

Introduction to the Olivet Discourse

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By David Curtis

Matthew 24:1-2

We are beginning a study of Matthew 24 which is known as the Olivet discourse. This is also a sermon on the mount. Few chapters of the Bible have called forth more disagreement among interpreters than Matthew 24 and its parallels in Mark 13 and Luke 21.

Before we begin our study of chapter 24, we need to examine its **context**. Apart from an understanding of its context, you can come up with all kinds of weird interpretations.

So, let's begin at the beginning. Matthew, Mark and Luke are usually known as the Synoptic Gospels. Synoptic comes from two Greek words which mean "to see together" and literally means able "to be seen together." The reason for that name is this, these three gospels each give an account of the same events in Jesus' life. There are in each of them additions and omissions; but broadly speaking their material is the same and their arrangement is the same. It is therefore possible to set them down in parallel columns to compare the one with the other. We will be doing this as we study Matthew 24.

Matthew was the gospel that was written for the Jews. It was written by a Jew in order to convince Jews. One of the great objects of Matthew is to demonstrate that all the prophecies of the Old Testament are fulfilled in Jesus, and that, therefore, he must be the **Messiah**. It has one phrase that runs through it like an ever-recurring theme-- "*That it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet.*" That phrase, in varied form, occurs in the gospel as often as 10 times. Jesus is the prophesied Messiah.

Jesus' birth and Jesus' name are the fulfillment of prophecy:

Matthew 1:21-23 (NKJV) "And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name **JESUS**, for He will save His people from their sins." 22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 23 "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."

The flight into Egypt was prophesied:

Matthew 2:14-15 (NKJV) When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, 15 and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son."

Herod's slaughter of all the young children in an attempt to kill Jesus was prophesied:

Matthew 2:16-18 Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. 17 Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: 18 "A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation, weeping, and great

mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, Refusing to be comforted, Because they are no more."

Joseph's settlement in Nazareth and Jesus' upbringing there:

Matthew 2:23 (NKJV) And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

Jesus' healing of their sickness:

Matthew 8:16-17 (KJV) When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: 17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

The triumphal entry of Israel's Messiah, Jesus:

Matthew 21:3-5 (NKJV) "And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them." 4 All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: 5 "Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey."

Jesus' betrayal for thirty pieces of silver:

Matthew 27:9 (NKJV) Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced,

The casting of lots for Jesus' garments as he hung on the Cross:

Matthew 27:35 (NKJV) Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots."

It is Matthew's primary purpose to show that the Old Testament prophecies received their fulfilment in Jesus; how every detail of Jesus' life was foreshadowed in the prophets; and thus to compel the Jews to admit that **Jesus is indeed the long awaited Messiah of the Hebrew Scriptures**. The Jews knew very well the Old Testament teaching that Messiah would bring in the promised Kingdom of Heaven.

MESSIAH is the transliteration of a Hebrew word meaning, "anointed one," that was translated into Greek as *Christos*. They viewed Messiah as a warrior-prince who would expel the hated Romans from Israel and bring in a kingdom in which the Jews would be promoted to world dominion. The course of Jesus' ministry is one in which He sought to wean the disciples away from the traditional notion of a warrior Messiah. Instead, Jesus tried to instill in their minds the prospect that the road to His future glory was bound to run by way of the cross, with its experience of rejection, suffering, and humiliation. Jesus taught them that His Kingdom was not of this world, it was not a physical kingdom but a spiritual one.

John 18:36 (NKJV) Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here."

Luke 17:20-21 (NKJV) Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; 21 "nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

Could words be plainer? Jesus taught that His Kingdom is a spiritual kingdom. Yet, so many still look for a future physical kingdom.

Matthew teaches us much about the **Kingdom of Heaven**.³² times in Matthew's gospel Jesus talks about the Kingdom of Heaven. Matthew's dominating idea is that of Jesus as the Messiah and King of Israel.

Jesus spoke Aramaic; the Gospel writers translated Jesus' sermons and parables into Greek. Mark, Luke, and John translated Jesus' words as "kingdom of God." Matthew sometimes used this phrase too, but often he preferred to translate Jesus' Aramaic words as "kingdom of heaven." The two phrases mean exactly the same thing, because they are translations of the same Aramaic words of Jesus.

What did Jesus mean when he spoke of the kingdom of God? He meant, quite simply, the rule of God. The kingdom of God is the reign of God.

Matthew emphasizes the coming kingdom and the judgment of all who reject it. Right at the beginning, there is John the Baptist's call to repentance and warning of judgment to all who rejected God's kingdom.

