

## **The Discourses in Matthew** **(following the Sermon on the Mount)**

### **Discourse #2: Matthew Ch. 10: The Sermon to Israel**

B. The King gives instructions to His followers to announce His coming to the nation Israel (9:35-11:1).

1. The King instructs the disciples to announce the Kingdom throughout Israel (9:35-10:15).

*The section here is a time restricted section, not to be textually applied beyond its specific historical setting. Here Jesus is testing the response of Israel to the offer of the Kingdom. He sends the 12 out on His behalf and will determine the acceptance/rejection of the nation based upon their reception of those He sends in His name.*

a. Jesus with compassion beseeches the Lord to send workers (9:35-38).

*The main message here is dispensational. The Old Covenant had condemned man and many had recognized their sins and were awaiting God's Anointed. Yet the leaders who should have led the many to the Lord, were oppressing them with self-righteous condemnation, giving them no hope. Thus now that the Anointed One had appeared, Jesus will call His disciples (and those who will follow them) into the ministry of the New Covenant (the announcement of forgiveness of sins). Thus the seed is planted in the O.T. (the anticipation) and the harvest is in the New Covenant in Jesus.*

b. Jesus empowers the twelve disciples (10:1-5).

*Following the request for workers, the Lord sends the 12 out. Note that in accordance with the exhortation of 6:33 the disciples are warned not to seek remuneration and to go only to Israel, not to the Gentiles. That will come in Matthew 28:19*

c. Instructions to disciples to offer Messiah to the cities (10:6-15).

*This section is a historical test of Israel's reception of the King. Should they accept the disciples or should they not take care of them on their journey would demonstrate Israel's belief. They reject and the eschatological judgment is pronounced as being worse than that of Sodom and Gomorrah (a Godless, pagan, non-Israelite city).*

2. The King gives the disciples instructions on judgments and reward based on the ministry of the Kingdom (10:16-11:1).

*The section moves from the historical section into the future beyond the actual lives of the disciples to the times when others would take the message of the disciples into the world on their behalf until the return of the King to end the delay and begin the Kingdom.*

- a. Warning to disciples regarding persecutions (10:16-23).

Of note here is that Jesus is sending out disciples to preach what He preached in the Sermon, but now to Israel. They will be persecuted for righteousness sake, which is now in His person. This persecution will be continued until the end, and one must not apostatize or they will not be delivered into the kingdom alive. This is a message to endure persecution.

Note however, that while this seems to be time bound; that is a message only to Judah while Christ was on earth, the end of this paragraph indicates that the message of the Messiah continues until the end.

- b. Exhortations to disciples to speak out (10:24-33).  
c. Disciples to be required to give up life (10:34-39).  
d. Those disciples to be honored as Jesus Himself (10:40-11:1).

This is a very important section and will have implications for the rest of Matthew, particularly the Olivet Discourse.

Note that the reception of the Messiah is the essence of their salvation as He sends the disciples out. Thus, if you want to receive the Messiah, you receive His disciples. Note that a reward is given by the Messiah (the kingdom) and one who receives a prophet in His Name receives His reward. He even moves this down to a righteous man. Thus, if a righteous man brings a message and he is received, one shall receive the reward of the one who brings the message. Thus the message of Christ is given to apostles and to righteous men. This message is spread by them and the ultimate reward is the reward of the Messiah.

The little ones appear to be young in the faith in Chapter 18, yet here may be indicating the apostles as the "least", or perhaps righteous men who bring the apostolic message. This appears to be a message that one should pass on the righteous message given in the Sermon. Christ comes in

the Name of the Father and thus has His reward (inheritance; the kingdom). The disciples (prophets) come in His Name and share His reward. The righteous men come in the name of righteous men and receive their reward (that of Christ, that of the Father). Then they give their message (as a disciple, prophet, righteous man) to others and those others are receiving that one as a righteous man and thus share in the reward.

**Discourse #3: Matthew Ch. 13: Parables of the Kingdom**

- C. The King gives instructions to his disciples concerning the delay (interim period) of the kingdom (13:1-53).

*Following the rejection of the King by the nation Israel, Jesus now moves to replace the Mediatorial nation with His 12 disciples who will minister on His behalf during the delay (and those who will take their word to the world). This chapter will present the mysteries of the Kingdom, which basically explains that the Kingdom will be delayed, the Sons of the Kingdom will be those who believe (as opposed to genetic inheritance of Israel). And the Word will be the determiner of those who believe and the eschatological judgment when the King returns. Note that in these sections to follow the inclusion of Gentiles into the church has not been revealed. What will be revealed here is that the apostles will be part of a believing remnant which will not be determinable by genealogical (physical) means, but by belief in the King. That believing remnant will carry forth the word (which Israel was to carry forth), and the physical separation will become evident at the return of the King in the eschaton.*

1. The determiner of new life (Deut. 30:6), the implanted word: The Sower and the Seed (13:1-17).
  - a. Jesus teaches concerning the soils. The fruit-bearer is the one who multiplies the seed into the fruit based on the type of soil (13:1-9).
  - b. Jesus explains that Parables are to fulfill His ministry as that of Isaiah, that of hardening the national rejection through the teaching of the Word (13:10-17).
  - c. Jesus points out that the implanted word is characteristic as a basis for multiplying fruit (13:18-23).

