

THIS WEEK'S STUDY: 12/27-28/2021 *Matthew Chapter 24:27-51*

PLEASE NOTE WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED A PASSCODE TO JOIN THE STUDY!

MONDAY 7 PM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

THE MONDAY NIGHT STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN CLASSROOM HS107, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!

MEETING ID# - 87858644763 Passcode: 087484

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TUESDAY 7 AM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada).

THE TUESDAY MORNING STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN THE FAMILY ROOM, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!

MEETING ID# - 85309150746 - Passcode: 715340

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+16699006833,,85309150746# US (San Jose) +12532158782,,85309150746# US (Tacoma)

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Phil Twente ptwente@gmail.com cell 714 425 9221 For Audio & notes from previous studies - www.ptwente.com

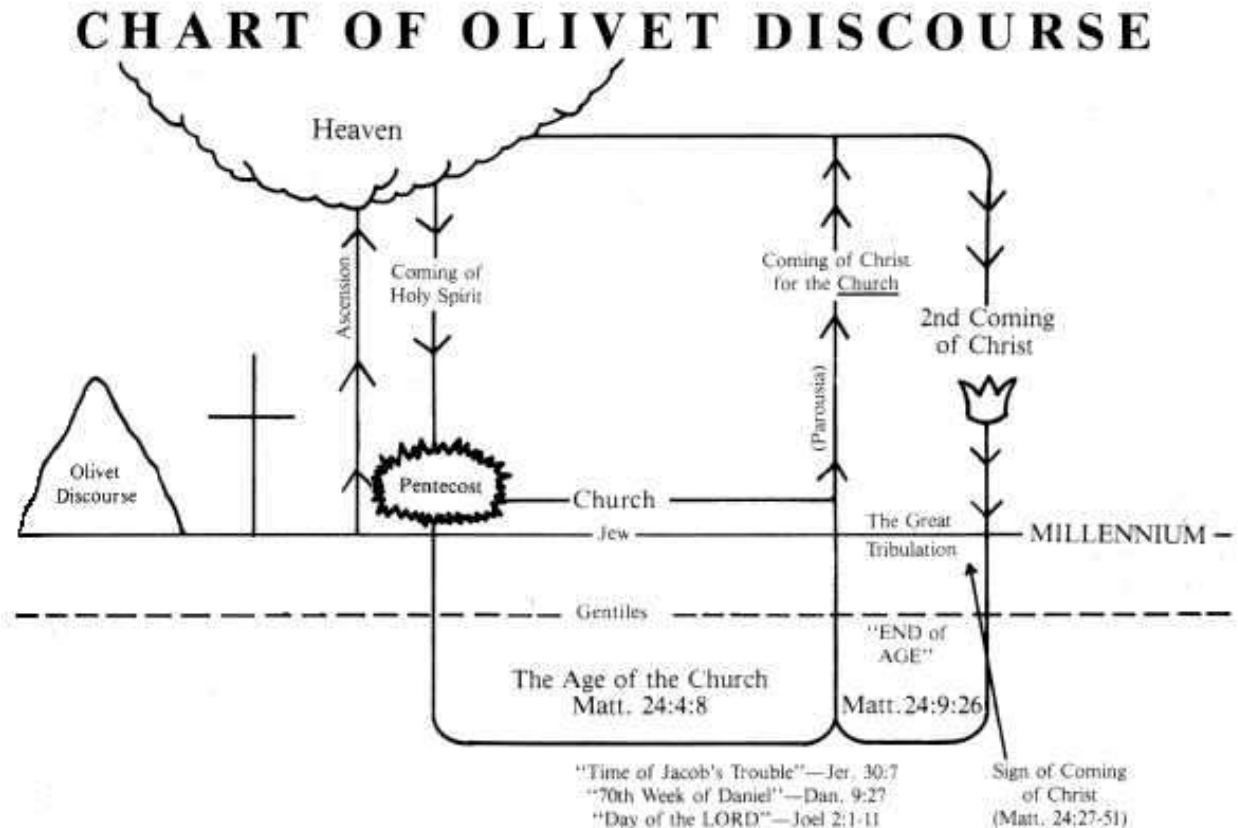
OPENING PRAYER

Matthew Chapter 24:27-52 – The Olivet Discourse, Part 2 –

The Coming of the Son of Man - (vs. 29-31); The Parable of the Fig Tree – (vs. 32-35); No One Knows the Day or Hour - (vs. 36-44). The Faithful Servant and the Evil Servant – (vs. 45-51).

