

“The Day of the Lord - Warnings Concerning Things to Come”

Our Outline Concerning the Tribulation Teaching of Scripture: The Day of the Lord

- **Our Lord’s Warnings Concerning Things to Come Are Weighty**
- **Our Lord’s Tribulation Teaching Has a Clear Focus: “Watch and Pray!”**
- **Paul’s Tribulation Teaching Is in Its Essence Dispensational**
- **Peter’s Tribulation Teaching Regarding Paul Is Challenging Indeed**

Introduction:

- Today our theme is, again, the Coming of Our Lord Jesus, or to use a word that conveys much meaning, the “apocalypse” of our Lord Jesus Christ. Last time we introduced this subject, and I trust that that was a blessing to you. That the promises regarding the coming of the Lord will be fulfilled exactly as written, in some cases nearly four thousand years ago or more, is most comforting, even for us today who are living under grace.
- We shall see clearly the dispensational significance of these revelations. In our next studies, our focus will be on that very thing, the dispensational distinctives between Grace, as we know it today, and Law, as seen in the Tribulation. But first we need to lay a foundation. We will do that by examining in some detail the prophetic revelation concerning the coming Tribulation period, and then what our Lord revealed to his disciples concerning that period in Israel’s prophetic history. With that foundation, we will see in later studies what the apostle Paul writes about that and learn the “dispensational” contrasts between Kingdom preparations and laws, and the principles of grace that are effective today. For they are so different.

We shall see that there are great differences and they are critical for us to understand. Without this understanding, we will flounder under grace, not enjoying the liberty and the blessings God has for us today. May that never be!

- Paul writes in 1 Cor. 10 that those things are written for Israel in the latter days but are nevertheless our examples, that we may not be tempted and fall away from grace, which would be for us such a departure indeed.

Our Outline Today: Our Lord’s Warnings Concerning Things to Come Are Serious

- **Old Testament Prophecy Supports Our Lord’s Teaching in Every Way**
- **Our Lord’s Teaching Reveals First the Suffering and Then the Glory**

I. Old Testament Prophecy Supports Our Lord's Teaching in Every Way:

- The Coming of the Lord - His Glory Displayed and His Purpose Realized:
 - Let's not forget that the central theme of the Tribulation Period is the salvation of Israel, nationally. This will be accomplished by the Lord God saving a faithful remnant to inherit "the promised land," thereby fulfilling many of the terms of Prophecy regarding the Seed of the Woman. The rest of those promises are spiritual and cannot be fulfilled until the Second Coming, though they were foreshadowed at the First Coming in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection and the many gifts given to believers at that time through the Spirit.

Zech. 12:10 ... And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for [his] only [son], and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for [his] firstborn.

- There is a National focus here - Israel in the Land that was Promised. These events are by the Lord scheduled for the end of the Great Tribulation.
- The spiritual salvation of the Elect Jews [as in Matt. 24:31] shall be accomplished by God.
- All unbelievers will be removed and judged at the Second Coming - there is much in the book of Revelation that is about this. The gospels also are focused on these things.
- But that the Lord would ultimately fulfill all of his promises towards his people is the great theme of it all. And that included the promises concerning the Seed of the Woman. The scarlet thread that runs through Scripture. Amen.

Zech. 13:1, 6, 8-9 [*Spiritual salvation offered, so personally - but, not the blessings of the Mystery which were kept secret.*]

1 In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

...

6 And [one] shall say unto him, What [are] these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, [Those] with which I was wounded [in] the house of my friends.

...

8 And it shall come to pass, *that* in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off *and* die; but the third shall be left therein.

9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It [is] my people: and they shall say, The LORD [is] my God.

Zech. 14:4... And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which [is] before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, [and there shall be] a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

Ex. 19:4-6 [*Prophesied at the giving of the Law for Israel and to be fulfilled at the end of the Tribulation*]

4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and [how] I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth [is] mine:

6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These [are] the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

- Here we have the direct lead-in to our subject today, the Dispensational Significance of all of this. Ex. 19:5 sets the stage for the end times prophecies, doesn't it? "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth [is] mine".
- As stated here clearly, for Israel, obedience to the Law was a requirement for this salvation. Those (many) who deny this are conflicting directly with the written word of God as we find it in so many places, not only, of course, in the Old Testament but also in the New. Of course, faith was also required, as without that they could not have ever been saved, as other scripture so clearly reveals. "Without faith it is impossible to please the Lord", Heb. 11:6.
- But the missing link in our understanding here is the controlling presence of the Holy Spirit at work in the Tribulation period in a mighty way. The elect will be empowered by the gift of the Holy Spirit according to Jer. 31 & 32, and that will make this obedience not only a possibility but also a reality for the elect remnant of Israel. We will look into that further as we begin here in this study.

Remember the word of the Lord through the prophet Jeremiah that we have examined so often over the many years of our teaching here:

[READ] Jer. 31:31-34 [*The New Covenant revealed.*]

31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day [that] I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the LORD:

33 But this [shall be] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

[READ] Jeremiah 32:36-42

36 And now therefore thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning this city, whereof ye say, It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence;

37 Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely:

38 And they shall be my people, and I will be their God:

39 And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them:

40 And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

41 Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul.

