

Sunday June 14th 2015
Matthew Chapters 24-25
Part One

1). Mt 24:1 ¶ *Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. 2 And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down." 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 will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"*

a). In v3 the disciples ask the Lord 2 interrelated questions – the first is, ‘when will these things be?’ and the second, ‘what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?’

b). The first question is one concerning time, ‘when’, at what time, ‘will these things be’ – and the things they are asking about cause us to go back to statements made by Christ in Chapter 23 and then to Christ’s words in v2 of Chapter 24 in relation to the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. And that which Christ says recorded in Chapter 23 and the beginning of Chapter 24 is connected to the nation of Israel alone – it has to do solely with events concerning the Jewish people and is Jewish entirely in its scope, but the focus throughout remains what it can only ever be, the Millennial Kingdom, the 7th Day – and that which He says must also be placed within the framework of Jesus’ message throughout His earthly ministry.

c). And so to put what the Lord says in these 2 Chapters into its correct context let’s go back and review some things that we already know, going back firstly into foundation, to see once again God’s stated purpose for creating Man - Ge 1:26 ¶ *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion....."*

God’s purpose then for creating man is regal, it is for the purpose of rulership, and this rulership is firstly to be exercised by the faithful portion of the eternally saved in the 7th Day; the point in time to which all scripture moves – a time when Satan and his angels will be replaced by a new order of rulers - Heb 2:5 ¶ *For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. 6 But one testified in a certain place, saying: "What is man that You*

are mindful of him, Or the son of man that You take care of him? 7 You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands. 8 You have put all things in subjection under his feet." For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.

d). And this new order of rulers must come through the 'seed' of one man, Abraham - Ge 22:17 *"blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. 18 "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."*

e). Abraham's descendants then, and his descendants alone, will be the ones who will rule from the heavens and on the earth during the coming 7th Day and these descendants of Abraham must come through the lineage of Isaac, then Jacob and Jacob's 12 sons – the nation of Israel.

f). That Israel should hold this preeminent position is made plain for us in God's words recorded in Exodus - Ex 4:22 *"Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: "Israel is My son, My firstborn."*

A statement that reflects back on - Isa 43:1 ¶ But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine.

g). And it is within the purview of Israel's status as God's firstborn son, within the context of God's purpose for Man, that Christ comes to the earth with the offer of the Kingdom of the Heavens to Israel; an offer subject to Israel's national repentance from centuries of unbelief and disobedience; disobedience that we have witnessed through the events at Kadesh Barnea and the nation's actions during the ensuing centuries leading to the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities and beyond.

And we will remember that following John the Baptist's imprisonment Jesus continues to preach this one specific message, a message that is consistent with God's stated purpose for Man through Israel – Mt 4:17 *From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

And this message at this time can only be for the Jews alone - Mt 15:24 *But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."*

Despite Israel's previous centuries of unbelief they still remained the only group of people on the face of the earth at this time that could be given the offer of the Kingdom of the Heavens as this was an offer only available to the eternally saved from the seed of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, those who are the repository of the promises - Heb 11:12 *Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude-- innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore. 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.*

h). And as we will remember Israel, led by their religious leaders, rejected this offer and rejected the One who brought it resulting in the Kingdom of the Heavens, the realm from which rulership over the earth will take place during the 7th Day, being taken from them - Mt 21:43 *"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.*

i). It is from this time then that the Lord's crucifixion and resurrection take center stage and this time that leads us into Christ's further condemnation of the scribes and Pharisees as seen in Matthew Chapter 23 - Mt 23:13 ¶ *"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.*

This is the first of 7 'woes' proclaimed against Israel's religious leaders, culminating in this condemnation recorded in - Mt 23:32 *"Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt.33 "Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell [Gehenna]? 34 ¶ "Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, 35 "that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. 36 "Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.*

j). Now all of this provides the context which leads into Christ's pronouncement concerning Israel recorded at the end of the Chapter -

Mt 23:37 *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! 38 "See! Your house is left to you desolate; 39 "for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'"*

The desolation spoken here against Israel, 'Your house is left to you desolate', must of necessity encompass not only the Jewish people, but also the city of Jerusalem, the Temple and the geographical land.

k). And it is this pronounced 'desolation' of the house of Israel, with the coming Kingdom in view, that is the focus for what we see at the beginning of Chapter 24 -Mt 24:1 ¶ *Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. 2 And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."*