CHAPTER 24 - THEME: Matthew chapters 24 and 25, known as the Olivet Discourse, constitute the last of three major discourses in this Gospel. They are called major discourses because of their length, their content, and their intent. This discourse is also given to us in Mark, chapter 13 and in Luke chapter 21. In this Olivet Discourse, when Christ speaks of His coming, He is referring to His return to the earth, bringing an end to world governments of men and to establish His Kingdom. The church is not in the picture. By the end of the age, the church will have been removed, and it will be the last days of the nation Israel. He is speaking about the Great Tribulation period and so labels it in this discourse.

A chart of the Olivet Discourse from J. Vernon McGee's commentary is shown below:



Review of last week's verses of chapter 24 –

Mat 24:3 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?"

Mat 24:24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

Mat 24:25 See, I have told you beforehand.

Mat 24:26 "Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it.

The Great Tribulation – continuing:

Mat 24:27 For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

- Just like a flash of lightning, which travels about 270,000 mph, He just goes there, bang, brilliant! It will be far different from His first coming, where He did come quietly, as prophesied, born of a virgin! Born in Bethlehem. His second coming will be completely different! It won't be hidden at all, but apparent to everyone!

Mat 24:28 For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles (also translated, vultures) will be gathered together.

- Just as vultures gather to eat, or to judge, so to speak, a rotting physical corpse, Jesus, at His second coming, will judge the moral and spiritual corruption of the world at that time. When the Lord comes again, He will come in judgment.
- There are a number of interpretations of this verse by Bible commentators. In other places in the Bible, it speaks of the vultures and the bodies, the carcasses of man. (Eze 39:17-20)* "And as for you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Speak to every sort of bird and to every beast of the field: "Assemble yourselves and come; Gather together from all sides to My sacrificial meal Which I am sacrificing for you. A great sacrificial meal on the mountains of Israel, That you may eat flesh and drink blood. [18] You shall

eat the flesh of the mighty, Drink the blood of the princes of the earth, Of rams and lambs, Of goats and bulls, All of them fatlings of Bashan. [19] You shall eat fat till you are full, And drink blood till you are drunk, At My sacrificial meal Which I am sacrificing for you. [20] You shall be filled at My table With horses and riders, With mighty men And with all the men of war," says the Lord GOD.

- **Also, in (Rev 19:17-18)*** *Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for the supper of the great God. [18] that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great."*
- **Jesus is talking here of the Great Tribulation period** and of the battle of Armageddon in which the Lord will invite the vultures to come and to feast on the bodies of the fallen armies who had gathered together to try to thwart the return of Jesus Christ in power and in glory. *Wherever the carcasses, the bodies are, there will be eagles, or the vultures be gathered together.* The next verse tells us that immediately after the tribulation of those days, the battle of Armageddon, which is the last event of the Great Tribulation period.

The Coming of the Son of Man

Mat 24:29-31 ***"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. [30] Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. [31] 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.***