*The point of these four soils and the evaluation of them is the observation of the fruit. While the first three soils ultimately do not identify with the word for various reasons, the final one is the only one who is identifiable with the life promised in the O.T. The fruit, here as well as throughout the gospel, is the teaching (or profession) of the Sermon on the Mount (the message of the King as fullness of the O.T.). Thus, one's life is determined based on one's own continuing and verbal identification with the giving of righteousness through the King. Others will abandon it based on riches, persecution or other misunderstandings of life (Life = representation of God on earth).*

2. The true believers are to live among the unbelievers in the coming age: The parable of reaping the wheat and tares and separating them at the end of the age is indicative of the period of delay until the kingdom (13:24-30).

*Recall that Jesus is speaking to 12 disciples that He has called apart from Israel in their rejection of chapter 12. He is pointing out to them that they (as the believers in God's Anointed One, the true 'sons of God') will be unidentifiable physically from the nation of Israel, the claimants of the title 'sons of God', Deut. 14:1). However, they will become physically evident at the visible separation at the return of the Lord.*

*Note the similarity between this and chapter 7 in the Sermon. The 'good seed' is the Word of the King while the 'bad seed' is the deceit of Satan (or false teaching). You shall know them by their fruits quickly identifies the wheat from the tares (their confession). However, visibly they are not separable without great effort. While they are known, they are not separated until the judgment when their fruits (confession) identifies them and they are judged.*

3. The parable of the mustard seed explains that God will bring about the ultimate Jewish kingdom which will have the Gentiles resting in it through the ministry of the gospel during this new age (13:31-33).

*While the reader might think, based on the former parable, that the 12 genealogical tribes would pass away, Jesus points out that the Jewish Kingdom will be fulfilled and Gentiles will enjoy the benefits of YHWH through the Jews as prophesied in the O.T. This would be a contrast to the 12 disciples so that it is clearly stated that they will not replace Israel.*

4. The parable of leaven shows that the ministry of the kingdom will grow until it penetrates the whole world (13:34-35).

*This is not a new concept. The O.T. had established Israel as priests to the world (Exodus 19:5) who would establish the knowledge of YHWH throughout the earth (Isa. 11:9). It would be through the King (Isa. 52:10). The revelation is that it is through the King and His message now going through the 12 that the nations will receive it.*

5. Jesus explains the judgment of the tares and the wheat (13:36-43).
6. The treasure hidden in the field (13:44).

*Exodus 19:5 refers to Israel as a treasure. However, as stated previously in the parables, it is a believing remnant that will be saved. God sells all that He has (a reference to the death of His own Son) and purchases the whole world for the sake of the remnant who will be saved.*

7. The pearl of great price (13:45-46).

*This parable tells of something of great value, a 'good' pearl. The word here for 'good' is always used in Matthew as something of rightness, normally with respect to God. In Matthew the only thing that is "good" is the righteousness or holiness of God.*

8. The fish parables picture the judgment at the end of the age (13:47-50).

*Continuing on with the theme of the identification of the 'sons of God' through their testimony and not their physical genealogical identification, Jesus points out that in the judgment at His return, the separation will occur which has not in the period of delay.*

9. Jesus explains that he who understands would benefit from the knowledge of how the Old Covenant would complement the New (13:51-52).

*Here the treasure which the scribe possesses is the "word" and its understanding (13:51). Thus he is able to perceive the Old Testament as fulfilled in his eyewitness of Jesus.*

**Discourse #4: Matthew Ch. 18: The Sermon to the Church (Doctrinal Basis)**

4. The King illuminates his disciples concerning their representation of God (and Jesus) for their leadership during the New Age (18:1--19:1).

*This is the fourth discourse of Jesus that Matthew has presented. This one takes the lesson of the Sermon on the Mount and applies it to those who will establish the church during the age of delay. In summary, it requires that the church preach the gospel for salvation and sanctification. That is, everything comes from the hand of the King, particularly imputed righteousness, and to teach otherwise (works) is to cause believers to stumble and incur the discipline of God Himself.*

- a. To disciples<sup>1</sup>: Repentance based on humility before God (God's righteousness versus man's depravity, cf. Matt. 5--7). (18:1-4).

*The question asked is who is the greatest in the kingdom. Jesus answer is that there are two categories, the greatest and the least. The greatest are all those who enter the kingdom, while the least are those who do not.*

*Jesus illustrates who will be in the kingdom through the use of a little child. One must be turned, or be humble to enter the kingdom. While humility by itself does not explain the ability to enter, Jesus will define that in the next verses to be that of belief in Him. Thus one believes in Him for their righteousness and is turned from their own righteousness which requires humility.*

*It is important to notice that the 'greatest' is a resident of the kingdom, not necessarily indicating that this one is greater than someone else in the kingdom. He is greater with respect to the one who is outside the kingdom ('the least') in Matt. 5. The 'humble' are those who see their own depravity (lack of status with God) and ask. The 'repentance' here is a change from their understanding of their present self-'righteousness' to that of God's righteousness in Christ.*

- b. Warning to teachers: Teaching false doctrine (doctrines of self-righteousness) instead of God's righteousness is ultimate opposition to God (18:5-9).

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<sup>1</sup> Note here that He is addressing the disciples, but is exhorting them (use of "you") to turn so that they might enter the kingdom. Thus the address must be taken as differentiating the claimants of 'sons of the Kingdom' (which would include Pharisees) and the true 'sons of the Kingdom' (based on the teachings of the King).

*In this next section Jesus will encourage those who teach imputed righteousness through the King, but will give dire warnings to those who teach works and sel-righteousness and so lead the young beliers away from God.*

- 1) Requirements of representatives of God and the King: Receive the humble into the Kingdom indicates an understanding of the King's reception of themselves (18:5).

