

# Pentwater Bible Church

*Gospel of Mark*

*Message 50*

*April 12, 2015*



Jesus Among His Students by Rembrandt Cir 1634

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The Book of Mark  
Message Fifty  
**THE OLIVET DISCOURSE**  
April 12, 2015  
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The Sermon on The Mount by Fra Angelico Cir 1436-1443

## JESUS TEACHES THE EVENTS ON EARTH PRIOR TO ESTABLISHING HIS EARTHLY KINGDOM

The Olivet Discourse is Christ's last great sermon and it touches on many key events during The Church Age and the ushering in of the Kingdom. It is important that we understand this discourse in order to fully be aware of the end times and experience the pressure that Christ wanted us to sense so that we would continue working (laboring) for The Kingdom.

The Discourse is spoken right after Jesus denunciations of the Sanhedrin, Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes and Herodians in the Court of the Gentiles on the Temple Mount. The Discourse is immediately before the Upper Room 1<sup>st</sup> Communion and the Last Passover of His crucifixion. Jesus had offered the Kingdom to the Nation Israel and it was rejected. The pressing question His followers had was, "When would the Kingdom come." The Olivet Discourse answers this question as well as the events leading up to it.

*The more literally we take the Bible our theology becomes more fundamental. The less literally we take the Bible the more liberal our theology becomes.*

In order to get the complete understanding of this sermon it is important to bring in the complete text of all three synoptic Gospels. In addition to the thirteenth chapter of Mark, Matthew chapters 24, 25 and Luke chapter 21 will be aggregated. Jesus presents the Olivet Discourse in a chronological manner and will signal when He breaks the chronology for a digression or to bring in relevant material.

## TERMINOLOGY

Several key words and concepts must be understood prior to an exposition of The Olivet Discourse.

## The Rapture

The Rapture is a word that does not appear in our English Bibles. It is an Anglicized Latin word; Rapturo; meaning to be caught up. Jerome the first translator of the Bible into Latin used the word Rapturo about 384 AD. It is found in 1 Thessalonians 4; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; John 14:3.

*1 Thessalonians 4:15-18*

*For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive [and] remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words (KJV).*

The believers in Jesus Christ both alive and those who have passed on will experience this blessed event some time prior to The Great Tribulation. Jesus Himself in The Olivet Discourse will discuss this event.

## The Great Tribulation

The Great Tribulation is a time yet future on planet earth where there will be huge catastrophes such as the world has never seen. A worldwide war coupled with unprecedented natural disasters as well as economic chaos, famine and disease will be rampant on the planet. The believers are kept from this “Day of Wrath” as the Lord describes it (Revelation 6-9; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; Romans 8:1, Isaiah 13-27 etc.).

*Matthew 24:21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

## Millennium

After the Great Tribulation the Lord Himself returns (Revelation 19) along with the previously raptured believers (saints) (Zechariah 14:5) and Jesus sets up His 1,000 earthly reign on planet earth; ruling the world government from David’s Throne in Jerusalem. The word Millennium is not in our English Bibles. It is another Latin word that refers to a thousand, mille.

## The Kingdom

The Kingdom is simply the earthly realization of the Heavenly Kingdom of God (Matthew 6:9-12; Isaiah 60-61 etc.).

*Matthew 6-9-10*

*After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as [it is] in heaven (KJV).*

Jesus promised His Apostles that this would happen some day. It is yet future from us today and is the same as the Millennium. The Millennium simply gives us the duration of the earthly Kingdom.

#### BROAD OUTLINE OF THE DISCOURSE

We will be studying The Olivet Discourse in 14 sections. The basic format is chronological. However Jesus will break the chronology periodically and when He does He will tell us.

