

The Mt. Olivet Discourse: Part 5

Matthew 24:23-28 — “Lightning & Vultures”

INTRODUCTION:

One characteristic of *apocalyptic* literature is its graphic descriptions.

REVIEW:

1. Jesus proclaims that the Temple will be destroyed and left desolate (Mt. 23:34-39).
2. Jesus specifically says this will happen within that generation (23:36 & 24:34).
3. When asked by the apostles as to when this will happen, and what are the signs it is coming, Jesus answers:
 - 4 preparative, “non-signs” — false Christs, wars, famines, pestilences & earthquakes
 - 2 more “nearer signs” — persecution by the Jews; Gentile (world-wide) evangelism.
4. Overall, Jesus’ answer comes in 3 timeframes:
 - Verses 4-8 = *Signs before the Temple’s destruction*
 - Verses 15-28 = *What happens during this time*
 - Verses 29-31 = *What happens afterward*
5. Jesus points finally to the “Abomination of Desolation” as *the sign* for His disciples in Judea to flee to the mountains (AD 66, fleeing to Pella). This event marked the beginning of “The Great Tribulation” of Jerusalem under the Roman siege.
6. Christ says that tribulation was shortened for the elect, surviving Jews.

MEANING OF MATTHEW 24:23-28

**** Q:** *Why does Jesus warn the apostles about not believing false reports of His presence?*

- They would long to see Jesus (cf. Luke 17:20-23).
- They may have believed that the Temple’s end = the start of Messiah’s reign (cf. Acts 1:6).
- They would have had a great emotional attachment to the Temple (Mk. 13:1; Luke 21:5).

I. (Verses 23-26) — “Be careful not to believe only what you want to hear.”

A. “Proof” of the false declaration: _____ & _____.

1. “Signs” — _____ 2. “Wonders” — _____

3. In the Bible, these are used to demonstrate _____

_____ (Heb. 2:1-4).

B. The twofold test: _____ + _____.

II. (Verse 27) — “Be careful not to hear only what you’ve always been taught.”

A. *Point* of the false declaration: Messiah is _____ & _____.

B. What would the disciples have expected after the Temple’s destruction?

C. How does verse 27 contradict this?

1. Normal view: “When I do come....”

2. Pastor Garrick:

a) Lightning =

b) Point:

Matthew 24:26-27	Luke 17:20-24
<p>“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 <i>it</i>. For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.”</p>	<p>Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."</p> <p>Then He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see <i>it</i>. And they will say to you, 'Look here!' or 'Look there!' Do not go after <i>them</i> or follow <i>them</i>. For as the lightning that flashes out of one <i>part</i> under heaven shines to the other <i>part</i> under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day."</p>

III. (Verse 28) — “Be careful not to let what you’ve always been taught destroy your faith.”

A. Comparison to Luke 17:34-37,

1. “One is taken, the other left”

2. “Where, Lord?” (Thus, Matthew has “wherever”.)

3. Luke has “body”; but Matthew has “carcass” = dead body.

B. Principle: