

## THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

This is a narrative of my understanding of Jesus' teaching commonly known as "The Olivet Discourse," taking into account the three versions presented in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. A more detailed commentary is available at my website: [www.momsbiblejournal.com](http://www.momsbiblejournal.com). It would be helpful to have your bible at hand for ready reference.

This was Jesus' last major teaching before His crucifixion. It was a response to the questions posed by some of His disciples—Peter, James, John and Andrew. Jesus and His disciples had just left the temple compound after a major confrontation with the Pharisees. The closing words of this confrontation establish the context for what follows.

*Matthew 23:37–39 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."*

Jesus is referencing the time when He will return as their King once they finally recognize Him as their Messiah. As they walked away, the disciples pointed out the beauty of the temple. To their amazement, Jesus responded by saying that the time was coming when not one stone of that beautiful building would be left upon another; it would be completely torn down. Some time later, the four disciples asked Him their questions. They basically wanted to know when this was going to happen and what signs would precede His return as their King. They obviously thought the two events were connected, considering His parting remarks as noted above.

Jesus began His response by warning the disciples to stay aware, because many men would emerge on the scene claiming in His name to be the Messiah. Sadly, they would succeed in deceiving many people. He then proceeded to tell them of several things that would occur before the end, a reference to His return.

First, Jesus stated that there will be wars and rumors of wars; nations (a reference to ethnicity or races) will war against other nations and kingdoms (territory ruled by one leader) will war against other kingdoms. Arnold Fruchtenbaum had some interesting insight on the Jewish origin of "nation against nation, and kingdom against kingdom."

“This expression, found in Jewish sources such as the Bereshit Rabbah (written shortly after Yeshua’s time) and, later, the Zohar Chadash—is a Hebrew idiom for a world war. What Jesus was saying, then, is that it would be a world war rather than merely a local war that would mark the beginning of the end of the age.”

Regarding World Wars I and II: “Both wars had a decisive impact on Jewish history. The first gave impetus to the growth of the Zionist movement, and the Second World War led to the re-establishment of the Jewish State.”

Jesus went on to say that there will also be famines, pestilences (plague and disease), earthquakes, troubles, and fearful sights and great signs from heavens. He then compared all these things to birth pains, indicating that they will occur with greater intensity and frequency as the time for His return draws near. It’s quite thought-provoking to note how these signs correspond to the first five seals that are opened in Revelation 6.

Jesus also warned them that many of them (and countless others, as history will prove) will be hated, imprisoned and killed because of their faith in Jesus. Not only will they face persecution from civic and religious leaders, they will also face betrayal by parents, siblings and their children. Jesus had warned them about this sad truth in previous teaching.

*Matthew 10:34–38 “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.”*

After telling the disciples that some would be faced with execution, the Lord encouraged them to look beyond this life—“*not an hair of your head shall perish.*” Obviously, this cannot be a reference to physical death. This is an allusion to our resurrected body that will live for eternity. Our life here is but a vapor in comparison.

*1 Corinthians 15:53–54 “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.”*

*James 4:14 "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."*

The LORD also encouraged His disciples by telling them that through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, He will give them the words He wants them to say when they are brought before the authorities.

There is a ray of sunshine as Jesus continues to prophesy, the gospel will be preached in all nations in spite of the persecution and martyrdom of believers.

The next warning is against false prophets that will rise up and deceive many. False prophets always lead people away from the truth of God's word. Their deception will be facilitated by the fact that sin will abound more and more and love will become colder as people are focused more and more on self.

My understanding of scripture continues to clarify with continued study. That is certainly true regarding this teaching. It now seems clear to me that Luke's account makes specific reference to the attack of Titus and his legions, while Matthew and Mark focus on the actions of the Antichrist during the tribulation. It's also very probable that Luke's account has further application as a foreshadowing of the events that will occur in the tribulation as recorded in Matthew and Mark.

