

Jesus Teaches the End of the Age, Part II

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Matthew 24:3 As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what {will be} the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" NASB.

In our last sermon about this subject, we discussed Jesus teaching what the signs for the end of the age would be and who would be the recipients of these signs. Jesus speaks of a great apostasy, or falling away from the true faith in the Living God, wars and rumors of wars, and the sign of the abomination of desolation. Then suddenly He turns His attention to one group of people that will be His focus to bring them to the recognition of their Messiah by persecution and being refined as silver is refined in the fire....namely the nation of Israel.

If you need a refresher course in what was established in Part I, then I invite you to read that sermon first here or on my website, as we are moving on to the next chapter of Matthew 25 that is directly connected to chapter 24 and further reveals signs that point to His coming in the clouds with power and great glory to rule and reign for 1000 years.

Parable of the Ten Virgins

25:1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

25:2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

Some erroneously take this passage as speaking of the church, not as a whole, but individuals. Notice they are waiting for the bridegroom. They are virgins, meaning they follow after no false god, or have allegiance to the "anti-Christ" who will demand worship during the tribulation period, but notice what becomes of them?

25:3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

25:4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

25:5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

Oil in their lamps is a sign of the Holy Spirit. While enduring the period known as the tribulation, they became weary. What does the above passage mean? During the period known as “Jacob’s troubles” or the Great Tribulation, many will fall by the wayside and lose out with God, as they do not keep the Spirit of God fresh in their lives. Unlike the Age of Grace when the church had been sealed with an irrevocable sign of redemption by the blood of Jesus Christ and a deposit of the Holy Spirit was given to their spirit to dwell in life as His children till their redemption, the Holy Spirit has been withdrawn to Pre-Pentecostal times as noted in 2nd Thessalonians:

2:7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth (God's Holy Spirit) will let, until he be taken out of the way.(drawn back)

2:8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: (emphasis mine)

The fullness of God's Holy Spirit to hold back the rampage of evil from this earth that will overtake all who live, has been removed in its power along with the Church. Satan will now have full sway to attempt to destroy all of mankind, but while he's at it, seek worship for himself from fallen and evil men.

Notice what happens while these virgins are waiting for the bridegroom?

25:6 And at midnight (end of the age, emphasis mine) there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

25:7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

25:8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

These foolish virgins had lost the Holy Spirit in their lives. They have let the troubles, the persecution, and the evil around them rob them of staying faithful to God. Will it be possible for a person who has accepted Jesus Christ during this time to lose out with Him? According to these verses, it will take all the faith and diligence to stay true to God's Word, and half of these virgins fail in that attempt. So during the tribulation, it will be possible to lose out with God. Back to what Jesus said in the previous chapter:

24:11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

24:12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

24:13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. (emphasis mine)

24:14 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.

As mentioned, some believe that this is part of the church. They are not. How do I know? Because of the verses following them, frantically trying to find oil for their lamp.

25:10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

25:11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

25:12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

These virgins were guest. Five were included, five were denied access, as they were not recognized by the

bridegroom for entrance to the feast. The church has already been redeemed approximately seven years earlier and here Jesus, the bridegroom is presenting her to the world for a wedding feast. These virgin guests were not the bride. Revelation:

19:9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

Looking at the Amplified Bible explains better what is being said here in the KJV and it behooves us to compare the two. I know, some will say KJV only, but explanation is needed for the passage to become clear:

19:8 She has been permitted to dress in fine (radiant) linen, dazzling and white—for the fine linen is (signifies, represents) the righteousness (the upright, just, and godly living, deeds, and conduct, and right standing with God) of the saints (God's holy people).

19:9 Then [the angel] said to me, Write this down: Blessed (happy, to be envied) are those who are summoned (invited, called) to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he said to me [further], These are the true words (the genuine and exact declarations) of God.

