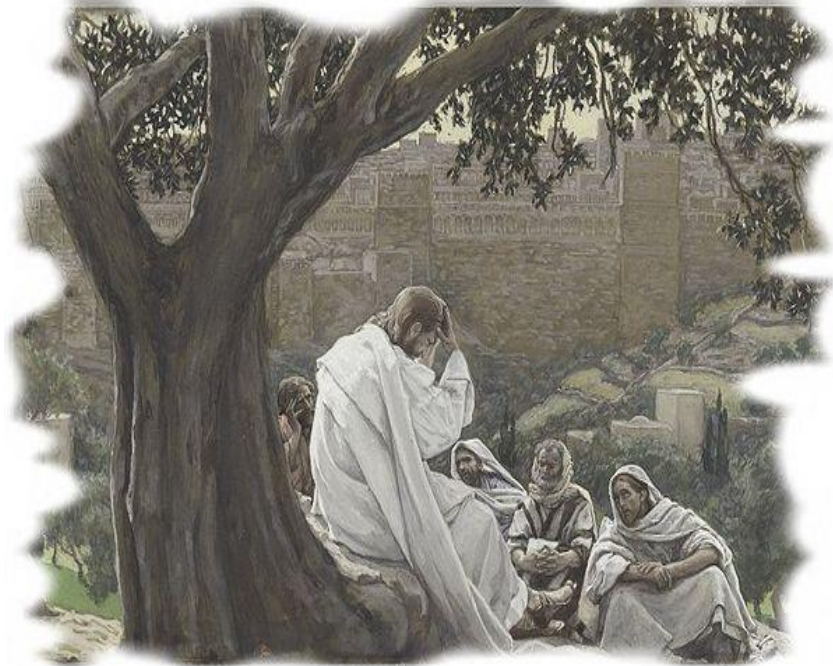
Probably adding to the disciple's confusion that the temple would be torn down was the fact that in Daniel, Zech. and Ezekiel there were prophecies showing a temple where sacrifices would be taking place at the end of the age.

***Daniel 9:27 (NKJV)*** <sup>27</sup> Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate." **(This temple will be built by the Jews – more on this later)**

***Zechariah 14:20-21 (NKJV)*** <sup>20</sup> In that day "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" shall be engraved on the bells of the horses. The pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar. <sup>21</sup> Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the LORD of hosts. Everyone who sacrifices shall come and take them and cook in them. In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts. **(I believe this temple will be built by Jesus during the Millennium)**

***Ezekiel 43:4-7 (NKJV)*** <sup>4</sup> And the glory of the LORD came into the temple **by way of the gate which faces toward the east.** <sup>5</sup> The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple. <sup>6</sup> Then I heard *Him* speaking to me from the temple, while a man stood beside me. <sup>7</sup> And He said to me, "Son of man, *this is* the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever. No more shall the house of Israel defile My holy name, they nor their kings, by their harlotry or with the carcasses of their kings on their high places. **(Same as above)**

**III. The Questions Of The Disciples... (Mt.24:3; Mark 13:3-4; Luke 21:7)**



**Matthew 24:3 (NKJV)** <sup>3</sup> Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

**Mark 13:3-4 (NKJV)** <sup>3</sup> Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately, <sup>4</sup> "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?"

**Luke 21:7 (NKJV)** <sup>7</sup> So they asked Him, saying, "Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign *will there be* when these things are about to take place?"

Here we see Jesus answering the questions that was asked publicly in **Luke 21:5-6**. The crowd asked when and what are we to look for. In Matthew and Mark's gospel when approached by His disciples privately, they were concerned more with the end times and his coming.

#### IV. Observations regarding these questions:

##### A. **Matthew** wrote his gospel for a **Jewish** audience

- 1) He likely recorded the questions as asked by the disciples, who presumed the destruction of temple would mean His coming and the end of the age.
- 2) Jewish readers of the gospel would likely have the same conception.

##### B. **Mark** and **Luke** wrote their gospels to **Gentiles**

- 1) To avoid possible misunderstanding by non-Jewish readers, they worded the disciples' questions to reflect what the discourse is actually about.
- 2) I.e., the destruction of the temple and the sign when its destruction would come about.

### III. **THERE ARE TWO AGES**

**Note:** I believe that the bible interprets its self. There are no contradictions so we must define certain words or phrases by other portions of scripture to the best of our ability.

There can hardly be a better place to begin our study of the return of Christ and the end of the age than by examining what Jesus Christ has to say. Jesus Christ is the Messiah who according to the Old Testament will come to establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

He will reign from the throne of David, in Jerusalem. From the very beginning of Jesus' ministry He taught about the coming Kingdom and the end of the age. His most comprehensive teaching on the topic is called the Olivet Discourse (*mentioned above*), which is recorded in the first three Gospels of the New Testament (Matthew, Mark and Luke).

