

Context & Questions of the Olivet Discourse

1) The Context that led to the Olivet Discourse – Matthew 21-23

- Triumphal Entry (21:1-11), fulfillment of Zech 9:9 (Jesus presented as King)
- Jesus cleanses the Temple of the moneychangers (21:12-13)
- Anger of the priests and scribes when Jesus healed the blind & lame (21:14-17)
- Curses fig tree that bore no fruit (21:18-22)
- Jesus's authority challenged by the chief priests and elders (21:23-27)
- Parable of the two sons emphasizing doing the will of God 21:28-32)
- Tells parable of the landowner, mistreatment of the prophets (21:33-46)
- Parable of the marriage feast, about destruction of Jerusalem (22:1-14)
- Pharisees tried to trap Jesus in His words, paying taxes to Caesar (22:15-22)
- The Sadducees came questioning Him about the resurrection (22:23-33)
- The Pharisee testing Him, asked what is the greatest commandment (22:34-40)
- Jesus asks the Pharisees a question and silences them (22:41-46)
- Scribes and Pharisees out to exalt themselves (23:1-12)
- Pronounces 7 woes on the scribes and Pharisees (Matt 23:13-33).

The chief priests and elders were in His face, testing and interrogating Him, trying to find fault in His words.

This resistance to Christ's message is very evident in their treatment of Him and the Jewish leaders' rejection of Jesus as the Messiah.

2) Jesus prophesizes destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem

- A. Jerusalem to be destroyed – Luke 19:41-44 (did not recognize time of their visitation)
- B. Jesus pronounces judgment on "*this generation*" hearing His words – Matt 23:34-36
- C. Temple to be left desolate/destroyed – Matt 23:37-39

3) Peter, James, John, and Andrew question Jesus concerning the destruction of the temple.

³ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what <i>will be</i> the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" Matt. 24:3	³ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately, ⁴ "Tell us, when will these things be? And what <i>will be</i> the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?" Mark 13:3-4	⁷ So they asked Him, saying, "Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign <i>will there be</i> when these things are about to take place?" Luke 21:7
--	---	---

Mark and Luke plainly ask two questions; (1) When will these things be? ("*these things*" are every stone of the temple being thrown down). (2) What will be the sign when "*these things*" will take place. Matthew gives the same first question as Mark and Luke, but adds (3) What will be the sign of your coming (Parousia), (4) and of the end of the age?"

4) The questions answered in the CONTEXT of the temple being destroyed, not Christ's return in the distant future.

1. ***When will the Temple be destroyed? "When will these things be?"*** Answer: "These things" refer to the temple being destroyed that occurred within the generation (1st century) of hearing Jesus's words. (Not a future generation)
2. ***What will be the sign of these things taking place?*** Answer: When Jerusalem is surrounded by armies.
3. ***What will be the sign of your coming (Parousia)?*** Answer: Jesus's enthronement in Heaven. This "sign" is in heaven, Jesus's "*Parousia*" in the 1st century was not on earth, but in heaven (Dan. 7:13-14). His "*Parousia*" on earth will be at His 2nd coming (1 Cor. 15:23).
4. ***What will be the sign of the end of the age?*** Answer: The total desolation of the temple, end of the priesthood, and the animal blood sacrificial system. This is the end of the Jewish Age, not the end of history. In that He says, "*A new covenant*," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away (Heb. 8:13).

Comments:

The Olivet Discourse is the foundation or cornerstone of Bible eschatology. Jesus mentions key points that are the basis of eschatological systems. These points include; wars and rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes, the gospel being preached in the whole world, the abomination of desolation, the great tribulation being the worst times the world has ever seen, and the Son of Man coming on the clouds with His angels gathering His elect.

Jesus gives the time indicator of when these events will take place, "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place" (Matt. 24:34). The generation Jesus was talking about was the generation hearing His words (Matt. 23:31-36).