I believe that there is a definite break in Revelation 19:8 and the next verse 19 and is sometimes missed in comparison to this passage. Those called tribulation saints to the wedding feast which comes directly after the consummation of the marriage covenant between husband and wife are guests, not the bride. The marriage covenant between Jesus Christ and His church is one aspect completed in glory, but the wedding feast is upon the arrival of our Lord in chapter 19 with His bride riding on white horses and clothed with fine linen, clean and white which is a sign of the saints.

When you turn back your focus to the foolish virgins as they beat on the door asking entrance into God's presence and the wedding feast, Jesus as the bridegroom, says that He did not know them, as they are not invited as guest and have not a proper attire, the Holy Spirit's indwelling to be admitted.

The bride is already inside. The bridegroom does not invite His bride to the wedding. She is the FOCUS of the wedding. She receives no invitation except being covered in the blood of Jesus Christ as a requirement for being part of the Bride of Christ and that covenant has been completed in heaven's realm. So what this parable is talking about is Tribulation Saints who endure to the end of a most horrible time of persecution and possible martyrdom and will not give into denying their Lord, or being deceived by the spirit of anti-Christ, but can lose what they had due to their lack of faith and perseverance to be faithful till the end of the age as represented by the five foolish virgins.

Parable of the Talents

Matthew 25:14 For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

25:15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

This is another way of our Lord presenting those from the Tribulation period who some will win, and some will lose. These servants are delivered talents to be used in the work of their Master, and to receive a return on His investment. The Master expects production. Production of what?

In ancient times, the talent was a measure of solid gold. It was the most valuable of metals during this time. Jesus is presenting to His servants something that is most valuable to Him. Since God does not need gold, as everything belongs to Him already, what is Jesus talking about? I believe He speaks of His Word!

Why am I convinced of this? Let's turn to Mark chapter 4. Jesus speaks of the parable of the sower of seed.

4:14 The sower soweth the word.

4:15 And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

4:16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

4:17 And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

4:18 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,

4:19 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

4:20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

Who is the sower? The Holy Spirit plants the Word, but we are His instruments, His servants. We sow based on the leading of the Holy Spirit and God gives the increase. As noted further on in Mark 4:

4:24 And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given.

4:25 For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

4:26 And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;

4:27 And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.

4:28 For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

4:29 But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

To each of His servants during this time, as with the foolish virgins, God gives something that they must hold onto. As you read, you see that each of the servants use that talent, God's Word, in the production of winning souls for Jesus Christ. It depends on the measure of understanding and ability. But each must use his in the service of their Lord. To do otherwise, is like the unprofitable servant who hid His Master's money/Word away from doing anything useful to further the coming Kingdom of God. During this time, there will be a famine in the land...famine of food? No, famine of the Word of God.

"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord GOD, "That I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD. They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the LORD, but shall not find it."
(Amos 8:11-12)

During this time, the Word of God will be most precious, as it will be hard to find, as evil and idolatry have filled the land. Those who are given the gift of God's Word, must share that Word with others. Only by sharing the Word of Truth with their neighbor, be he Jew or Gentile, will there be a return of people receiving salvation. It could be as simple as sharing a hidden bible with your neighbor and risking being reported. To do so will in most likelihood be filled with danger to even speak the Word of God to anybody. Those that hide His Word, and follow not His command will likely lose out in the end, just as the five foolish virgins did and wasted away their chance to keep their salvation. So what happens to the foolish servant who hid His Master's money/Word in the ground and did not proclaim the Gospel that he had?

25:30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (synonymous with hell)

Parable of the Sheep and Goat Judgment

25:31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

25:32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

25:33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

This is yet another parable of the tribulation period showing how people will treat one another. Who are the people that are in prison, hungry, thirsty, or naked?