An event also recorded in the parallel account by Luke in - Lu 21:5 ¶ *Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said, 6 "These things which you see--the days will come in which not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down."*

l). So, when Jesus asks His disciples, 'Do you not see all these things?' He is asking if His disciples have seen, if they have understood the pronouncements He has just made against the scribes and Pharisees reflecting back on His removal of the offer of the Kingdom of the Heavens from the Jewish nation resulting in the house of Israel being left desolate, including the destruction of the Temple, with the ultimate promise of a future day when Israel will say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord' - in other words He asks them, 'have you understood anything I've been saying?'

m). And so it is that which Jesus has previously said with respect to the 7th Day and Israel that provides the context for the disciples' questions that then follow - literally then they ask, when, at what time, will the nation, including the land and the city be left desolate and the Temple be destroyed? And what will be the sign of Your coming and the end of the age when Israel will at last say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord'?

n). In the verses that follow Jesus answers these questions very precisely, as we will see, but before we go there in Matthew and to help us understand exactly what He does say we will re-visit some verses from Daniel first.

2). Da 9:24 *"Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy. 25 "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. 26 "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined. 27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."*

a). We are blessed that the Lord does not leave us to our own devices when it comes to understanding the scriptures, but instead He provides for us that which we need to know so that we can understand correctly if we will take the time to search it out.

b). Now whereas it is true to say that the house of Israel has been 'desolate' and fruitless now for centuries and that their Temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70AD that which Jesus says in Matthew Chapter 24 cannot possibly be referring to either of these because of what we know from studying Daniel Chapter 9.

c). From that which we see in v24 of Daniel we can know for certain that God has ordained a very specific period of time for the Jewish people in which their transgressions will be finished, their sins brought to an end, reconciliation being made for their iniquity which will allow for everlasting righteousness to be brought in, for vision and prophecy to be sealed up, and the Most Holy, the Lord Jesus Christ, to be anointed [with respect to rulership] – a specific period of time then that will bring about the repentance and restoration of Israel which will lead into Christ's Millennial Kingdom.

d). And this specific period of time given here in Daniel is shown to be, 'Seventy weeks', or 70 sets of 7 – 490 years. And not only this, but we are given a specific time from which the 490 years are to be counted – *'from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem'* – This command was given by Artaxerxes in about 445BC and is recorded in Nehemiah Chapter 2 - Ne 2:5 *And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my*

fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it." 6 Then the king said to me (the queen also sitting beside him), "How long will your journey be? And when will you return?" So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

e). So, just to take a look at the world today will show us that Israel is neither repentant nor restored as yet, that Christ has not returned, that the Millennial Kingdom of Christ has not begun and that there have been considerably more than 490 years since Artaxerxes issued his decree – leaving us with only one explanation, corroborated by the scriptures – which is that God's 490 years specifically for His people Israel have not yet been completed and by comparing scripture with scripture we would understand why - *That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. 26 "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;*

f). From these verses we can see that there are 69 'weeks' or 483 years from Artaxerxes decree to the crucifixion of Christ and we have already seen from earlier in our study that the Lord's crucifixion is the terminal point of Israel's rejection of their Messiah and His proffered Kingdom, and we also know that the Kingdom of the heavens which was taken from Israel at this time has, for the last 2000 years, been offered to the 'church', the new nation which is to produce the fruits of it.

g). Ac 15:14 *"Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name.*

That which Simon 'has declared' is pictured in the type from Genesis Chapter 24 of Abraham's oldest servant searching out a bride for Isaac – fulfilled in the work of the Holy Spirit throughout this present dispensation amongst God's 'family', Christians, as He seeks those who will follow Him in order to be part of the Bride of Christ for the purpose of rulership in the 7th Day.

h). And those who would make up this 'Bride' must of course be from the 'seed' of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob and Jacob's 12 sons, because it was to Abraham and his seed alone that the promise was given - Ga 3:28 *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

i). Or to say this same thing another way - Ga 3:8 *And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by [the] faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed." 9 So then those who are of [the] faith are blessed with believing Abraham.*

j). And all the while that God is dealing with His household servants, comprising the 'Church', He is not dealing with Israel whom He has set aside for this period of time – something clearly pictured in the panoramic sequence given through Genesis Chapters 21 -25.

k). Now the math will tell us that if 69 'weeks' or 483 years only have expired in God's dealings with Israel there must remain a 70th 'week', a final 7 years yet to be completed.

