

The Olivet Prophecy – The Sign for OUR Times!

By Andy Walton

Few would doubt that the Olivet prophecy is talking about events leading up to AD70 **and** events leading up to (and including) the return of Christ.

The two events are linked even though approximately 2000 years separate them. They are linked by one thing – God’s judgments being poured out on the nation of Israel because of their godlessness.

The difficulty we have is determining which parts refer to AD70 and which parts to the last days. The events are similar in certain respects and yet in others they are quite different as we shall see.

I am going to propose that the sign of Israel’s imminent judgment in the “last days” is quite different to the sign given for the judgment in AD70.

I am going to show how Matthew 24 and Mark 13 focus predominantly on “the last days” and how Luke 21 focuses predominantly on AD70. When you read Matthew and Mark you will see they are almost identical. When you read Luke 21 (carefully) you will see it is quite different.

The Olivet prophecy was obviously given at the same time to the same disciples but the reporting of it by Luke had a different focus. We see this in the gospels - that each gospel writer has his own perspective of events he heard and saw - and (though inspired) recorded them differently.

Let us begin at the start. Jesus and his disciples were looking at the huge temple in Jerusalem. Jesus said in all 3 gospels “[Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.](#)” Jesus refers here to the destruction of the Temple which happened in AD70 but as we know many of the stones they would have been looking at (the Wailing Wall) do remain standing even today. This is a sign to us that all has NOT been fulfilled and that there are TWO stages to the completion of this prophecy.

The gospel writers then record the opening questions by the disciples. Matthew and Mark’s accounts point to a latter day focus where Luke has more of an AD70 focus.

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?](#)

This clearly is a latter day question. The “[coming](#)” of Jesus Christ must refer to the SECOND COMING. The physical return of Christ from heaven. The “[END OF THE WORLD](#)” is mentioned 5 times in the New Testament. ALL of them refer ultimately to the final judgments at the VERY END of the world . The last one (Hebrews 9:26) refers to Christ appearing the first time. The verse says “[IN the end of the world hath he \[Jesus\] appeared to put away sin](#)”. The word “in” can be translated UNTO or BEFORE. Christ did come BEFORE the end of the world. His sacrifice was to last UNTO the end of the world. The other occurrences of this phrase are Matthew 13:39 & 49, & 28:20. ALL LAST DAY.

Mark 13:4

[Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when ALL these things shall be fulfilled?](#)

This is very similar to the question in Luke with ONE big difference. This question says “[when ALL these things](#)”. In other words when EVERYTHING is to be fulfilled. It is a latter day focussed question.

Luke 21:7

Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?

Luke records the question in this way. Not ALL things being fulfilled, not the return of Christ, not the end of the world but specifically about the Temple – when would it be destroyed.

Remember Jesus had said the stones of the Temple would be thrown down. The focus is different. The question is different. The answer as we shall see was different!

The next section is the same in all 3 gospels.

It is Christ's reply to the questions.

We quote from Matthew 24:4-7 but all the gospels record the same

“Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, **but the end is not yet**. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.”

The equivalent verses in Mark 13 are 5-8 and in Luke 21 are 9-11.

Christ is saying here that a lot of time must go by. Note his comment “**the end is not yet**”. Mark records “**the end shall not be yet**”. Luke records “**but the end is not by and by**”.

There are going to be many wars and rumours of wars and nations rising against each other. There will be famines and earthquakes and pestilence etc.

Christ is giving us a broad picture that MUCH HISTORY must pass by before the END happens. We are seeing an increase in these last days of all these aspects HOWEVER all of history has seen these events taking place. Christ is telling his disciples - you must wait a long time.

It is after these opening statements by Christ that the gospels begin to differ significantly.

Matthew 24:8 tells us that all these things “**are the BEGINNING of sorrows**”. These events described must come FIRST before the END happens.

Luke 21:12 has a completely different perspective. “**But BEFORE all these**” he writes!

Luke goes BACK in time BEFORE AD70 and Matthew goes FORWARD to the time of the end!

This is made abundantly clear when you look at phrases that occur in Matthew from here on in to those in Luke.

Matthew 24:9 speaks of the faithful believers being “**hated of ALL nations**.”

Verse 13 speaks of “**he that shall endure to THE END**” shall be saved.

Verse 14 speaks of the gospel being preached “**in ALL THE WORLD**” unto “**ALL NATIONS**”.

Verse 14 concludes “**THEN SHALL THE END COME**.”

Look at the parallel verses in Luke and there is NOT ONE mention of these things.

No mention of “the END”, no mention of the gospel being preached to “ALL nations”, no mention of LATTER DAY TIMES.

So Luke says that BEFORE all these things the following events would occur.

12 But BEFORE all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name’s sake.

Luke 21:12-19 are clearly about AD70. These events happened BEFORE AD70.

Persecution of believers, being delivered into synagogues etc.

Interestingly Matthew speaks of “false prophets arising”. This is something that occurred mainly after AD70 with the advent of false “Christian” religions and worship. The “false prophet” is still around at the time of the end and Armageddon – see Revelation 16:13. In fact the “false prophet” is given as a sign later in Matthew 24 and Mark 13! (though mentioned by a different name...)

Matthew and Mark BOTH conclude this section with the phrase “THE END”. See verse 14 of Matthew and verse 13 of Mark. In fact they say it is only when the gospel has been preached in ALL the world for a witness to ALL nations that the END will come. and

Luke 21 does not mention the end at all at this stage. In AD70 the gospel had NOT been preached in ALL the world to ALL nations. So Matthew and Mark MUST refer to the last days.

And so we reach a crucial part of the Olivet prophecy so remember....

Matthew and Mark have both mentioned “THE END”. Luke has not.

Luke is still leading up to AD70, Matthew and Mark are now at the time of “THE END”.

Luke now gives a sign for those living BEFORE AD70.

Verse 20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

This we know was the sign for true believers prior to AD70. The Roman armies surrounded Jerusalem but then withdrew allowing a window of opportunity for those who read and understood to flee. The Roman armies did return and destroyed Jerusalem and the nation was scattered.

Note in Luke 21:22 that these are called “the days of vengeance”. A totally different description to the phrase given in Matthew and Mark describing the last days.

They were days of vengeance. Vengeance for what? For the fact that the Jews had killed the only begotten Son of God.

Luke then tells us that the nation would be scattered through all the world and Jerusalem would be trodden down of the Gentiles. We know this happened. AD70 the nation of Israel was scattered and over time ended up in every nation on earth. Jerusalem was controlled by the Gentiles for almost 2 millennia. Christ then says Jerusalem would be “trodden down of the Gentiles UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” In 1967 this took place. For the first time in 1897 years Jerusalem was controlled once again by the Jews. Luke has now caught up with Matthew and Mark. He is in the LAST DAYS. And once more the verses line up together with the signs in the sun moon and stars and the return of Christ in the heavens etc.

But what of Matthew and Mark?

They were already at the “time of the end” when we left them in verse 14.

What sign were they given for the FINAL destruction of Jerusalem and the nation of Israel?

The sign for the last days IS DIFFERENT!

It is an abomination standing in the Holy Place - or as Mark puts it – where it ought not!

When we see the abomination standing in the Temple area then FLEE TO THE MOUNTAINS!

Get out of Israel because just as in AD70 war is close.

We are told in Matthew 24:21 and Mark 13:19 that these days are of “[great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time – no nor ever shall be](#)”.

There can only ever be ONE time of trouble such as never was and it was NOT AD70.

It comes at the time of the end - it precedes the return of Christ.

Daniel 12:1 makes this clear.

[“and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake...”](#)

This greatest of troubles is still to come.

Therefore the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place is a sign that a time of trouble such as never was is at hand.

Consider this as well. When in AD70 did an abomination of desolation ever stand in the holy place BEFORE the destruction, as sign that the destruction was nigh and therefore you knew to flee? The answer is never. The Romans stood on the destroyed holy place AFTER, not as a sign BEFORE as a warning to flee.

We then come to the final part where Matthew, Mark and Luke all consider the “[signs in the sun moon and stars](#)”, the “[distress of nations with perplexity](#)” etc.

Verse 29 in Matthew 24 says “[immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened](#) etc”. The word “after” is normally translated “with”. In fact 345 times out of 473 it is translated “with”.

Matthew is telling us that the “time of trouble such as never was” INCLUDES the signs in the sun moon and stars, the distress of nations and so on. It is part of the final labour pains of the world.

The question that therefore remains is this.

