

THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

Matthew 24:1-3

The Context



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THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

A painting of Jesus sitting on a rocky ledge, looking out over a vast, hazy landscape. He is wearing a white robe and a white shawl. The background shows a valley with a city in the distance, under a warm, golden light.

Jesus' Teaching on
End Time Israel

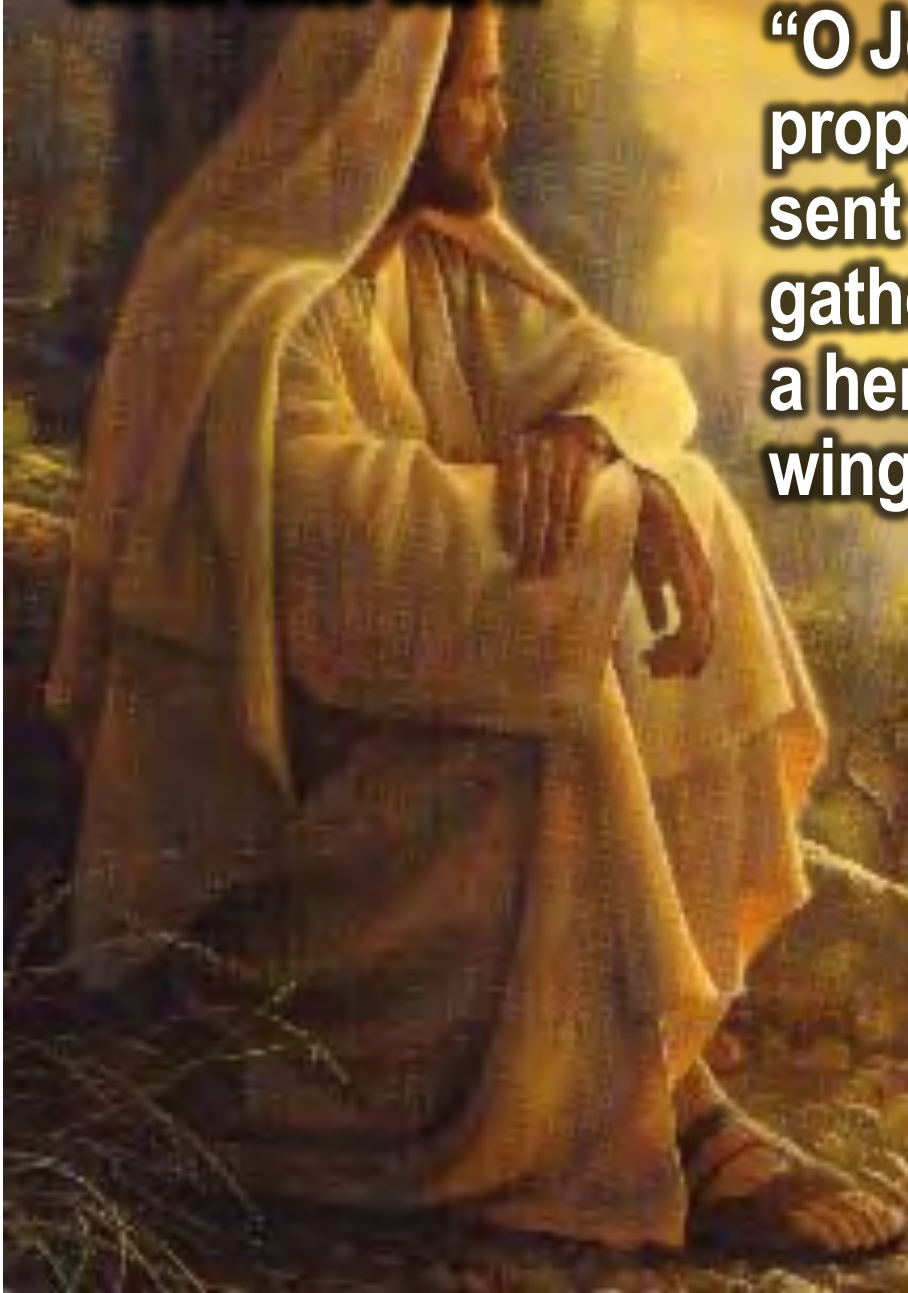
Review of
Lesson 1

The Olivet Discourse is an important passage for the development of anyone's view of Bible prophecy. The Olivet Discourse is made up of our Lord's teaching on Bible prophecy that is found in Matthew 24-25, Mark 13 and Luke 21.



In spite of the fact that the Jewish people deserved the approaching judgment, like a caring parent about to administer a just punishment, Christ cries out ...