42 For thus saith the LORD; Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them.

- And so "... all Israel shall be saved." Paul's words summarize the Old Testament prophetic revelation regarding what had been and what would come to be for his chosen people. They had turned against him and had suffered the consequence of that rebellion. Their suffering would continue until the appointed time of their national redemption. That time would come, but not until they had come as it were, "through the fire" of the

Tribulation, a time like no other. But the work of the Lord in them would be so very, very wonderful that the former times would not even come back into their memories. As verse 42 summarizes it so well, "For thus saith the LORD; Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them." Amen.

- Now we are well prepared to look at our Lord's teaching regarding this coming prophetic period, the Tribulation.

II. Our Lord's Teaching Reveals First the Suffering and Then the Glory:

- Christ's teaching here comprises the singular "Olivet Discourse". This teaching is the introduction to chapter 25 where we will dwell next time, Lord willing. This teaching is an austere and solemn warning for all those who will live during this time, a time like nothing before upon this earth. Those words should cause all who read or hear them to pause and consider what they are saying.

[READ] Matthew 24:1-3

1 And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to *him* for to shew him the buildings of the temple.

2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

Matthew 24:4-10 [*False Christs and great tribulation, "All these are the beginning of sorrows."*]

4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. [*Great trials on the earth will come...*]

8 All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. [*Martyrdom will be the order of the day.*]

10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. *Human relationships so often relied upon will be shattered.*]

[READ] Matthew 24:11-14 *[False prophets shall arise, but the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached and many will endure to the end and be saved.]*

11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

Matthew 24:15-22 *[Those discerning the signs must obey: Verses 16 - 20; After those things shall be the coming of the Lord with unmistakable miracles and signs from God.]*

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

[READ] Matthew 24:23-24 *[Many false Christ's, counterfeit Messiah's, shall appear performing miracles and signs. Beware of them.]*

23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here *is* Christ, or there; believe *it* not.

24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Matthew 24:25-28

25 Behold, I have told you before.

26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers; believe *it* not.

27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

Matthew 24:29-31

29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

[READ] Matthew 24:32-35

32 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer *is* nigh:

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, *even* at the doors.

34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

- This is the first of seven parables here at the end of Matthew's account of the Lord's teaching of his disciples. It speaks forcefully and graphically of the nearness of the Lord's return to this earth to establish his 1000-year kingdom.
- The selected tree here, the fig, is not that important, as Luke adds in his account "... and all the trees". Some say the Fig Tree represents National Israel. But that does not seem to be the case here, though in other scripture it may be. That would weaken or change the importance of this teaching altogether. The point here is that the signs given by the Lord will be sure indicators of the nearness of his coming. Verses 33 & 34 say so explicitly: "when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, *even* at the doors."
- Verse 35 emphasizes the importance of this teaching for those to whom it applies. Misapplications to ourselves in this dispensation, however, are dangerous indeed.
- In summary, therefore, as we close this teaching:

Matt. 24:3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? [*For this will be the key question then - it is not today!*]

- The beginning of sorrows - verse 8 - this is the character of the coming tribulation trials for Israel and the Jews, first the suffering and then the blessings and glory.

■ False Christs - verses 4 & 5

- Wars and rumors of wars - verse 6
- Calamity upon calamity - verse 7
- Martyrdom will be the order of the day - verses 9 & 10
- False prophets - verse 11
- Broken natural human bonds - verse 12
- But the ray of hope: "he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" - verse 13
- The gospel of the kingdom will be the witness for the world - verse 14
- The great events of the Tribulation as Daniel prophesied will be the news of that day - the key sign being what Daniel chapter 9 says regarding the abomination of desolation with the challenges leading to the Mark of the Beast - verse 15
- False Christs and false prophets showing miracles, signs and wonders
- Those discerning the signs must obey: Verses 16 - 20

- After those things shall be the coming of the Lord with unmistakable miracles and signs from God as an alert for the chosen nation. Their response will be critically important, as we have seen so clearly here today. But it is essential for those signs to be correctly discerned, for the enemy will also be working miraculously.

The parable of the fig tree, verses 32 - 34, makes that point so forcefully, doesn't it?

- We have read much foundational teaching here today and are now well prepared to move ahead with the culmination of the Olivet Discourse. For the Lord continues his teaching as recorded in chapter 25 of Matthew's account, and it is enlightening indeed.

Dramatic dispensational contrasts will be easily seen in our future studies as we show the clear differences between our current dispensation of God's grace and the coming Tribulation. Those that seek to place the Body Church in that period have no scriptural basis for their teachings. For today, grace reigns. Amen.

Conclusions / Exhortation:

- Encouraging, brethren? I would hope so. For the Lord God, the Creator and Sustainer of the Earth and all that is in it, shall keep his promises, whether to Israel or for us members of his heavenly body!
- Again, as we have been emphasizing for a while here in our studies, the Tribulation for Israel will be a time of suffering before their Messiah's glory

is fully revealed. But for us, beloved, our hope is in the imminent return of Christ for his church. This most “blessed” hope will be glorious indeed. The dispensational distinctives are so very important as we shall see in our next study, Lord willing.

- For Israel, both faith **and** obedience are requirements and **not** faith alone. But for us, faith and faith alone (with works “prohibited”) are the essence of our eternal inheritance.
- But the bottom line is simply this: During the Tribulation period, God’s elect remnant shall be saved to his eternal glory. Israel will have been fully prepared for their Millennial ministry to the nations. And the glory of the Lord will be displayed upon them. Amen and amen.