

## Desolation and Abomination

### Selected Scriptures

May 12, 2024

We come to a point in our study of the Olivet Discourse where it's time for us to pause for a bit, and we want to clarify an interpretive issue here in the text. We've come through, as you know, through Jesus' prediction concerning one of the most dreadful events in history, which is the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in AD 70. This really happened. We went through the history of it. Looked at the extra biblical sources as well to the corroborate all that Scripture says, all that Jesus predicted came true. And having worked through that section, which is you'll find, your, you'll find that in Luke 21. Luke 21.

If you're have your Bibles, you could turn to Luke 21 and verses 20 to 24. Having worked through that section, we realize that there can be some confusion that arises, readers of the

# GRACE CHURCH

---

Grace

Scripture, when we compare Luke with what sounds like very similar material in Matthew and Mark. So let's start this morning just by reminding ourselves of what the text says starting in Luke 21, verse 20.

Jesus says to his disciples, "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is at hand. Then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains and those who are in the midst of the city must leave. And those who are in the countryside must not enter the city, because these are days of vengeance, so that all things which are written will be fulfilled.

"Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress upon the land and wrath against this people, and they will fall by the edge of the sword and will be led captive into all the nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."

# GRACE CHURCH

---

Greeley

Today I'm going to take off my preacher hat and put on my teacher hat. Take off the, the, preacher hat, put on the professor hat, because we're going to do some study and I just, I just want you to know that that is not a, an abdication of my pastoral role. Because in Ephesians 4:11, "Christ gave some," some, "as apostles and some as prophets." Those are past gifts and past offices that have been fulfilled and we have the work of those offices of prophet and apostle written here in the New Testament.

"But he gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists and some as pastors and teachers." And in the grammar, there, pastor and teacher is linked. There's a single definite article and those two gifts joined by *kai*, joined by an, "and" a conjunction showing that those two gifts bleed over into one another. So any pastor, one of the main tools in his pastoral bag is, his shepherding bag, is to teach, teach, truth. So I make no apology for taking off my preacher hat and putting on the teacher hat. Any teacher in the church, given to the church, he is not a teacher given by Christ, of the church, if he is not also pastoring in his teaching.

# GRACE CHURCH

---

Grace

If he doesn't have a shepherding mindset with regard to the things that he teaches, if he doesn't want to see people conform to the truth, grow up in the faith; Pastoring, teaching go hand in hand. That's why some in looking at Ephesians 4:11, just put a hyphen between pastor and teacher. They call it pastor-teacher. That's one gift. Some people see it that way. I don't see it that way, but I do see the gifts as very, very closely linked; linked with the one bleeding over to the other.

So that's what we're going to do this morning. We're going to lean more heavily into the teacher side of that, the professor side of that, and we're wanting to look at Luke 21 as it relates to particularly Matthew 24. And obviously we can't cover all there is to cover, because there's so much here. It seems that every line brings up more questions and brings up more issues. And there's just so much, and I don't have a semester or two with you, in this section of Scripture to unpack all that's here. We can only skip off the wave tops of the text.

But I'm gonna try to engage the critical questions. And as we compare and contrast these texts in Luke and in Matthew, we're

gonna work through this in four stages this morning. And you can jot these down just so you know where we're heading and so you can kind of keep on, keep tracking our progress along the way. If you want to write these down, we're talking about the confusion that can exist between Luke, when we compare Luke 21:20 through 24, with Matthew, particularly 24:15 to 22.

So we're talking about confusion. So we're going to talk about, number one: The nature of the confusion, number two: Some reasons for the confusion, number three: Some answers to the confusion. And I'll just warn you ahead of time, that's the biggest, chunkiest point, the answers to the confusion, and number four: The significance of the clarification. Hopefully you're going to get some clarity this morning. So not all is we'll, we'll not, we'll start with confusion, end with clarity, clarification. Okay.

So the nature of the confusion, some reasons for the confusion, some answers to the confusion, and the significance of the clarification. So what confusion? What confusion are we talking about? What's the issue? I'm referring to the obviously, the

confusion over eschatology in general, but more specifically over the Olivet Discourse, and maybe even more particularly over the relationship of Luke to Matthew and Mark and in these verses in particular.

So first you want to jot this down, number one: The nature of the confusion. The nature of the confusion is when interpreters try to make Luke 21:20 to 24, as we've learned, which predicts the destruction of Jerusalem, that's fulfilled in AD 70. When they try to make that fit with similar content in Matthew 24:15 to 22 and Mark 13:14 to 20.

In Matthew and Mark, Jesus predicts what's still future to us. What's coming in the great tribulation. So when interpreters conflate this still future event called, The Abomination of Desolation, which happens at the midpoint of the great tribulation. When they mistake that and join that together with the past, with the historical event of AD 70, the desolation of the city of Jerusalem, well, confusion abounds to no end.

# GRACE CHURCH

---

Grace

There are people who join Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, say they're all saying the same thing. And some people say they're all saying the same thing, all about the future, and some say they're saying all the same thing, about the past, about AD 70. And I'm saying no. Luke 21 predicts the past. Matthew 24, Mark 13, they predict the future. In fact, Matthew 24 is all about the tribulation period. The entire thing is pointing to the future.

So with this particular comparison and contrast to these passages, Luke 21:20 to 24, the keyword there is found in verse 20. It's the word desolation. And we do find that word, desolation, in Matthew 24:15 and Mark 13:14, but it's connected to the word, abomination; Abomination of Desolation. Here just desolation. And we make a mistake, and confusion abounds when we try to make them all say the same thing.

John Calvin agrees. He says that The Abomination of Desolation of Daniel is not in Luke's account. That's what I'm saying, and I agree with Calvin on that. He says further this, he says, Quote, "It is a mistake to suppose that this expression," this

expression being the Abomination of Desolation. "It is a mistake to suppose that this expression denotes the siege of Jerusalem. And the mistake receives no countenance from the words of Luke, who did not intend to say the same thing, but something quite different for the city having been formally delivered when it appeared to be in the midst of destruction."

Again, we're talking about Cestius's failed siege. We've learned about that. "So when the city of Jerusalem having been formally delivered when it appeared to be in the midst of destruction, lest believers should expect something of the same kind in the future, Christ declares that as soon as it would be surrounded by armies, it was utterly ruined, because it was wholly deprived of divine assistance. The meaning, therefore, is that the issue of the war will not be doubtful, because that city is devoted to destruction, which will not be able to escape any more than to rescind a decree of heaven.

"Accordingly, Luke shortly afterwards adds that Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles, a mode of expression which denotes utter ruin. But as it might appear to be strange, the



# GRACE CHURCH

---

Grace

Holy City should be given up to the Gentiles to do with it as they pleased. He adds a consolation that it was only for a time that so much liberty was allowed to the Gentiles till their iniquity was ripe, and the vengeance which had been reserved for them was fully displayed." End Quote. I agree with what John Calvin says there. And yet we do need to admit how similar the three synoptic accounts sound to one another.