It's very interesting that the Holy Spirit can use the same teaching or prophecy to make distinct application to two different time periods. Jesus gave evidence to this truth when He read in the synagogue from Isaiah 61:1-2, stopping in the middle of a sentence to declare that He was the fulfillment of that prophecy to that point (Luke 4); the rest of the prophecy in Isaiah referenced His return as King of kings. The biggest pitfall in my study of prophecy still continues to be previous teaching that seems to cloud my understanding until I allow the Spirit to open my eyes a bit more.

I am also encouraged by what I learned in my study of Daniel. He was told to shut up or seal the words of his prophecy because it was intended for those living in end times (12:4) and that at that time *"many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."* I believe this refers to understanding God's word in light of the words of the prophet Amos.

*Amos 8:11-12 "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it."*

Amos is talking of a time when men will run to and fro and not be able to find understanding of the word of God. Daniel is speaking of a time when men will be running to and fro and knowledge shall be increased—they will find more understanding of the word of God.

In Luke's account, the LORD warns the disciples that when they see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, they can know the destruction of the temple is near. They should leave town immediately and sound the warning to others. Jesus declared that this will fulfill God's vengeance against that generation on behalf of the martyrs of faith from Old Testament times, just as He had told the Pharisees.

*Matthew 23:33–36 "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation."*

Jesus declared that in addition to the destruction of the temple, the Jewish people would suffer at the hands of the Gentiles and be taken as captives among the nations. He also said that Jerusalem would remain in the hands of the Gentiles until their times were fulfilled in accordance with God's plan. The times of the Gentiles won't be fulfilled until Antichrist is defeated and Christ returns as King to reestablish the throne of David.

In Matthew and Mark's account, Jesus warns about the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, making clear that this is a future event.

*Daniel 12:11 "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days."*

Nothing happened that would answer to this prophecy when the Roman legions destroyed the temple and the city of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Yet, Jesus makes reference to an unholy thing or person standing in the temple, most likely in the holy of holies. This necessitates the existence of another temple; so, obviously, that is yet future to present time. The fact that revered Moslem structures are currently located on the temple mount seem to negate this possibility, but I know that God's word will prove true. I think it is likely that mediating peace in the Middle East and reaching an agreement to

rebuild the temple will be the primary accomplishments that launch the ascendance of the Antichrist as the recognized leader of the world.

Paul makes it fairly clear in his second letter to the Thessalonians that the abomination of desolation is perpetrated by the Antichrist.

*2Thessalonians 2:3-4 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.*

It's interesting that the Spirit inspired Matthew and Mark to include a special note to those *reading* this passage. Obviously, the gospel narratives were written to be read by others. It also indicates to me that the authors were aware they might not be around at the time this event occurred. The word for *readeth* was quite interesting; it stated, "to know again." This implies that this message should serve as a reminder of something of which you already have knowledge. The word for *understand* means to exercise the mind in order to comprehend. Implication—one should be able to comprehend and take action when the event occurs.

The LORD makes it clear that when they see the abomination take place, they should immediately flee the country; they weren't to take the time to get anything to take with them. He noted that it would be really hard on those who were pregnant or nursing babies and told them to pray it wouldn't be in winter, when travel would be much more hazardous, or on the sabbath, when travel would be more difficult.

I know from my study of Revelation that this event basically marks the midpoint of the tribulation, the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel, the last seven years on earth before Jesus returns as King of kings. It marks the time when Satan is thrown out of heaven and, I believe, indwells the antichrist. He will be intent on persecuting the people of Israel in particular.

Jesus goes on to say that this will begin a time of "great tribulation," a time of trouble worse than any other since the creation of the world. In fact, if the LORD had not determined to cut short the time for the benefit of the elect (those who turned to Him in faith during that time), all flesh on planet earth would be destroyed. Mankind has not had this ability until more recent times with the advent of nuclear technology and the development of biological and chemical warfare.