- ***Immediately after the tribulation, there will be great catastrophic, cataclysmic events taking place*** within the universe. ***The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven.*** It is interesting that in the Book of Revelation as He is giving details of the great tribulation period, He speaks of the sun increasing in its strength and scorching men upon the earth. Is it possible that our sun will go into a supernova? Perhaps so. Here it is turned dark and of course, because the moon is only a reflection of the sunlight, it also is darkened. *"The stars will fall from heaven."* A tremendous meteorite shower upon the earth. *"And the powers of heaven will be shaken."*
- ***(Rev 6:12-14)* I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. [13] And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. [14] Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.*** Tremendous, cataclysmic events changing really the whole geographical surface of the earth.
- ***(Isa 13:10-11)* For the stars of heaven and their constellations Will not give their light; The sun will be darkened in its going forth, And the moon will not cause its light to shine. [11] "I will punish the world for its evil (notice the purpose of the great tribulation is to punish the world for their evil), And the wicked for their iniquity; Now if you are righteous in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, then the Great Tribulation is not for you! It is for the wicked world to be punished for their iniquity! I will halt the arrogance of the proud and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible."***
- ***Joel speaks of it in (Joe 2:10-11) The earth quakes before them, The heavens tremble; The sun and moon grow dark, And the stars diminish their brightness. [11] The LORD gives voice before His army, For His camp is very great; For strong is the One who executes His word. For the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; Who can endure it?*** As Joel speaks of these same events, he speaks of them in the light of the return of Jesus Christ. *"The Lord gives voice before His army, His camp, that is, the church of Jesus Christ, is very great!"*
- ***(Joe 3:15-18) The sun and moon will grow dark, And the stars will diminish their brightness. [16] The LORD also will roar from Zion And utter His voice from Jerusalem; The heavens and earth will shake; But the LORD will be a shelter for His people, And the strength of the children of Israel. [17] "So you shall know that I am the LORD your God, Dwelling in Zion My holy mountain. Then Jerusalem shall be holy, And no aliens shall ever pass through her again." [18] And it will come to pass in that day That the mountains shall drip with new wine, The hills shall flow with milk, And all the brooks of Judah shall be flooded with water; A fountain shall flow from the house of the LORD And water the Valley of Acacias.***
- **The glorious coming again of Jesus Christ and a whole new earth,** a new environment by His coming! Isaiah said, ***(Isaiah 24:23)* Then the moon will be disgraced And the sun ashamed; For the LORD of hosts will reign On Mount Zion and in Jerusalem And before His elders, gloriously.***
- **Jesus is summarizing what Isaiah and Joel and the other prophets have told us.**

Mat 24:30 Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

- **Hallelujah! I can hardly wait!** (*Rev 19:14-15*) *And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. [15] Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.*
- **Daniel, writing of this, said, (Dan 7:13-14)*** *I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. [14] Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. (Every knee shall bow, every tongue shall confess Jesus Christ is Lord!) His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed!*
- **The tribes of the earth will mourn, (Zec 12:10)*** *And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.*
- **In (2Th 1:7-10)** *and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, [8] in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. [9] These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, [10] when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.*
- **Finally, (Rev 1:7)*** *Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.*

Mat 24:31 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.

- **His elect!** This is the second time “elect” is used in this chapter. The meaning of who the “elect” refer to depends on the context of the use, as “elect” is used in the Scriptures to describe both Israel and the church.
- **The identity of the elect is very important.** If, *the elect* here are the church, which Peter speaks of the church as *elect* of God, then it would put the church in the great tribulation period. But, if *the elect* is the nation Israel, then that gives the place for the rapture of the church and the church not being here during this time that the antichrist is revealed, and the Great Tribulation is taking place upon the earth.
- **One of the first events, it seems, is that will take place after the church is raptured will be the revelation of the antichrist.** In (*Rev 4:1*)* *After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this. I will show you things which will be after these things. After what? After the things of chapter two and three, which are the things of the church. The messages of Jesus to the churches.*
- **Immediately John was in the spirit, caught up into heaven.** There, he saw the throne of God and heard the worship of the cherubim about the throne of God. He saw the response of the twenty-four elders. Then he saw the scroll in the right hand of Him who sat upon the throne. He heard the angel proclaim with a loud voice, Who is worthy to take the scroll and loose the seals? He saw Jesus as a Lamb that had been slain as He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne. He heard the multitudes in heaven as they sang, (*Rev 5:9*)* *And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation. [10] And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth."* That’s a song that only the church can sing, there in heaven, in chapter five.
- **When Jesus begins to open the seals, the first seal brings forth the antichrist, the white horse, and his rider.** It will be followed by the wars and the famines and the desolation of the great tribulation period, the four horsemen of the apocalypse. Paul the apostle in writing about the son of perdition, said, (*2Th 2:3*)* *Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition. That man of sin. But he cannot be revealed as long as the church is here. It is not until the church is removed that the antichrist can be revealed! Thus, the deception of the elect would be the elect of Israel, the nation of Israel elected by God and spoken of as God’s elect in the scriptures.*