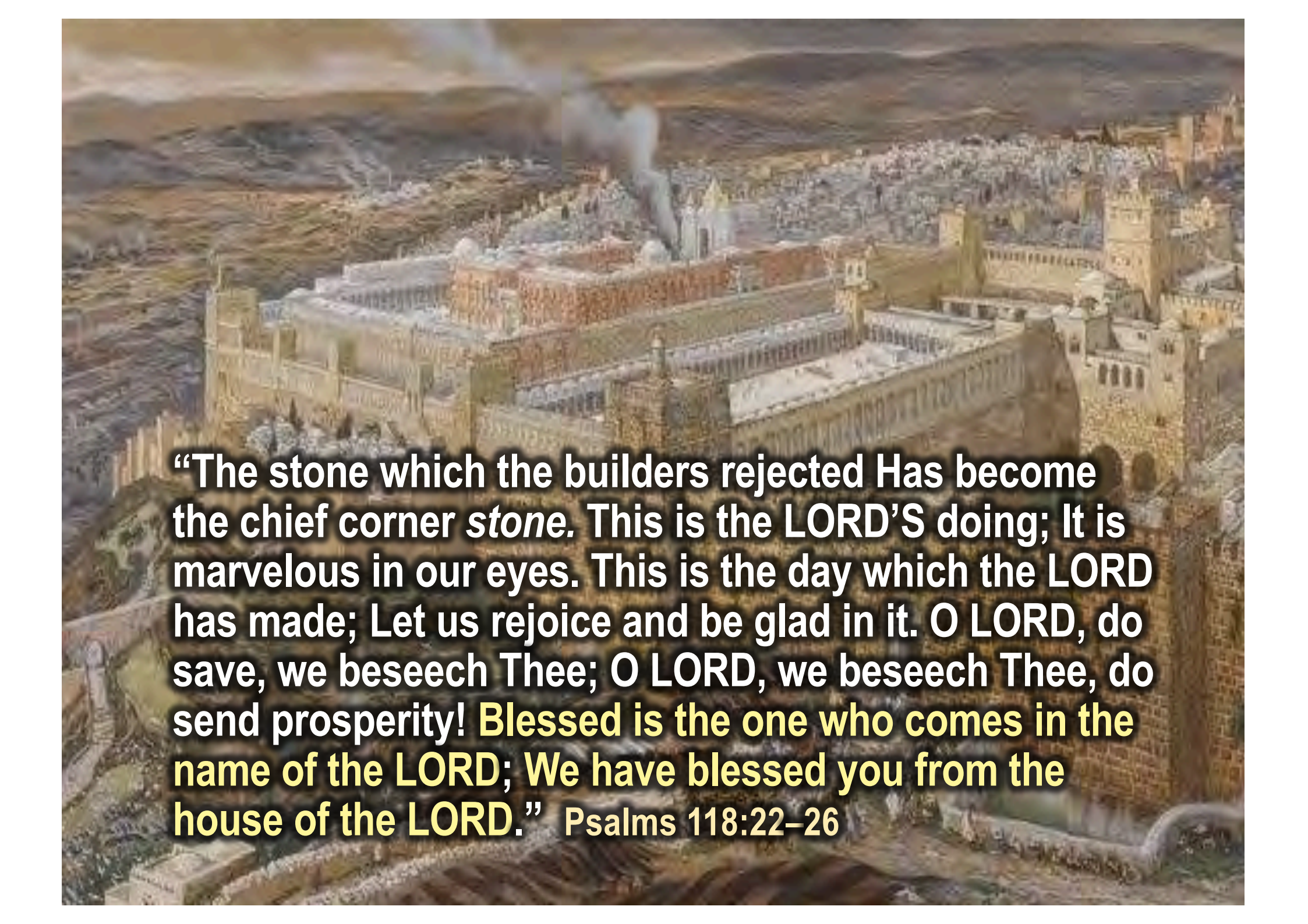
“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.



• **Christ is making an offer to the Nation. But the verse concludes with Israel's rejection of His offer when Jesus notes that the leaders of the Nation were unwilling.**

• **Because of the nation's rejection of Jesus as Messiah, Christ now pronounces judgment upon them in verse 38 and says "your house is being left to you desolate ..."**

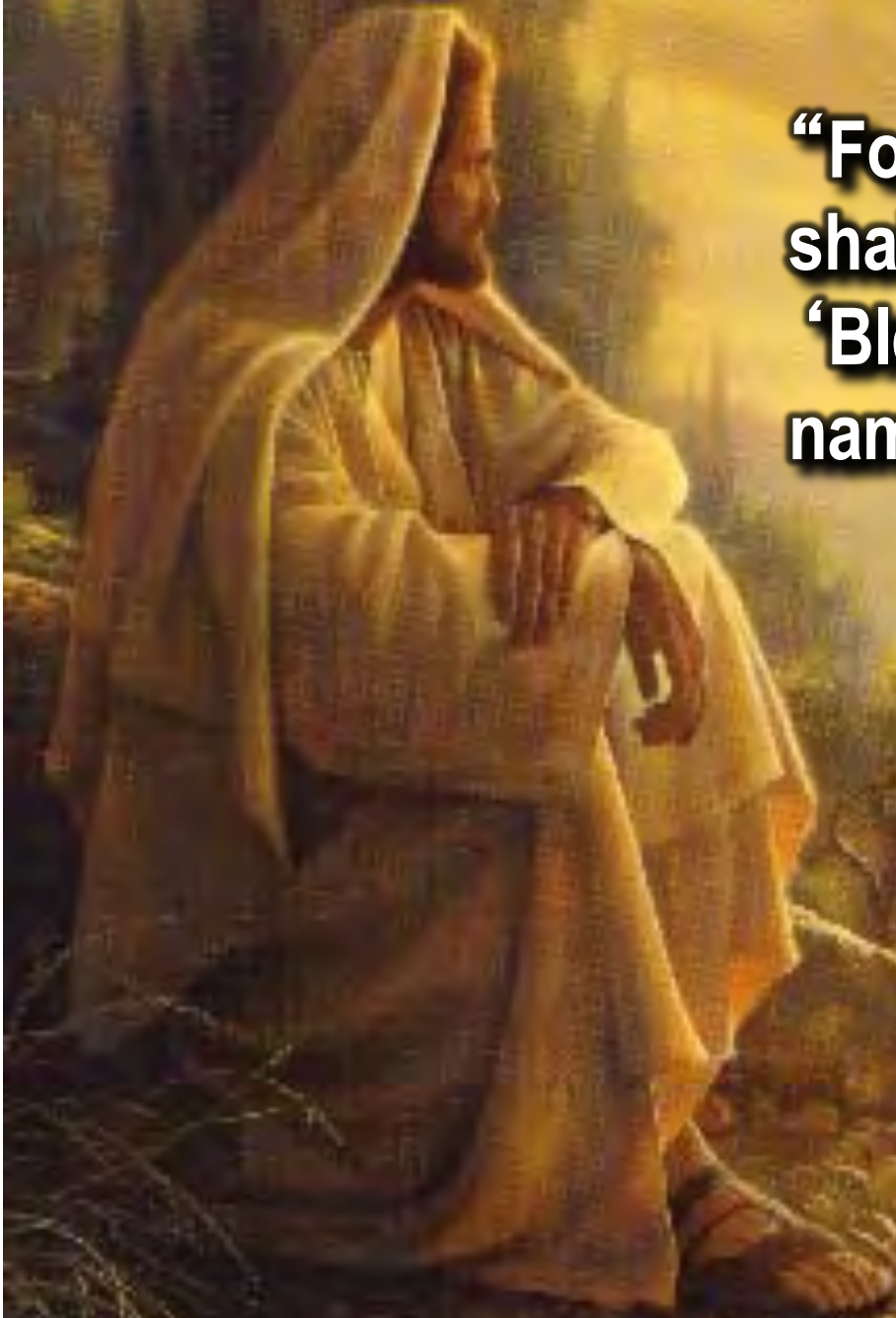
• **What is meant by "house?" It is a reference to the **Temple**.**

