

Thursday Evening Bible Study

Series: the End Times – Bible prophecy about future events and periods

Teaching Summary for Week 48

The Tribulation Period

Part 3. The Chronology of the Tribulation Period

Daniel's Seventieth Week

Dan 9:27 "And he will make a firm covenant 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 abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

Daniel provides three markers for the final seven-year period.

He tells us what happens at the beginning, the middle, and the end.

The seventieth week **begins** when the prince who is to come makes a firm covenant with the many for 7 years. The "many" are a large majority of the Jews.

Note carefully what starts the 70th week – it is *not* the Rapture of the church. It is this firm covenant which the prince who is to come makes with the many.

The seventieth week **ends** when the prince who is to come is completely destroyed.

What happens in **the middle** of the week is the key to understanding the internal chronology the Tribulation period.

Daniel reveals that in the middle of the 70th week, the prince who is to come will **put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering.**

“ in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate “

Daniel 9:27 is the frame on which all of the other prophecies of the Day of the Lord are placed. And the lynchpin is the abolishment of the regular sacrifice and the setting up of the abomination of desolation.

Dan 12:11

11 "From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days.

Daniel 12:11 refers to this same event as “the abomination of desolation”.

We are now examining the New Testament prophecies of the end times. We will learn a lot more about what happens during Daniel’s seventieth week – particularly the second half of that week.

We have begun with the gospel of Matthew: Matthew 24:1-31. This prophecy was given to the Jewish people by the Lord Jesus Christ.

We went over the whole passage last week.

This evening we will begin in verse 9:

Matt 24:9-31

9 "Then **they will deliver you to tribulation**, and will kill you, and you will be **hated by all nations** because of My name. 10 "At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. 11 "**Many false prophets will arise** and will mislead many. 12 "Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. 13 "**But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.** 14 "This gospel of **the kingdom** shall be preached in **the whole world** as a testimony to all the nations, and then **the end** will come.

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)**, 16 then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. 17 "Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house. 18 "Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak.

19 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 "But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath.

21 "For then **there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.** 22 "Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. 23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There He is,' do not believe him. 24 "For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. 25 "Behold, I have told you in advance. 26 "So if they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go out, or, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe them. 27 "For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will **the coming of the Son of Man** be. 28 "Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.

The Glorious Return

29 "But **immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky**, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 "And then **the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky**, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and **they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY** with power and great glory. 31 "And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and **THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER** His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

There is a recurrence here. Verses 9-14 cover the second half of Daniel's 70th week in outline form.

Then verses 15-31 cover the same time period, giving additional details.

Remember, the lynchpin of Daniel's 70th week is the **abomination of desolation** which will occur right in the middle of the 7 year period.

In Matthew 24:15, our Lord Jesus refers to this same event, and even references Daniel:

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),**

Jesus' description of the Great Tribulation ends in verse 28.

Verse 29 begins with these words:

29 "But **immediately after the tribulation of those days**

What occurs immediately after the tribulation? The Son of Man comes on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. This is the Second Coming of Christ.

So let's return to Matt 24:9 and note the events that will take place in the second 3 ½ years of Daniel's 70th week.

1. The Jews will be delivered to tribulation, and be killed.
2. They will be hated by all the nations because of the name of the Lord.
3. Those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.
4. Many false prophets will arise and mislead many, even if possible the elect (remnant of Jewish tribulation saints).
5. Lawlessness will be increased.
6. Those who endure to the end will be saved. Saved here means to be brought into the Messianic Kingdom.
7. The gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to the nations.
8. The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give forth its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.
9. The sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky.
10. Then all the tribes of the earth will mourn.
11. The Son of Man comes in the clouds with great power and glory.
12. The Son of Man will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

The next New Testament prophetic passage that mentions the abomination of desolation is **2 Thessalonians 2:1-12**.

2 Thess 2:1-12

1 Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, 2 that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. 3 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. 5 Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?

6 And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. 8 Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; 9 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, 10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. 11 For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, 12 in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.
NASU

In verse 1, “the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together with Him” refers to **the Rapture of the church**.

2 Thessalonians was written sometime after **1 Thessalonians**.

In 1 Thessalonians 4, Paul had revealed the mystery of the Rapture

1 Thess 4:13-18

13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. 15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until **the coming of the Lord**, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then **we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.** 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Then right after this, Paul launches into a discourse on **the day of the Lord**.

As we studied, the day of the Lord refers to the **Tribulation Period** (usually the Great Tribulation), the **Second Coming of Christ**, and the **Judgments** that follow His Second Coming.

