

Lighthouse Bible Church

January 18th, 2015

Matthew 24: 15 – 26 *Scripture Reading: Mark 13:14 - 23*

‘Signs that the end is near’ #5

Stand – Read – Pray

Last week we began to look at what Matthew 24: 15 calls the ‘abomination of desolation’ that Daniel talked about several times and what the Bible predicts it will be in the future. We saw that in one aspect, it was related to a vile man by the name of Antiochus 1V who desecrated the temple around 165 BC by killing a pig and stuffing it down the throats of the priests and then setting up an idol, a statue, of Zeus and Daniel referred to that as the abomination of desolation.

And, by the way, this man Antiochus Epiphanes, as we saw last time, is a prefiguring, a type of what the anti-Christ of the future will be and do during this time that Jesus is talking about in Matthew 24, and how his reign is described in Daniel, 2nd Thessalonians 2 and several places in the book of Revelation.

Because we also saw that the ‘abomination of desolation’ that Daniel spoke about, also refers directly to the anti-Christ of the future tribulation time, a time yet future to us and the time Jesus is talking about in Matthew 24: 15. He is the one **Daniel 9: 27** says will **break the peace treaty with Israel and set up the abomination in the holy place**. He is the one **2nd Thessalonians 2: 4** says will **sit in the temple of God demanding to be worshipped as God**. He is the abomination or as **Revelation 13: 13 – 15** says **his image, that will have life and breath, will be the abomination**.

We also looked at the fact that there had to be a holy place in order for this abomination to take place and we looked in great detail at the preparations that are being made, today, for the building, furnishing, sacrificing and priests for the third temple that is being prepared for building in Jerusalem as we speak.

We saw that when the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet is placed in the third temple in Jerusalem, then things are going to get bad. Verse 21 says FOR THEN there will be great tribulation such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time no, nor ever shall be.

When the anti-Christ sets himself and or his image in the temple and stops the temple sacrifices, then the 2nd half of the tribulation period begins. So Jesus gives some warnings to those alive when this happens and we see it starting in verse 16.

Verse 16: then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains

Jesus says, ‘when you see that event take place, if you are in the area of **Judea**, then **flee to the mountains**. The region of Judea is the closest region to the city of Jerusalem where the temple will be desecrated and the persecution and killing of Jews and Christians will begin.

So Jesus says **flee *phuego*** as fast as you can. That word flee is where we get our English word fugitive from, it is a person who flees in order to escape capture. He wants to destroy all the saints **Revelation 13: 7** says and he wants to destroy all of the Jews **Revelation 12: 6, 13 – 17** says.

Sadly, according to **Zechariah 13: 8 – 9**, two-thirds of the Jews will not make it out of Jerusalem.

According to **Revelation 6: 9 – 11**, **Revelation 7: 9 – 14**, **Revelation 12: 11**, **Revelation 13: 7** many Gentile believers will not make it out either and even if they do, most will eventually be killed.

But interestingly enough, some Jews and probably Gentile believers as well will get some supernatural help when they flee and seek protection from the satan-inspired anti-Christ. *Read **Revelation 12: 6, 13 – 17**.*

So Jesus says ‘get out while you can, flee to safety in **the mountains** and He tells them how important it is to not waste any time in Verses 17 – 18.

Verse 17: let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house.

Jesus says that you will be wasting valuable time even going from your housetop into your house to get something, He says don’t do it. He says, get off your housetop and run for your life.

The **housetop** was a common place for people to go, even today. There were stairs on the side of the house that would lead to the roof where a person could go to relax or to pray or to avoid conflict as in **Proverbs 21: 9, 25: 24** or whatever.

You see Peter in **Acts 10: 9** was staying with Simon, a tanner, in his house by the sea. It says **Peter went up on the housetop to pray at noon**. So it was a common place to be. Jesus says if you are up there when you hear about the abomination in the temple, then don’t even go down to your house to get anything, just flee.

By the way, how would they hear on their housetops about the abomination of desolation? Well, like what Jesus said in **Matthew 10: 27** and **Luke 12: 3** **what I tell you in your hearing ‘preach from the housetops’**. The housetops were the place of communication as well.