An aerial, high-angle view of a vast, ancient stone city, likely Jerusalem, built on a hillside. The city is characterized by its massive, light-colored stone walls and numerous towers and spires. In the center, a large, prominent structure, possibly the Temple Mount, is visible. A thick plume of white smoke or steam rises from the city, drifting towards the left. The background shows a hazy, mountainous landscape under a cloudy sky. The overall scene conveys a sense of historical grandeur and divine presence.

“The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief corner *stone*. This is the LORD’S doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it. O LORD, do save, we beseech Thee; O LORD, we beseech Thee, do send prosperity! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD; We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.” Psalms 118:22–26

• Jesus continues His prophecy in the next verse ...

“For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me *until* you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’ ” **Matthew 23:39**



- **We see 3 things in this statement:**

1. **When He says, “from now on you will not see Me,” Jesus speaks of His departure.**
 2. **The word “until” speaks of delay and postponement.**
 3. **He looks to a time of Israel’s future repentance when, just as they rejected Christ in the past, they will one day change their minds and realize that indeed Jesus is the nation’s promised Messiah and will say, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.”**
- **This is the condition for the second coming that we will see spoken of in the next chapter — [Matthew 24](#).**

To review the message of Matthew 23:37-39:

- 1. Christ's message begins with His offer (v. 37).**
- 2. followed by Israel's rejection (v. 37).**
- 3. which brings judgment (A. D. 70) (v. 38).**
- 4. Christ speaks of His departure (v. 39).**
- 5. followed by delay (v. 39).**
- 6. but in the end Israel will repent (v. 39).**

THE HISTORICAL SETTING FOR THE DISCOURSE

“And Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him.”

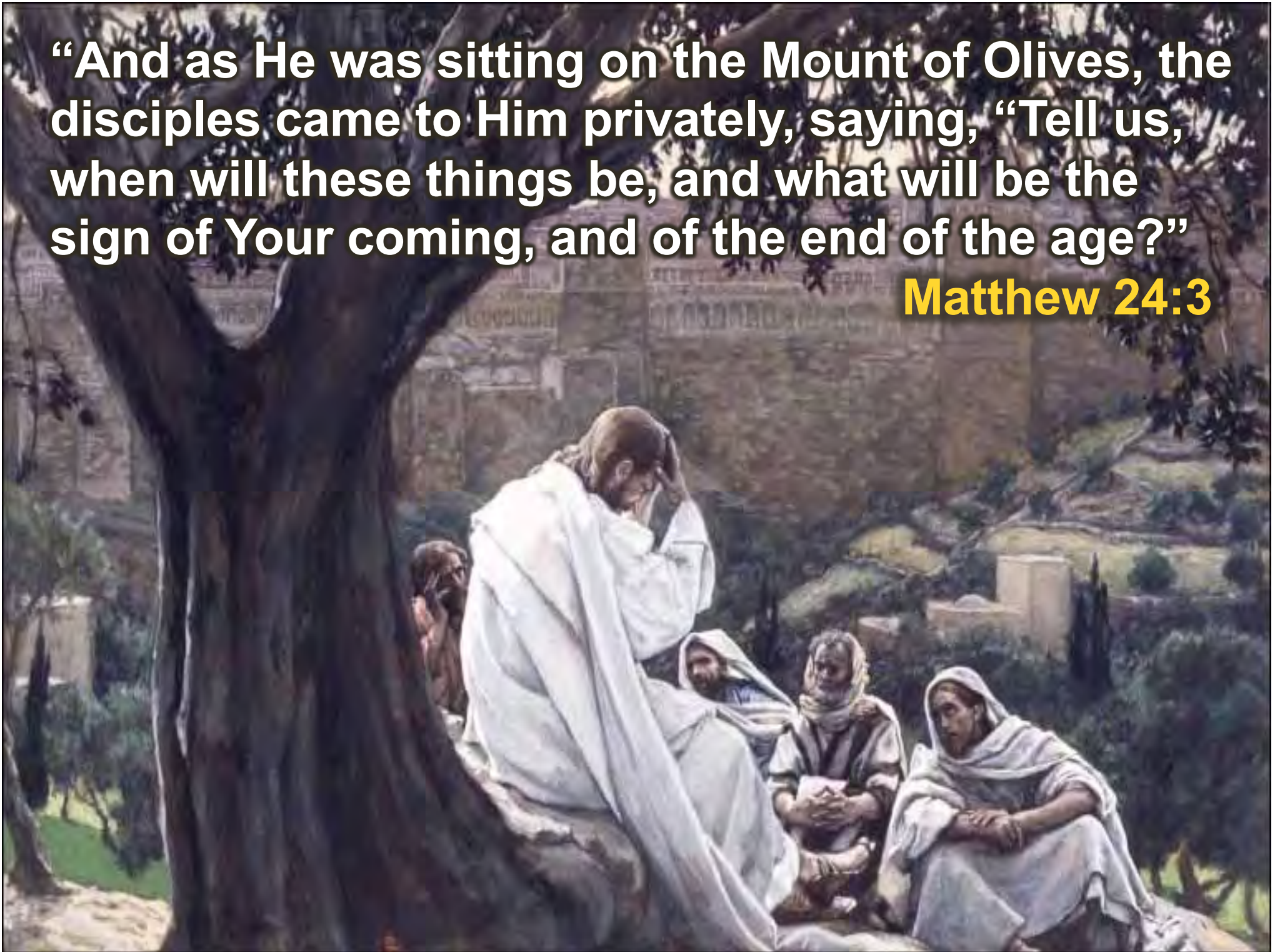
Matthew 24:1

“And He answered and said to them, “Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here shall be left upon another, which will not be torn down.”

Matthew 24:2

“And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

Matthew 24:3



THE OLIVET DISCOURSE



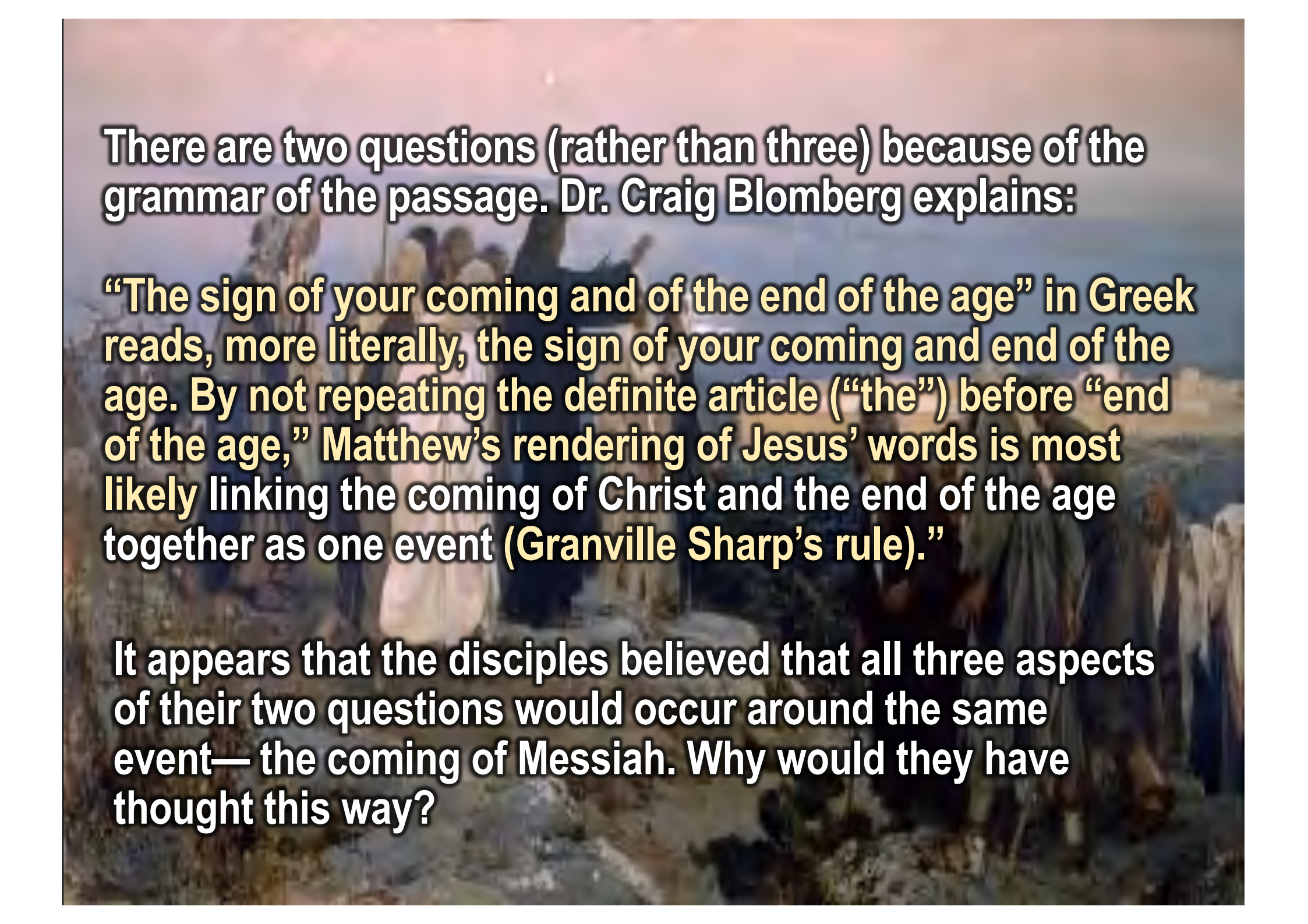
Jesus' Teaching on
End Time Israel

Lesson 2



The Questions of the Disciples

1. When will these things be?
2. What will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age?

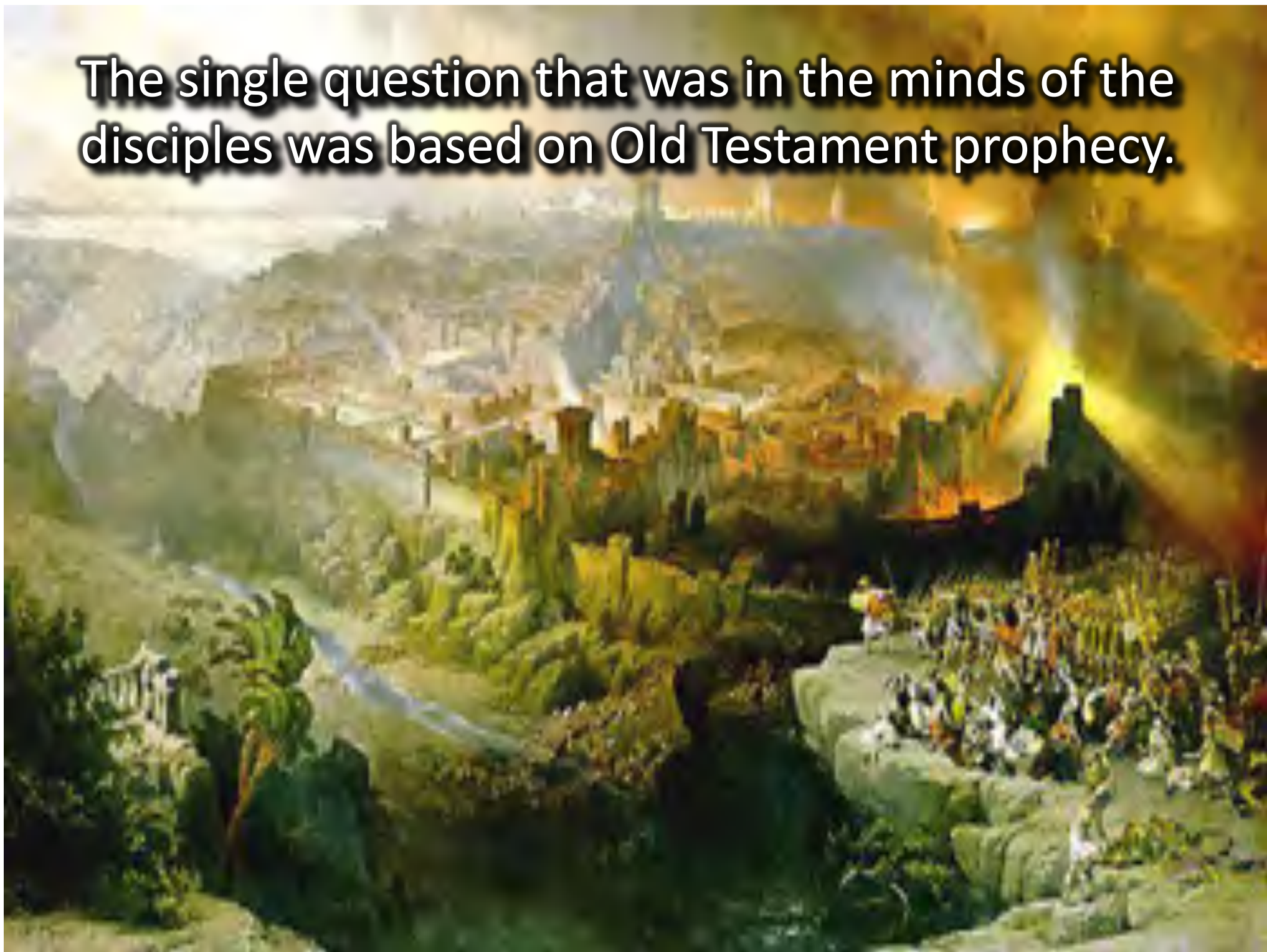


There are two questions (rather than three) because of the grammar of the passage. Dr. Craig Blomberg explains:

“The sign of your coming and of the end of the age” in Greek reads, more literally, the sign of your coming and end of the age. By not repeating the definite article (“the”) before “end of the age,” Matthew’s rendering of Jesus’ words is most likely linking the coming of Christ and the end of the age together as one event (Granville Sharp’s rule).”

It appears that the disciples believed that all three aspects of their two questions would occur around the same event—the coming of Messiah. Why would they have thought this way?

The single question that was in the minds of the disciples was based on Old Testament prophecy.



Dr. Stan Toussaint (Commentary on Matthew) suggested that the disciples were influenced by the prophecy of Zechariah 12–14:

“In their minds they had developed a chronology of events in the following sequence:

- (1) the departure of the King,**
- (2) after a period of time the destruction of Jerusalem, and**
- (3) immediately after Jerusalem’s devastation the presence of Messiah.**

They had good scriptural ground for this since Zechariah 14:1-2 describes the razing of Jerusalem. The same passage goes on to describe the coming of the Lord to destroy the nations which warred against Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:3-8). Following this the millennial kingdom is established (Zechariah 14:9-11).“

Therefore, the disciples thought that all three events were related to a single event—the return of the Messiah as taught in Zechariah 14:4. They were right to think of Zechariah 12–14 and its teaching about Messiah’s coming. However, they were wrong to relate the impending judgment of Jerusalem and the Temple with the return of Messiah.

Prophecies of Jerusalem and the Messiah in Zechariah 12–14

“Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem, it will also be against Judah. “And it will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it ... In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the LORD before them. And it will come about in that day that I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem ... In that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity. “And it will come about in that day,” declares the LORD of hosts, “that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they will no longer be remembered; and I will also remove the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land.” Zechariah 12:2–3, 8-9; 13:1-2

Prophecies of Jerusalem and the Messiah in Zechariah 12–14

“Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. And you will flee by the valley of My mountains ... Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him! ... And it will come about in that day that living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter. And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one.” Zech. 14:1-9

(Zechariah 14:1–9)

Jesus often corrected the disciples' misunderstanding of the popular belief of their day.

Matt. 5:27-28 “**You have heard that it was said**, ‘YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY’; **but I say to you**, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.”

Matt. 5:31-32 “**And it was said**, ‘WHOEVER SENDS HIS WIFE AWAY, LET HIM GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE’; **but I say to you** that everyone who divorces his wife, except for *the* cause of unchastity, makes her commit adultery ...”

Matt. 5:33-34 “**Again, you have heard that** the ancients were told, ‘YOU SHALL NOT MAKE FALSE VOWS, BUT SHALL FULFILL YOUR VOWS TO THE LORD.’ **But I say to you**, make no oath at all ...”

Matt. 5:38-39 “**You have heard that it was said**, ‘AN EYE FOR AN EYE, AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH.’ **But I say to you**, do not resist him who is evil ...”

Matt. 5:43-44 “**You have heard that it was said**, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR, and hate your enemy.’ **But I say to you**, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you ...”

Even though the disciples merged these events, Christ did not merge these events into a single time period. In fact, Matthew and Mark do not deal with the destruction of Jerusalem in their accounts of the Olivet Discourse. Their focus is upon the future days of the Tribulation leading up to Christ's return.

Only in Luke's account does Christ deal with the issue (21:20-24). But Luke also deals with future days of tribulation and Christ's return as well (21:25-36).

For whatever reason, Matthew and Mark's entire focus is upon the last question that speaks of "the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age."