1 Thess 5:1-11

5:1 Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. 2 For you yourselves know full well that **the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.** 3 While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then **destruction will come upon them suddenly** like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. 4 But **you, brethren, are not in darkness**, that the day would overtake you like a thief; 5 for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; 6 so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. 7 For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. 8 But since **we are of the day**, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. 9 For **God has not destined us for wrath**, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, so that **whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him.** 11 Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

Here Paul gives us information about the day of the Lord, which begins at the middle of Daniel's 70th week. The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. People will be saying "peace and safety", when out of nowhere destruction will come upon them suddenly.

By the way, Jesus in Matthew 24 predicts that the same thing will happen. See Matt 24:37-44.

Clearly the day of the Lord will bring destruction upon the people. So if the saints at Thessalonica received a message that the day of the Lord had come, they would have been very shaken and disturbed.

And apparently, at some point after Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians, that is exactly what happened. Let's return to 2 Thessalonians 2.

2 Thess 2:1-5

1 Now we request you, brethren, with regard to **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him**, 2 that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that **the day of the Lord has come**. 3 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless **the apostasy comes first**, and **the man of lawlessness is revealed**, the son of destruction, 4 who **opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God**. 5 Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?

So verse 1 refers to the Rapture of the church age saints.

Verse 2 tells us that the saints at Thessalonica has been disturbed by a message to the effect that the day of the Lord has already come.

What makes it disturbing is the fact that the rapture comes before the day of the Lord. So if that deception had been true, the saints at Thessalonica would have **missed the rapture** and now would have to endure the devastating events of the Day of the Lord.

Now in verses 3-4, Paul gives some events that will occur before the day of the Lord arrives. These events had not yet occurred, so the saints could be certain that the day of the Lord had not yet come.

- The apostasy comes first.
- 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 temple of God, displaying himself as being god.

Verse 4 refers to **the abomination of desolation**.

In verse 5, Paul was telling them these things while he was still with them.

According to Acts 17:1-4, he was with them for **3 Sabbaths**. He was in the Temple, reasoning with them from the Old Testament that the Christ had to die and rise again from the dead, and that Jesus is the Christ.

Let's continue with verses 6-12.

2 Thess 2:6-12

6 And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. 8 Then that **lawless one will be revealed** whom **the Lord will slay** with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by **the appearance of His coming**; 9 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with **the activity of Satan**, with all **power and signs and false wonders**, 10 and with all the **deception** of wickedness for **those who perish**, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. 11 For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, 12 in order that they all may **be judged** who did not believe the **truth**, but took pleasure in wickedness.

The Lord will slay the lawless one (the prince who is to come, the beast of Revelation) at the when the Lord appears at His Second Coming.

This event, recall, marks the end of Daniel's 70th week.

Now the lawless one that is coming will be in accord with the activity of satan. This matches what we know about the beast in Revelation.

Rev 13:1-6

And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore.

Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. 2 And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And **the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority**.

3 I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; 4 they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?" 5 There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-10

9 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with **the activity of Satan**, with all **power and signs and false wonders**, 10 and with all the **deception** of wickedness for **those who perish**, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.

So the beast will come with all power and signs and false wonders, as well as to deceive the earth dwellers who do not believe in Christ.

Matt 24:23-24

23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There He is,' do not believe him. 24 "For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show **great signs and wonders**, so as to **mislead**, if possible, even the elect.

NASU

Rev 13:11-15

11 Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb and he spoke as a dragon. 12 He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. 13 He performs **great signs**, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. 14 And he **deceives** those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life.

This passage in 2 Thessalonians 1:1 -12 confirms what we learned in Matthew 24.

It also sets us up for our study of the chronology of the book of Revelation.

We will begin our study of the chronology of the book of Revelation next week.

To prepare for this study of Revelation:

1. **Read the book of Revelation 2-3 times** between now and next Thursday.
2. Then go through the book and write down which scenes occur **in heaven** and which occur **on the earth**.

There is substitute for reading this book over and over again.

Here is some motivation

It reads like an epic drama.

The bad guys seem to have won, but at the last minute the Superhero arrives on the scene and defeated all of the bad guys. He rescues His people from the jaws of destruction.

The climax is the complete and final victory of your Lord Jesus Christ over all the forces of evil, taking His throne to rule as King forever.

It's a true story that will take place in the future. At the end, all the good guys live happily ever after.

And besides all that, you will be blessed by reading this book and heeding the things which are written in it:

Rev 1:3

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.

GO FOR IT!