

The Second Question

Matthew 24:4-41

In the first lesson “*Introduction to Olivet Discourse*”

[–referred to as the most important single passage of prophecy in all the bible–] we looked at this discourse in the context of the previous chapters;



And we noted Merrill Unger’s ([A.B., Ph.D., Johns Hopkins University; Th.M., Th.D., Dallas Theological Seminary] pastored several churches before joining the faculty of Dallas Theological Seminary in 1948.) outline of chapters 24-25;

And we noted the setting for these prophetic words by Jesus Christ.

In the second lesson we studied the first question of **Matthew 24:3**. We now come to the Second question the disciples asked our Lord.

Matthew 24:1

- 1 *Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him.*
- 2 *And He said to them, “Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down.”*

3 *As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, (1) when will these things happen, and (2) what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"*

The first thing Jesus answers them is a warning:

4 *And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you."*

In our last lesson we noted two important interpretive points:

First Matthew 24:4-16 refers to the first half of The Tribulation.

Secondly How the first great occurrence of The Tribulation is the rise of the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire, also known as the antichrist. So it follows that the first warning to the Jews would be not to be deceived by him or by the False Prophet.

While this does not refer to the CHURCH AGE, a word of warning to believers in CHURCH AGE.

It is the nature of mankind to be easily deceived. And the reason for this is because our flesh nature is more deceitful than all else Jeremiah 17:9.

We get into our minds the way something ought to be, and therefore are easily deceived. This is why so many people marry the wrong person, they are easily deceived. And this is why so many are so deceived about what is the way of salvation, they have in their minds how God ought to be and surely He will want our good works for Salvation.

John 8:32

32 You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free

Free of being deceived!

Also, the first warning about the antichrist is found in the NEW TESTAMENT written to believers in Jesus Christ.

1 John 2:18

18 Children, it is the last hour; Church Age and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.

We would expect a definite article before the first *antichrist*.

While the presence of the definite article specifies or identifies the noun, **the absence of the definite article emphasizes the character or quality of the noun.**

So what John is emphasizing here is the character of the antichrist. And his character is that he is a liar and that he seeks to usurp the true Christ.

Also, **2 John 1:7**

7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, therefore believers in CHURCH AGE should be warned by Jesus Christ's warning of the believers in

The Tribulation *those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.*

Mark 13:22 is another interesting passage but it must be interpreted as to context. And the context is The Tribulation.

Mark 13:19

19 *“for those days The Tribulation will be a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never will.*

Mark 13:20

20 *“Unless the Lord had shortened those days, seven years cut short, so The Tribulation will be a full six years and only part of the seventh year, and why is it cut short? no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom He chose, He shortened the days of The Tribulation*

Mark 13:21

21 *“And then if anyone says to you, staring at the beginning of the Tribulation ‘Behold, here is the Christ’; or, ‘Behold, He is there’; do not believe him; do not be deceived.*

Mark 13:22

22 *for false Christs antichrist and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order to lead astray, if possible, the elect.*

Mark 13:23

23 *“But take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance. Some Jews will listen and some will not. And this brings us right back to our study in Matthew 24.*

Mark 13:24

24 *“For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.*

Matthew 24:4

4 *And Jesus answered and said to them, “See to it that no one misleads you.*

Matthew 24:5

5 *“For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will mislead many.*

As we have already noted, this section of our Lord’s reply to the disciples covers the first half of The Tribulation; it is most befitting

that Jesus would start off with a warning to all the Jews about His arrival; That there would be false Messiahs coming on the scene. Jesus Christ warns them that these false Messiahs will even perform *great signs and wonders*. This is because the Jews look for signs.

It is amazing how many Christians in the Church Age also look for signs. And for this reason so many are so misled. They prefer signs to walking by faith and trusting the Holy Spirit to guide them.

This is why **Habakkuk 2:4** declares

4 but the righteous (just) will live by faith.

If you don't know how to live by faith in normal life, you will be devastated in sufferings and tribulations.