*Now that they have repented and are running the church they must insure that they teach the doctrine of righteousness from God. These therefore are ministers of God's mercy.*

- 2) Identification of, and warning to, those who teach otherwise: Rejecting the humble (believers in the mercy of God in the King) through their teaching.<sup>2</sup> (18:6-14).

- a) Serious consequences to those who oppose the King's teaching (18:6).

*The stumbling here is the fact that one moves to works due to the teaching of the false teachers. Since true teaching of imputed righteousness is the only means to God, He issues dire consequences for those who teach otherwise.*

- b) There is no physical possession that is as valued as the understanding and representation of God (18:7-9).

*The stumbling blocks here are the world's teaching regarding having their own righteousness. Since there is no mercy in them they affect the young believer by trying to entice them to be proud and arrogant as they are. Thus, the world should take on*

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<sup>2</sup> Note that in 18:3-6, there is parallelism giving definition to exactly what defines this child that Jesus is using as an illustration.

18:3 “. . . unless you are turned and become like children . . .”

18:4 “. . . whoever humbles himself as this child . . . ”

18:7 “. . . one of these little ones who believe in Me . . .”

It is clear to see the definition of “turned” is the nature of humbling oneself before God which is defined in the Sermon as being the representative of God and receiving all things from Him including righteousness. The parallel phrase to that in 18:7 is believing in the King for that imputation of forgiveness. Note that this forgiveness as a main theme is continued in 18:15 through the end of the chapter. The Pharisees were not at all interested in forgiveness.



*the Sermon on the Mount where one is exhorted to get rid of anything that causes them to not enter the kingdom. Specifically in the Sermon, this was their heart. Thus, the character of the warned here is of essence. All should get rid of their Adamic, selfish heart and allow Christ to enter and give imputed righteousness (new character).*

c. God values the humble repentant sinner greatly enough to bring him back if he should be affected by false teaching (18:10-14).

- 1) Believers has great value as their representative angels have direct access to the Father in heaven (18:10).

*The point of this is to state that the young believers are of such value that they have protecting angels who are very close, and thus important, to the Father, so much so that they are able to see His face from their position. Any problems encountered by this young believer will be immediately brought before the Father, who cares very much for their welfare.*

- 2) The King has been sent from God to bring them to God (18:11).

*The very point that God sent His Son for was to save these from hell. Thus, for the antagonist to take them back to their own righteousness through his teaching of works is to go against the very Son of God.*

- 3) God's desire is seeking the humble who has strayed into self-righteousness like a shepherd who risks losing the seemingly secure sheep (18:12-13).

*While a shepherd is very interested in saving his possessions, here the sheep, God is also very interested in saving His possessions, but this time it is people. The character of God is such that it rejoices over a returning lost believing sinner than it does those who have not needed to repent.*

- 4) Summary: God's will is that the humble, those who perceive God as forgiving, and themselves as depraved, receive forgiveness (18:14).

*The point here is a summary. God does not want believers, once having been given life through the Son and imputed*

*righteousness to ever go back to self-righteousness and thus lose their sanctificational life. Losing one's sanctificational life is not the same as losing one's salvation life (which one cannot do since he/she is eternally secure). Losing one's salvation life is to return to the position of belief in self-righteousness that they had before they were saved. Since walking in imputed righteousness of Christ is what makes one alive, when they turn from this they are walking in death, not glorifying God, but self. This results in not having life in their walk now, but also not having rewards in the kingdom (though they will be there), not having represented the King.*

- d. Thus the representatives of God (the church) should pursue an errant believer until he has rejected their message of his error and potential forgiveness (18:15-22).

- 1) The representatives, the church, should seek the repentance of an erring believer and offer him forgiveness (18:15-17).

*This is a list of the processes by which one is to attempt to restore the brother (either the teacher of self-righteousness or the brother who has now been captivated by it). The first attempt is by one who has witnessed the offense and seeks to have it rectified simply. The goal here is restoration through mercy, not punishment.*

*The second process is to take two or three witnesses with him so that his offense can be confirmed and also confirm his repentance or rejection of this confrontation.*

*The third process is for this unrepentant one to come before the church where they as a body exhort him to repent. The final result of his rejection here is to be expelled from the church, and from then on he is treated as one of those who lives in self-righteous behavior – a Gentile.*

- 2) The representatives, the church, should recognize that they have the ability to execute this forgiveness and excommunication as representatives of God (18:18-20).

*These verses as the ones previous are not to be seen as generally applicable to anyone, but these are applicable to the elders (and the church through them), in that if they approach someone and then discipline them, as they have done it on behalf of God (according to the Scriptures) then God has effectively done it. Thus if the elders expel the person from the church, it is in effect, that God has done it.*

*The point of the "two or three" is not to establish a minimal gathering for Jesus to be present, but is based upon the past verses, that if the two or three witnesses (elders who went to*

*the brother) are gathered together and decide a church member's judgment then Jesus is united with them in their decision.*

- 3) The representatives of the church should be prepared to forgive to the maximum degree as often as is required (18:21-22).

*Peter then illustrates the purpose of this exercise in church discipline by asking the Lord how far the mercy should be granted. As was stated in the Sermon on the Mount, God loves His enemies and extends forgiveness, seeking reconciliation to any extent. Thus the Lord's exhortation is to be merciful as God has granted you mercy, that is, without limit.*

*Thus, when Peter does not extend ultimate forgiveness, he is not acting like God and thus stands self-condemned (unforgiven).*

- e. Illustration: Those who do not perceive God's heart of forgiveness (perceive God as judgmental based on man's personal efforts), will not forgive others and thus will not be forgiven themselves (18:23-35).