1. The Historical Setting
2. The Three Questions
3. The General Characteristics of The Church Age
4. The Sign of The End of The Age
5. Personal Experiences of the Apostles
6. The Sign of the fall of Jerusalem
7. The Great Tribulation
8. The Sign of the Second Coming of the Messiah
9. The Regathering of Israel
10. The Exhortation
11. The Parable of the Fig Tree
12. The Rapture of the Church
13. Parables urging Watchfulness, Readiness and Laboring
14. The Judgment of the Gentiles

#### Mark 13:1-5

*<sup>1</sup>And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here. <sup>2</sup>And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. <sup>3</sup>And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, <sup>4</sup>Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled (KJV)?*

Jesus and His inner circle went across the Kidron valley and went up on the Mount of Olives and were looking back west to the Temple and one of the apostles remarked about the magnificence of the structure and Jesus said it would be destroyed so completely that one stone would not be left on another. They could not imagine such an event since this was the largest and most used building compound in Israel. Peter, James, John and Andrew wondered when this would occur and wanted a sign of sorts to signify these future events.

#### THE HISTORICAL SETTING

After His scathing denunciation of the Pharisees, and after announcing the coming destruction of the Temple, Jesus and His disciples moved out of the Temple compound for the last time. On the way out, the disciples pointed out the magnificent buildings of the Jewish Temple Compound. Actually at that time, the Temple buildings were not yet

completed. Herod the Great began the Temple Compound in 20 B.C. but it was not finished until A.D. 64 only 6 years before its destruction. The words of the Olivet discourse were spoken in the year A.D. 33, so the building had been going on some fifty+ years at that time. They would continue for another 31 years. The stones, which so impressed the disciples, were indeed magnificent, and some of them are still visible in the walls of the Temple Compound today. These “Herodian Stones” are huge and each measures 10 to 12 feet in length and weighs several tons.

Though this was an amazing prediction, especially in light of the political scene and the actual structure of the temple, Jesus' words here had an extremely literal fulfillment in 70 AD. When Roman armies besieged Jerusalem in that year, many Jews took refuge in the temple - the strongest building in the city. It caught fire (reportedly from a torch thrown by a drunken soldier), incinerating the people inside and melting the golden-domed roof down into the crevices of the stones of the temple; When the ruins cooled down, Roman leaders ordered the temple literally dismantled stone by stone, to recover the gold and to utterly break the spirit of Israel. The structure was dismantled to the extent that its exact location today cannot be determined.

This prophecy of the Messiah left the disciples perplexed.

The Temple Will Be Destroyed!

These men would very likely think that although things may change, the Temple would never go away. This prophecy had to strike them as being extremely unlikely. Thus, the prophecy was very literally fulfilled, not one stone was left upon another of the Temple. (Don't confuse the Temple with the Temple Mount, the retaining wall, which is still there.)

The literal fulfillment of this prophecy establishes the tone for the rest of the prophecies in the Discourse; we should expect a literal fulfillment for these as well.

#### DEDICATION OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

After the completion of the Temple, King Solomon dedicated it in 953 B.C. Solomon's speech to the people and an enormous offering of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep followed his humble prayers. A great public feast followed:

*1 Kings 8:65-66*

*<sup>65</sup>So Solomon held the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great assembly, from the entrance of Hamath unto the brook of Egypt, before Jehovah our God, seven days and seven days, even fourteen days. <sup>66</sup>On the eighth day he sent the people away; and they blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that Jehovah had showed unto David his servant, and to Israel his people (ASV, 1901).*

The account in II Chronicles tells us that fire from heaven (The Shekinah Glory) ignited the offerings on the altars as Solomon finished praying:

## *II Chronicles 7:1-7*

<sup>1</sup> Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of Jehovah filled the house. <sup>2</sup> And the priests could not enter into the house of Jehovah, because the glory of Jehovah filled Jehovah's house. <sup>3</sup> And all the children of Israel looked on, when the fire came down, and the glory of Jehovah was upon the house; and they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and gave thanks unto Jehovah, saying, For he is good; for his lovingkindness endureth for ever. <sup>4</sup> Then the king and all the people offered sacrifice before Jehovah. <sup>5</sup> And king Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty and two thousand oxen, and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the people dedicated the house of God. <sup>6</sup> And the priests stood, according to their offices; the Levites also with instruments of music of Jehovah, which David the king had made to give thanks unto Jehovah, (for his lovingkindness endureth for ever), when David praised by their ministry: and the priests sounded trumpets before them; and all Israel stood. <sup>7</sup> Moreover Solomon hallowed the middle of the court that was before the house of Jehovah; for there he offered the burnt-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings, because the brazen altar which Solomon had made was not able to receive the burnt-offering, and the meal-offering, and the fat (ASV, 1901).