- **When He comes again, 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.**
- **Now the antichrist is, if possible, deceiving the very elect (Mat 24:24).** Here when Jesus returns, He sends out the angels to gather together *His elect* from the four corners of the earth. There are those who say that's the church, the Lord's going to gather then the church. But in the Old Testament, this very event is prophesied. But it is prophesied not of the church but of the nation Israel! Much confusion has been created by Bible teachers who spiritualize Israel in the New Testament to be a reference to the church and they say that the nation Israel is through, as far as God is concerned. All of the prophecies that related to Israel are now applicable to the church, or all the promises are applicable to the church, and it has created a great confusion especially in the understanding of biblical prophecy. If you interpret this as the church, then the rapture takes place after the great tribulation period. That is where you get your post-tribulation rapture ideas, and these are the scriptures that they use to prove it.
- **However, since Israel has been re-established as a nation in 1948,** it has become obvious that Israel is indeed alive, showing the Replacement theology of the church replacing Israel, is incorrect!
- **In (Isa 11:12)* He will set up a banner for the nations, And will assemble the outcasts of Israel, And gather together the dispersed of Judah (from where?) From the four corners of the earth.** What did you just read here? It is very obviously talking about Israel! He shall gather together **His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.**
- **Continuing to speak of Israel, With a great sound of a trumpet.** We read in (Isa 27:13)* *So it shall be in that day: The great trumpet will be blown; They will come, who are about to perish in the land of Assyria, And they who are outcasts in the land of Egypt And shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.*
- **In (Jer 23:3) "But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.**
- **(Isa 45:4)* For Jacob My servant's sake, And Israel My elect, I have even called you by your name; I have named you, though you have not known Me.**
- **Then (Isa 65:9)* I will bring forth descendants from Jacob, And from Judah an heir of My mountains; My elect shall inherit it, And My servants shall dwell there.**
- **(Isa 65:22)* They shall not build, and another inhabit; They shall not plant, and another eat; For as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, And My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.**
- **The promise is a reference to Israel, not the church!**
- **Also read Revelation, chapter 19, for an overview of His coming!**
- **Now as we get into verse thirty-two, we switch gears and Jesus has given them the signs,** these are the signs. He takes you right up to His coming in clouds and great glory to establish God's kingdom upon the earth. But now, we're going to *The Lesson of the Fig Tree*.

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

Mat 24:32 "Now (present imperative, now and continuing) **learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.**

- (Verses 32-35) seem to indicate that, as a man can tell by the signs of nature when summer is on the way, so he can tell by the signs of the world when the Second Coming is on the way.
- **Now in a figurative sense in the Old Testament, the nation of Israel was likened to a fig tree.** In (Hos 9:10)* *"I found Israel Like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers As the firstfruits on the fig tree in its first season. But they went to Baal Peor, And separated themselves to that shame; They became an abomination like the thing they loved.*
- **In (Jer 24:5, 8)* "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: 'Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge those who are carried away captive from Judah, whom I have sent out of this place for their own good, into the land of the Chaldeans. [8] 'And as the bad figs which cannot be eaten, they are so bad'—surely thus says the LORD—'so will I give up Zedekiah the king of Judah, his princes, the residue of Jerusalem who remain in this land, and those who dwell in the land of Egypt.**
- **God laments in (Joe 1:7) He has laid waste My vine And ruined My fig tree; He has stripped it bare and thrown it away; Its branches are made white.** So, the nation of Israel has been likened unto the vine, the vineyard, and also likened unto the fig tree. Now learn of parable, Jesus said, *of the fig tree*.
- **When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.** Look at a fig tree. When it starts to put forth its leaves, you know that summer is coming. It is just a sign that summer is near.

Mat 24:33 *So you* (someone living in our day) **also, when you see all these things, know that it** (His second coming) **is near—at the doors!**

- **The budding of the fig tree, the leaves.** Now the fig tree is being the nation of Israel. We remember when Jesus cursed the fig tree, typical of the nation of Israel, failing to bring forth fruit, is cursed, withers, and dies. God chooses from among the Gentiles, His church, to bring forth the fruit that the Lord desires. But the fig tree is beginning to bud.
- **In 1948, Israel, against all odds, was born again.** That which was dead, the valley of dry bones that God said to Ezekiel, (*Eze 37:3*) *And He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" So I answered, "O Lord GOD, You know."* He saw the bones come to life. He saw the flesh come on them, the body, the sinews and all. He saw the rebirth of the nation. In 1948, we saw it, 2500 years after the vision of Ezekiel. We saw the fulfillment of that vision in the rebirth of the nation of Israel. In 1967, we saw Jerusalem again come under the control of the Jewish nation.
- **When Israel first became a nation in 1948, Jerusalem was a divided city.** The Jordanians occupied half of the city. Israel, having the other part of the city. In the war of 1967, the entire city came under Jewish control, no longer being trodden under the foot of the Gentiles. For the first time, actually since Nebuchadnezzar's captivity of the city. Jesus said, Jerusalem will be trodden under the foot of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. The fig tree obviously budding forth. What does it tell us, but that summer is near? Summer is near! It is close! It's even, Jesus said, *at the doors!*

