

Lesson 47 Matthew 24.3-25.46 (3) Jesus teaching on reaching

Introduction

First the LORD in the Olivet discourse laid down a historical time frame and parameters for the church age. These statements are known world-wide and are of especial value to our era and to the church living in the end-times. To grasp the serious nature of judgments that are withheld by the Holy Spirit's ministry is to purchase a zealous interest in reaching the lost for Christ.

The events analysed: Chapter 24

(a) Birthpangs

"See that no-one deceives you, many will come anchored to my name and deceive many"

"Be ready to hear of wars and rumours of wars"

"Prepare for this but do not shout about it or be frightened-these happen-but no way are they the end or purpose"(Greek
⏏⏏⏏⏏)

"Nation will rise on the shoulders of nation"-cf Rome-the Huns-the Ottoman sweep west-the Spanish British French & German expansion and the American revolution.

"There will be famines deadly infections and seismic eruptions in particular places (Greek *τυποί*)

(b) Devastating persecution & total evangelisation

Christians will be "hostages" to distress & affliction-leading to deaths

Christians by professing Christ as God's Son will be hated (Greek *μισουμενοι* counted insufferable")

Some will be baited by hope of easement; multiple betrayal will occur; impassioned pseudo preaching too; people leave the Christian sphere as shooting stars; a widespread loss of love for others becomes evident.

(c) The Abomination

Daniels "*βδέλυγμα*" or "evil smell in God's nose" brings desolation-commanding a seat in the Jerusalem sacrum. The emergence of this power demands unprecedented Christian discretion of speech.

(d) The evacuation of Jerusalem & the Tribulation

Escape to and beyond the "borders" or "mountains" is predicted-a time of unprecedented trial for young families and infants. So severe is the turmoil and so devastating the woes that God says it shall not be again (Greek *ου ου μη* "no no no")The days will be truncated in mercy upon Israel and the remnant of men. Away from the face of these judgments on evil men the church shall take her homeward way as in Noah's day before the deluge.

Be ready faithful and living holy

Do not be surprised when Christ comes as a thief

Serve the Lord's people with sustaining food of scripture

While you wait serve your fellow believers, avoid excesses, do not share in violence.

Chapter 25 The three perspectives on service in the light of Christ's advent.

(a) Parable of the ten virgins

Be ready for the "midnight call" and "keep your lamps trimmed"-well aware of the high price and great value of salvation and the work of the Holy Spirit (Who is as "oil in the vessel" of our lives)

(b) Parable of the Talents

The Lord departed but sent out his Jewish apostles, dispersed Jews worldwide during the gospel era and in our time has brought to birth a church of the Meshiachim. The parable focuses on the "one-talent" man who has small regard for Christ whilst it encourages those fruitful servants whose greatest joy is to enter into the marriage feast of the lamb.

(c) The Sheep & Goats

The nations will be judged at the outset of the millennium and those who "*had no inspiration to do kindness to these little ones*"(Christ's flock) receive their just reward.



From paper to practice.

- 1 Give three essential responses to divine grace in our time as we await the coming of Christ
- 2 How is the Holy Spirit vital to our readiness to meet Christ?
- 3 Be a resourceful steward of the talent(s) God has given you-what is your outstanding talent?
- 4 Remember the "sheep" and "goats" are distributed amongst all nations. What characterises a goat?