Remember, the world will be in total confusion with the rapture of the Church. And in these difficult times many will claim to be the Messiah.

Note in **Matthew 24:5**

5 many will come in my name.

It must be noted here that the prophetic utterances by Jesus Christ in Matthew 24:4-11 are paralleled with the first five seal judgments of Revelation 6:1-11.

The first seal represents the first false Messiah in... (Revelation 6:1)

Revelation 6:1

1 Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, "Come."

Revelation 6:2

2 I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

In our study of Revelation we saw how the rider on the white horse of the first seal is a false Messiah.

And that he will bring a false peace in the world. And for this reason many will be deceived by his claims of Messiahship.

Now the Second Seal releases the Rider on the Red horse and he will take peace from the earth.

Revelation 6:3

3 When He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come."

Revelation 6:4

4 And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from

*the earth, and that men would slay one another;
and a great sword was given to him.*

And both of these riders will claim they are the Messiah and that everyone should follow them. So Jesus Christ warns the Jews against being deceived by these false Christ.

Revelation 6:3

3 When He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come."

Revelation 6:5

5 "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many.

One final word on verse 5: *will mislead many*

Look back at **Daniel 9:27** describing Daniel's Seventy Weeks:

27 "And he will make a firm covenant he refers to the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire, the prophesied antichrist *with the many* This is the many Jesus Christ prophesied in Matthew 24:5 (he will mislead many) *for one week*, at the beginning of The Tribulation *but in the middle of the week* after 3 ½ years *he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing*

of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”

Wars and Rumors of Wars

Matthew 24:6

6 “You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end.

Unfortunately many teachers wrongly say this applies to the Church Age.

One of the clues to this verse is the unusual Greek word at the beginning. The Greek word is usually not translated into English. The Greek word *mello* “to be about to” to be about to do or suffer something. To be at the point of something of something impending. Only since Israel has been re-established as a recognized nation (May, 1948) have they heard of wars against them. But once the Church is removed, Israel will begin to hear numerous reports of war against her.

Is it this that Jesus refers to here in Matthew 24:6.
Now what is it that is impending that they shall hear?

Of wars please remember we must interpret the bible in context.

And the context is not World Wars or wars in America, but wars that involve Israel. Yes there have been wars and rumors of wars throughout the world since the time of Jesus, but these have not been against or about Israel. Jesus is here referring to wars and rumors of wars that involve Israel.

Another interesting word used in this verse is the Greek word ***polemos*** .

Archbishop Trench in *Synonyms of the New Testament* points out that this word, in comparison to other Greek words for *wars* refers to ‘the whole course of hostilities’ rather than just the individual battles that comprise the larger war campaign.

Therefore these words by Jesus to Israel of the future, that is of The Tribulational period refers to wars directly against Israel, of which many are beginning in these last days of the Church Age.

It has been pointed out by Tommy Ice and others that this is a parallel to the future coming of the second seal of Revelation 6:4. Where the judgment of the red horse is said to ‘*take peace from the earth, and that men should slay one another*’; the first seal opened up peace on the earth—right after the confusion of the removal of the Church from earth.

Then the opening of the second seal, takes the peace away from the earth, especially in the middle east.

This of course corresponds to Matthew 24:4-6.

It is always essential to interpret any passage of Scripture in context. Many false doctrines and conclusions are developed by taking a passage of Scripture and interpreting it out of context. You must be very careful of interpreting a passage for the Tribulation as applying to the Church and visa-versa.

Matthew 24:6

6 *“You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end.* I love the Lord, He describes very difficult times, yet He encourages them *not to be frighten.*

Usually the admonition is to ***fear not—for I am with you***, but this time Jesus Christ uses the strong Greek word *to cry out, to clamor*, describing a condition where you are even beyond fear.

This word is used only here and in the parallel passage of Mark 8:15 and by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:2 where Paul is describing these coming events to Christians.