l). *Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for **one week**; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.* It is this 'one week' seen here that is the final 70th 'week', the final 7 years, that which comprises the time that we know as the Tribulation which will bring the 490 years to completion.

m). Now because God never deals with two different sets of household servants at the same time this 70th 'week' for Israel cannot begin until after the resurrection/rapture of the 'Church'.

n). And it is this period of time, the 70th 'week', the Tribulation that Christ's answer concerning 'when will these things be?' is directed.

o). The desolation of the house of Israel that Christ speaks of in Matthew Chapter 23 and the destruction of the Temple He speaks of in Chapter 24 are to take place after His crucifixion – but they cannot happen in the time when God is dealing with the Church because they specifically relate to the nation of Israel, which means they remain yet future, during the time of the Tribulation. In other words these things don't happen prior to or during the 69th 'week' as detailed in Daniel because Jesus speaks of them as being yet future, and so they can only be fulfilled during the 70th 'week' – a period of time that cannot possibly have taken place yet, nor can take place until after the 'Church' is removed.

3). So with all this in mind, let's remember the first of the disciples' questions, 'When will these things be?' And in order to answer this, the Lord begins by giving a complete overview of the time when these things will come to pass in v4-14 of Matthew Chapter 24, before dropping back to where He had previously begun in the verses that follow, v15-22, where their question is specifically answered.

a). Mt 24:4 ¶ *And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. 5 "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. 6 "And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not*

yet. 7 "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes [shakings] in various places. 8 "All these are the beginning of sorrows. 9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. 10 "And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. 11 "Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. 13 "But he who endures to the end shall be saved. 14 "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

b). V4-6 begin to set out events that will be the experience of those Jews living in the land of Israel during the first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation and v9-14 take us to the second 3 ½ years.

c). The complete 7 years of the Tribulation begin when 'the prince who is to come' confirms a covenant with many [in Israel] 'for one week' – this is the same event pictured through the opening of the first seal on the 7 sealed scroll in Revelation Chapter 6 - Re 6:2 *And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.*

The white horse denotes peace and the one seen sitting on the horse, who is the Antichrist, has a bow, but no arrows. He has a 'stephanos' crown showing that he is not yet the world wide ruler he is to become, but his intent is clear as he goes forth conquering and to conquer - Da 11:21 ¶ *"And in his place shall arise a vile person, to whom they will not give the honor of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue.*

d). It would seem that a major component of the covenant made with Israel has to do with the re-building of the Temple in Jerusalem and the re-introduction of worship under the Mosaic economy. And although the Temple worship in these days will have no value for the Jewish people, the Temple itself, on that particular site, is still the place where God's Name resides and the shadow of the Theocracy will still linger there.

e). But all of this of course can only take place after the resurrection/rapture of the 'Church' - 2Th 2:6 *And now you know what is restraining, that he [the Antichrist] may be revealed in his own time.*

f). This is also clearly seen in the sequencing of events recorded in Revelation Chapters 1-6.

g). And according to our verses from Matthew Chapter 24, the Lord warns against deception, 'take heed that no one deceives you' and the

possibility of deception comes through, *"For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.* There will then throughout this period of time and certainly during the first 3 ½ years, be many false 'Christs' arising from amongst the Jewish people themselves claiming to be that which they are not.

h). The Lord also tells them, *"And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.* So then there will be false Christs and wars and rumors of wars during this time, but this is not the end of the age, the end of Tribulation – it cannot be yet – The house of Israel will not yet have experienced the depth of its desolation and the Temple, rebuilt at the beginning of the Tribulation, will not at this point have been destroyed.

i). *"For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes [shaking – not earthquakes] in various places. 8 "All these are the beginning of sorrows.* All of these things then during the first half of the Tribulation must come to pass and their occurrence marks just the beginning of Israel's sorrows.

j). And unfortunately the word 'sorrows' here is not a good translation. In our thinking sorrows have to do with extreme sadness, whereas the original word in the Greek language speaks of the pains associated with giving birth – and so we could better translate this as 'the beginnings of birth pains'.

k). And during this period of the 7 years of the Tribulation the nation of Israel will firstly give birth and then will itself be born.

l). Isa 66:7 *"Before she was in labor, she gave birth; Before her pain came, She delivered a male child. 8 Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, She gave birth to her children. 9 Shall I bring to the time of birth, and not cause delivery?" says the LORD. "Shall I who cause delivery shut up the womb?" says your God.*

And all of course with a view to the Kingdom which is to come.

m). We will continue with this next time – if the Lord is willing.