- 1) God (the king) seeks to bring men (slaves) into relationship (settle accounts) with Himself (18:23).

*Now the illustration is given to relate to the forgoing lack of forgiveness that Peter has stated, and what happens if one does not give this forgiveness to others.*

*All men owe God immensely and this slave owed his master more than could be repaid in several lifetimes.*

- 2) The debtor (evil man) owes the king (holy God) more than he can ever repay (18:24).
- 3) The King righteously (under the Law) condemns men to death (all that he has) for inability to pay (18:25).
- 4) The debtor wrongly perceives that he can pay back if given enough time (self-works) (18:26).
- 5) Due to the attribute of the king (God's heart in the Law) He offers forgiveness to the debtor (through Christ to the character) (18:27).
- 6) Yet the lack of understanding of the King's heart (God's heart) is shown by the large debtor's heart as he continues to insist that others pay back manageable debts to him

through works instead of being like the king and offering mercy (18:28).

*Note here that all of the large debtor's money had been gained by borrowing from the King's funds. Thus when his debt was forgiven he should have forgiven others since it was that very money that the King had lent him that the others owed.*

- 7) The others respond like he did, asking for a delay in judgment (they actually could repay the debt since it was smaller). (18:29).
- 8) The large debtor rejects mercy and insists on self-righteous acts which serve himself instead of the King.<sup>3</sup> (18:30).
- 9) Others (fellow elders of the church) inform the King of his trespass (18:31).

*As in the previous passage, the elders take this person's offense to God (the King) and he is excommunicated from the church (put in prison).*

- 10). The Lesson: One should represent God as they God has acted toward them (18:32-33).

*This is the fullness of the verse that if one does not have mercy, mercy will not be extended. And if one has mercy on others, mercy is extended. Thus a believer is one who is identified by his testimony and the fact that he extends mercy.*

- 11) The Result: Those who do not perceive the heart of the King do not act similarly and will be judged by being turned over to Satan and his realm by being excluded from the body (18:34).

*Jesus Christ had established His church, of which the gates of hell would not prevail. The church then is His body. To be excommunicated from the church is to leave the body and thus the protection that is afforded the body of Christ. Thus, the one is thrown out into the realm of Satan (self-righteousness) and is thus subject to all its death (both physical and spiritual).<sup>4</sup>*

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<sup>3</sup> Note that the large debtor is serving himself in both actions. He takes the remission of his debt from the King (which enhanced his fortune) and then takes the money from his debtor (which would enhance his fortune). Everything serves the self-righteous.

<sup>4</sup> New Testament examples of this are in 1 Corinthians 5:5 (one in the church who has committed immorality with his step-mother and is advocating that it is

- 12) The Application: Forgiveness of brothers is related to the perception of forgiveness by God and reveals one's heart (18:35).

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acceptable in the church to do so; 1 Corinthians 10:30 where they have abused the Lord's supper and thus have advocated self-righteousness in the church; James 5:14-15 where the brother has advocated such self-righteousness against the body and is confronted by the elders; among other passages.)

## **Discourse #5: The Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24--25)**

*The King is going to expound on the end of the period of delay that He introduced in Chapter 13. That period will end with His return to judge and bring in His earthly Kingdom. While the Sermon on the Mount has been preached during the time of delay, that preaching will end with a judgment based on the King's requirements; that is, if a man possesses the very righteousness of the King, given to Him through the King's death and resurrection.*

*The Times of the Gentiles (Israel's judgment by Gentile rule) will end with the return of the Jewish King forecast by Daniel (9:24-27).*

*Thus, in Matthew 24--25, the King announces the time of His return. His point is not the timing of the beginning of the Kingdom but that it **will** come in a very physical way. The point of the Olivet Discourse is not for church age believers to know when He is coming by observing the newspaper headlines. The main point of this discourse is to know **that** He is coming back. Without that coming and without that judgment then the value of His words is of little consequence.<sup>5</sup> Therefore the Second Coming in judgment is announced because it emphasizes that the delay is not to be taken as the status quo (as with the slave who thought his Master was not coming for a long time in 24:45-51). The Words of the King in the Sermon on the Mount are the status quo of the King and they must come to pass in the Kingdom which requires a judgment on that basis.<sup>6</sup> The requirement of the church age believer is to be ready, which requires a change of state of the person which then would not depend on knowing the time.*