Though there are those that believe all these events refer to history past, they are ignoring the plain reading of scripture. As stated previously, there was no abomination of desolation that occurred when Titus and his legions destroyed the temple and Jerusalem. Neither was there a threat to the entire population of planet earth at that time. People who deny the future application of this scripture are also those that deny that the people of Israel are still a valid part of God's plan for the future. They will be made to realize their error when Jesus returns as King of kings to rule the world from the throne of David in Jerusalem in the restored nation of Israel.

The LORD warns the disciples again that false Christs, those claiming to be the Messiah, will emerge on the scene. Some of these false Christs will be able to perform great signs and wonders, but they should not let that deceive them. Some of these impostors will veil themselves in secrecy, granting access only to those who are willing to seek them out. Jesus clearly declares that His return will be as public and obvious as lightning that comes out of the east and shines to the west; there will be nothing secret about it.

Scripture clearly states that spiritual forces of evil are capable of performing miracles that will deceive those that choose to reject God.

*Deuteronomy 13:1-4 "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him."*

Paul told us that the Antichrist would be able to perform lying wonders.

*2 Thessalonians 2:9 "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders...."*

And John told us about the false prophet, right-hand man to the Antichrist.

*Revelation 13:13-14 "And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast...."*

Jesus next begins to identify things that will occur at the end of this time of tribulation to signify that His return is very near. The sun and moon will be darkened, the stars

will fall from the heavens and the forces of heaven will be shaken. These signs in the heavens will dramatically affect things on earth, especially the oceans, and will cause great distress among all the people on earth.

Finally, the LORD will be revealed, coming in the clouds of heaven in all His power and glory to defeat the forces of evil and establish His kingdom—and we will be with Him! Many scriptures reference this time.

*Revelation 1:7 “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.”*

*Revelation 19:11–14 “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.”*

*Matthew 26:64 “Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.”*

*Matthew 16:27 “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.”*

*Jude 1:14–15 “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,  
To execute judgment upon all....”*

*Colossians 3:4 “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”*

Again, Fruchtenbaum makes an interesting observation: “From these passages, we learn that immediately after the Tribulation of those days, there will be a total blackout with no light penetrating at all, followed by a sudden, glorious, tremendous light that will penetrate through the blackout. This is the Shechinah Glory, and this Shechinah light will be the sign of the Second Coming of Christ.”

The LORD tells us that after He returns in glory to establish His kingdom, He will send His angels throughout the world to gather the elect, the remnant, all the Jewish

believers, and bring them home to Israel. He then declared that when we see all these things **begin** to come to pass, we can know His return is near.

It's at this point that Jesus presents the parable of the fig tree. He noted that when you see the fig tree putting forth leaves, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these signs coming to pass, you can know that His coming is near. It is interesting to note that Luke specifically includes all trees.

I know that many prophecy scholars equate the fig tree with Israel based on Old Testament scripture.

*Joel 1:6–7 "For a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion. He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast it away; the branches thereof are made white."*

Establishing Israel as the fig tree, they proceed to compare the rebirth of the nation of Israel to the budding of the fig tree. Though the comparison of Israel to the fig tree and the prophesied rebirth of the nation (Ezekiel 36-37) are scriptural, I personally don't see that as the primary point being made here, even though I do believe that Israel's rebirth as a nation is the most significant sign regarding the nearness of the second coming of Jesus.

The Lord is drawing a word picture here. According to *Eerdman's Dictionary*, the first fruit of the fig tree appears in February before the leaves appear in April/June; when the leaves appear, the fruit is usually ripe. When you see the leaves shooting forth on the fig tree, you know that summer is right around the corner. Luke even adds the phrase "and all the trees" since the sprouting of the leaves on the trees in spring are the harbinger of summer soon to come. Just as the sprouting of leaves is a sign that summer is coming, the emergence of the signs previously discussed are announcing that the kingdom of God is at hand—the return of Jesus to rule as King on planet earth.