Mat 24:34 **Assuredly, I say to you, this generation** (tribe or a race? Israel?) **will by no means pass away till all these things take place.**

- **The word "generation," the Greek word "genea"** (we get genealogy from this root) **usually refers to a national kind of an ethnic group.** What Jesus is prophesying is that the Jews would not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Now the Jewish nation, the fact that it remains, and they remain as an ethnic group of people, is a miracle unparalleled in the history of man! No ethnic group has been able to maintain its national identity without a national homeland for more than five generations. In all of history, it never happened that without a homeland people were able to maintain an ethnic identity. How many Hittites have you met lately? Or Amorites? Or Jebusites? They were just sort of swallowed up into the nations where they were dispersed when they were taken captive. But the Jews have maintained their national identity all over the world wherever they have been scattered. Israel is an integral piece of the last day's puzzle. Don't be surprised if Israel is significant in the last days!
- **They've maintained for 2500 years a national identity without a homeland!** A miracle of God, unparalleled in history! Thus, the prophecy of Jesus has been fulfilled! The generation, the "genea" did not pass until all these things be fulfilled. We are in the process of seeing them fulfilled now. The fig tree is budding, summer is near, even at the doors.
- **There are others who interpret "generation" as a period of some forty to a hundred years,** according to various calculations. Some begin counting from 1948. Others have started counting in 1967 when Jerusalem was no longer under Gentile control. They say that the generation living to see the budding of the fig tree would be the generation that would not pass. It's possible but may be stretching it a bit.
- **It seems best to interpret Christ's words as referring to the generation alive at the time** when those final, hard, labor pains begin. This view would fit with the lesson of the fig tree, which emphasizes the short span of time in which these things will occur.

Mat 24:35 **Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.**

- **Jesis said, this is sure!** He's been talking about heaven and earth. There is going to be a great shaking, the stars falling. They are going to pass away! But My words are going to abide! They are not going to pass away. (*1Pe 1:25*)* **BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER.** *Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you. (Isa 40:8)* The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever."*

No One Knows That Day and Hour

Mat 24:36 **"But of that day and hour no one knows** (He can't be talking about the second coming as Daniel tells us how many days after the abomination of desolation occurs. He has to be talking about the rapture of the church), **not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.**

- (*Verses 36-41*) **says quite definitely that no one knows the time of the Second Coming,** not the angels, not even Jesus himself. But only God; and that it will come upon men with the suddenness of a rainstorm out of a blue sky.
- **We are told now how as Christians, we are to live in anticipation** for the Rapture of the church, which will be the beginning of His second coming! *But of that day and hour no one knows.* The disciples want to fix the

precise time, but this was not for them to know. Instead, Christ emphasizes faithfulness, watchfulness, stewardship, expectancy, and preparedness. He teaches these virtues in the parables that follow. This is the emphasis on the rest of the chapter.

Mat 24:37 But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

Mat 24:38 For as in the days before the flood (worldwide), they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

Mat 24:39 and did not until the flood came and took (a different word than *paralambano*, used in vs. 40 & 41) them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

- **No man knows the day or the hour!** It's going to be a surprise! It's going to come without warning! Just as in the days of Noah, the people were surprised! Noah had been a preacher of righteousness, building the illustrated message, building the ark before them out there in the Babylonian plains. Everyone was saying that he was crazy! It wasn't until the flood actually began that they then realized, too late, that Noah was correct. Now in the days of Noah, as the days of Noah were, basically the illustration that Jesus is giving here is the suddenness and the surprise of His coming. No man knows the day or the hour! The world is not expecting it. The world will not expect it. It is not until the church is removed and the judgment of God begins that the world will realize that God's Word is true! We are supposed to learn from the unbelievers in Noah's day!
- **But as the days of Noah were!** (*Gen 6:1*)* Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them." The days of Noah were days of rapid population growth. (*Gen 6:5*)* Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. It was a time when men's minds were polluted with evil thoughts. (*Gen 6:11-13*)* The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. [12] So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. [13] And God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.
- **It was a time of corruption, violence, wickedness and of population explosion.** We see those things today. Population explosion. The minds of men polluted and corrupted by sin and by evil. Wickedness exceedingly great. Violence filling the earth. (*Heb 11:7*)* By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.
- **This judgment will begin with the rapture of the church.** It's going to take the whole world by surprise! The world is not expecting it. It is not until the church is removed and the judgment of God begins that the world will realize that God's Word is true. The other return of Christ, when He return with His church is known. It is dated! It is 1,260 days, the most documented time in the Scriptures, after the Abomination of Desolation. Jesus held the Jews to be responsible for remembering this. Jesus has to be talking about the church!
- **People are unaware that the coming of the Lord is at hand.** In fact, they are not even concerned with their sin. They don't believe there is a God. They are just going to keep on doing what they're doing. They don't care! They don't believe judgment is coming. We will do what we want! So, it will be as in the days of Noah, who knew not until the flood came and took them away. But it shouldn't take us by surprise!

Mat 24:40 Then two men will be in the field (Not likely happening during the Great Tribulation-the scorching sun, the gathering of all the armies of the world?): one will be taken (*paralambano* – to take into close association, take to oneself, take with/along) and the other left.

- **I believe this verse, as well as the next verse, could be translated,** saying, Then two men will be in the field: one will be raptured and the other left to go into the Tribulation!

Mat 24:41 Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.

Mat 24:42 Watch therefore (present imperative, watch, now and continuing to watch), for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.

- **I believe that this is a reference to the rapture of the church.** We don't know what hour the Lord is coming. The rapture could take place at any time, and there will be a sharp division. Two in the field, one raptured, the other left for the great tribulation. Two grinding at the mill, one taken, the other left.
- **Watch therefore! This is really the key word of Jesus in this latter portion of the chapter!** You don't know when it's going to happen, so be ready! You don't know when it's going to happen **so watch!** We don't have to know the date or the hour. We are to watch and be ready at all times! Be on watch! Don't be lethargic! Don't sleep! In Luke's account of this same message of Jesus, he warns against getting caught unaware. Be careful that you are not ensnared by the enemy's traps, the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches and the desire of other things so that that day catches you unaware. So here the Lord says, watch therefore. Why? Because you don't know the hour that your Lord does come.

Mat 24:43 *But know this* (know by experience, and learn), *that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.*

- **If we are willing to do that on a tip that our house is going to be burgled** at such and such an hour, which basically would have little or no eternal effects. How much more should we be willing to watch and be ready for the very thing that means our destination for eternity!

Mat 24:44 *Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.*

- **Do you think the Lord is coming tonight?** I think He's coming soon but not tonight, to be honest. I mean, if I really thought He was coming tonight, I don't know what I would do at this point. I believe He's coming soon but the very fact that I don't believe He's coming tonight makes it a very real possibility. For *at an hour that you do not expect, the Son of man is coming!*
- **You (we) can only be ready if you trust in the salvation that God has provided for you,** through the blood of His Son on the cross! There is no other way you can get ready to defy gravity and change at the speed of light! It's not like half of good people go up and the other half don't. We don't know when He is coming, but we are watching!

Mat 24:45 *"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season?"*

- **Who is that wise and faithful servant God has put over His household,** over the church, to give them their food in due season? What our Lord is doing in the remainder of the Olivet Discourse is giving parables to illustrate the attitude of people to His coming and what will happen when He does come. **As His servant and steward of the gospel, how wise and faithful am I?** How are you, am I, serving Him?

Mat 24:46 *Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.*

- **Jesus said occupy till I come!** Blessed is the servant that the Lord when He comes finds him doing the work of the Lord, giving food to the household of God in due season.

Mat 24:47 *Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods.*

- **Shall confirm his appointment over his household, and, as a reward,** shall place him over all his property. This parable is designed to show the effect of faithfulness. Faithful servants of Christ shall be rewarded! This will be done by His approval, and by the rewards of the heavenly world.