### **The Organization of the Olivet Discourse:**

**There are three things that the Olivet Discourse teaches:**

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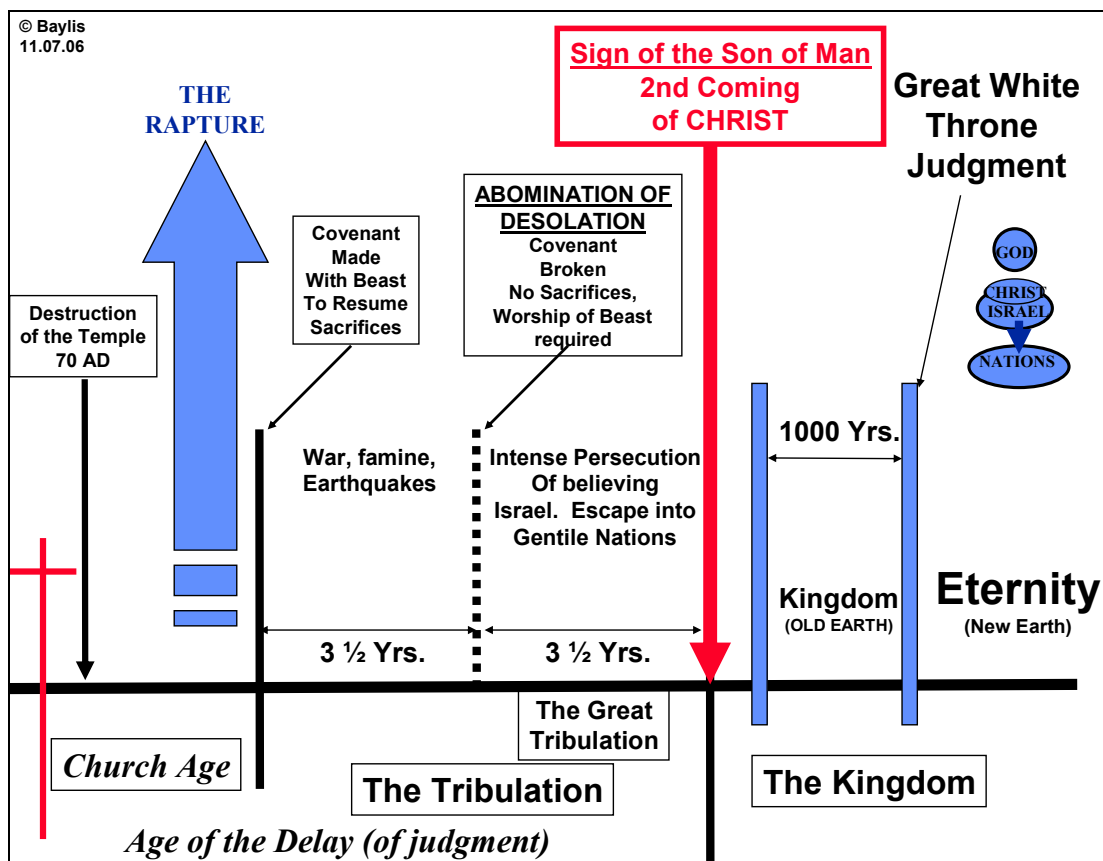
<sup>5</sup> This is a major reason for discipline with children. While the punishment is effective as a deterrent, it is more importantly that when there is a judgment it shows that one values their words. If rewards are given for good behavior it shows the value of one's promises. If discipline is given for bad behavior, it also sets a value on the words. Threats without judgment show no weight is on the words. Thus if there is no judgment, no reward, there is no consequence to the words.

<sup>6</sup> This is the problem in 2 Thessalonians, where they argue that the "Day of the Lord" has already come. The Day of the Lord was the day of visitation of the Lord to the earth. It was fairly common in the Old Testament that this meant a judgment (not the literal visitation) which would establish His desires on earth. Thus, it was quite common for Israel to think that the Day of the Lord might be only spiritual and not a physical visitation. Thus, they would think that the Day of the Lord had come (in a spiritual sense) and that they were prospering in a status quo situation.

1. **The destruction of the Temple** during the Age of Delay and Israel continues under the curse of the Times of the Gentiles with Rome ruling.
2. **The Return of the King to establish His Kingdom** which will be visible and real and has been planned since the foundation of the earth (Gen. 1:26,28)
3. **The Judgment by the King for entry into the Kingdom or rejection into Hades:** based on the criteria established in the Sermon on the Mount.

**Three things revealed (24:3):**

1. “When will these things be?”
2. of your coming,
3. and the end of the age?



24:15--28: “What is the sign of your coming and the end of the age”

- a. First the abomination of desolation (15-22)
- b. Sign of coming of Son of Man (23-31)

## **The Olivet Discourse: Commentary**

### **I. Introduction: The disciples inquire regarding the destruction of the temple, the return of Jesus as King (24:1-3).**

*The questions of the disciples basically refer to Daniel and the statements of Jesus as they fulfill the Old Testament prophecy. "When will these things be" is the question of when will the temple be destroyed? While to the Pharisees the times seemed like everything was fine, nevertheless the temple would be destroyed shortly after the Messiah was cut off. Daniel states,*

*9:26 "Then **after** the sixty-two weeks (Note: 483 years from the order to rebuild the temple ending on the day of the Triumphal Entry) the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.*

Thus it is clear that it is following the removal of the Messiah by Rome (Gentile control) that the temple will be destroyed by Rome also.

### **II. The events prior to the 'end' are not to be mistaken to validate "another" or "the end". (24:4-14)**

*The schedule presented in Daniel 9:24-27, particularly verse 27, is referenced. There would be a 3-1/2 year period where the antichrist would make a covenant with Israel to restore their worship. That would be followed by a 3-1/2 year period where He would break the covenant and remove their worship so they could worship him. This will be the end of the "Times of the Gentiles" when they will have the pinnacle of Gentile, Satanic rule.<sup>7</sup>*

#### **A. Do not mistake the sign of another (24:4-5).**

*The "many" is normally a technical term for the nation Israel (used in Daniel as such). The point is that Israel (whom the apostles are going in the place of) will follow another, the antichrist, who is ruling for Satan. This is the one with whom they make the covenant of Dan. 9:27.*

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<sup>7</sup> The Times of the Gentiles is indirectly being referred to here. The same period of time referred to in 24:15ff. is paralleled in Luke 21:20-24 where the "Times of the Gentiles" phrase is utilized.



- B. Do not mistake covenant judgments on Israel as advocating another's power, nor 'the end'. (24:6-8)

*Basically the time where Israel continues under oppression (through a deceitful peace) is the first 3-1/2 years of the tribulation. Judgments #1 (wars) and #2 (famines) are among those listed in Leviticus 26 (and elsewhere) as judgments on Israel to bring them back to God. Earthquakes, while not listed among the war, famine and death trilogy is also a judgment on Jerusalem (cf. Zech. 14:5, Amos 1:1, Isaiah 29:6, Rev. 11).*

*During this first half of the tribulation, the 10-kingdom federation of Daniel 2, 7, 8 will rise to power. There will be cataclysmic judgments, some of which are related to the promised curses of Leviticus 26 and will devastate Israel and other nations. These will be taken by some (Israel) to follow the antichrist based on these seeming signs; especially his victories in war (cf. Rev. 11).*

1. The judgment of war (24:6)
2. The judgment of famines (24:7)
3. The judgment of earthquakes (24:7)
4. Conclusion: These are only the beginning of the events that indicate the 'end.' (24:8).

- C. The persecution of the elect will be the deceit of "another" and the "end" but is the time still prior to the end (24:9-14)

*The deceit of Satan is strong. The fact that true "sons of the Kingdom" (Israelite believers specifically here) are persecuted and have nothing is taken by those who are deceived to indicate that these believing Jews are cursed (being hated by God). Those who worship the antichrist have pleasure, apparent blessing and an enjoyable life are seen to indicate that they are indeed following God. Thus the Antichrist will use these things (physical blessing) as an indicator of His Messiahship.*

1. Death and hatred will occur on those faithful to the king (24:9)
2. Apostasy and betrayal by those unfaithful to the King (Israelites will demonstrate their true identity by turning against the Jewish believers) (24:10)

3. The increase of false prophets who promote self-righteousness (24:11).

*Jesus had warned of false prophets (identified by their teaching of self-works or other gods apart from the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ the King). The antichrist and his followers will promote their own self-righteousness and so teach others. Their identity is clear if one understands the Sermon on the Mount as they are known by their "fruits" or their teachings.*

4. The increase of covenant rebellion against the Law of the King (24:12)

5. The faithfulness of the remnant (24:13). Those who understand the words of the king will persevere in faithfulness to be saved into the kingdom.

*It is not saying that all who persevere will be kept alive until the kingdom, but that of those who have remained alive at the end, the one who has persevered will be the one who is saved into the kingdom. In other words it is affirming that the physical kingdom (in a physical remnant) will be kept alive to establish the Kingdom, and that this physical remnant will be made up of those who have persevered, based on the understanding of the King (Matt. 5--7).<sup>8</sup>*

6. The ministry of the remnant to fulfill the Abrahamic Covenant prior to the end, that is they will preach the gospel of the King (24:14)

*The "Gospel of the Kingdom" is the gospel preached here in the Gospel of Matthew, that of the King in Matt. 5--7. In short the world will be presented the truth of God's righteousness, man's depravity and most importantly the imminent appearance of Jesus as King to judge.<sup>9</sup>*

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<sup>8</sup> It might be more easily understood if the contrary was stated. The one who does not persevere (understand) will not be the one who establishes his presence in the Kingdom. Thus perseverance in understanding is valued by the King.

<sup>9</sup> This is likely a reference to Dan. 12:4: "12:4 "But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase." "Knowledge is increased" indicates the fullness of times coming in the revelation of God in man (Jesus Christ). This revelation will go forth

III. The events of 'the end'. (24:15-23)

A. The Great Tribulation

1. Begun by the Abomination of Desolation, the identification of "another" (24:15).

*The Abomination of Desolation is when the antichrist enters the temple and declares himself to be God. He stops all worship of other gods and sacrifices and all men must worship him or die.*

2. The recognition of the false messiah and the fleeing of the remnant (24:16-22)

- a. The revelation of the false messiah (24:16).

*The abomination of desolation is the sign of the false messiah. As his forces come to Jerusalem, Jesus instructs the believers of that day to go into exile into the nations to avoid subjection to the Beast. At least 144,000 are in this number (Rev. 7 and flee to the nations for protection.*

- b. The fleeing of the remnant (24:17-20).

*The believers in Israel now flee to the nations of the world to protect themselves from the persecuting antichrist. The world, not at that time under the direct control of the antichrist, takes the believers in, not being threatened by them.*

- c. The intensity of persecution on the remnant (24:21).

*Yet the antichrist pursues them and ends up managing to get them persecuted as the nations of the world come under his dominion and submit to him and he becomes a fearful world leader.*

- d. The preservation of the remnant for the Kingdom (24:22).

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(better translation than "to and fro") through the apostles in the church age and in Israel in the tribulation ("many" in Daniel indicates the Jewish remnant of believers).

*The last half of the tribulation will be so bad that God will have to cut it short with Christ's return. Otherwise there would be no Israel left to populate the kingdom.*

IV. The Sign of the Son of Man is the visible coming of the King to earth (24:23-31)

- A. Not to be verified by signs and wonders since the false prophet(s) will do signs<sup>10</sup> (24:24-25).

*According to Deut. 13:1ff. a false prophet was not to be identified by his signs and wonders but by his word. Jesus reaffirmed this in the Sermon in chapter 7. However, they were to know His word in the O.T. and in the Sermon and this would allow them not to be deceived by the antichrist and his self-righteous propaganda.*

- B. Not to be a philosophical or unseen judgment, but a specific appearance by the King in the sky to come and judge the earth (24:26-28).