Jesus then declares that "this generation" will not pass until all these things are fulfilled. There is much debate about what is meant by "this generation." It would seem to me that in context, it is referencing those that see the signs. These signs include all the predicted events presented prior to this statement—some of which are a part of the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel, the tribulation period. The generation that sees the hard labor pains will see the fulfillment of the prophecy.

Note: False labor sometimes precedes onset of actual labor. It is similar to actual birth pains, but is premature. Events could happen similar to the birth pains before actual labor begins—but even false labor is a signal of labor soon to commence. Labor pains that result in birth continue to increase in intensity and frequency until birth occurs.

The LORD then assures His disciples that even though heaven and earth will eventually pass away, His word will not; all will come to pass as He has foretold.

*Isaiah 51:6 "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished."*

*Isaiah 65:17 "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind."*

*2Peter 3:13 "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."*

*Isaiah 40:8 "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."*

The LORD also tells His disciples that no man on earth or angel in heaven or even the Son (Jesus Himself) knows the day or hour appointed for His return; that is a time known only to God the Father.

This is a little bit confusing in that once the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel starts, a specific timeline is given regarding its duration. It will last for seven years or 84 months or 2,520 days; it is even specified that the Antichrist will only be allowed to rule for half that time—3.5 years or 42 months or 1260 days. It seems one could mark off the days on a calendar. I think the key is that no one before those who experience the tribulation will have a clue regarding the day or hour. Even those who live through the tribulation will not be able to be specific as to the hour.

The other hard thing to understand is that the Father has information that the Son does not have. Again, I think the answer is found in the fact that the Son at the time of this prophecy is functioning in the human realm through the anointing and revelation of the Holy Spirit. Until He was resurrected to His glorified state, He was by choice just as dependent on revelation through the Spirit as we are now. He lived His life as God had intended for man to live when he was created—as the second Adam.

*1 Corinthians 15:21–22 & 45 “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive....And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.”*

It is also thought-provoking to know that neither do the angels in heaven know the appointed time. They know the plan and they helped reveal it to John; they just don't know the exact timing.

From the perspective of the Old Testament saints, the coming of the Messiah would end up being a two-part process—first as the Suffering Servant and next as Victorious King. That lends credence to the same type of perspective in the eyes of the New Testament saints—first as Deliverer of the church and next as Victorious King.

Although the Greek for the words *day* and *hour* allow for more general time references, it would seem that their use as a unit is significant to a specific day and hour that would include the thought of a specific year.

I think at this point, based on the verses that follow, that Jesus is making reference to the rapture, the catching away of the church before the start of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, since that concept is presented in scripture as something that could happen at any moment with no preceding signs of identification. This seems out of context with the coming of the kingdom, but is in line with Old Testament prophecies that referenced a span of time or more than one event, e.g., Isaiah 61 as noted above.

*Isaiah 61:1–3 “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.”*

When Jesus read from this section in the synagogue in Nazareth, he stopped after “the acceptable year of our LORD” and declared that He was fulfilling the scripture that day. He did not continue reading because the rest of the prophecy referred to His second coming as Messiah the King.

Though the disciples would not have understood the distinction between the rapture and the return of Jesus as King Messiah, it in no way changes the truth of each. The LORD waited to reveal this mystery through the Apostle Paul.

*1 Corinthians 15:51–53 “Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”*

*1 Thessalonians 4:16–17 “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”*

Paul is describing a time, a moment, when living believers will be caught up in the air with believers that had already died to be resurrected to incorruptible bodies. It is an event that can happen at any moment.

In light of that truth, the LORD encourages His followers to be aware, watch and pray because they could not know the time of His return. I believe He is addressing spiritual readiness. We are to be perceptive of what is happening around us—able to recognize the signs given by the Lord. We are to be spiritually alert and not affected by the world’s outlook as described by Peter.