What is the abomination that causes desolation? If it is to be the last great sign surely it must be clear for those who can see and are watching. It should also warn those living in Israel to escape.

The first thing to note is that abomination of desolation STANDS in the holy place. The holy place refers to the exact area where the “holy place” the original Jewish temple once stood. It is where currently the Dome of the Rock – the Muslim shrine stands. This shrine itself cannot be the

abomination that causes desolation. The Dome of the Rock has existed there for over 1300 years so it cannot be a sign of urgency to flee Israel.

Jesus says to understand who or what the abomination that stands in this sacred area is you must read and understand Daniel.

Daniel 9 verse 27 reads as follows

He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple **he will set up an abomination that causes desolation**, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.

This is the last verse of Daniel's 70 week prophecy. It is a verse that speaks about the final 70th week. Without going into detail here the 70 week prophecy is about a countdown to the first coming of Christ and also the second coming of Christ. The first "69 weeks" countdown to when Christ declared himself as king by riding into Jerusalem on a donkey and then shortly after being crucified. The final 70th week (a 7 year period) countdown to Christ being established as King on earth.

So who is the "he" in Daniel 9:27 who sets up an abomination that causes desolation?

Well this person has already been mentioned in the previous verse. We read in that verse (v26) "The people **of the ruler who will come** will destroy the city and the sanctuary."

This verse goes all the way back to AD70 when a certain people destroyed the city (Jerusalem) and the sanctuary (The Temple). Who were those people? The answer is the ROMANS. So the "ruler who will come" is a ROMAN ruler.

There is only one Roman ruler of prophetic significance in the Bible and that is the leader of the Roman Catholic Church. Revelation 17 says (speaking of the false religion of Rome) that there is a harlot woman riding a beast. The harlot woman represents the false religion of Rome and she has written on her forehead "ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." We know the woman is to do with Rome as Revelation 17 verse 9 tells us that the woman sits on 7 hills. Rome is built on 7 hills.

So, going back to Daniel 9:27 we are being told in the final 7 year period leading up to the establishment of Christ's kingdom that a Roman Ruler (Pope) will make an agreement (confirm a covenant) with "many" people. He sets up an abomination at the holy place – the temple site.

This abomination in the holy place might be the Pope himself declaring to be God on earth. He possibly making some type of peace agreement between Israel and the nations that involves dividing the land.

2 Thessalonians 3 verse 3 says

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there comes a falling away first, **and that man of sin be revealed**, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; **so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.**

When the Pope is revealed in Jerusalem and the Temple Mount site those in Israel should flee.

To be continued.....

See last page for Matthew and Luke's gospels combined into ONE continuous message.....

Proposed order of the discourse of Christ on the Mount of Olives.

Red = Matthew 24 Blue = Luke 21

Post AD70 – history to time of the end	<p>1 ¶ And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.</p> <p>2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.</p> <p>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?</p> <p>8 and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass? And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.</p> <p>9 But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by.</p> <p>10 Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:</p> <p>11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.</p>
Pre AD70 and the great sign for those days for true believers.	<p>12 But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.</p> <p>13 And it shall turn to you for a testimony.</p> <p>14 Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer:</p> <p>15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.</p> <p>16 And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death.</p> <p>17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.</p> <p>18 But there shall not an hair of your head perish.</p> <p>19 In your patience possess ye your souls.</p> <p>20 ¶ And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.</p> <p>21 Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.</p>
AD70 and nation scattered.	<p>22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.</p> <p>23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.</p> <p>24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations:</p>
Post AD70 – history to time of the end	<p>9 : and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.</p> <p>10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.</p> <p>11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.</p> <p>12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.</p> <p>13 But he that shall endure unto the END, the same shall be saved.</p> <p>24 and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.</p>
The time of the end and the great sign for those days for true believers.	<p>14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the END come.</p> <p>15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)</p> <p>16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:</p> <p>17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:</p> <p>18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.</p> <p>19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!</p> <p>20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:</p>
The final time of trouble such as never was and the return of Jesus Christ tot the earth!	<p>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.</p> <p>22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.</p> <p>23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.</p> <p>24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.</p> <p>25 Behold, I have told you before.</p> <p>26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.</p> <p>27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.</p> <p>28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.</p> <p>29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:</p> <p>30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.</p>