The Babylonians destroyed this temple in 586 B.C. Ezra attempted a partial rebuild. Actually at the time of the Olivet Discourse (Cir. 33 AD), the Temple buildings were not yet completed. Herod the Great began the rebuilding Temple Compound in 20 B.C. but it was not finished until A.D. 64 only 6 years before its destruction. The words of the Olivet discourse were spoken in the year A.D. 33, so the building had been going on some fifty+ years at that time. They would continue for another 31 years. The stones, which so impressed the disciples, were indeed magnificent, and some of them are still visible in the walls of the Temple Compound today. These "Herodian Stones" are huge and each measures 10 to 12 feet in length and weighs several tons.

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### THE THREE QUESTIONS

Private answers to three questions: Four disciples ask Jesus three questions and Matthew 24, 25 and Mark and Luke's recording together answer the three questions. Matthew and Mark are silent on one of the questions and Luke answers that one.

Jesus' prediction brings up three questions in the minds of His disciples  
The Matthew account reads as follows Matthew 24:3

*Matthew 24:3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?*

And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? The Luke account reads. Master , but when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign when these things are about to come to pass?

And they asked Him, saying, Teacher, when therefore shall these things be? And what shall be the sign when these things are about to come to pass?

The first question: when will these things (that is, the destruction of temple) be? Matthew does not record Jesus' answer to this first question, but Luke does in Luke 21:8-23.

The first question in the Matthew passage, “When shall these things be?” imply His remark in verse 2; i.e., the destruction of the Temple. In this account in Matthew this is not dealt with very intensely, however in Luke responds clearer (Luke 21:20-24). And what shall be the sign when these things are about to take place? While this question is not answered very thoroughly, for us it is a matter of history as this prophecy has been fulfilled. Also, perhaps it is left vague purposely, as it would be easy for us to mix up this last Temple with the one that will be present in the last days.

The second question is answered in the remainder of the chapter: what will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age? This question was asked perhaps as they remembered the events surrounding the last temple's destruction: the temple was destroyed in the context of national judgment and exile. This question does not concern the Rapture of the Church because the Rapture is imminent and can happen at any moment having no warning sign preceding it. However, the Second Coming will be preceded by a sign, and the disciples asked what the sign would be.

Perhaps it was so each age would have reasons to be ready for Jesus return; because we should not think of Jesus' return as an event far off on a time line, but something we have been running parallel with since the day of Pentecost.

The third question was: What shall be the sign of the end of the world? The Greek word translated world actually means ”age.” They asked for a third sign and that was, “What will be the sign that the end of this age has begun?” In rabbinic theology of that day, the rabbis spoke of two ages: ”this age,” meaning the age in which we not live, and “the age to come” meaning the Messianic Age. So the question is, “What is the sign that the last days of this age have begun and will lead to the Messianic Age?”

So altogether there were three questions in which the disciples asked for three signs to watch for. Yeshua answered these questions, but not in the same order as they were asked. Not are all three answers found in all three accounts. While Matthew and Mark recorded the answer to the second and third question., they ignored the answer to the first question. It is Luke who recorded the Messiah’s answer to the first question.

Last time we left off with the opening questions in the Olivet Discourse. The Apostles come to Jesus right after the Pharisee denunciation in the Temple and they are on the Mount of Olives looking westward back at the Temple. We discussed the historical setting and then we began to look at the three questions they asked Him.

*Matthew 24:3*

*And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world (KJV)?*

*Luke 21:7 And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign [will there be] when these things shall come to pass (KJV)?*

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NEXT MESSAGE: THE OLIVET DISCOURSE PART II

**Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments**

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