*The identity of the Son of Man will be clear for He will appear like lightning, that is, in the sky and visible to all.*

*The indication of the Messiah in the "wilderness" or the "inner rooms" is indicating that he has come in secret or is unknown apart from a visible violent judgmental coming. This would be a philosophical coming (unseen) but testified. A sample of this would be when people advocate there is no heaven or hell or there is no Kingdom and judgment. Their belief would be something like "you get what is coming to you in the here and now" or "what goes around, comes around". This type of belief espouses blessing now for good works (self-righteousness) as well as a judgment now for being unspiritual. Jesus is clear. His sign will be His own personal appearance in the sky with the mighty angels to do judgment on the earth.*

- C. The validation is a fulfillment of prophecy (24:27-31)

1. Not an earthly presence but a heavenly appearance (24:27-28)

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<sup>10</sup> Refer to Deut. 13:1ff. for the Law's statement on the identity of false prophets.

*Jesus points out clearly that He will be seen as the King of the earth in a visible coming in the air according to Zechariah 14.*

2. The accompanying heavenly signs (24:28-31).

a. The creation: sun, moon and stars (24:29)

*The point that is being made is that things do not continue as normal. These are supernatural occurrences so as to make one pay attention to something that is very important in relationship to God.*

b. The Son of Man: Coming on the clouds

*No one has the ability to come on the clouds of heaven but Jesus. The “coming on the clouds” is a reference to His coming to remove the rule of the Gentiles from Daniel 7.*

c. The Elect: Gathered to return to the land supernaturally.

*It is at the same time that the angels will go throughout the nations and gather the elect. In the physical realm the nation of Israel is returning to the land, guided by the call of the Greater Moses as He returns to the Mount of Olives.*

V. The signs of the coming with respect to the identity of the Sons of the Kingdom (24:32--25:46).

A. The Parable of the Fig Tree: The sign of the coming perceived by Israel prior to the end: Israel to return to God (24:32-35).

*One should recall the fig tree that had been cursed earlier in 21:19 and the meaning of “fruits” from Matt. 7 as confession of Christ. Now Jesus states that Israel is seen as approaching the ministry of confession and is about to bring forth fruit. This would be indicated by the fact that many Israelites are coming to Christ and it is seen that the nation as a whole is about to confess Christ.*

*This generation is the generation of Christ’s day as it is throughout the book; the generation of those who were hearing His words and the Sermon. The words “until all these things take place” should be*

*translated “until all these things are born (generated)”. In other words, Jesus death on the cross and resurrection would bring forth the beginning, that is the potential of Israel’s return in the basic elements. Since Jesus was the ideal Israelite, He would be the firstfruits of many to come.*

- B. The Parable of the Unfaithful Servant: The sign of the coming not perceived by those who do not understand the “Word of the King” (24:36-51)

*The 'time of His coming' is related to the Old Testament. It signified a return of God's presence to the world to judge. He had 'come' in the Old Testament but it was an unseen coming, only seen by its effects, i.e., the Exodus, or famine, etc. to Israel. Thus, Israel does not think He (the Father) is coming for a long time, i.e., there is no physical and actual judgment, only a philosophical one, that is, you are blessed if you do good and cursed if you do evil.*

*In the days of Noah, it was not that they did not know what 'time', but that they did not believe it was coming at all.*

*The context of 24—25 does not seem to be limited in its principles, but is limited in its application. Thus while the Gospel of the Kingdom is the Gospel which is found in the Sermon and is not different when preached in the Tribulation, but the focus of 24—25 is the Tribulation and the Second Coming. Thus this slave who the master puts in charge of his household to give them food at the proper time is not different from the church age in the sense of giving them food (mercy from God in the Sermon’s Gospel), but is specifically related to the ones who give Israel the message and whatever else they need as they flee into the nations. But, the servant who rejects the remnant and persecutes them is also identified as one who is to be identified with the enemies of God and thus to eternal judgment.*

- C. The parable of the virgins: Those who are not prepared for the return of the Messiah (believe in His return and His righteousness in judgment) will not be able to enter the kingdom. (25:1-13).

*This parable is a parallel to the wise and foolish man in Matt. 7 where the wise man was one who built his house on the rock (the gospel of imputed righteousness) and the foolish man was one who built his house on the sand (self-righteousness).*

*The virgin symbol is used for Israel in Jeremiah as well as other places. Israel was to be betrothed as a virgin only to YHWH.*

*However, the question of her true righteousness and worthiness to enter the kingdom is based on her preparation for this kingdom. There are 10 virgins. Five are foolish (from the Sermon we know they have not perceived the words of the King and are self-righteous). Five are wise and thus are perceiving the words of the King and have asked for His righteousness.*

*Note that all have oil in their lamps, but the wise take some extra along with them. Thus the foolish perceive that their righteousness is enough for the present and do not perceive the true righteousness requirement of the kingdom is beyond them (cf. Matt. 5:17-20). Thus, when the Bridegroom appears, they do not have enough to enter the Kingdom. The wise virgins tell them to depart and get their own (purchase it<sup>11</sup>) since they cannot share theirs (the foolish did not value it). The foolish then approach the Bridegroom later and request entry, but the King does not recognize them as His own (no relationship as they had not recognized His character).*

- D. The story of the talents: Believers will value the forgiveness God has given them, while false claimants will not and will be sent into eternal punishment (25:14-30).