Matthew 3:1-3 (NKJV) In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, 2 and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" 3 For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.'"

The emergence of John was like the sudden sounding of the voice of God. It had been four hundred years since the voice of the prophets had spoken.

The Jews believed that Elijah would return before Messiah came, and that he would be the herald of the coming King and evidence that the judgment was drawing near.

Malachi 3:1-2 (NKJV) "Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the LORD of hosts. 2 "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire And like launderer's soap.

Malachi 4:5 (NKJV) Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

John wore a garment of camel's hair, and a leather belt around his waist. That is the very description of the raiment which Elijah had worn:

2 Kings 1:8 (NKJV) So they answered him, "A hairy man wearing a leather belt around his waist." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."

John's message was one of repentance or judgment. Had they known their Bibles, they should have recognized him.

Matthew 3:7-12 (NKJV) But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 "Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, 9 "and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. 10 "And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.11 "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 "His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

John warns them not to count on their ancestry to save them. They needed to repent, turn to God, or they would suffer His wrath. Verse 12 is a prophecy speaking of AD 70 and the destruction of Jerusalem.

Matthew 4:23 (NKJV) And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

This should have made it clear to them who he was. Who else could do this but the promised Messiah of Israel.

Isaiah 35:4-6 (NKJV) Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you." 5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6 Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert.

When John was in prison and began to doubt who Jesus was, he sent his disciples to ask if he was He that should come. Jesus said his works should make it evident that he was Messiah.

Matthew 11:4-6 (NKJV) Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: 5 "The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. 6 "And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."

Jesus warns that those who reject him as Messiah and his kingdom will suffer judgment.

Matthew 8:11-12 (NKJV) "And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. 12 "But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Here Jesus uses a famous and vivid Jewish picture. The Jews believed that when the Messiah came, there would be a great banquet at which all Jews would sit down to feast.

The Jews looked forward, with all their hearts, to this Messianic banquet; but it never, for a moment, crossed their minds that any Gentile would ever sit down at it. Yet, here is Jesus saying that many shall come from the east and from the west, and sit down at the table at that banquet.

Still worse, he says that many of the sons of the kingdom will be shut out. The Jews had to learn that the passport to God's presence is not membership of any nation; it is faith.

Jesus continually warned the Jews of their coming judgment because of their apostasy. I believe that most, if not all, of Jesus' parables deal with the kingdom of God or the destruction of Jerusalem because of their rejection of that Kingdom. As we move closer to chapter 24, notice the building of the judgment theme.

Matthew 21:33-43 (NKJV) "Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. 34 "Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. 35 "And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. 36 "Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. 37 "Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 38 "But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' 39 "So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. 40 "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?" 41 They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons." 42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes'? 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.

Keep verse 43 in mind, because it relates to the prophecy of Jesus in Matthew 24. Jesus had clearly prophesied that the Kingdom of God would be taken from the Jews and given to another nation who would bring forth fruit. Listen to what God said to Israel through the prophet Isaiah:

Isaiah 65:15 (NKJV) You shall leave your name as a curse to My chosen; For the Lord GOD will slay you, And call His servants by another name;

Let's continue on in Matthew as we move toward chapter 24

Matthew 22:1-7 (NKJV) And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: 2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, 3 "and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. 4 "Again, he sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.'" 5 "But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. 6 "And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. 7 "But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

It is clear that the reference here is to Jerusalem. Its destruction in AD 70 is clearly predicted here.

Let's look at chapter 23. In this chapter Jesus pronounces **seven woes** upon the scribes and Pharisees. Verses 13-26 of this chapter form the most terrible of all discourses ever delivered to

mortals. It was pronounced in the temple, in the presence of multitudes. This was the last of the Lord's public discourses; and it is a most impressive summary of all that he had ever said, or that he had to say, of a wicked and hypocritical generation.

The Greek word used for "woe" is *ouai*; it is hard to translate for it includes not only wrath, but also sorrow. These woes can be contrasted to the Beatitudes. Those in Christ's spiritual kingdom would be blessed, but those who reject it are damned. Jesus, the Messiah, is here pronouncing judgment.

Matthew 23:33-35 (NKJV) "Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? 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.

Jesus's charge is that the history of Israel is the history of the murder of the men of God. He says that the righteous men, from Abel to Zacharias, were murdered. The story of Zacharias is found in 2 Chronicles 24:20-22. Zacharias rebuked the nation for their sin, and Joash stirred up the people to stone him to death in the very Temple court; and Zacharias died saying, "May the Lord see and avenge!"

In the Hebrew Bible, Genesis is the first book, as it is in ours; but, unlike our order of the books, 2 Chronicles is the last in the Hebrew Bible. We could say that the murder of Abel is the first in the Bible story, and the murder of Zacharias the last. From beginning to end, the history of Israel is the rejection, and often the slaughter, of the men of God.

Notice, who their blood is come upon; "*upon you*" -- the scribes and Pharisees of the first century; the ones Jesus was then speaking to. See also Luke 11:50-51. This is confirmed in the next verse.

Matthew 23:36 (NKJV) "Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

Now, all commentators are agreed that "*this generation*" means the generation then living. Keep that in mind when we come to verse 34 of Matthew 24. Jesus says that the Jewish people would be punished for their rejection of God's servants, and the kingdom of God would be taken from them, and it would all happen in that generation.

Matthew 23:37-39 (NKJV) "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;

By "*house*," he was referring Jerusalem, and certainly the temple, was included. The word "*desolate*" is the Greek word *eremos*, it means waste, desert, desolate, solitary, or wilderness. The city and the temple were both destroyed in AD 70.

Matthew 23:39 "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 meaning is that after the week of the passion, Jesus will not again publicly reveal himself to the Jews. Unless they acknowledged His Messiahship and repented, they would die in their sins. Some of them did repent, but most of them perished.

After saying this, Jesus departed from the temple. 24:1 says, "Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple." This departure may be the same as that mentioned in:

John 12:36 (NKJV) "While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.

He hid himself from them; he appeared no more openly before the people, but remained in privacy with His disciples alone.

Now, with all of this in mind, we move into chapter 24 and the Olivet discourse of Jesus. This is one of those places where chapter and verse divisions can be very detrimental. We need to ignore the break here, and go from the end of chapter 23 right into 24.

Matthew 24:1 (NKJV) Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple.

Mark 13:1 (NKJV) Then as He went out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!"

Luke 21:5 (NKJV) Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said,

The discussion that Jesus had just had with the scribes and Pharisees took place inside the Temple grounds. Now, as they depart from the Temple (*hieron* - the temple complex) the words of Jesus, "*Your house shall be left to you desolate,*" still burned in their ears. They point out the buildings of the Temple and their magnificence. Mark says that they particularly pointed out the stones of the temple. What could possibly happen to such a massive edifice? There was nothing quite like the Temple in the ancient world. There was such a reverence for the temple, even in distant parts, that one would scarcely dare to imagine that it could ever be destroyed.

Let me give you a little historical background on the **temple**. There were three historical Temples in succession; those of Solomon, Zerubbabel, and Herod. The first temple was built by Solomon, about 1005 years before Christ, 1 Kings 6. He spent seven years building it, 1 Kings 6:38. This temple remained till it was destroyed by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar, 584 years before Christ, 2 Chronicles 36:6,7,19.

After the Babylonian captivity, the temple was rebuilt by Zerubbabel, but with vastly inferior and diminished splendor. This was called the second temple. This temple was often defiled in the wars before the time of Christ. It had become very decayed and impaired. Herod's Temple was really a massive rebuilding of the Zerubbabel Temple, so both are called the "second Temple" by Judaism.

This rebuilt second temple is the one under discussion, and it was called **Herod's temple**. Herod the Great came to power in 37 B.C. and determined that he would please his Jewish subjects, and show off his style of kingship to the Romans by making the Jerusalem Temple bigger and better than it had ever been. His most notable contribution was the magnificent stonework of the Temple platform which was greatly enlarged. The descriptions in Josephus and the Mishnah have been fleshed out by recent archaeological discoveries.

This temple was begun in 19 B.C. by Herod the Great, king of Judaea, and was completed so as to be fit for use in nine years, about eight years before Christ. Herod had kept 10,000 workmen employed in building this temple for eight years. Additions continued to be made to it, and it continued increasing in splendor and magnificence till about AD 64. John said (John 2:20), "*Forty*

and six years was this temple in building. " Christ was then thirty years of age, which, added to the sixteen years occupied in repairing it before his birth, makes forty-six years.

This temple surpassed the first two in architectural splendor. The temple was a source of wonder. The stones themselves of these buildings were fabulous in size. Those in the foundation were as much as 60 feet long, and others above as much as 67 feet or more long, 7 1/2 feet high, and 9 feet wide. To the Jewish people, there was nothing like this building in the whole world.

The temple was erected on Mount Moriah. The space of the summit of the mount was not, however, large enough for the buildings necessary to be erected. It was, therefore, enlarged by building high walls from the valley below and filling up the space within. One of these walls was 600 feet in height. The ascent to the temple was by high flights of steps.

The appearance of this, built as it was with white marble, and decorated with plates of silver, from the Mount of Olives was exceedingly dazzling and splendid. Josephus says that in the rising of the sun it reflected so strong and dazzling effulgence that the eye of the spectator was obliged to turn away. To strangers at a distance, it appeared like a mountain covered with snow, for where it was not decorated with plates of gold, it was extremely white and glistening.

Rabbinic literature is not particularly favorable to Herod. Nevertheless, concerning Herod's temple it states, "He who never saw Herod's edifice has never in his life seen a beautiful building."

The temple sight is now occupied by the Mosque of Omar, the Dome of the Rock, center of the Muslim worship (the third holiest place in Islam, after Mecca and Medina).

It was of this magnificent temple that Jesus said, *"not one stone shall be left upon another."*

Matthew 24:2 (NKJV) 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."

Mark 13:2 (NKJV) And Jesus answered and said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

Luke 21:6 (NKJV) "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."

Jesus predicted that this massive temple would be utterly destroyed in an act of God's judgment. At the time this was spoken, no event was more improbable than this. Yet, all this happened in AD 70 exactly as Jesus said it would. After the city was taken, Josephus says that Titus, "gave orders that the soldiers should dig up even the foundations of the temple, and also the city itself." Thus fulfilling the prophecy of:

Micah 3:12 (NKJV) Therefore because of you Zion shall be plowed like a field, Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins, And the mountain of the temple Like the bare hills of the forest.

Thomas Newton says, "Not leaving one stone upon another," is a proverbial and hyperbolic way of speaking to denote very exemplary destruction.

Luke further expounded upon this idea in:

Luke 19:41-44 (NKJV) Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, 42 saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. 43 "For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, 44 "and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

Here we clearly see the reason for this utter destruction of Jerusalem: *"Because you did not know the time of your visitation."* The nation had rejected Jesus as their Messiah and because of this, they were judged, their temple and city destroyed as had been prophesied.

F.F. Bruce described the destruction of the city in this way:

"Accordingly, in April of AD 70 Titus invested Jerusalem... As the siege wore on, the horrors of famine, and even cannibalism, were added to the hazards of war. By September 26 the whole city was in Titus' hands. It was razed to the ground, only three towers of Herod's palace on the western wall being left standing, with part of the western wall itself. "

Jesus pronounced doom on the temple because the true center of the relation between God and man has shifted to himself. In chapter 23, Jesus has already insisted that what Israel does with him, not the temple, determines the fate of the Israelites. Jesus taught this same idea in John 4:

John 4:20-24 (NKJV) "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." 21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. 22 "You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. 23 "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24 "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Jesus said there is a time coming when no one will worship God at Jerusalem. Then he said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth." Soon, no one will worship in Jerusalem, but now God can be worshiped in truth, i.e. reality! The shadow worship of the temple is being replaced with the reality.

Hebrews 10:1 (NKJV) For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.

The Law system was a shadow of the good things to come. The good things were the spiritual things of the gospel. It had been prophesied that Jerusalem would be destroyed and that God would raise a spiritual temple, the church, Christ's body.

Amos 9:7-12 (NKJV) "Are you not like the people of Ethiopia to Me, O children of Israel?" says the LORD. "Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, The Philistines from Caphtor, And the Syrians from Kir? 8 "Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are on the sinful kingdom, And I will destroy it from the face of the earth; Yet I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob," Says the LORD. 9 "For surely I will command, And will sift the house of Israel among all nations, As grain is sifted in a sieve; Yet not the smallest grain shall fall to the ground. 10 All the sinners of My people shall die by the sword, Who say, 'The calamity shall not overtake nor confront us.' 11 "On that day I will raise up The tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, And repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, And rebuild it as in the days

of old; 12 That they may possess the remnant of Edom, And all the Gentiles who are called by My name," Says the LORD who does this thing.

James said that the Church, the body of Christ, was this tabernacle of David, and it was being raised up at that time.

Acts 15:13-17 (NKJV) And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, "Men and brethren, listen to me: 14 "Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. 15 "And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: 16 'After this I will return And will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, And I will set it up; 17 So that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, Says the LORD who does all these things.'

The fleshly, earthly tabernacle was a shadow and God destroyed it in AD 70. We now live in a spiritual kingdom, with a spiritual tabernacle, we worship God in spirit and in reality.

With that background in mind, we are prepared to look at the disciples' questions in verse 3, next week.

This message was preached by [David B. Curtis](#) on November 23, 1997.