Jesus gave the Olivet Discourse in response to the disciples' inquiry regarding His return. However, He had already taught extensively about the end of the age and the coming Kingdom of God. Therefore, before we continue with the Olivet Discourse we will first review Jesus' earlier teachings.

During Jesus' ministry He referred to two ages, this present age in which we now live and a second age which is to come in the future. Below are some of His teachings about the two ages:

**Matthew 12:32(NKJV)** <sup>32</sup>Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either **in this age** or **in the age to come**.

**Mark 10:28-30 (NKJV)** <sup>28</sup>Then Peter began to say to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You." <sup>29</sup>So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, <sup>30</sup>who shall not receive a hundredfold **now in this time--** houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions-- and in **the age to come**, eternal life.

**Luke 18:29-30(NKJV)** <sup>29</sup>So He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, <sup>30</sup>who shall not receive many times more in **this present time**, and **in the age to come** eternal life."

**Luke 20:34-36(NKJV)** <sup>34</sup>Jesus answered and said to them, "The sons of **this age** marry and are given in marriage. <sup>35</sup>But those who are counted worthy to attain **that age**, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; <sup>36</sup>nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.

**Ephesians 1:20-21 (NKJV)** <sup>20</sup>which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup>far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in **this age** but also in **that which is to come**.

*Ephesians 2:5-7 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), <sup>6</sup> and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> that in **the ages to come** He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Ref.)

*Hebrews 6:4-5 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, <sup>5</sup> and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of **the age to come**, (Ref.)

**The present age**, the one in which we now live, began in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God. In contrast to **the present age**, Jesus teaches about an **age of righteousness** that will come after the present age. The age to come will begin when Christ establishes the Kingdom of God on earth. That is the age all believers are waiting for. In **Luke 20:34-36**, Jesus tells us that those who are worthy to take part in **“that age”** will be called children of the resurrection.

As we can see Jesus refers to only two ages, **“this age”** and the **“age to come”**. Therefore, we should not believe those who say there are many ages.

The Parable of the Wheat and Tares is one of several parables Jesus employs to tell us about the **coming Kingdom of God. Mt. 13:24-30**

The parable is about a man who sowed good seed in his field, but when the crop sprouted it was discovered that someone had planted bad seed among the good. The servants asked if they should weed out the bad from the good. The master told the servants to let both grow together **until the “harvest”** and then the good wheat will be gathered into the barn and the tares burned. The Parable of the Wheat and Tares provides insight into how and when the coming Kingdom of God will come.

On this occasion the disciples asked Jesus for an explanation of the Parable of the Wheat and Tares. This is what He says,

*Matthew 13:37-43(NKJV)* <sup>37</sup>He answered and said to them: “He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup>The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked *one*. <sup>39</sup>The enemy who sowed them is the devil, **the harvest is the end of the age**, and the reapers are the angels. <sup>40</sup>Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at **the end of this age**. <sup>41</sup>The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, <sup>42</sup>and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup>Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Jesus clearly states, *“The field is the world.”* He then explains that the wheat symbolizes the righteous and the tares are the unrighteous, which must grow together until the **“harvest”** at **“the end of the age.”** *“The harvesters are the angels”* who will separate the wheat from the tares at the *“harvest.”* We also notice that the angels of God are mentioned in association with the return of Christ. Compare the verse above with the corresponding verse below from the Olivet Discourse. Both are referring to the time when Christ returns to establish the Kingdom at the end of the age.

**Matthew 24:31(NKJV)** <sup>31</sup>And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Jesus tells us that at the end of this age He will return with His angels and gather the believers. We see the reward of the righteous, *“Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father”* **Mt 13:43.**

He also tells us that the angels will separate out the unbelievers for punishment, *“They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth”* **Mt 13:42.**

On the day the Son of Man comes there will be deliverance for the righteous and punishment for the disobedient. Notice the similarities between **Matthew 13:43**, above, and **Daniel 12:3**, below, as they describe the deliverance of the believers.

*Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever (Daniel 12:3).*

Both verses depict the shining brightness of the believers when they receive their resurrection bodies and enter into the Kingdom of God at the end of the age.

The Parable of the Dragnet also describes the same thing. The righteous will be gathered and the wicked will be separated out for punishment.

**Matthew 13:47-50(NKJV)** <sup>47</sup>“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, <sup>48</sup>which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. <sup>49</sup>So it will be at **the end of the age**. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, <sup>50</sup>and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”