*2Peter 3:4 “And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.”*

We are to be approaching God with earnestness and eagerness for the LORD’s return, even though we don’t know when that will be. He then goes on to give an illustration concerning that time, making reference to the days of Noah. In the days before the flood, people were eating, drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until the day that Noah entered the ark; in other words, they were living life as usual. Only after Noah was in the ark did the people recognize the truth of his preaching. Noah knew all along that God was going to destroy “all flesh wherein is the breath of life” under heaven.

*Genesis 6:13 & 17 “And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.”*

Scripture also tells us that Noah was a preacher of righteousness.

*2Peter 2:5 "And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly...."*

This tells me that his situation was much like that of Christians who share the truth of God's coming today. He knew the truth and was faithful to preach it, but the people ignored his message because they didn't believe it. We who have been redeemed by Jesus know the truth and are faithfully declaring it to those around us, but they choose to ignore it because they don't believe it.

This is not the first time that Jesus had taught this truth.

*Luke 17:26-30 "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."*

Note that Jesus included the example of Lot in His earlier teaching to emphasize His point. I think the important truth to note is that God is going to deliver His own before exacting judgment on the wicked.

As He continues to paint His word picture, the LORD says that two will be working in the field; one will be taken, and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken, and the other left. This is descriptive of what happens at the rapture when the LORD takes the family of believers home to heaven and leaves the unbelievers behind to experience the coming judgment.

Jesus then gives another illustration of this event. He tells the story of a man who heads out on a journey, delegating duties to each of his servants and commanding the overseer to be vigilant and watch for his return. He told them that he didn't know how long he would be gone and didn't want to find them sleeping on the job when he returned.

In context, the obvious application is that when Jesus returns, it will be at a time unknown, but should not be unexpected. Again, this cannot apply to the time when He returns in all His glory as King. According to Daniel, a specific time has been allotted

for the tribulation; and we can know for sure that the LORD will return seven years after it starts.

*Daniel 9:25–27 “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”*

In summary, the reference to Messiah being “cut off” is an allusion to the crucifixion of Jesus. After that time, Jerusalem and the temple will be destroyed (which happened in 70 AD). The “prince that shall come” refers to the Antichrist. The first real identifying factor of the Antichrist will be when he confirms a covenant between Israel and “many” nations for one week, or seven years. In the middle of that week, he will break the covenant and stop all sacrifices when he declares himself to be God in the temple, as revealed by Paul.

*2 Thessalonians 2:3–4 “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”*

This act is the abomination of desolation foretold by Jesus earlier in this chapter.

Jesus gives yet another illustration of a man whose home is robbed because he had no way of knowing that a thief was coming. If he had known, he would surely have been prepared.

There are some verses in Revelation that I think are directly related to this illustration.

*Revelation 3:3 “Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.”*

*Revelation 16:15 “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.”*

The purpose of each illustration is to point out the importance of expectation and preparation. Jesus is going to come without warning, like the thief, and we should always be in a state of expectation and readiness. The one who is truly watching will be ready—will not be in a position of shame to meet the Savior. This is a truth that has become much more important and real to me as I have grown older and more absorbed in His Word. I am so much more aware of what I am doing each minute. I so want the Spirit to be at home in my being. This makes it much easier to make choices in entertainment and in how I prioritize my time.

The LORD goes on to say that the servant who is busy doing what he was assigned to do will be rewarded. The evil servant that is disobedient and wicked in light of the fact that his master's return is delayed will be appointed his portion with the hypocrites. He will be revealed for who he truly is—a servant in name only.

Jesus goes on to emphasize the importance of avoiding sinful behavior that will result in one being surprised and unprepared when He comes. He then goes on to say that you want to be accounted worthy of escaping all the things that will come to pass (in reference to the tribulation) and standing before the Son of Man (Him). This emphasizes the truth that He is talking about the rapture. So, how is one accounted worthy? By being clothed in the righteousness of Jesus as a result of accepting His gift of salvation.

*2 Corinthians 5:21 "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."*

*Ephesians 2:8–9 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."*

*Romans 10:9 "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."*

My heart's cry—"Come Lord Jesus!"