The First Question

“Tell us, when will these things be” (Matt. 24:3)?

Since Jesus had earlier spoken of Israel’s “house” [Temple] being left “desolate” (Mt. 23:38) and had just stated that there would come a time for the Temple when “not one stone would be left upon another, which will not be torn down” (Mt. 24:2), it is evident that this prophecy concerned the Roman destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70. This was given in greater detail at the time of the triumphal entry on Palm Sunday (Lk. 19:43-44) where it was explained (vs. 42) that this judgment was the consequence of National Israel’s rejection of Messiah.

Near Judgment for National Israel Based on Present Generation's Rejection

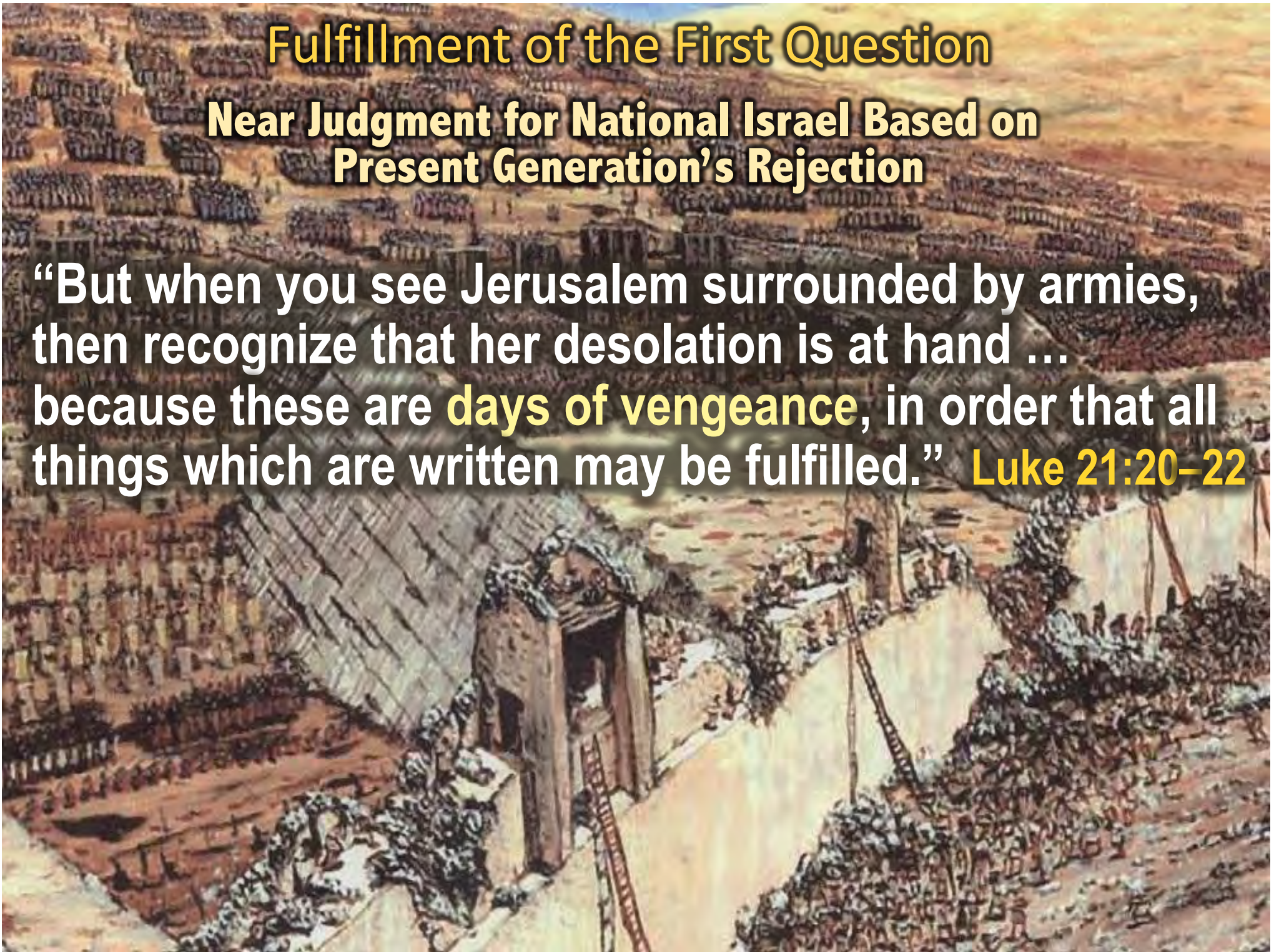
"For the days shall come upon you when your enemies will throw up a bank before you, and surround you, and hem you in on every side, and will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, *because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.*" **Luke 19:43-44**

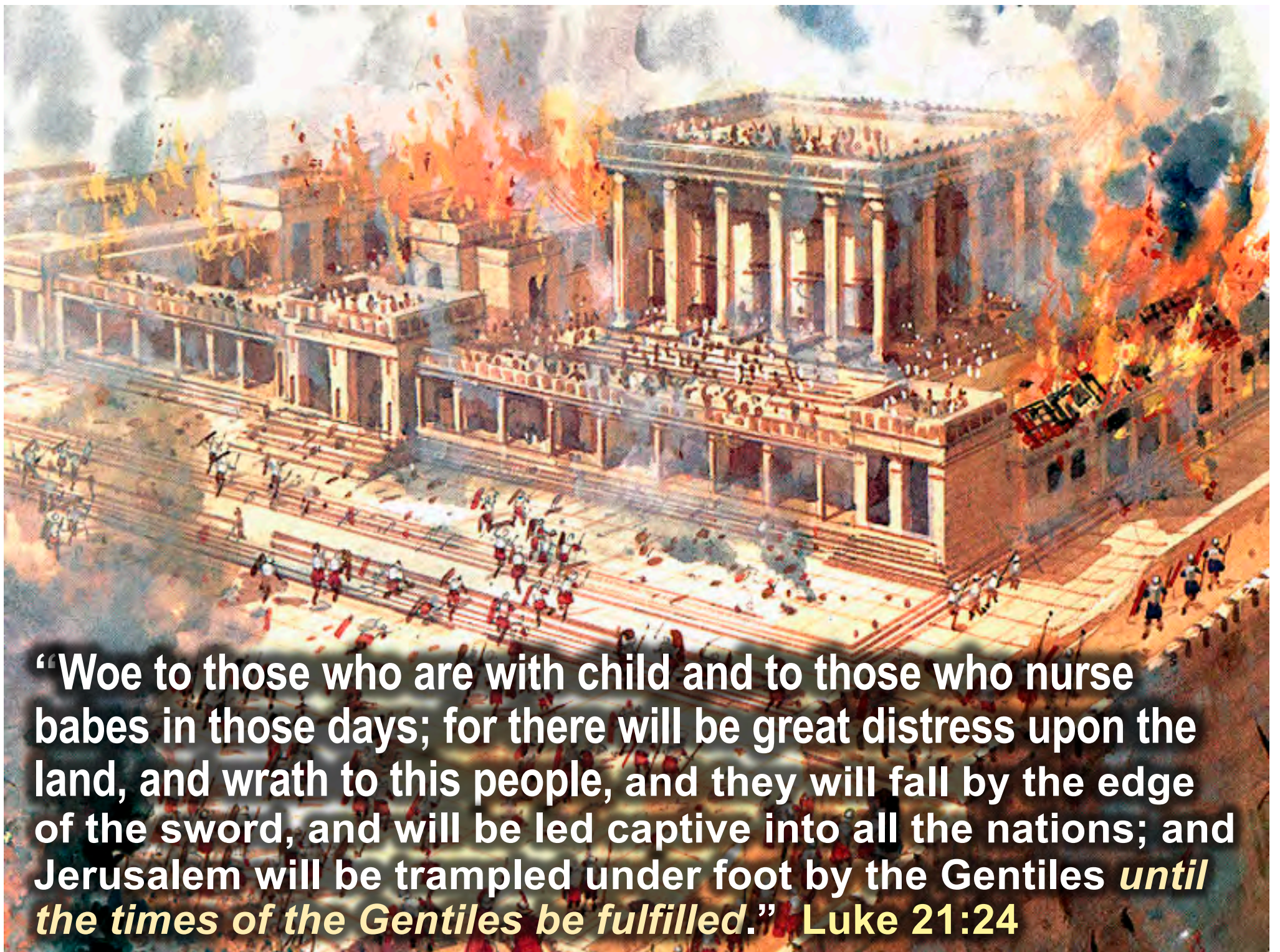


Fulfillment of the First Question

Near Judgment for National Israel Based on Present Generation's Rejection

“But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand ... because these are **days of vengeance**, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled.” **Luke 21:20–22**






“Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days; for there will be great distress upon the land, and wrath to 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 be fulfilled.*” Luke 21:24

The Difference in Focus in the Contexts of Luke and Matthew/Mark

Luke 21:20-24 presents the first-century Roman invasion of Jerusalem. The entire passage speaks over and over again of judgment and wrath upon the Jewish people and their city, just as Christ prophesied in Matthew 24:2. Yet, when one searches prophecies of Matthew 24 and Mark 13, this language is missing. Instead of “great distress upon the Land, and wrath to this people,” Matthew 24 speaks of rescuing the Jewish people who are under great distress (Matt. 24:29-31). Of course, as Luke includes the answer to the second question, he also focuses on national Israel’s deliverance:



Messiah's Coming at the End of the Age is a Judgment on the Gentile Nations to End their Dominion and to Rescue National Israel because of that Generation's Repentance

“And then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD (Dan. 7:13) with power and great glory. “But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