So if you'd like to, and I suggest that you do, keep a finger in Luke 21, turn over to Matthew 24. Listen to this from Matthew 24 starting in verse 15. It's going to sound similar to Luke 21, but you're going to notice some differences. This is what he says, starting Matthew 24, starting in verse 15. "Therefore when you see the Abomination of Desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things that are in his house. And whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his garment.

"Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! But pray that your flight will not be in the winter or on a Sabbath. But then there will be a great tribulation, such has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. And unless those days have been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect, those days will be cut short."

Trust you can discern, just stopping there, I trust you can discern the differences between Luke and Matthew. I'm gonna draw them out further in a moment, but let's go now to Mark's Gospel, because I want us, I want you to see Mark 13 starting in verse 14. I want you to hear how similar Mark is to Matthew. Here's Mark 13, starting in verse 14, you'll see how similar he is to Matthew, but again different than Luke. Mark 13, verse 14, he says this, "But when you see the Abomination of Desolation standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. And the one who is on the housetop must not go down, or go get anything out of his house; and the one who's in the field must not turn back to get his garment."

"But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! Pray that it might not happen in the winter. For those days will be a time of tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of creation which God created until now, and never will. And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom He chose, He shortened the days." End Quote, and stop there.

Matthew and Mark obviously agree with one another. They also obviously differ from Luke in at least six different ways. I think I have six written down here, but there's so much more we could say. I just want to be really brief, but show you six different ways that Matthew and Mark differ from Luke. Again, Mark agrees with Matthew against Luke, so I'm mostly going to cite Matthew and Luke. But Matthew and Mark are together on one side and Luke is on the other.

First, in Matthew's account, Jesus says, "When you see the Abomination of Desolation spoken of through Daniel, the prophet standing in the Holy Place," you can see Matthew and Mark saying

basically the same thing there. In Luke though, he doesn't talk about the Abomination of Desolation, doesn't talk about Daniel, doesn't talk about standing in the Holy Place. He says, "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies," that's it. Matthew and Mark add "(let the reader understand)." They're pointing readers back to Daniel's prophecy where they find this expression, the Abomination of Desolation. There's no such exhortation to the readers of Luke's account. That's a first major difference section of differences there.

Secondly, another difference we see is in Matthew, the command to flee there, is, is regional from Judea. There's no mention of the city of Jerusalem. In Luke 21:21, the concern is about Jerusalem, and the city is the central point of reference. Those who are in the midst of the city must leave. Those who are in the countryside must not enter back into the city. The city is highlighted there, even though historically, as we've seen, Galilee and Judea endured several waves of Roman wrath first by Cestius Gallus and Vespasian, finally, Titus. The city of Jerusalem is the center of attention in Luke 21:21.

Thirdly, we see in Matthew, there are woes upon pregnant and nursing mothers. In Matthew and Mark, woes upon the pregnant mothers, nursing mothers and those are about the chaos that comes from sudden departure, the sudden need to travel. I mean, I remember the, how difficult it was for me as a, as a brand new father. I'd just come out of the military. In the military it's like strip everything down, be as simple as possible, only take what's essential. And when I became a dad, all of a sudden, I realized how much we needed to take.

It seemed like the entire nursery was packed into the trunk by me; into the trunk and carrying everything out and putting into the trunk. And then unpacking that to every Bible study we went to, every church event, every everything. Unpacking, packing, unpacking, packing, that got, by, by child number five, believe me, we were more military in our thinking. But you know how it is, as first-time parents, everything matters. Got to have fifty diapers, not just two.

Chaos of sudden departure for these moms, pregnant women, nursing mothers, very, very difficult. The hazards of

treacherous travel. That's why Jesus says, "Pray your flight will not be in the winter or on the Sabbath." There's nothing about that in Luke. The woe is not over mothers who leave the city, but those who are within the city, in Luke. What we talked about last time, they're the ones who experienced the vengeance. They're the ones who experienced the famine, the siege that we learned about last week. Horrible things that they went through. So two different reasons for the woes. That's a third difference.

Here's a fourth difference. In Matthew, the reason for the tragedy is the great tribulation. In Luke, though, the reason for the tragedy is great distress. And you say, well, aren't those synonymous expressions? They seem that way at first glance, but no, they are not synonymous. In Matthew and Mark, the tribulation is worldwide and it's unique in history. In fact, both Matthew and Mark are very, very explicit about this. From creation to the very end, nothing like this. I'll cite Mark's account, which is more explicit here. "Those days will be a time of tribulation, such has not occurred since the beginning of creation which God created until now, and never will. And

unless the Lord had shorten those days, no life would have been saved." Nobody, no soul would have been saved.

In Luke's account, Jesus says, there will be great distress upon the land and wrath against this people. He's isolating the distress to Judea. He's particularizing the judgment that is upon the Jewish people, and it's because they rejected their Messiah. In Luke, the language of judgment is reserved for the Jews, and there's divine protection for the church. In Mark and Matthew, the language of judgment is for the world, upon the nations, and divine protection for Israel. It's flipped around.

Not only that, but what happens in the desolation and destruction of Jerusalem, that has happened to other cities throughout history. In fact, there was another desolation of, just of Israel back in 586 BC when the Babylonians came. There are other cities throughout history that have also been laid siege to, have had terrible famines, have had cannibalism within.

All the, all the terrible things that you see in AD 70 have happened to other cities throughout time. It's just that here this is divinely directed to punish the Jews for rejecting the Messiah. That's different. Again, in Luke the language of judgment reserved for the Jews; divine protection, though for the church. He shepherds the church out of, out of the city.

In Mark and Matthew, the language of judgment is for the entire world upon the nations. There's nothing like it since the beginning of creation until the very end of time. Nothing like it at all. And there's divine protection for believing Israel, whom Christ again shepherds out of the land, shepherds out of Judea; gets them out.

A Fifth difference: In Matthew, Jesus reveals the divine, attention to, intention to cut those days short for the sparing of the elect. In Luke there's no concern about sparing the Jews from the judgment they're gonna receive, because that is the point, his vengeance upon the Jews. They will fall by the edge of the sword. Jesus says in Luke, "they will be led captive into all the nations until Jerusalem is trampled under foot by the



Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”

There's no, no let up there, no mercy, no stopping it.

Sixth difference: And again, this is just a short list we could go on. We, we, go a long time on these differences. I'm just trying to summarize. In Matthew, number six, Jesus follows up the Abomination of Desolation with a warning. That whole section, he follows it up with a warning, that those fleeing the Antichrist's abomination are to watch out for false christs and false prophets. They're not to be deceived by private, secret Second Comings of Christ.

In Luke, there's no such warning. In fact, Luke had recorded that same warning back in Luke 17:23 and 24. But it was not after the prediction of AD 70. Why? Because it does not fit. It doesn't fit the timing. Doesn't fit the history. Instead, what follows right after the, “until the times the Gentiles are fulfilled,” verse 24, right after that at the tribulation midpoint, after that is the Second Coming section, verses 25 to 28. It's to save Israel, believing Israel, from all the nations that are surrounding, coming to destroy Israel.

Again, just six summary differences between Luke 21 and then Matthew 24 and Mark 13. Now since the accounts differ so much, why is it that so many conflate them? Why is it that so many confuse the three accounts and blend them together, even, either to talk about the far future, all three or to talk about the far past, all three. Why do people do that? Let me give you a just a second point, just in our overall outline, number two: Some reasons for this confusion. Some reasons for the confusion.

First, when we read the accounts, just as Bible readers, just Christians, we become Christians, we start reading through our Bibles. And as we read, as Bible readers, kind of quickly, superficially, you know, hurrying on our way to work, whatever it is, we, it's very easy for us to make the mistake of believing that these three say the same things. They refer to the same events. They're just looking at the same events, maybe from different angles, and giving us different details.

Very understandable, that to the untrained eye, they seem to be saying the same thing. But once we dig a little bit deeper, as

we've done, once we compare Scripture with Scripture, what do we, what do we do when we do that? We're Bible readers. We want to go a little bit deeper. We read commentaries, don't we? Read theological articles, lectures on the, listen to lectures on the Olivet Discourse. And what do we find there, when we try to go a little bit deeper?

Here's a second reason for confusion, and this is a point I've made in a previous sermon. We find out that the commentaries can be just as confused, and just as misleading, and blend them all together, and make no sense of it. In fact, commentaries, they're as, as, I said in a previous sermon, they're coming from different hermeneutical approaches, coming from different theological approaches, coming from different, some of them are absolute total liberals; writing commentaries, studying scripture, experts in language.

But they really don't believe the text. They don't believe Matthew wrote Matthew, Mark wrote Mark, Luke wrote Luke. They believe some, there's some deeper text behind the text. And that's kind of what the whole approach to their, their, study is

to figure out the text behind the text and all the community, that in all their theological presuppositions that entered into the text, and kind of produced the Bible that we have now. So the Bible's kind of, it's very quaint, simplistic. You're a simpleton, if you just look at your text, the Bible you have in your hands. But the real scholarly work, the real academic, you know, hard horsepower is spent in getting to the text underneath the text.

A lot of commentaries are written or influenced by those approaches, and the commentaries themselves are pretty opaque about their presuppositions. They're, they're, not clear about hermeneutical interpretive approaches. Even if they were clear though about their interpretive approaches, even if they were forthright saying, Hey, I am a total liberal. I am unbelieving. I don't believe any of this stuff is really true. It's just a fascinating historical document. If they say that from the very beginning, even if they did that, or even if they told you, Hey, I'm being inconsistent in my hermeneutic, or I believe in a Christ Redemptive Hermeneutic, that just kind of sweeps through everything and finds Christ in every single passage. Even if they were clear, even if they were forthright, not many readers

are able to discern the implications of wrong presuppositions on the text on the interpretation.

Now, many readers are able to spot the inconsistency in hermeneutics, so it's difficult. I understand as a reader myself, when I've gone into commentaries, when I've gone into lectures, when I've gone into critical journals and theological journals, it can be really challenging, and so I sympathize with you entering in to try to get clarity. Sometimes it can be just as confusing or even more confusing, I'd say backing out from what's deep and scholarly, backing out to a popular level.

Here's a third reason for some confusion, adding to this confusion over eschatology, number three. Over a number of decades of popular evangelicalism, those who kind of control the conferencing space and the publishing space. All that is para church, by the way, it's not the local churches that are driving that, it's para church organizations. They've been sending the message for quite a long time that what really matters is what unites us. In the old days, we used to call that ecumenism and we didn't, it wasn't a compliment.

But these days, the kind of ecumenical spirit, and I do have an ecumenical spirit. I do. I don't, I don't see that as a bad thing. But for decades, what really matters, what unites us, is to be gospel centered. Gospel centered means, let's talk, let's focus on Soteriology. Let's focus on the reform doctrines of Soteriology. Let's focus on, we believe the Bible and what the Bible teaches about salvation, but a lot of other things, let's just not argue on that stuff. And there's a point to be made there, that we don't need to be divided on those things. We need to understand what is primary, what is most important, what is salvific, what, what, is the dividing line between Christian and non-Christian. Yes, that's true, but that's not all that's important.

Everything that God has written is important. I realize some matters are weightier and some are less weighty, but it's all important. But this gospel centered approach can minimize Eschatology, the lowest common denominator approach that kind of brings everybody together. Honestly, if you divide over Eschatology, your conferences are very small. If you drop the, the, standards on Eschatology or any other doctrine, you get a

big conference. And publishers love big conferences. Why? Because more books go out to more people and more money is made. Now, I don't want to create cynicism in all the publishers and all the conferences, but that is going on.

Gospel centeredness is what gave rise to para church organizations like the Gospel Coalition, Together for the Gospel. Both of those organizations had their uses, have done well. Gospel Coalition has drifted over time, because evidently gospel centeredness isn't all that's important. So there's a lot that's weakened it. But one consequence, as I'm saying, of uniting Christians around Soteriology alone is that it left a vacuum on other important doctrinal matters like baptism, like church polity, like the sign gifts, and what you believe about continuationism or cessationism.

And also Eschatology, just made that an issue of non-importance. And that sends a message, sends a message to all your conference attendees. It sends a message to all the young people who are coming up in the faith at that time, that really, this stuff doesn't matter that much. Nature abhors a vacuum,

though, doesn't it? And so does doctrine; so does theology. Certain voices stepped into the void with answers. They're not always the right answers. Often people providing answers, they misunderstand what they criticize. They often create caricatures of one another's Eschatological views because they don't really understand them very well.

None of this helps, just regular, normal Christians like us find clarity about Eschatology, and it's so important that we find clarity about Eschatology. Why? Because Jesus is giving this for encouragement, for our hope. So the very hope that he wants to provide and clarity about what's going to happen in the future is completely undermined, when we say, can't understand it, not really important to figure it out anyway. Why would we do that to any of the text? Why would we undermine our Lord's purposes in trying to bring us encouragement, and settle us in hope, and give us great assurance, and give us joy about what's going to happen in the future, and excited anticipation about the victory of Christ over all powers?



Why would, who would? Who would be interested in maybe undermining that? So let's just today, together push back against this. Let's, let's get a little countercultural here and unpack some of the details of this. After all, we do live in Weld County. Wild, wild Weld. Let's be wild. Let's just be, be, countercultural. Push against the grain. Get a couple splinters. Yes. But we're going to unpack some of the details.

So we're going to get into the bulk of this in a third point, number three: Some answers to the confusion. Some answers to the confusion. I've listed some differences, summary differences between Luke's account of the desolation of Jerusalem and the accounts of Matthew and Mark. Both of those refer to the Abomination of Desolation. Everybody sees the differences. Everybody sees them easily, plainly.

So what is the answer? Why are there differences between these accounts? Well to put it plainly, as we're saying what Luke records in verses 20 to 24, Luke 21, that's all about the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple and that's been fulfilled in the past, as we've been saying, in AD 70. What

# GRACE CHURCH

---

Grace

Matthew and Mark record is Jesus' prediction not of AD 70, but of the tribulation and the salvation of believing Israel which is still future to us. Jesus said, "you will not see me again until you say blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." They have not said that, and so he has not come. I cannot possibly work through all the issues in a single sermon. Silver and gold have I none, but what I do give you, I give you in the name of Jesus Christ. Let's try to clarify this. Right?

Go to Matthew 24, if you're not there already. Let's take a look at that section. Matthew, chapter 24, verses 15 to 22. Try to provide an overview of this and just walk through the text together. We'll start in verse 15, and again, this is going to be hitting high points, skimming off the wave tops, but I hope that this gives you some clarity about what's going on.

Matthew 24:15 to 22, starting in verse 15, Jesus says, "Therefore when you see the Abomination of Desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the Prophet, when you see the Abomination of Desolation standing in the holy place, (let the reader understand)." That's twice, isn't it, he's pointed us

back to Daniel, spoken of through Daniel, and let the reader understand, the reader of what? The reader of Daniel. So this Abomination of Desolation is technical language. We need to understand this, that when people see this in Scripture, the Abomination of Desolation, they, their minds are going directly back to Daniel.

It's referring to something quite specific. John Calvin says this word, abomination, *bdelygma*. *Bdelygma*, that word is a religious word. Abomination is religious in nature and especially when we consider the context here, as Jesus says, it's standing in the Holy Place. Whatever this abomination is, it's standing in the Holy Place. What's the Holy Place for the Jews? The Temple. The Holy of Holies. So it's standing in the Holy Place. This is a detestable act of defiling idolatry. And it's an idolatry that then leads to desolation, leads to judgment, destruction. Jesus is, of course, referring to that which was spoken of through the prophet Daniel, which is why Matthew calls the readers of his gospel, Mark does the same thing, to read to understand. He points them back to the book of Daniel

And so keep a finger in Matthew 24. Let's go back to the book of Daniel, the book of Daniel. We'll take a look at Daniel Chapter 9. God sends messengers to tell Daniel. Daniel, this is in response to Daniel praying. He's praying about the exile of his people. He's praying about the future of his people, Israel. He's praying about the city of Jerusalem. He's praying about the temple. He's got concerns on his mind for God's promises of restoration to Israel. And so God sends messengers to tell Daniel about this thing called the Abomination of Desolation. Tells him about a lot of things.

A lot of the, the, the future history of Israel, as unfolded in Daniel 9, 10, 11, and 12. It's just fascinating. We don't have time to go through all this. But I just want to focus on the Abomination of Desolation as a technical expression coming from Daniel. There are three places, Daniel 9:27, Daniel 11:31 and Daniel 12:11, all of them use that, that terminology, the Abomination of Desolation.

The first one, Daniel 9:27, it maps the future of Israel and kind of cites the Abomination of Desolation to begin with.

Daniel 11:31 provides a type of the Abomination of Desolation. And then Daniel 12:11 reiterates the timing of the Abomination of Desolation. So again go back to Daniel 9:24, 9:24, where Gabriel comes to Daniel and tells him this: Seventy weeks have been determined. "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people." Who's that? Israel. "And for your holy city." What's that? Mecca? No. Holy city of Jerusalem. So this is about the Jews and Jerusalem. "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make an atonement for iniquity, to bring an everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Holy of Holies."

So as Gabriel reveals this to Daniel, he's using that, seventy weeks language. It's as if Gabriel unfurls a scroll, as one has called this, and, and, and a scroll of, of, a calendar of successive weeks, unfolds. It's laid out before them and these weeks are weeks of years. So 70 weeks, 490 years. Notice in that verse with Daniel 9:24, two sets of three actions. Two sets of three actions. The first set of actions pertain to God's plan to deal with Israel's sin. We have a whole Old Testament that, that

shows the repetition of Israel's sin over and over and over again.

They keep doing the same thing over and over again. And you wonder when's this going to come to an end? Well, right here. Gabriel's telling Daniel about God's plan to deal with Israel's sin once and for all, to bring a final end to it. And the second set of actions pertains to God's plan to secure Israel's righteousness, to secure Israel's righteousness, to make sure that there is no falling into sin again, that there is no drift backward, there is no more drift into idolatry. Or rather to secure full and final righteousness that never changes.

Further, God's plan to deal with sin, we can see, was accomplished in Christ's first coming. And God's plan to secure righteousness for his people, Israel, which is secured in Israel's repentance, that comes in conjunction with Christ's second coming. So we see the first set of actions of Christ's first coming, second set of actions, Christ's second coming. You can also see this in terms of the active and passive obedience of Christ.

In the, in the passive obedience of Christ; that is not to say he was passive, it's to say, it's what he suffered. *Pati* the word, the Latin word for suffering. In the passive suffering obedience of Christ, he accomplished God's plan to deal with Israel's sin. In his act of obedience, fulfilling all of the law, fulfilling all righteousness, he secured full final righteousness for his people. That's why we are so grateful for the imputation involved in Christ's active and passive obedience. God imputed our sin to Christ, punished him for it. God imputed Christ's righteousness to us and treated us as Christ deserves to be treated.

Israel's final act of transgression, rebellion, was to reject their Messiah. He is the subject of all the Law and the Prophets. And once Israel rejected Christ, their rebellion was sealed, their sin was complete. They were unable to go any deeper or any farther. After all, once you reject God's salvation for you, what other depth of sin can you go to? That was the end of their sin.

# GRACE CHURCH

---

That was the culminating point of their sin, but wondrously, marvelously, in the act of rebellion itself, in the, Israel's rejection of its Messiah, that is what brought about the end of sin through the rejected Christ. This is the point of Isaiah 53, to atone for all iniquity and provide everlasting righteousness. So righteousness never to be forsaken, never to be broken.

Again, Paul summarizes this in 2 Corinthians 5:21, "God made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." Active and passive obedience. Christ's first coming, Christ second coming for his people, the Jews.

Now, after God accomplished his atoning work for his people, Israel, in Christ he sealed the prophetic vision. That's what we see in Revelation, the unbreaking of the seals of the scroll. Who's worthy to take the scroll? Only the Lamb of God, right? So he comes and starts to break open the seven seals, unscrolling that scroll of vision and prophecy. It's sealed here. There's a future anointing of the Holy of Holies. There's temple worship.



# GRACE CHURCH

---

Grace

Can't get into all this right now, but it refers to Ezekiel's temple. We actually covered this in times past and talking about the temple in weeks, in months past in our study of Luke. So he's referring to this future anointing of the Holy of Holies, Temple worship reinstated, Ezekiel's temple, and so he goes on to say this in Daniel Chapter 9. So, Daniel, you are to know and to have insight. Why did God come to Daniel? Why did God send Gabriel to Daniel? To obscure the truth, to hide it, to make it confusing, to obfuscate, to darken? No! So you can know. So you can have insight.

Understand, whenever God reveals, he intends us to have clarity. You're to know, you're to have insight that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah, the prince, there will be 7 weeks and 62 weeks. It will be built again with Plaza and Moat, even in times of distress. So the clock starts there at the decree of Artaxerxes in Ezra 7:12 and following. When Artaxerxes authorized magistrates and judges, to the returned people of Israel, back to the land. And that authorizing of magistrates and judges, means they have self-rule, means the rebuilding of the city, its walls, reestablishing rule of the Jews of Jerusalem for themselves.

Now what's this, 7 weeks, 62 weeks, all that stuff. The math gets a little tricky. It's not our purpose today, so I'm not going to show you all my work on this. But from the decree of Artaxerxes to either the baptism or the death of Jesus, some people have different views here. But that's 483 years, 7 weeks, 62 weeks, it's 483 years; by the calendar Gabriel uses 7 weeks, 62 weeks. Basic math, 7 plus 62, 69 weeks, right? 483 years.

So we're asking the question then, what about that extra seven years? How do we take 483 up to 490? Where, where is that 70th week? Well, Daniel 9:26 says, "Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing." What is that? The crucifixion. And then he says, "The people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary." Now note the distinction between the prince who is to come and the people of the prince who is to come. If the people of that future Prince are the Romans and the destruction of the city and the temple refer to AD 70, then the prince who is to come points to a still future ruler.

# GRACE CHURCH

---

Grace

The end that Gabriel predicts next, in the middle of verse 26, "The end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined." That fits with the time of tribulation that Jesus predicted in the Olivet Discourse. It's what we read and studied in Luke 21:8 to 11; Great tribulation or the tribulation time; first half of the tribulation.

Matthew 24:4 to 14, it's also parallel there; Tribulation time, time of Jacob's trouble. The phrase, Jacob's trouble, comes from Jeremiah 30 verse 7. Jacob's trouble. Jeremiah reveals there says, "but he," that is Jacob, "he shall be saved out of it." Jacob, Israel, the people, will be saved out of that time of trouble. So there's a tribulation still future.

There's trouble for Israel still future and they will be saved out of it. So where does this trouble come from? Daniel 9:27, the trial comes from the rise of the Antichrist. It says in verse 27, "he" that is the prince who is to come, "he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week." There's Daniel's 70th. "He'll make a firm covenant with," the people or with, "the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will

put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of the abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that's decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

Okay, so we've located Daniel's 70th week. It's the final week in which this prince who is to come makes a firm covenant with the Jews. He makes that covenant for one week. But in the middle of that week, that's 3 1/2 years. Seven years is one week. He puts a stop to sacrifice and offering.

So who is this prince who is to come? Who is this person? How do we identify him? Some people say, that is referring to Jesus Christ. Some people say it's Jesus. They say his death abolished temple sacrifice and temple offering. But that is not correct. That view is not correct. It doesn't fit the facts. Christ, we know never decried the temple itself.

He, he, condemned the tenants who were running the temple, yes, but not the temple. When he spoke about the Pharisees, he says the Pharisees sit on the seat of Moses. Yeah, so do what they

# GRACE CHURCH

---

Grace

tell you, but don't live as they live. Don't do as they do. He affirmed the seat of Moses. He affirmed the, the, Temple; its role in the life of the people, Israel. But he looked at the people who turned the Temple into a den of robbers and he indicted them. He said judgment is coming upon you. The Temple is still his father's house. The Temple is still the house of prayer for all the nations, but under that management, that's got to go.

The building itself does not matter. That's why the Apostles, the elders, the members of the Jerusalem church even after Christ's ascension, they continued daily in the Temple. They kept going to the daily sacrifice. They offered sacrifice. They gave gifts. They made vows. It wasn't until AD 70 that sacrifice was ended. Those early Jewish Christians, they were there at the Temple conducting their ministry in Solomon's Portico. Now. so this one who is to come, the prince who is to come is not Jesus Christ, contrary to some views.

Others say the prince who is to come, this one who is going to make a firm covenant with many for the week, middle of the week,

put a stop to sacrifice, grain offering. Some people say this is referring to the Roman General Titus Vespasian. The one who entered into the land and destroyed the city, destroyed its Temple. They say that he ended sacrifices and offerings. That can't be right either, though. It does not fit the facts.

Titus did not make any covenant with the Jews for a week. He didn't break any covenant either. It wasn't Titus, furthermore, who put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering. Josephus is very clear about this. After all, Josephus was there, present, standing beside Titus. He actually carried the message of Titus to the Jews who were opposing them to the revolutionaries. He was there on scene.

Josephus had a keen interest in seeing the temple restored, its worship continued. One of the faction leaders, remember that name, John of Gischala, that revolutionary leader we talked about last week, week before. At the very end, as everything's, and the siege is drawing to a close, that John defeated Eleazar and his faction; defeated him, controlled all the rebel forces,

himself. So it was actually John who put a stop to the daily sacrifice.

Josephus went in to appeal, once they conquered Antonio's fortress, which is connected to the Temple. Once they conquered Antonio's, for Antonio, the Antonio fortress, it was actually Josephus who was ordered by Titus himself, backed up by the Emperor Vespasian, he tried to get John to reinstate the daily sacrifice, pleaded with him. You read about all this in, *the Wars of the Jews, Book six, Chapter 2*, if you'd like to look for yourself. It's very interesting reading that, that expression. So basically what I'm saying is it wasn't Titus who put a, a, stop to sacrifice and grain offering. It was one of the revolutionaries, the Jews themselves who did that.

This expression, verse 27, some people have been confused by this, "on the wing of the abominations." It is a bit difficult to understand, but since the wording or that word, *kanaph*, can mean wing like a wing of a bird. But when you think about the wing of a bird, what is it doing? It's stretching out. So the wing, that concept of wing or *kanaph*, that word can also mean

extremity or extended. So it seems to be referring, wing of abominations seems to be referring to that which is extended out, that which is at the extremity of abominations, during the 70th week; something that is extended, gone to its extreme end.

This extreme abomination comes in the one who makes desolate and makes even a complete destruction, one that is decreed, one that's poured out on the one who makes desolate. This is talking about the Abomination of Desolation, and there's no sense in which any decreed desolation came back to revisit Titus. He was not revisited by the abomination that he had made. Titus went back to Rome. He celebrated a triumph in the streets of Rome. He paraded through the streets with his prisoners. He actually later succeeded his father Vespasian as Emperor.

So the one, if Titus is the one who makes desolate, well, there's supposed to be then a desolation that comes back to revisit him. Didn't happen. Titus is not the, the, one who makes desolate. He is not the one who brings the Abomination of Desolation. So if it's not Jesus who makes desolate. If it's not



# GRACE CHURCH

---

Grace

Titus who makes desolate. If neither of them are the prince who is to come, well, who's this talking about?

Turn to, two chapters over to Daniel 11. Daniel 11, because God sends Daniel yet another angelic messenger. Some say this is a preincarnate Christ, who comes as the Angel of the Lord. He's just. The language describing him is very Christ like. It's interesting, if you see there, but another angelic messenger and this one prophecies the Persian conquest followed by the Greek conquest, goes to the, gives us a type of the Abomination of Desolation. Find your way to Daniel 11:31. It says, "Mighty forces from him will stand and profane the sanctuary fortress and abolish the regular sacrifice, and they will set up the Abomination of Desolation." That text talks about Antiochus IV, Epiphanes. He conquered the city of Jerusalem in 167 BC, before Christ. Intending to come in, he, he, hated the Jews, and intending to defile the Jews, defile their altar, humiliate the Jews in their own temple on their own ground, he tried to prove the superiority of the Greek gods. And so Antiochus slaughtered a pig on Yahweh's altar, slaughtered that pig to offer a sacrifice of honor to Zeus; Zeus over Yahweh. That was the message he's sending.

Now, Antiochus Epiphanes does not fulfill, the regular, the earlier prophecy of Daniel 9:27. He doesn't fulfill it for many reasons, but he is a type of the future Antichrist. What Antiochus did in 167 BC sets a pattern for all those who are alive when, christ, Antichrist is revealed. Those who watch the Antichrist ascend in their day. Those who see the Israel come back together and make a deal with the Antichrist, make a covenant, enter into a covenant with him for their protection, who watch him, then break that covenant with them when he commits this most heinous extreme of sins, called the Abomination of Desolation. And some say, yeah, that's Titus. Or yeah, that's, that's, Antiochus Epiphanes.

With Titus, after Jerusalem fell, some people who think that Titus is the, the, one who brings the Abomination of Desolation, they say well, because his men marched the Roman Standards into the Temple area, as [does] Jerusalem was destroyed and the Temple was destroyed. The Jews considered those Roman Standards idolatrous. They had the Roman eagle on them and he offered sacrifices to his gods in the environment of the temple, in the Temple complex.

So did Titus fulfill this Abomination of Desolation as foretold in Daniel? No. What Titus did was an act of idolatry, to be sure. But since John had already cut off the daily sacrifice, since the Temple was already destroyed and burned to the ground, and not one stone left upon another, it was not functional. So Titus didn't abominate an active operational Temple. He didn't call anyone to worship himself. Titus didn't use the altar of Yahweh to promote idolatry. Titus desolated the Temple for sure, but in no way did he abominate the Temple after the pattern of Antiochus.

Now I know there's a lot to cover here, but we're gonna leave Daniel behind and go to a section of Scripture in the New Testament where we see this Antichrist figure fulfill Daniel's prophecy. Turn ahead to 2 Corinthians or 2 Thessalonians, I should say, 2 Thessalonians and Chapter 2, 2 Thessalonians Chapter 2. There were some coming into the young Thessalonian Church and trying to trouble them by saying that the day of the Lord had already come and they are left behind.

# GRACE CHURCH

---

Grace

And so Paul is providing assurance to this troubled church. Those who think that they missed the day of the Lord, that they missed the Second Coming, and look in, in, 2 Thessalonians, Chapter 2, verse 3, Paul says, "Let no one in any way deceive you, for the day of the Lord has not come unless the apostasy comes first, unless the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called God or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the sanctuary of God, exhibiting himself as being God."

That is the Abomination of Desolation according to Revelation 13:11 to 18. This Antichrist, he's revealed as the beast. There in Revelation 13, he sets up an image of himself, an idolatrous statue in the temple sanctuary. He requires all the people of the earth to worship his image or die. And to enforce that, he has any worshipper put a mark of himself, on their hand or forehead, and unless they receive the mark of allegiance to the beast, as worshippers of the beast, no one can buy or sell, he'll starve them out. It'll be a famine ongoing for those who don't worship.

# GRACE CHURCH

---

Grace

Now, whatever you think of the leaders that have risen in our nation, Ronald Reagan, I've heard called the Antichrist before. Barack Obama, Donald Trump, Joe Biden, none of them are the Antichrist, Okay? None of them. We don't know that person yet. There's no world leader to date that's been that brazen to go into the, march into the Temple and the Holy of Holies and set up a statue of himself and say, everybody worship me, everyone worship me through the image of the statue. Nobody's done that.

None of these passages, Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians 24, Matthew 24:15, Revelation 13:15. None of them, by the way, could have been fulfilled in AD 70 either. Not by Titus, not by anyone else. Why? Because that Temple was not standing when Titus entered into it, that Temple was set on fire, burned to the ground, not one stone standing on another. But in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 and Matthew 24:15, there is a Temple. There's a Temple there for the Antichrist to stand in. There's a holy sanctuary for him to enter, in which he's able to go in and take his seat and exhibit himself as god himself.

# GRACE CHURCH

---

That Temple, by the way, is described and measured and surveyed in the most literal terms possible in Ezekiel 40 to 42. We've gone through some of that before. That is the Temple that is set up in the end time. It's there in the tribulation time. That is the Temple that's desecrated by the Antichrist, when he sets up his abomination in the Holy of Holies; one that causes desolation, one that brings God's judgement, that draws the wrath of God, and so that his abominating act in the Temple itself, that is going to lead to his desolation. A desolation that it, that is going to spread out to chase the Jews, but it'll eventually turn around and consume him, the wrath of God when Christ returns. And then that lawless one will be revealed, Paul says in second, 2 Thessalonians 2, "Whom the Lord Jesus will slay with the breath of his mouth and" bring an end, "bring to an end by the appearance of His coming."

So much more to see, obviously. So much more I'd like to tell you, but it's Mother's Day. You all have food in the oven. Got to get you home. We have to keep moving. So go ahead and return now to Matthew 24. Matthew 24. You're like, he only went through one verse. And what, what's, what if, what's, how long is this going to be? Don't worry about it. We're going to speed up now

that, I just want to give you a little bit of an insight into what the Abomination of Desolation is, that technical expression and that it's the Antichrist who commits it.

And now that we know that, we can finish surveying Matthew 24:15 and following, "Therefore, when you see the Abomination of Desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house. And whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his garment."

It's not like Luke's account, is it? It's not like AD 70. It's, it's, got similar language, doesn't it? But it's, it's not like the same thing. When residents heard of Roman legions marching to Jerusalem, they had time to get away. When they watched them begin to surround the city and prepare for a siege and set up and strip the forest bare to create wood for their siege works, they had time to get away.

# GRACE CHURCH

---

Greeley

But here in Matthew's account, there's a sense of suddenness in the account, isn't there, taking the Jews by surprise. In fact, it's the presence of the Antichrist all of a sudden standing in the middle of the Temple, like, whoa, what's he doing there? That's the sign their to look for. When they see that, these Jews living in the tribulation time, they got to get out and they got to get out fast. Why? Because the Antichrist, he's turned on them. He seemed a friend. He seemed a protector, and all of a sudden he's standing in the middle of the Temple in the Holy of Holies, setting up a statue to himself, calling the whole world to worship him. And anybody who doesn't worship him will die. Jews don't see that coming.

At that time, those Jews, they're gonna make the same mistake they've always been making throughout history, to rely on some foreign power to help them, to rescue them. They're trying to survive as a people, not by bowing the knee to God and his Christ, but they're trying to survive as a people, by military might, by the protection of some other nation, some foreign power, making strategic alliances. That's exactly the trouble they got into all throughout history. Led them into idolatry.



Taught them to trust in themselves, their own ingenuity, their own compromises.

In this case, though, they tried to make an alliance with the Antichrist. I mean, after all, he is a stunningly powerful world leader, charismatic, influential, able to make deals. He seems to be on their side for a time. He protects, his, the Jews. He protects the Jews from the surrounding nations. All those nations bang for Israel's blood. And then he turns on them. And when he turns on them, he turns hard and fast and violently, and he pursues them like a dragon pursuing a woman, Revelation, chapter 12. So the Jews are forced to flee once again. Not all of them do. Some people, some people will stay. Some people will suffer terribly. But that is the winnowing Scripture speaks of, of the Jewish people.

Those who will continue to go their own way, continue to trust in the world, continue to turn from God, continue not to bow the knee to Christ, and they'll suffer, they'll die, they'll go into exile. But for all those who believe, for all those who repent, as Zechariah 12:10 says, all those who look upon him whom

they've pierced and mourn for that one and repent. For all those who, for all those who read the words of their Messiah, written in the Gospels. For all those who go back to Daniel and think about this, and God opens their eyes, and gives them grace, and grants them faith to believe, oh, those believers will leave Judea. They will flee to the mountains, just as Jesus says.

Another very difficult time for Jewish believers, Matthew 24:19, you say, wait a minute. Where's, time out? Where's the church? The church has been raptured. The church is no longer there. That's why the focus is on the Jews. The focus is on Israel. Will there be Gentiles saved during that time? Absolutely. But they will be joining the Jewish people, bowing down to their Messiah. They'll have the whole written Canon of Scripture before them. They'll be able to figure things out because the Holy Spirit will be in them and draw them into all truth and lead them into understanding. But it's Israel that will be the focus during the tribulation period. The Church: The church is with Christ in heaven waiting for his return.

Very difficult time for Jewish believers here on earth, Matthew 24:19, "Woe to those," again, "who are pregnant, to those who are nursing babies in those days, pray that your flight will not be in the winter or on a Sabbath." Again, in Luke 21:23, the woe upon the pregnant and nursing mothers is because they're stuck in the city during a horrific famine and a dreadful siege; talked about some of that.

Matthew 24:19, the woe there is upon the pregnant and nursing mothers who are in flight. Who are running, on the run as refugees, having to take their little ones with them. As Jewish refugees flee Judea and head into the mountains as mothers take their babies with them. It is a harsh, arduous escape from the Antichrist's wrath. If they've got to flee in the winter, they're going to be slowed by the rainy season. Rainy season means high water in the rivers. Rivers are very difficult to cross. River and stream crossings are treacherous, as every military man knows, who practices those things trying to get across a river. It's an order of magnitude more difficult with pregnant moms, nursing moms, little babies. Imagine having to be the leader of some, somebody who's fleeing Judea in a time like that. Very difficult.

And also slowed by Sabbath day travel restrictions. As fastidious Jews, God testing their faith, perhaps. See if they'll honor the Sabbath, keep it holy, even though they are on the run, and Antichrist's forces are bearing down on them, hunting them down. Much like the Egyptians did, pressing Israel to the sea. None of that, by the way, fits the circumstances of the destruction in Jerusalem in AD 70. None of that.

So, Jesus says, basically, pray for a favorable season to escape in. "For then," verse 21, "For then," in that time, "there will be a great tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now," no, "nor never will. Unless those days have been," cut off or, "cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short."

Jesus portrays the flight of the Jews to the mountains in prophetic imagery, when he reveals this to John, in the Revelation, Revelation, Chapter 12. You don't need to turn there, but just listen to this. See if you could pick up some of

this familiar language. Revelation 12:6 and Revelation 12:13 as well. "The woman," she represents Israel, "she fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God so that she would be nourished for 1260 days." You say, how long is that? Oh, that's actually 3 1/2 years. 3 1/2 years, half of the seven-year tribulation. It's the back half.

It's the second-half, that they're on the run, after Antichrist breaks his covenant with Israel. After he turns on them at the midpoint of the tribulation, the Jews flee and God takes care of them for the rest of those 3 1/2 years, as they're on the run. According to Revelation 12:14, God gives the woman wings like an, of an eagle, puts her out of the reach of the Antichrist, makes her untouchable. And though the journey is difficult, as Matthew 24:19-20 says, God lets her "fly like an eagle into the wilderness to her place, where she again was nourished," Revelation 12, "for time and times and half a time." Again, that's just language for 3 1/2 years.

It's exactly as God did with his people in the Exodus, when he brought them out, took care of Israel, his chosen people. He's

doing this, this yet again now, not, not, just with Egypt the superpower, but now an alliance of nations now headed up by the Antichrist, a world leader. Surrounded and yet God takes care of them. Christ shepherds his people once again, enables their escape. He sustains their lives to the very end of the tribulation when he comes again and destroys all those other forces.

So much more to that story, obviously, but that's where we need to stop for now. And let me congratulate you folks because you made it. Okay, take a very deep breath; exhale slowly. Don't do it too much or they'll accuse us of doing yoga in church. We won't do that. Just relax while I tell you this, as we close. Why all this was necessary today. Why do we need to do this?

Number four: We give you the significance of the clarification. It was necessary to show you the differences between Luke's account and that of Matthew and Mark, and then try to give you a summary of Matthew 24 and go into those other prophetic texts as well, just to try to clear up some confusion that comes when comparing those chapters. Because I want you to grow in how you

read the Bible and its Eschatology. I was tempted at this point to preach a second sermon, but I'll save that for next time, as we get into the Second Coming text, that's next.

But I want you to understand the Bible. I want you to trust what you're reading there. I want you to read it and let your eyes, and, and I'm not talking about superficial reading. I understand that we can all get confused when we read superficially. We go to another passage; it seems the same. We're like, yeah, same stuff. We kind of move on. But listen, when we slow down, as we try to do here, as we slow down and take a slow roll and go deeper, we start to notice things. And I want to encourage you to trust your eyes, the mind that God has given you, the spirit whom he caused to dwell in you, who is your internal illuminator of the truth. I want you to trust the Bible that's in your hand, because it's a good translation. These English translations we have are really, really good. And I want you to understand what's happening next. What's coming in the future.

Why is it important to grow in your understanding of Eschatology? Why should you pay attention to last things? Why

# GRACE CHURCH

---

Grace

shouldn't you just say, well, I'll leave it for someone else; all the scholars to figure that out. Why should you take it upon yourself? Because it's essential for framing your life according to the revealed truth of what's coming. It's essential. It's vital. It's critical for you to live out a life before God in light of what God has planned that's to come.

I told you before, at some point in the past, I've told you that knowing what Christ has taught, if you're living just after Christ ascended and you're living in Jerusalem, you're part of the Church there. You've, you're breaking bread daily, enjoying the Apostles teaching. You're out there in Solomon's Portico and you're preaching to the Jews. You're just having a great time. You're loving this spirit indwelling thing, and what's happening, and the, the, truth is just hitting your mind.

As you go back through the Old Testament, you see how everything points to Christ, and you're loving the truth. But reading through what Jesus said or understanding what Jesus said in the Olivet Discourse, it would make you a little less interested in



investing in property in Jerusalem, right? It maybe would break the hold that this earth has on your heart.

If you had money to invest, you're considering a particular investment opportunity, maybe a startup company or something like that. And if I could pull you to the side and show you the future of that particular startup is going to be an unmitigated disaster, would you go forward and invest in that startup anyway? What if I could show you the one company, the one company in 1000 that's not only going to be profitable for the next year or the next 10 years, 20 years, 30 years, but the next 100 years; more inclined to invest?

Eschatology is like that, folks, but so much more important. Eschatology tells you where to invest your thinking, your time, your priorities, your life, your money, your stewardship. Listen to the words of John at the very beginning of the revelation. "Blessed is he," Revelation 1:3, "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy and heed the things which are written in it, for the time is near."

# GRACE CHURCH

---

Grace

God has given eschatology for our good. He's given it to us to bless us. After Paul explained to the Thessalonian Church, the Doctrine of the Rapture, he ended by saying this, "Therefore comfort one another with these words." *Parakaleo* is the verb, to encourage one another, strengthen each other with these words; this doctrine. When he says these words, he's not just talking about the particular nouns and verbs and conjunctions, and he's talking about the doctrines that they teach.

Paul told the Corinthians, as well, after this long doctrinal section on, on, the importance of the resurrection and its impact on Eschatology. In 1 Corinthians 15:58, very last, first of that chapter, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord." Those Corinthians had jobs. Their kids did sports. Their kids are raised in schooling and all those kind of things.

They had all the challenges and difficulties that you have. Paul says, now that you understand how vital the Doctrine of the Resurrection is, now, that you understand its impact on the

# GRACE CHURCH

---

Grace

future, securing your future hope of being resurrected in the end, that you're transformed, "in the moment, in the twinkling of an eye." Be steadfast. Beloved brethren, be immovable. Don't let anything shake you.

Always abound in the work of the Lord, not abounding in whatever you achieve in this life, not abounding in your own comfort, ease, experiences that you can stack up in this life. No. Always abound in the work of the Lord, knowing your toil, your *kopos*, your labor with sweat is never "in vain in the Lord." Anything you invest in his work, his kingdom, his righteousness, anything you invest in is, in his church, is "not in vain the Lord." It's all accruing to your benefit. That's a solid investment. That's one that's going to bear fruit for eternity. After all, God has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Beloved, that's why clarity in Eschatology, clarity in all of Scripture, really, but especially in Eschatology. It's why clarity is so important. We should expect that from our God, who doesn't hide truth from us, doesn't make it hard and obscure.

# GRACE CHURCH

---

Grace

It's not to say everything's equally easy to understand. He requires us to do some work and put in some effort, some toil, some labor, put in some sweat, some hours. But it's there, if you just work hard. We should expect that because our God is a God who glorifies himself.

What is it to glorify himself? Glorify: Sometimes we think like a, a, Cadillac is a glorified Buick. It's not in that sense at all. Glorify God means to make him fully known in all of his attributes. God rejoices to glorify himself, to reveal his mind, his thinking. So if he rejoices to reveal his thinking; his mind is truth to us. We should expect when we go in, we're going to find clarity. We're going to find answers. we're going to find help. We're going to find power, strength, encouragement. If you're not finding that, problem is not here, problem is not in your God, the problem could be in you. This is the point of Eschatology, folks.

I have so much more to say. You don't know what's left on the editing room floor, but I'll pick it up, piece it together, and, and, fire it at you next week. All right. There's so much more

to say about interpreting Eschatology and this issue of the perspicuity of Scripture, doctrine of clarity of Scripture. and why it is that we can expect to come to clarity, as long as we follow rules that cut out our own biases, get rid of our own subjectivity. As we're aware of our presuppositions and assumptions that we all bring into text of Scripture and, and, all of our preferences. If we follow rules that cut that out and make us as objective as possible and mitigate all our biases, we're going to find that there's actually a lot of clarity we can have. A lot of things we can understand. Well, that's coming next week on the Second Coming.

Let's pray. Our Father, we're so grateful to you for giving us clarity in the truth. We thank you for revealing your mind to us, glorifying yourself to us, and particularly as you've glorified yourself in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The incarnate truth, lived out before us, as he came to reveal you to us; reveal all of your mind to us. We are grateful beyond words; please help us to be. I'm greatly encouraged by the things that we hear, understand, learn. And I pray that you would settle any, any, nervous heart who feels that these things are so far beyond and so difficult.

# GRACE CHURCH

---

Greeley

I just pray that you would help keep all of us together as a church, walking through the truths together, so we receive the greatest benefit and blessing and encouragement out of it. We love you, Father. We thank you for your fatherly love. Love for us as your children. We thank You, Lord Jesus, for your shepherding love for us, as the Good Shepherd. As you shepherd us, your sheep, lead us into green pastures, beside still waters, anointing our head with oil. Our cup does run over. We love you and thank you. It's in your name we pray. Amen.