

03 – THE SECOND COMING

- ✓ We've been studying the Olivet Discourse, which examines the "end times" in chronological order. So far, we've looked at: Signs the Tribulation is about to begin (v. 4-8), and the first (v. 9-14) and second half (v. 15-26) of the Tribulation.
- ✓ That brings us to the Second Coming (v. 27-30). Before we look at this section of Matt. 24, let's review what we've already said about the Second Coming. Remember, we said that Jesus returns on:

The Last Day of the Tribulation

- ✓ Armageddon is underway, and it's not going well for Israel.

Zech. 14:2 – "For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be captured, and the houses looted, and the women raped; and half of the city shall go into captivity ..."

- ✓ So, half of the city falls! (The women are raped, and the city is pillaged.) Then, just when it looks like the second half of the city is going to fall, God does something He hasn't done since the 9th plague in Egypt. He "shuts out the lights". The sun won't shine, and the moon won't give her light. (Why would God do that?)
- ✓ Remember I Said: At the Rapture of the Church, it's not too late to get saved, but at the Second Coming it is. So, God in His mercy, "shuts out the lights" and gives people one last chance to receive Christ. Then, after the darkness, Jesus comes back. (Now, I said all of that without giving you any Scripture. Let me give you some now.)

The Second Coming – (v. 27-30)

Matt. 24:27 – "For just like the lightning comes from the east and is seen as far as the west, so the Coming of the Son of Man will be."

- ✓ The next verses are going to describe the period of darkness.

Matt. 24:29 – "Immediately after the tribulation ... "

- ✓ Notice the timing. The darkness occurs "immediately after the tribulation ..." Time has run out on the Antichrist's reign. The Tribulation is over, and Jesus is about to return. (Now watch God "shut out the lights".)

Matt. 24:29 – "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light ..."

- ✓ Matthew isn't the only one who mentions darkness in connection with the Second Coming. Mark and Luke mention this event, as do a few Old Testament writers. Isaiah describes the 2nd Coming like this:

Isaiah 13:10 – "For the stars and the constellations shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened ... and the moon shall not shine."

Joel's Prophecy

- ✓ So far, we've been told about the darkness (by Matthew, Mark, Luke and Isaiah), but no one has told us why it happens. To understand that we'll have to turn to Joel.
- ✓ Joel's prophecy starts with a description of the attack on Jerusalem. (From Zechariah, we learned that half the city falls. Joel gives us a glimpse of the army that attacks them.)

Joel 2:3 – "In front of them a fire consumes; and behind them a flame burns. Land ahead of them is like the Garden of Eden, but they leave behind them a barren wasteland; nothing escapes them ..."

- ✓ He continues his description of the army in the verses that follow. Unfortunately, some have misinterpreted what he said. (Back in the 1980's, someone put their misunderstanding to music.)

*They rush on the city, they run on the walls,
Great is the army that carries out His Word ...
Blow the trumpet in Zion, Zion,
Sound the alarm in Thy Holy Mountain.
Blow the trumpet in Zion, Zion,
Sound the alarm.*

- ✓ The army in Joel 2 isn't the Church! He's describing the future armies of Antichrist! The Jews are "blowing the trumpet" and "sounding the alarm" because they're under attack! (Maybe they didn't notice, but the army that's "rushing on the city" and "running on the wall" isn't "carrying out God's Word". They're "climbing through the windows" and raping the women. That's not us!)

Joel 2:3 – *"In front of them a fire consumes; and behind them a flame burns. Land ahead of them is like the Garden of Eden, but they leave behind them a barren wasteland; nothing escapes them."*

- ✓ After the first half of the city falls, the lights go out!

Joel 3:14-15 – *"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord (2nd Coming) is near in the valley of decision. (Here it is again ...) The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining."*

- ✓ Matthew and Isaiah mentioned the darkness. But Joel takes it a step further. He tells us WHY everything went dark. In the darkness, "multitudes" are in the "valley of decision". (The lights went out, to give everyone one last chance to receive Christ.)
- ✓ When the darkness ends, Jesus returns like lightning (v. 27).

Matt. 24:29-30 – *"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light. THEN (after the darkness) ... they shall see the Son of Man ... coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory."*

- ✓ Joel concurs:

Joel 3:14-15 – *"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord (2nd Coming) is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. THEN (after the darkness) the Lord shall roar out of Zion."*

What Happens On Earth After the 2nd Coming – (24:31 – 25:49)

- ✓ We talked about this a few weeks ago. We called it "the Rapture in Reverse". After the 2nd Coming, the angels go forth & gather up the unbelievers and throw them into hell. We saw that in the parable of the Wheat & the Tares.

Matt. 13:40-42 – *"Just as the tares (weeds) are gathered up and burned in the fire, so will it be at the end of the age (the end of the Tribulation). The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will REMOVE out of the kingdom, all those who practice lawlessness and lead others into sin (unbelievers) and will throw them into the furnace of fire; where people will cry in great agony and defiant rage."*

- ✓ So, the unbelievers are thrown into hell. But what happens to the believers – (the ones who received Christ during the period of darkness)? They remain on the earth and go into the Millennium, still in their natural bodies (Matt. 13:43). They'll continue to marry and have children throughout the thousand years.
- ✓ In case you've ever wondered, this is who we reign over. I used to wonder about that. I knew the Bible said we'd rule and reign with Christ, but I could never figure out who we'd rule over! (Do we take turns ruling over each other? "I'll rule over *you* on Mon, Wed, and Fri, and you rule over *me* on Tues. and Thurs?" No. We rule over the redeemed Tribulation survivors.)
- ✓ Luke 19:17-19 talks about our individual assignments: *"You'll have authority over ten cities in my kingdom ..."*

The Key to The Last Section – (Matthew 24:31–25:46)

- ✓ If you understand the concept of the **unbelievers being removed** (and thrown into hell), and the **believers remaining on earth** (to enter the Millennium), you'll understand everything that follows. He's going to describe it over and over.

The Days of Noah

*Matt. 24:37-42 – “But as the **days of Noah were**, so shall also the **Coming of the Son of man be.**”*

- ✓ (Again, we've pulled this verse out of context.) I hear SO many Christians say, “The **Rapture** must be soon, because our days are just like the days of Noah.” Then, they compare sin in *our* day, with sin in Noah's day. (There are some similarities between our society and Noah's, but that's not the point of the passage.)
- ✓ **Here's What Happened in the Days of Noah**: The believers were gathered together in the Ark and preserved. And the unbelievers were *removed* from the earth and swept into hell. When the believers came off the Ark, they entered a brand-new dispensation which began with believers only. (That's what's happening here.)

*“For as in the days that were before the flood **they** (the **unbelievers**) were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, And **they** (the **unbelievers**) knew not **until the flood came, and took them** (the **unbelievers**) **all away**; so shall also the **Coming of the Son of man be.**”*

*“**THEN** shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken (the **unbeliever**), and the other (the **believer**) is left (to enter the Millennium). **THEN** two women shall be grinding at the mill; the (unbeliever) shall be taken, and the (believer) is left.”* (**Then the Millennium begins with believers only.**)

- ✓ Again, if you can remember the concept of the **unbelievers being removed** (and thrown into hell), and the **believers remaining on earth** (to enter the Millennium), you'll understand what follows.