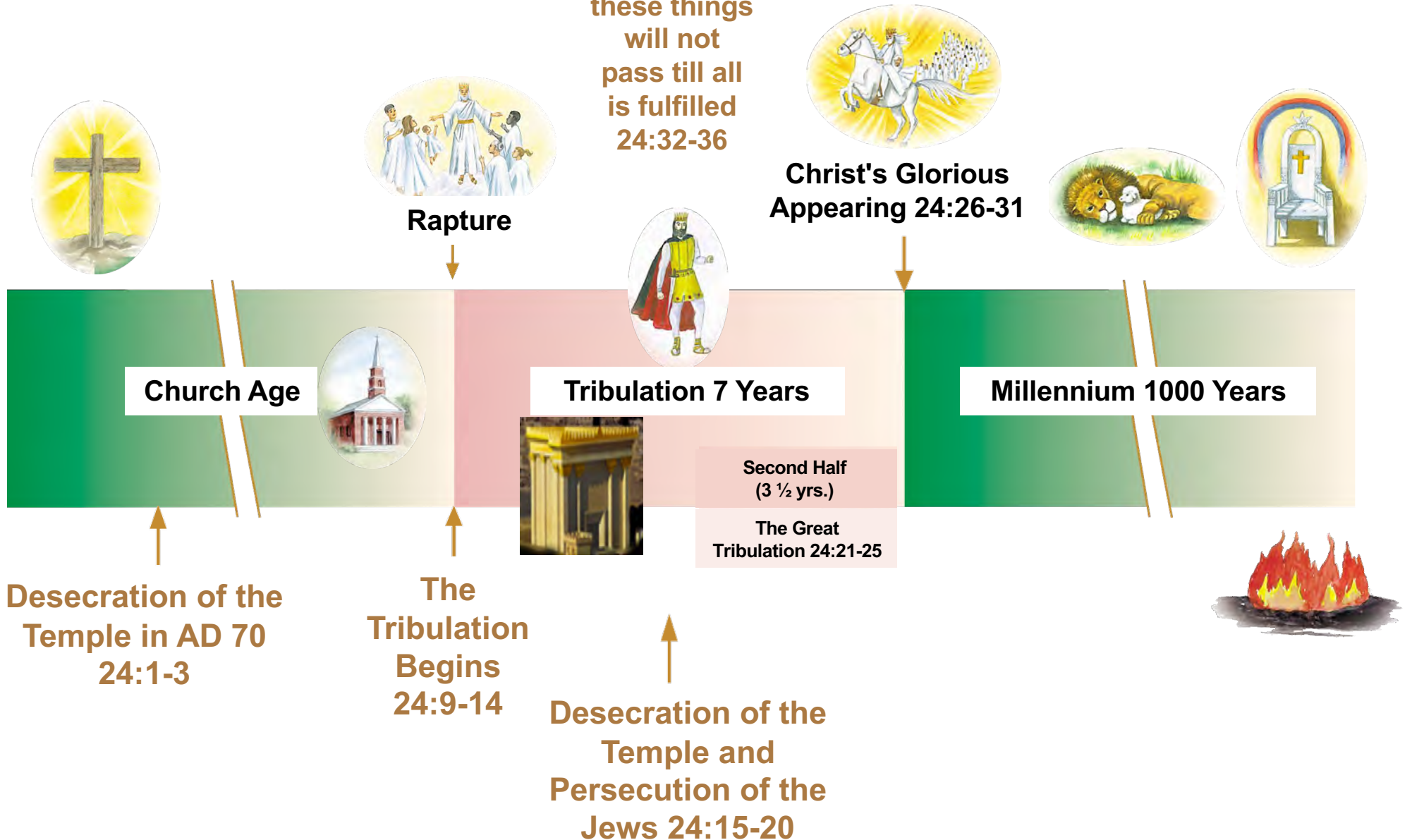
Luke 21:27-28

Climax of the Discourse

- **The Olivet Discourse, except for Luke 21:20-24, speaks of National Israel's *deliverance* from her Gentile enemies.**

الأحداث المسجلة في
خطاب جبل الزيتون

The
generation
that "sees"
these things
will not
pass till all
is fulfilled
24:32-36



CONTRASTS BETWEEN AD 70 AND THE FUTURE CAN BE SEEN FROM THE CASE OF THE TEMPLE

During the time of the Tribulation, Jesus speaks of a signal event connected with the Temple (Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14). This is its desecration by an abomination that was prophesied by the Prophet Daniel (Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:2, 11). What Temple is being spoken of here by Jesus? Was the Temple that was to be desecrated the same Temple as the one predicted to be destroyed?

There are a number of contrasts within this text that indicate that Jesus was talking about *two different* Temples.

(1) The Temple described in Matthew 24:15 is not said to be destroyed, only desecrated (see Revelation 11:2). By contrast, the Temple in Jesus' day (or Matthew 24:2) was to be completely leveled: "not one stone would be left standing on another" (Matthew 24:2; Mark 13:2; Luke 19:44).

(2) The Temple's desecration would be a signal for Jews to escape destruction (Matthew 24:16-18), "be saved" (Matthew 24:22) and experience the promised "redemption" (Luke 21:28). By contrast the destruction of the Temple in Matthew 24:2 was a judgment "because you did not recognize the time of your visitation [Messiah's first advent]" (Luke 19:44b) and resulted in the Temple being level[ed] to the ground and your children [the Jews] within you" (Luke 19:44a).

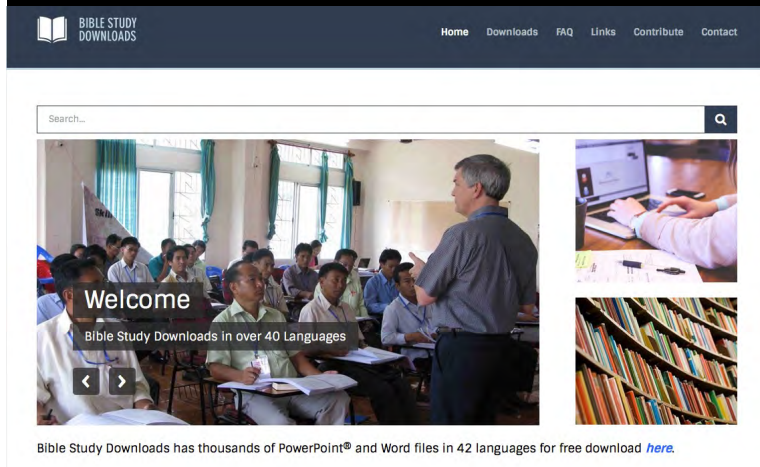
(3) The generation of Jews that are alive at the time that the Temple is desecrated will expect Messiah's coming "immediately after" (Matthew 24:29), and are predicted to not pass away until they have experienced it (Matthew 24:34). By contrast, the generation of Jews who saw the Temple destroyed would pass away and 2,000 years (to date) would pass without redemption.

(4) The text Jesus cited concerning the Temple's desecration, Daniel 9:27, predicts that the one who desecrates this Temple will himself be destroyed. By contrast, those who destroyed the Temple in A.D. 70 (in fulfillment of Jesus' prediction)—the Roman emperor Vespasian and his son Titus—were not destroyed but returned to Rome in triumph carrying vessels from the destroyed Temple.

(5) The time "immediately after" (Matthew 24:29) the time of the Temple's desecration would see Israel's repentance (Matthew 24:30), followed by, as Matthew 23:29 implies, a restoration of the Temple. By contrast, the time following the destruction of the Temple only saw a "hardening" happen "to Israel," which is to last "until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in" (Romans 11:25)—still 2,000 years and counting.

(6) For the Temple that is desecrated, the scope is of a worldwide tribulation "coming upon the world" (Luke 21:26; compare Matthew 24:21–22; Mark 13:19–20), a global regathering of the Jewish people "from one end of the sky to the other" (Matthew 24:31; Mark 13:27), and a universal revelation of the Messiah at Israel's rescue (Matthew 24:30–31; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:26–27). This scope accords with the prophesied end-time battle for Jerusalem recorded in Zechariah 12–14, where "all nations of the earth will be gathered against it"

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