

# Jesus' Olivet Discourse

Matthew 24 & 25



**Matthew 24:4** And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.

**Matthew 24:5** For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.

**Matthew 24:6** And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

**Matthew 24:7** For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.

**Matthew 24:8** All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

A terrible time is coming. We most commonly call it the Tribulation or the Great Tribulation. It has a few other names and descriptions in the Bible.

You'll find it mentioned as **birth pangs** in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Micah. Another name for it is **the day of the Lord**, and this is probably - it is indeed, in fact - the most popular name for the Tribulation period.

Another title that is given to it is **the day of wrath** in Zephaniah 1:15 or **the day of the Lord's wrath** in Zephaniah 1:18.

Then there are these:

1. It is **the day of desolation** and **the day of vengeance** in Isaiah.
2. It's **the day of Jacob's trouble** as we read in Jeremiah 30:7.
3. It is **the day of darkness and gloominess** in Zephaniah, Amos, and Joel.
4. It is **the day of clouds and thick darkness** in Zephaniah and Joel.
5. It is **the day of trumpet and battlecry** in Zephaniah 1:16.

6. It is **the day of alarm** in Zephaniah 1:16.
7. It is **the day of the Lord's anger** in Zephaniah.
8. It is **the day of destruction and ruin from the Almighty** in Joel 1:15.
9. It is **the day of calamity and distress** in Deuteronomy and Obadiah.
10. It is **trouble and tribulation** in Deuteronomy and Zephaniah.
11. It is the time, or the day, **of trouble and distress** in Daniel and Zephaniah.
12. It is **the indignation** in Isaiah 26.
13. In Isaiah 28 it is **the overflowing of the scourge**, God's **strange work**, and His **strange act**.
14. It is **the fire of His jealousy** in Zephaniah 1:18.
15. It is the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy of the End Times in Daniel 9.

**That's just the Old Testament!** In the New Testament we see it called **the day** in First Thessalonians 5:4; **the day of the Lord** in Mark thirteen; **the wrath of God** in First Thessalonians five and Revelation eleven; **the wrath to come** in First Thessalonians one; **the great day of their wrath** Revelation six; **the wrath of God** in Revelation 15:14 and 19; **the wrath of the Lamb** in Revelation six; and **the hour of trial** in Revelation three.

- being changed to bring change -

Daniel called it the seventieth week. It means a 'week' of years, or seven years. The two halves of it are described as **a time and times and half a time** in Revelation 12:14. The two halves of it are described as one-thousand two hundred and sixty days in Revelation 11:3 and 12:6.

(By the way: It is not to be confused with the phrase **the day of Christ** which refers to Jesus Christ's rule of the earth during the Millennial Kingdom).

It is this period of time in the prophetic future that Jesus was describing in the Olivet Discourse. In verses four through fourteen of chapter twenty-four we see Him focusing on the first half, the first three and one half years, the first time and times and half a time, the first one-thousand two hundred and sixty days.

To be fair, many solid evangelicals would say that Jesus' comments in verses four through eight can be applied all through the age in which we live leading up to the Tribulation. They say the Tribulation then begins in verse nine.

It's not really worth arguing over; either view is equally biblical. It just seems more precise to put this whole discussion in the future.

One reason to think it is future is that the things Jesus mentioned seem to correspond to the seals He opens in the Revelation. There are seven seals to be opened. When the seventh seal is opened, seven trumpets are blown. When the seventh trumpet is blown, seven bowls of wrath are poured out upon the earth.

We can compare Jesus' statements in Matthew to the seven seals:

1. The false Christ's correspond to the first seal which is Antichrist.
2. The wars and rumors of wars correspond to the second seal which is warfare in which nations will rise up against each other on a global scale.
3. The unusual disturbances in nature including famines correspond to the third seal which is famine.
4. The fourth and fifth seals are death and martyrdom.
5. Earthquakes correspond to the sixth seal which is an earthquake.

**Matthew 24:4** And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.

As the Tribulation begins the Church has been resurrected and raptured. Those who are left are sent a strong delusion to believe the devil's lie. Many will be deceived.

The devil is no less deceptive now than he will be in the future. We need to cultivate a healthy skepticism. Not a cynicism or a sarcasm... But we can and should be spiritually skeptical.

**Matthew 24:5** For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.

This is more than just the prevalence of cults and false teachings. This is people claiming to be the Messiah. Every age has its share but in the Tribulation it will be out of control. Sadly, **many** will be deceived – meaning they will perish having trusted in someone other than Jesus.

We must stand for the truth. It isn't because we want to be right or win an argument. It is because error ruins people's lives.

One of the false Christs will be the antichrist. He will accomplish what no other world leader has yet been able to accomplish: Make peace in the Middle East. He will guarantee Israel's peace to the extent they will be able to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem.

The peace the antichrist brings will be tenuous at best:

**Matthew 24:6** And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

He doesn't really bring kum bay ya! Nations are still at odds with one another.

One possible scenario has his armies advance on the Middle East to defend Israel. Once he arrives in Jerusalem at the mid-point of the Tribulation he enters the Temple and declares himself God.

**These things must come to pass.** God's prophetic plan will unfold exactly as written.

**The end is not** yet is a rather hopeful statement. No matter how bad things get we will not destroy ourselves completely. God's plan to redeem His creatures and the creation cannot be foiled by our own stupidity.

**Matthew 24:7** For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.

Global conflict will bring the global catastrophes of **famine** and **pestilences**.

**Earthquakes** will occur in various places could mean *unusual places*. Now while this prediction is future, it is none the less interesting that increasingly there are earthquakes in various places today.

Sunday, 13 April 2008

GRANTS PASS, Ore. (AP) — Scientists listening to underwater microphones have detected an unusual swarm of earthquakes off central Oregon, something that often happens before a volcanic eruption — except there are no volcanoes in the area.

Scientists don't know exactly what the earthquakes mean, but they could be the result of molten rock rumbling away from the recognized earthquake faults off Oregon, said Robert Dziak, a geophysicist for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and Oregon State University.

There have been more than 600 quakes over the past 10 days in a basin 150 miles southwest of Newport. The biggest was magnitude 5.4, and two others were more than magnitude 5.0, OSU reported.

On the hydrophones, the quakes sound like low thunder and are unlike anything scientists have heard in 17 years of listening, Dziak said. Some of the quakes have also been detected by earthquake instruments on land.

**Matthew 24:8** All these are the beginning of sorrows.

**Sorrows** can refer to the birth pangs of a woman in labor. Jesus likened the Great Tribulation to a woman in labor about to deliver a baby. Labor pains generally start slowly and then intensify up to the delivery.

The Great Tribulation will be like that. The first six seals follow one another at a relatively slow pace. The events they describe span a period of about three and one half years the first half of the Great Tribulation.

When the seventh seal is opened, the Great Tribulation intensifies with the blowing of seven trumpets. The trumpets describe events from about the mid-point of the Great Tribulation on towards the end.

When the seventh trumpet is blown, the Great Tribulation intensifies again with the pouring out of the seven bowls of wrath. This occurs in

rapid succession, describing events at the very end of the Great Tribulation.

When the seventh and final bowl of wrath is poured out, Jesus Christ returns to earth and it is delivered.

To the believers facing this terrible time Jesus said **see that you are not troubled. What an amazing statement!** If believers in the Tribulation can have peace, how much more can we in the day of grace?

*Let not your hearts be troubled!*

