

Bible Study Class #23

4/2/24

Synoptics 23 – 24

- Matthew 24 (Cont)

Matthew 24 (Cont)

- **Matthew 24:29** *“immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light,...*
 - The changes in the sun and moon meant the end of time (not the world)
 - Many of the prophets used similar language when describing the destruction of the city or nation
 - Often the cause of the darkening of the sun and/or the moon and them being turned into blood, was the vast amount of dust stirred up by horses and chariots on the move

Matthew 24 (Cont)

- Further, the observation of the motions of the sun and moon were the principle ways people in antiquity kept track of time
- The average man looking at the sky could tell the hour of the day, time of year, and even the month
- They also read the positioning of the stars
- Father said that when we hear these descriptions of the heavenly bodies, we need to remember **Genesis**, where they were first mentioned as the great lights given by God to give light upon the earth

Matthew 24 (Cont)

- **Matthew 24:30-31** *“then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven,...from one end of heaven to the other”*
 - This image is right out of **Daniel 7:13**
 - Jesus is talking about sending out His angels to gather the elect
 - Father said it can be read to mean the gathering of the Christians from Judea and getting them safely out of the way of the destruction (He is coming to the end of His prophesy)

Matthew 24 (Cont)

- At the moment of the destruction of the temple, the world witnessed a massive expansion of the church sending out angels to the ends of the earth to gather in the elect
- This is the age of the church discussed in **Revelation**
- The fathers of the Church saw the angles as being the apostles and their successors, the bishops
- Once Jerusalem was destroyed, He will send out His angels and then ascend to the ancient of days

Matthew 24 (Cont)

- **Matthew 24:32-34** *“From the fig tree learn this lesson:...this generation will not pass away till all these things take place”*
 - This should remind us of the story of the fig tree
 - We should underline the word “all”
 - Once again, father pointed to the confusion caused by Jerome’s subjective interpretation of the destruction of Jerusalem as being eschatological
 - Jesus said that all these things will take place **within one generation** (average generation was 40 years)
 - Everything Jesus said was fulfilled in 70 AD

Matthew 24 (Cont)

- **Matthew 24:35** *“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away”*
 - We heard this earlier in the Sermon on the Mount
 - This is an oath formula
 - This means that we can count on what Jesus just said
 - The rest of the text comments on this phrase
 - There are ways to read this without a future eschatological time for us

Matthew 24 (Cont)

- **Matthew 24:36-44** *“But of that day,...for the son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect”*
 - Again, one generation is 40 years
 - Jesus is predicting the coming of a massive battle
 - Unfortunately, a modern reading of the phrase, “one will be taken and one will be left,” has caused confusion
 - Tim La Haye, author of the *“Left Behind”* series, used this passage, along with **1st Thessalonians 4**, and parts of **Revelation** to justify his “left behind” theory in modern Protestant eschatology

Matthew 24 (Cont)

- He believed that the ones taken (and not left behind) were the righteous, while those left behind were the wicked
- This passage could also be about the Christians who fled Jerusalem before it was destroyed while the non-Christians were left behind and destroyed by the Romans
- Father has discussed this earlier to mean in scripture the one left behind were the righteous while those taken were the ones who suffered the bad luck (the Babylonian Exile, Noah, and the Flood)

Matthew 24 (Cont)

- Father reminded us of the parable of the householder who, if he had known when the thief would come, would not have allowed his house to be broken into
- This means that the message Jesus is presenting here is that one must be ready for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect, so always be ready

Matthew 24 (Cont)

- **Matthew 24:45-51** *“Who then is that faithful and wise servant,...Their men will weep and gnash their teeth”*
 - At this point, Jesus has again moved into a parable which is different from the parable in **Mark** and **Luke**
 - **Luke** presents the parable of the difference between the wise and wicked servant
 - Peter asked if this applies to himself and the apostles, and Jesus reminded him that he was the *al bieth*, who was to be in charge until the master returned

Synoptics 23 – 24

- Matthew 25

Matthew 25

- **Matthew 25:1-13** *“ Then the kingdom of heaven shall be compared to ten maidens who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom... for you know neither the day nor the hour”*
 - These were small oil lamps that could be held in the palm of your hand
 - They contained a small amount (2 or 3 tablespoons) of oil and a wick
 - They would usually burn for about an hour after which one had to replenish the oil from a small flask about the size of a medicine bottle

Matthew 25 (Cont)

- The story is about the 5 maidens who did not bring the backup vile of oil
- The story is about not being prepared; ready
- The wise maidens took flasks of oil with them the others did not
- “Trimming the wick” meant taking a small knife and trimming the wick after it filled with excess carbon as the oil ran dry
- This is another way of saying one has to always be ready

Matthew 25 (Cont)

- The foolish asked to borrow oil from the other because they did not know the day nor the hour for the arrival of the groom and his party
- All of these parables are about being prepared or always being ready
- Like the story of Noah, the wise servant, the wise virgins all were saying: “You just don’t know when this is going to happen, so make sure you are ready”

Matthew 25 (Cont)

- **Matthew 25:14-30** *“For it will be as when a man going on a journey called his servants...men will weep and gnash their teeth”*
 - The last servant was given only one talent and buried it in the ground for fear of not being able to give it back
 - Father explained that when a farmer sowed grain, he scattered it by hand, while trying to not waste any in the weeds
 - This means that this servant knew that his master was a hard man who not only harvested grain from the field but even tried to harvest those that had fallen into the weeds, or on the sides of the field

Matthew 25 (Cont)

- This implies that he was very careful with his money (therefore, he should at least have invested his money with the bankers to earn some interest)
- Thus, in this parable, this frugal servant will have everything taken from him
- When we hear this, it sounds like Jesus is a bad socialist
- Father reminded us that this is **not** about social welfare
- The message here, as we saw earlier in **Matthew 13**, is about the destruction of the temple
- It means his listeners should be ready as they did not know when this was going to happen

Matthew 25 (Cont)

- Jesus even warns them of several ways they might delay their flight, and the consequence of such delay
- This means that we can read this passage in the context of the destruction of the temple, and thus take the edge off the idea that this is about the end of the world