*The difference between the slaves was the perception of the value of the talents given to them based on their perception of the Master. Each used them as he perceived their value for expansion (or worth) of the kingdom. Thus the first two perceived their representative position and expanded the talents in the same way the Master had given them the talents. They valued them as “life” and able to produce “life”. The third however misperceived his Master as a man who was a hard man taking things that were not gained through the proper channels. This actually was true of the master as he affirms later. It was also true of God since God had judged the Canaanites and taken their crops and houses and given them to the Israelites in Deut. 6. But the response of the man was to fear the judgment and take measures to avoid it by trying to keep it from the master or from anyone else. He did not perceive the value of this mercy as being given to others as an investment. Thus he became fearful (of judgment as an enemy) of this hard master and sought to preserve what he had, not realizing its very value was to utilize it (did not perceive that those who are the master’s are those who have received mercy). However the Master*

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<sup>11</sup> It does not appear here that the “purchase” is a negative thing, since it is likely the wise virgins purchased theirs as well, only that they purchased enough. Thus the foolish are told to go back to the source and purchase it. Their statement is that their own righteousness that they received cannot be shared. Each individual must go to the source to receive their own.

*states that he ended up judging himself, since the Master required results. He should have been sure to have given him back something for His investment.*

*The Master requires that his talent is invested on his behalf. Thus, if one does not perceive the value of mercy and does not utilize it, he then does not perceive it for himself as well and thus does not give it out. If one does perceive mercy then one gives it out (since the very nature of it is that it is to be given and is not the property of the one possessing it) and thus gives a return for the investment.*

*The lesson here is that a believer has perceived the worth of the Master's righteousness and has asked for it. He then, as the mercy has been awarded Him, awards it to others on behalf of the King. He does not hide it since mercy is by definition to be given.*

E. Jesus to judge the sheep and the goats<sup>12</sup> (25:31-46).

*This judgment is a reference to Ezekiel 34:17 which is the judgment of the Sheep and Goats. The passage in Ezekiel refers to the Jews who have taken God's blessings and have fouled the streams for others. In other words, their self-righteousness has received from the hand of God and has not manifested that blessing as was intended, but has kept it for themselves, feeling they had deserved it, and thus others did not.*

1. Jesus will judge when He returns with His angels, a reference to Zechariah 14, and the return to judge the nations, including Israel.
2. The King will separate those who enter the Kingdom against those who do not have that right.
3. The basis of the judgment is how they responded to the least of Jesus' brethren, which indicates that they acted on behalf of Jesus fulfilling His desires.

*It is very important here to return to the Sermon on the Mount, for it is clear that the definition of this is not in this context. For instance, one would expect that One should do more for Jesus from this context, and if they did not, then they would be judged as being a "child of Satan" and unworthy to enter. However, if that is the case, it would be contradictory to the fact that these do not defend themselves*

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<sup>12</sup> Note here that the way that men extend mercy to the unbelievers (or believers) is the manner in which they perceive their own forgiveness. These are the true representatives of God.



*from a works point of view, and seem not even to know what they had ever done for the King. Thus, to advocate increasing ones works so as to be sure to enter the kingdom would be contradictory to the point that these who entered were not keeping track.*

*Note first of all that the foil (the one who sets off a more prime character by contrasting or by being similar) here is in all cases one who is in need and who cannot help themselves. They are hungry, thirsty, an alien, sick (literally: weak), or a prisoner. The one who operates for the Lord here is one who offers some sort of solace; either of the fulfillment of the need or some compassion that aligns with the one in need.*

*The most obvious thing from the Sermon on the Mount that God has given men is righteousness in contrast to having their own. Possessions were given only for the purpose of enabling the righteous one to glorify God's righteousness. Thus, everything was given from the hand of the King to represent Him on this earth. The servant, thus, was one who had nothing of his own, and thus has no self-justification. Thus, in opposition to the ones in Matthew 7 who justified themselves as demon exorcisers and miracle workers for the sake of the King, these do not have a self-justification, seeing themselves as unworthy and deserving of nothing. It is this very humility and lack of self-righteousness that identifies them as servants of the king. In other words, they had done things for Jesus, but they had not seen them as deserving works, only privileges for servants of the King. This testimony was exactly what identified them as Sons of the Kingdom.*

*The specifics were that they had granted the mercy that they had been granted through Jesus and thus were judged by mercy. Receiving mercy is the lack of self-justification and thus they had no plea. Jesus then recognizes that that was exactly the key; that they themselves had no justification, only their relationship to the King and His mercy.*

*Note that the "hungry and thirsty" relates to the Sermon on the Mount in chapter 5 which is a quotation out of Isaiah granting that the hunger and thirst is for righteousness of God. However, in addition, the text of Isaiah 58 has something to say about the providing of goods for those in need as a representative of God. Thus, not only is*

*righteousness (mercy) in view here, but the support of those who are suffering for the gospel through the giving of food, clothing, etc.*<sup>13</sup>

[This may be in the nature of taking care of the Man of God. Thus, blessing the Man of God is what is necessary as in the case of David, Elijah, Paul, etc. This would then be honoring those who Christ cared for in order to honor Him since these now are identified with Him. So it is ultimately an issue of identifying with Christ by identifying with the sons of the kingdom by giving them as part of the family.]

Hungry – gave something to eat; Israel did not give Him something to eat in 21:18.

thirsty - gave drink;

Stranger invited in;

Naked clothed

Sick visited Me

in prison, and you came to Me.'

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<sup>13</sup> The question of giving to those who are outside the body (unbelievers) here is difficult. The “least of these my brethren” does not seem to refer to Israel as is so often the interpretation. It does, in the context of Matt. 18, seem to be those “little children” or younger believers. However, the giving of bread to ones enemy does not seem to be apart from Matthew as God causes his rain to fall on the evil and the good. Note also that in Romans 12:20 Paul exhorts the believers to feed their enemies.