Do not be so over taken by all that is going on so as to lose sight of all the promises I have given you as to the certainty of the unconditional covenants. This is a present imperative. The present tense reveals that this will go on for a while (some seven years) but I am coming again to redeem Israel. But it is in the ***imperative mood, a command***. And we have studied how the imperative mood is the furthest from reality. The point here is that for them not to be so consumed with fear is to know the truth and to believe it and rest in it. To trust the faithfulness of God.



A.T. Robertson (Archibald Thomas Robertson [November 6, 1863 – September 24, 1934] was a notable American scholar of New Testament Greek.) in *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Vol. 1 says this word means to cry aloud, to scream.

He renders this passage: “*look out for the wars and rumors of wars, but do not be scared out of your wits by them*” Every use of this word in the New Testament Greek are in relationship to The Tribulation. This is going to be a very scary time of events all over the world for those who do not know the Word of God and that our God is in control. So as used by our Lord, twice recorded, and once by Paul this word describes a natural human reaction to all that is going on at the beginning of The Tribulation.

But Jesus Christ, the caring Shepherd, encourages them, not to be taken by all these events, they are inevitable to bring in the deliverance of Israel and inaugurating His Millennial Kingdom. Divine judgment is an absolutely necessary part of God’s plan for history of mankind and of the Jews of Israel because Satan is in control on the earth and evil is pre-dominate throughout the world. Jesus Christ Kingdom is going to be a righteous kingdom, therefore all evil must be gotten rid of. This can be a frightening thing if one does not have the knowledge of the Word of God and believe it. Knowing the predetermined plan of God is one of the most comforting aspects of knowing not only prophecy but in knowing the Word of God regardless of when you live. Prophecy, indeed all the Word of God provides wonderful miraculous peace to the believer who knows the Word of God and believes it in his soul. Judgment must come upon the earth because our God is a righteous God who has limits to His longsuffering.

Think about the scenario of the events:

- > Israel is a nation;
- > The Church is removed along with the restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit.
- > This will cause immediate confusion over the whole earth, for there are Christians all over the world, and they are all taken away at one time, which results in world confusion.

Jewish unbelievers are left behind, and it is to these that our Lord is addressing in Matthew 24.

Then the first Seal is opened that releases the White Horse which will bring peace on this confused world. But this peace is short known, the second seal is opened and a Red Horse comes on the scene and takes away this peace, especuallly to Israel. So all the Jews in Israel will be subject to going into over taking fear and cry out. So the Lord beckons them not to be overcome with being hysterical.

Matthew 24:6

6 See that you are not frightened, and why not be frightened? for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end.

Must take place This is such a beautiful statement in the Word of God.

We should take time to go through it's every use in the New Testament. It refers to what is necessary, what is inevitable. Let's look at one beautiful passage where this necessity is told by Jesus Christ Himself.

Matthew 16:21

21 From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day. This is necessary, this is inevitable if He is to be the Savior of all who believe in Him.

And for the inevitability of how it is necessary for all to believe in JC for salvation.

Acts 4:12

12 “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”

Suffering was inevitable for Jesus Christ. Suffering is inevitable for us in the Church Age, in the intensified stage of the **ANGELIC CONFLICT** and suffering is inevitable for Israel at the beginning and throughout The Tribulation. These things must be accomplished before Israel can receive the unconditional covenants promised to them by a Faithful God.

Matthew 24:6

6 this is not yet the end

People, this is spoken by Jesus Christ to the Jews in The Tribulation but oh, people please meditate on these precious words in your own life. No matter the trials, the tribulations, the sufferings, this is not the end. We are to live in light of eternity! ... keeping our eyes focused on Jesus Christ who sits at the right hand of God, today!

And He is coming again, and has an eternal dwelling place for you.

John 14:1

- 1 *“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.*
- 2 *“In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.*
- 3 *“If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.*
- 4 *“And you know the way where I am going.”*

Next Time

WARS OF THE TRIBULATION

are now described in verse 7