25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. (emphasis mine)

Who are the brethren Jesus speaks of? During the time of the tribulation, to be Hebrew of the nation of Israel, Jewish by convenience of terms, is to have a death sentence riding over you. Satan hates the nation of Israel and wants them dead. He will attempt to eradicate them and make God out a liar. As it was in the days of the Nazi Germany, to be Jewish, or to help a Jew in any fashion, is to be marked for death. During this time, the Anti-Christ will make Hitler look like a beginner, as he marches across the middle east and the greater portion of this earth looking for anyone and everyone who is Jewish by birth, or ancestry. To hide an Israeli, or give him drink, food, clothe him, or do anything to preserve his/her life, is taking your own life into your hands. Those that have empowered or hidden away their neighbor, the Jew, will be the sheep on God's right hand. Those that have handed their neighbor over to the authorities to save their own skin, will be on His left hand and will have lost out to being in God's Kingdom. These will cry out in dismay and objection to this condemnation, and Jesus will say:

25:44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

25:45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

25:46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

During this time of great tribulation, those who persevere and hold onto their crown will be led into the joy of their Lord. Those who miss the mark and lose their salvation through deceit of the evil one, or the powers that be, will be as each of the parables speak of, losers of the blessing to enter the Kingdom of God. During this time the verse that speaks of the love of many growing cold cannot be more dramatic than at this time of the history of the world. 'As Jesus spoke in the previous chapter of Matthew 24:

24:12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

24:13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

24:14 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.

The true love of God is seen in the sheep. As the sheep respond to their Jewish brother's need, they are united in their distress and at the same time unwittingly, unconsciously, without hypocrisy, align themselves with Christ. Apparently, they are not even aware of what they were doing. This is a kind of love that cannot be faked or put on. "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).

There is coming a day and it is imminent, when to be a Christian will be more dangerous than it is even today. Christians are persecuted in some form in some part of the world in this so called "modern age". But when this time of Jacob's trouble comes upon this earth, the next seven years will be the most horrific period in all of man's history on earth and it will come to every man, woman and child that has the unfortunate aspect of being alive on this earth at that time.

To those who are reading this, and have not accepted Jesus Christ as personal Savior, NOW, in all likelihood the chances of you making God's Kingdom and eternal life then will be nonexistent. But if you do, it will be fraught with so much danger and fear, that the weak of spirit will succumb to the powers who make you choose, Jesus Christ or your head. Many who at first hear the Good News with gladness will be like the seed that was sown on rocky ground, as spoken of in the Parable of the Seed Sower, when persecution comes, they have no root and wither away. Many will lose their life, their soul, and their eternal reward, because they have no ability to stand. Those who don't care will have a deceiving spirit that they will believe a lie.

2nd Thessalonians 2: 9-12:

The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

The signs of the end of the age are all around us. We wait for the next crisis that will usher in a man with a great speaking voice. A man with a charismatic personality, a man with a narcissistic arrogance, and a man who speaks soft words to deceive. When that man comes to power, and the signs that I spoke of in the first part of this two part series, then my reader, you will be tested beyond what is being tested now in this Age of Grace. Mercy is still available for the asking. This side of Jesus coming for His Church takes only a simple prayer of childlike belief. To be sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise is to rid yourself of the weight of what is coming. My reader, make no mistake, it is coming. All who live today and read these words, know in their gut, something major is about to happen. Every human with half a brain knows that this world cannot continue this way. They sense it, they smell it, and they see it. It assaults all of your five God given senses. To wait longer than a sudden crisis that takes the world by surprise will most likely spell your doom, the removal of the church, some call the Rapture. Please do yourself this one act that can preserve you for all eternity. 2nd Corinthians:

6:2 For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

So my reader, there you have it, In two chapters coming from God Almighty in the flesh, Jesus spoke of something you do NOT want to see in your mortal flesh, the Signs of the End of the Age. So come quickly, Lord Jesus. Amen, and amen.

This is Pastor Mike Taylor, praying God's salvation come into your life.
If there is anything I can help you with, counsel you, pray with you,
or just a friendly ear, email me at realteam1999@sbcglobal.net

God bless you all, till we meet at Jesus Feet.