Mat 24:48 *But if that evil* (by nature, a heart condition) *servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,'*

- **I believe that the Lord intended that the church should be expecting His coming any time** even from the apostolic period. The apostles were expecting the Lord to return at any time. I think God designed it that way. Because that expectancy of the Lord, coming at any time has a tremendous way of keeping us in focus! It's so easy to get caught up in worldly things, in material things. God wanted us to just live in the state of expectancy, letting our contact with the world be just as light as possible because the Lord is coming soon. He could come tonight! I believe that that is exactly what the Lord intended.
- **John in writing of the coming of the Lord said, (1Jn 3:2-3)** *Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. [3] And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.* It's a purifying hope in the church to believe that Jesus is coming at any moment, at any time!
- **If the servant says, well the Lord is delaying His coming,** the moment you put any event before the rapture of the church; in essence, you are saying, the Lord is delaying His coming. The Lord isn't going to come until the mid-tribulation period, we'll have to go through the revelation of the antichrist and so forth. But wait a minute, if we have to go through the revelation of the antichrist, then what is that doing to us? It takes us away from the eminent return of the Lord and it's putting it down, saying He's going to delay His coming until the antichrist is revealed. So, what an interesting sly trick of the enemy because now I'm looking for the antichrist, rather than looking for Jesus Christ! But not for us! May we be looking for our Lord, certainly not the antichrist! Looking for His coming, coming for me, any time to take me up! And the sooner, the better!
- **That evil servant who said the Lord delays His coming, what is the effect of that?** A relaxed slovenliness in the things of the spirit. Oh well, we've got time, have to wait for the antichrist to be revealed and these events are going to be taking place. Maybe we'll be martyred because we refuse to let them insert that little thing in our hand, but the effect of the idea, well the Lord is going to delay His coming until that occurs. Jesus said, that results in a tendency towards the carelessness of the servant.

Mat 24:49 *and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards,*

Mat 24:50 *the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of,*

(Luk 21:34-36) "But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. [35] For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. [36] Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

Mat 24:51 *and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

- **It is really a dangerous concept to say that the Lord is delaying His coming!** It's important to realize that in such a time as you think not, He's coming. He's coming at any time. Therefore, you watch, and you be ready. The lawlessness, the perversity of sex and gender, the blatant disregard and blasphemy of governments throughout the world, including our own country. How many more things must God do before we wake up to realize, Hey we're at the end of the road? How much closer do we have to get until we wake up and realize our Lord is coming soon at any time? Therefore, you be ready! He said. **Watch and be ready!**
- **Moving into the next chapter, we will get more parables, whose thrust is to watch and be ready.** Then, Jesus will tell us of the things that will transpire when He returns. Those immediate things that will take place when He comes back to the earth. It's an exciting chapter, as we continue to deal with the return of Jesus Christ to establish God's kingdom upon the earth, and the events that will precede this coming of our Lord. The important thing to us, is to **watch and be ready!**

SUMMARY POINTS:

- **Learning from the fig tree parable, when we see these things happening, we are to know that the second coming of Jesus is near! The first thing that will occur is the Rapture of the church!**
- **"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, by My Father only!"**
- **We are to watch and be ready, at all times, being faithful and wise servants!**
- **The importance of the rapture of the church is that we are not caught by surprise or are in a back-slidden state or living a life of compromise and hypocrisy.**
- **We are to live the Christianity Jesus describes. It is to be a life that is robust! A life that is living and strong! A life that has the power of the Holy Spirit in it! A life that is able to influence the world around us!**

Jesus is coming soon! Even so Come! Are you ready?

CLOSING SONG:

JESUS IS COMING SOON! EVEN SO COME - Hillsong (3:51)

All of creation All of the earth Make straight a highway A path for the Lord Jesus is coming soon Call back the sinner Wake up the saint Let every nation shout of Your fame Jesus is coming soon Like a bride waiting for her groom We'll be a Church ready for You Every heart longing for our King We sing "even so come" Lord Jesus, come Even so come Lord Jesus, come
There will be justice, all will be new Your name forever, faithful and true Jesus is coming soon Oh, like a bride waiting for her groom We'll be a Church ready for You Every heart longing for our King We sing "even so come" Lord Jesus, come Even so come Lord Jesus, come

So we wait We wait for You God, we wait You're coming soon (2X)

Like a bride waiting for her groom We'll be at Church, ready for You Every heart longing for our King, we sing

Like a bride waiting for her groom We'll be at Church, we'll be ready for You Every heart longing for our King, we sing "even so come" Lord Jesus, come

Even so come Lord Jesus, come Even so come Lord Jesus, come Even so come Lord Jesus, come

CLOSING PRAYER:

Assignment for next week: **Read Matthew Chapter 25, continuing that great prophecy chapter of the end times!**