Verse 18: and let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes

Jesus says, ‘if you are working in the field and your **clothes**, your outer cloak or garment or robe were left somewhere else while you were working, don’t even **go back to get it**. That is how serious this is and how quickly these attacks will come upon those who are in Judea.

Verse 19: but woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days.

Why does Jesus single out this group? Well, it will be hard for any nursing mother of a small child or any woman who is pregnant to just be able to up and run away from the coming destruction.

But there is more than just that. The hatred that Satan, and in this case the satanically inspired anti-Christ, has for Christ and Christians and followers of God and for innocent little children is well documented in biblical history.

All the way back to Pharaoh in **Exodus 1: 16, 22** he ordered the killing of all the male children in hopes of keeping the nation of Israel from growing. The nation of Israel, in **Jeremiah 32: 35**, offered their own children in worship of Baal by causing their children to be offered in a fire to the god Molech.

And of course we remember what king Herod did in **Matthew 2: 16 – 18** to all the male children 2 years of age and under as he was being controlled by Satan.

In **Hosea 13: 16**, Hosea prophesies to the rebellious people of God by saying **she has rebelled against her God they shall fall by the sword, their infants shall be dashed to pieces and their women with child ripped open.** And that is exactly what the historian Josephus recorded happening when Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD.

And that is exactly what is going to happen and why Jesus warns those who are pregnant and nursing in that time. It is going to be a horrible time like no other as the Satan inspired anti-Christ carries out his hellish plans against everyone, including little children.

It is hard to believe that it will be even worse than it is today where according to the CDC and the Gutmacher Institute that America kills over 1 million babies a year and has killed over 60 million babies since the Roe V Wade decision in 1973.

Verse 20: and pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.

It would be very hard to travel in the winter if there was rain or cold or maybe even snow that sometimes may happen there, but not often. But that would just add to the difficulty of trying to escape quickly.

He also says that pray that your flight is not on the **Sabbath**. Some unbelieving Jews today and in this time to come hold to the strictest laws of the Sabbath.

You can't go more than 2000 feet from your home. You can't carry anything that weighs more than a dried fig. You can't put on or take off anything etc. And if you go through a portion of Jerusalem that adheres to the strict Sabbath laws, you might be detained or stoned to death, much like what they wanted to do to Jesus when He violated their laws and traditions.

Jesus says 'don't let anything hinder you from fleeing, just get out of there. Jesus now gets back to telling them about some general and some specific signs that the end is near and that His return will happen soon thereafter. Look at Verse 21.

Verse 21: For then there will be a great tribulation such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

The abomination of desolation will begin the 2nd half of the tribulation, the last 3 ½ years known here as the **great tribulation**. That is the time frame of **Daniel 9: 27** and **7: 25**, that is the time frame of **Revelation 11: 2**, **Revelation 12: 14**, and **Revelation 13: 5**.

This will be the worse time in all of human history since **the beginning of the world** and it is all documented in **Revelation 6 – 19** with the SEAL, TRUMPET and BOWL judgments poured out on the earth.

This is the time that **Jeremiah 30: 7** calls the **time of Jacob's trouble**, it is the time that **Daniel 12: 1** says **shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that time** and **Joel 2: 31** calls it **the great and terrible day of the Lord**. Then Jesus says in Verse 22.

Verse 22 and unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved, but for the elects sake those days will be shortened.

Jesus says that this time frame of the great tribulation is so devastating that **unless those days were shortened, no flesh**, no one, **would** live through it, not even **God's ELECT**. That is how devastating it will be.

Who are God's elect? They are the one's chosen by Him for salvation, the called out ones, they are believers, whether Jew or Gentile.

The nation of Israel according to **Isaiah 45: 4** are God's elect. All born again believers according to **Ephesians 1: 4** are God's elect. Every one of those that God chose for salvation, sanctification and glorification are His elect.

