

THE HARMONY OF THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

© Kevin Lea, Dec 5, 2003, all rights reserved
Pastor, Calvary Church of Port Orchard, WA.
www.calvarypo.org
Updated Aug 25, 2021

The Lord Jesus gave some of the most detailed prophecies of future events just a couple days before His crucifixion. This teaching by Jesus was recorded in Matthew 24-25, Mark 13, and Luke 21. Theologians refer to these sections of scripture as the *Olivet Discourse* because Jesus spoke these prophecies while on the Mount of Olives.

There has been much confusion and debate about this discourse over the centuries. Much of the mystery has been removed with the rebirth of the nation of Israel, but views about who is being addressed and the timing of the events are still debated by sincere Christians.

After 35 years of pondering the different views and arguments, I feel it is time to contribute some thoughts in the form of this commentary. I have put the three passages from the three Apostles' writings side by side (using the New King James) so the entire context of Jesus words can be more easily compared and discerned.

(6) When the Antichrist miraculously recovers from his deadly wound, he goes on a demonically possessed rampage against the Jews. Those Jews who heeded Jesus' warning have already taken their families to the wilderness. They realize they were deceived into thinking their Messiah was the Antichrist, and now, in repentance, they are following the teachings of their true Messiah, Jesus. The Antichrist will try to annihilate these fleeing Jews, but God miraculously defends them.

Rev 12:13 Now when the dragon [**Satan**] saw that he had been cast to the earth [**losing the battle to have access to heaven**], he persecuted the woman [**Israel**] who gave birth to the male Child [**the Messiah, Jesus. Satan attempts this persecution against Israel by possessing the Antichrist and using him against the Jews**]. 14 But the woman [**Israel**] was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place [**believed to be the rock city of Petra, in Jordan**], where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time [**three and a half years**], from the presence of the serpent [**Satan**]. 15 So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman [**either literal flood of water or a flood of troops**], that he might cause her [**Israel**] to be carried away by the flood. 16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. 17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ [**those who during the tribulation period believe in the Jewish Messiah, Jesus, but were not among those fleeing to the wilderness and therefore not under complete protection by God**]. (NKJ)

As a side note, it is clear that the Church must be gone before the abomination of desolation. Jesus is warning the Jews living in Israel to flee to the wilderness. But in His entire Olivet Discourse, Jesus never tells the Church what they are to do. If the Christian Church were still on the earth, why does Jesus not warn them? If Christians are still on the earth, what are they supposed to do when they see the Antichrist commit the abomination? The answer must be that the church has been raptured and doesn't need to be warned. According to Revelation, many Jews and Gentiles will become believers during the tribulation period and will be killed for their faith, but they are never referred to as the church, and since they were not believers before the Rapture, they missed the opportunity to be spared the tribulation events.

In Revelation 3:10, Jesus promises the church of Philadelphia that He "will keep them from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth." Although the church of Philadelphia was a literal church at the time John the Apostle was given the vision of Revelation, many believe this promise of Jesus had a broader meaning, since the literal church of Philadelphia in John's day was never spared of a global time of testing. Therefore, it is believed that the church of Philadelphia actually symbolized the faithful Christian church in the last days, the church that would be raptured before the tribulation period begins.

Matthew 24:23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it.
 24 "For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.
 25 "See, I have told you beforehand.
 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!' do not believe it.
 27 "For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be."

Mark 13:21 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'Look, He is there!' do not believe it.
 22 "For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.
 23 "But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand."

Luke 17:22 Then He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it.
 23 "And they will say to you, 'Look here!' or 'Look there!' Do not go after them or follow them.
 24 "For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day.

Matthew and Mark record this second warning to the last-days Jews to not believe in false Messiahs. Luke recorded a similar teaching given to religious leaders who were questioning Him, as recorded in Luke 17:22-24 and included here for completeness. As stated earlier, this cannot apply to Christians, now or during the Tribulation, since Christians know that Jesus is the Messiah.

Jesus is warning the tribulation period Jews not to accept a human Messiah who forces them to put his name in their hand or forehead. John 5 seems to teach that many Jews will not heed this warning from their true Messiah, Jesus.

Jesus also makes it clear that His Second Coming will be like lightning in the sky. There will be no need for the Jew to wonder if their Messiah has come - it will be for the entire world to witness.