And notice that Jesus says **for the elects sake, those days will be shortened** in order to save them, to protect them from the utter destruction that the anti-Christ. How will those days be shortened? Well, the length of days of the great tribulation cannot be shortened because they are already set in scripture as 3 ½ years, 42 months, and 1260 days. So if He shortened those pre-determined days by even one day, He would violate what His word has said and He won't do that.

So what kind of shortening of the day that will help protect and save the elect is He talking about? Well, the shortening of the actual 24 hour day. Will that happen during the great tribulation? Yes!

In the 6th seal judgment of **Revelation 6: 12 – 13** the **sun becomes black as sackcloth** for a time and the **moon becomes like blood**. In **Revelation 8: 12** in the 4th trumpet judgment **a third of the sun is darkened, a third of the moon is darkened and a third of the stars are darkened and did not shine**. In **Revelation 16: 10** and the 5th bowl judgment, there will be **darkness over the kingdom of the beast**.

And if you think about this, God is willing to rearrange the entire universe to protect His elect. That is how important we are to Him. Then in the midst of all the anxiety over the disasters and killings and earthquakes and everything else, some people will become vulnerable and desperate and that is what many false Christ's and false prophets will take advantage of. Look at Verse 23 – 24.

Verse 23 – 24: then if anyone says to you 'look, hers is the Christ or there, don't believe it. Verse 26: therefore if they say to you 'look He is in the desert, do not go out, or look He is in the inner rooms, don't believe it. For false Christ's and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

Some people, undoubtedly working for the anti-Christ or just deceived by what they see and hear, are going to say **look Christ is over here** and some are going to say **Christ is over there**. They are going to say **He's in the desert, no He's in the inner rooms**, Trying to get people to follow that person or trying to get them out in the open where they can capture them and kill them and deceiving people into thinking Christ already came back and they missed it. But as we are going to see next time, no one is going to miss it.

And the people that are saying 'here is the Christ' or 'there is the Christ' will be pointing to those people because **false Christ's will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive...** The one's pointing the people to these false Christ's are deceived and the ones who go after the false Christ's because of what they see are all being deceived by these satanically inspired men who are doing these great signs and wonders.

The problem is, those **signs and wonders** will be very, very convincing to all unbelievers and **if it were possible, even the elect**, the born again believers chosen by God would be deceived.

But that is not possible, because they are discerning of the Scriptures, they are discerning of the times, they are discerning of the false teachings and false claims.

By the way, listen to what **2nd Thessalonians 2: 9** says about the anti-Christ who is alive during this time. It says **the coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs and lying wonders and with all unrighteous deception...** If he can do that then it will be no big deal for his false Christ's and false prophets to do the same things.

They are so convincing that if it were possible they would deceive the very elect, but it is not possible. Remember what **John 10: 27 My sheep hear My voice and I know them and they follow Me.**

So Jesus says if you hear anyone saying Christ is here or there, **don't believe it** and then He says in;

Verse 25: See I have told you beforehand. I am warning you ahead of time so when it happens you will already be prepared for it. Jesus knows everything that will happen before it happens and He warns those alive in this time to be watchful and discerning. Same for us today.

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Daniel 9: 27, 2nd Thessalonians 2: 4
Revelation 13: 13 – 15

Verse 16:

Revelation 13: 7, Revelation 12: 6, 13 – 17
Zechariah 13: 8 – 9, Revelation 6: 9 – 11
Revelation 7: 9 – 14, 12: 11, 13: 7

Verse 17:

Proverbs 21: 9, 25: 24, Acts 10: 9, Luke 12: 3
Matthew 10: 27

Verses 18 – 19:

Exodus 1: 16, 22, Jeremiah 32: 35, Hosea 13: 16
Matthew 2: 16 – 18

Verses 20 – 21:

Daniel 7: 25, 9: 27, Revelation 12: 14, 11: 2, 13:5
Jeremiah 30: 7, Daniel 12: 1, Joel 2: 31

Verse 22:

Isaiah 45: 4, Ephesians 1: 4, Revelation 6: 12 – 13
Revelation 8: 12, 16: 10

Verses 23 – 26:

2nd Thessalonians 2: 9, John 10: 27

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