28 "For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

Luke 17:26 "And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man:
 27 "They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.
 28 "Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built;
 29 "but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.
 30 "Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is

		<p>revealed.</p> <p>31 "In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back.</p> <p>32 "Remember Lot's wife.</p> <p>33 "Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.</p> <p>34 "I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left.</p> <p>35 "Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left.</p> <p>36 "Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left."</p> <p>37 And they answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."</p>
--	--	---

I have again included Jesus teaching in Jerusalem as recorded in Luke 17:26-37 since it helps to give the context of Matthew's record of the Olivet Discourse teaching. These verses are possibly referring to the fact that if the Jews do not listen to Jesus' warnings about the Antichrist, and thus fail to flee to the wilderness of Jordan when the abomination occurs, then they will be rounded up (one taken, one left – 50%) and killed in the following persecution of the Antichrist. Jesus teaches that their dead bodies will be left outside for the vultures and eagles. Zechariah 13:8-9 teaches that only one third of the Jews are going to survive this time of Jacob's trouble. Matthew also records Jesus teaching about one being taken and one left in verses 37-42 (below). There are other theories about what this very difficult passage is trying to teach, but it seems clear from the context that this cannot be talking about the rapture of the church, as some believe.

Jesus' teaching about "As in the days of Noah" also fits into this timeframe. Those Jews who have embraced the antichrist as their Messiah are living the good life. They have survived two wars of attempted annihilation of the Jews, the law of Moses is back in effect, their long dreamed of third temple is built and being used, and they have a contract with the global leader who has made it all possible. The recent horrors are past and the future looks bright. Then, in one day, their world comes apart when their "messiah" turns on them and the next three and a half years become a time of Jacob's trouble (for them and the rest of the world).

<p>29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.</p> <p>30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."</p>	<p>24 "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light;</p> <p>25 "the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in heaven will be shaken.</p> <p>26 "Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory."</p>	<p>Luke 21:25 "And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring;</p> <p>26 "men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken.</p> <p>27 "Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.</p> <p>28 "Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."</p>
---	---	--

The end of the seven-year tribulation period will culminate in an outpouring of the wrath of God such as the world has never seen. Revelation, Chapter 6, ties the dimming of the sun and the blocking out of the moon to a great earthquake.

Rev 6:12-14 - I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. (NKJ)

Is it possible that the earthquake coincides with eruptions of volcanoes, or super volcanoes, which spew ash into the air, thus blocking the sun and moon? Scientists are speculating that the Super Volcano of Yellowstone Park would create such an event when it erupts again. Recent land surveys indicate that portions of Yellowstone have bulged and uplifted several inches since the turn of the century. Studies of earthquake seismic waves also reveal that about two thirds of Yellowstone National Park is sitting on top of a massive magma chamber about 10 miles below the surface. If the bulging continues, it is only a matter of time until the lid blows off, releasing the unimaginable forces of the magma chamber. The Earth would then be subjected to the effects of an eruption that is tens-of-thousands of times more powerful than the Mount Saint Helens eruption (perform a goggle search on “super volcanoes” for more information).

These kinds of eruptions could also hurl rocks into space that would then return, due to gravity, and fall all over the earth. Could this be “the stars of heaven falling to the earth”? And could this be why people of the Earth will be hiding in caves?

Rev 6:15-17 - And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! "For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?" (NKJ)

Luke records Jesus’ warning that men’s hearts will fail them in the expectation of things that are coming on the earth. This could possibly refer to the knowledge of an asteroid or comet on a collision course with the earth and people dying of heart attacks and anxiety because of the things literally coming upon the earth, knowing that when the asteroid hits they will die and there is no chance for them to escape to safety.

Close call – Asteroid near miss for Earth yesterday

7 11 2009 - [http://wattsupwiththat.com/2009/11/07/close-call-asteroid-near-miss-for-earth-](http://wattsupwiththat.com/2009/11/07/close-call-asteroid-near-miss-for-earth-yesterday/)



yesterday/From NASA’s Spaceweather.com and NASA JPL Twitter feed. It only takes one missed space rock to ruin your day. Potentially Hazardous Asteroid - 3D rendering by Arlene Ducao

On Friday November 6th at 2132 UT (16:32/ 4:32PM EST) asteroid [2009 VA](#) barely missed Earth when it flew just 14,000 km above the planet’s surface. For comparison, Earth’s diameter is 12,756.1 km. That near miss was well inside the “[Clarke Belt](#)” of geosynchronous satellites.(35,786 km/22,236 mi). Friday’s (Nov 6) flyby of asteroid 2009 VA is the third closest on record. (That we know about.) If it had hit, the ~6-meter wide space rock would have disintegrated in the atmosphere as a spectacular fireball, causing no significant damage to the ground. But the fact that there was so little warning is troubling.

2009 VA was discovered just 15 hours before closest approach by astronomers working at the [Catalina Sky Survey](#). While millions worry about CO2, there seems to be little worry nor action about this list:

Near-Earth Asteroids

Potentially Hazardous Asteroids (PHAs) are space rocks larger than approximately 100m that can come closer to Earth than 0.05 AU. None of the known PHAs is on a collision course with our planet, although astronomers are finding [new ones](#) all the time.

On November 7, 2009 there were **1077** potentially hazardous asteroids.

Nov. 2009 Earth-asteroid encounters:

Asteroid	Date(UT)	Miss Distance	Mag.	Size
2009 UW87	Oct. 31	1.6 LD	18	11 m
2009 UK14	Nov. 1	9.1 LD	20	29 m
2006 JY26	Nov. 2	6.7 LD	22	10 m
2000 XK44	Nov. 4	28.8 LD	13	1.1 km
2000 UJ1	Nov. 7	43.3 LD	15	1.2 km
2000 TO64	Nov. 10	44.2 LD	14	1.9 km
2009 UK20	Nov. 12	6.5 LD	20	20 m

Notes: LD means "Lunar Distance." 1 LD = 384,401 km, the distance between Earth and the Moon. 1 LD also equals 0.00256 AU. MAG is the visual magnitude of the asteroid on the date of closest approach.

It is a threat we can actually develop technology for to do something about.

Others believe that Jesus' prophecy about the sun being darkened and the moon turning to blood will be fulfilled in a total solar and lunar eclipse occurring in the days immediately preceding Jesus' visible return to Earth (See www.calvarypo.org/HANDS/0574.pdf). This view is now out of favor following the hype of Sept 2015's lunar and solar eclipses failing to live up to the book selling hype.

No matter how these warnings of Jesus' are actually fulfilled, Matthew, Mark, and Luke make it clear the global cataclysms will be unprecedented and will immediately precede the second coming of the Lord Jesus. They also make it clear that Jesus will come in a way that will be visible by all the inhabitants of the world (as He comes from the sky in power and great glory).

31 "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

27 "And then He will send His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven."

When Jesus returns, His angels will gather all those who have lived through the tribulation period and bring them to Israel for the judgment of Matthew 25:32-46 and Joel 3. The gathering together of "His elect," refers to those who are "sheep" as defined in Matthew 25. They will be allowed to enter the Kingdom of God on Earth, where they will live under the rule of Jesus for 1,000 years (Revelation 20). Those who fail the test of Matthew 25 are the goats (unelected), and they will be judged by God and sent to the Lake of Fire (See Matthew 25:32-46 teaching below).

32 "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.

28 "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.

Luke 21:29 Then He spoke to them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees.
30 "When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that

<p>33 "So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near-- at the doors! 34 "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. 35 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."</p>	<p>29 "So you also, when you see these things happening, know that it is near-- at the doors! 30 "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. 31 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."</p>	<p>summer is now near. 31 "So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. 32 "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place. 33 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."</p>
--	--	--

There has been much controversy about this prophecy. Some (Preterists) believe that Jesus was saying that the prophecies of the Olivet Discourse would be fulfilled during the lifetime (generation) of the Apostles. Thus, all these global cataclysms, the Antichrist committing an abomination in the temple, etc. were fulfilled prior to and during the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. However, the actual events of the Roman army's destruction of Jerusalem and the temple do not fit with the prophecies of Jesus. For example, the Romans did not cause an abomination in 70 AD. In fact, Josephus, the Jewish historian, records (War of the Jews, Book VI, Chapter IV, paragraphs 6-7) that the Roman General (Titus) ordered his soldiers to put out the fire in order to preserve the temple which Titus considered a wonder of the world. His orders could not be heard over the slaughter of the Jews that was taking place and the temple continued to burn (but was not defiled with an abomination). Therefore, those who hold the "Preterist" view have to twist the scriptures to try and make them fit. They also have to do the same to the book of Revelation which they also claim was fulfilled in 70 AD, even though the evidence is very strong that the Apostle John wrote Revelation 30 years **after** the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.

Those who hold to the premillennial, dispensational view of the Olivet Discourse believe that since the events which Jesus prophesied have never literally taken place in the past, then they must still be future. The following interpretations of the above scriptures fit into this "yet future" frame of reference.

Some teach that the fig tree is symbolic of Israel, and the budding of the fig tree was the reestablishment of Israel in 1948. Those who hold this view use Jeremiah 24 and Matthew 21:19 as examples where God used the figs or the fig tree to symbolize Israel. Therefore, they believe that when Jesus said, "When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves" he was saying when Israel puts forth leaves – that is, becomes a nation again. The next statement by Jesus, "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation..." is then interpreted as a reference to a generation period of time applying to Israel becoming a nation (variously interpreted).

This understanding has given rise to many speculations about dating the second coming of Jesus. For example, some have taught that a biblical generation is 30 years long. Therefore, if one adds 30 years to 1948 (the budding of the fig tree), we have Jesus returning to set up His kingdom in 1978. In order to date the rapture, subtract 7 years, and the rapture should have occurred in 1971. When 1971 passed, a generation was reinterpreted as 35 years. Then a generation was assumed to be 40 years, and the time of the budding of the fig tree was reinterpreted as 1967 when the Jews gained control of most of Jerusalem. But again, the expected dates of the rapture and Second Coming have come and gone. Reinterpretation of the above passages based on the birth of the nation of Israel, or Israel taking control of most of Jerusalem (1967) continues to this day, but it appears this interpretation of Jesus' teaching is incorrect and has resulted in much confusion. There are two alternative views offered below.

Both alternate views believe Jesus' reference to the fig tree is not a symbolic reference to the birth of the nation of Israel. Jesus was simply pointing out a fact about a fruit bearing tree; that is, when a fig tree is in bud, people can know that summer is near. In the same way, when the Jews of the past saw the events leading up to A.D. 70, they would know that Jerusalem would soon be destroyed, but that the Jewish people would survive.

The first view holds that Jesus was also telling a distant future audience that the events leading up to His Second Coming (birth of the nation of Israel, rebuilding of the temple [allowing the abomination of desolation], global earthquakes, etc.) would reveal that the prophecies pertaining to His visible return would soon follow. Therefore, the generation seeing the signs leading up to the tribulation period (all of them, not just the birth of the nation of Israel) would also be the generation seeing the visible return of Jesus.

In the second view, some also believe that when Jesus said, "This generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place" that He was not talking about a generation of time. The Greek word for generation is "genea," which, according to Thayers Greek Dictionary can refer to, "what has been begotten, men of the same stock, a family."

In other words, Jesus was saying the "Jewish" stock would not pass away until all the prophecies of the Olivet discourse come true. If this view is correct, then this statement by Jesus is the third time He is encouraging the Jewish listener not to be discouraged into thinking the Jewish people will be destroyed before their Messiah returns to set up His kingdom.

I have non-believing Jewish friends in Israel who are lamenting, at this moment, the current strategic conditions of their country. They realize that the increasing strength of the surrounding hostile Muslim nations could result in the destruction of the Jewish nation.

If the Jews were to again be dispersed to the nations, it would be very likely that the Jewish race would soon after cease to exist as a "generation" or family that was distinct from the other nations of the world. However, the prophetic scriptures do not allow for the Jews to be dispersed again. Ezekiel, Zechariah and others make it clear that when the Jews are brought back into the land in the last days, they are there to stay until the Messiah comes. The prophet David (Psalms 2) makes it clear the nations plot IN VAIN against the Lord and His anointed, Jesus. As Jesus said, heaven and earth will pass away but His word will not pass away, and He will return before the Jewish nation and people would otherwise be destroyed.

I have discussed this last view ("generation" meaning the Jewish people rather than a period of time) with Dr. Tommy Ice. He disagrees with Dr. Thayer's dictionary stating that the Greek word "genea" can refer to a people group rather than a period of time. Therefore, he holds to the first view that the generation (of time) that sees the beginning of the events described in the Olivet Discourse will be the generation that sees the second coming of Jesus.

747sized asteroid skimmed by Earth, and scientists didn't see it coming

Dubbed 2021 SG, the asteroid flew close to the planet on September 16, but because it came from the direction of the Sun, scientists didn't see it coming.

By AARON REICH

SEPTEMBER 23, 2021 17:40

<https://www.jpost.com/science/747-sized-asteroid-skimmed-by-earth-and-scientists-didnt-see-it-coming-680052>

NASA Will Shoot Rocket at Asteroid to Test Planetary Defense Strategy **Listen To Article**

The Double Asteroid Redirection Test will get one chance to hit its target, the small moonlet in the binary asteroid system Didymos.

By Bryan Pietsch

October 6, 2021

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/10/06/nasa-asteroid-dart-dimorphos/>