

UNIT 4 PART 2

BF232 OUR FUTURE HOPE

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Now, we're going to look at what Jesus said about

GOD'S PLAN IN LIGHT OF ISRAEL'S REJECTION.

As I mentioned in the last session, in Matthew 24, Jesus gives an outline of Israel's future. This comes in response to a question that the disciples asked.

Matthew 24:1-2 As Jesus was leaving the Temple grounds, his disciples pointed out to him the various Temple buildings. But he responded, "Do you see all these buildings? I tell you the truth, they will be completely demolished. Not one stone will be left on top of another!"

Remember how Jesus ended Matthew 23 saying,

Matthew 23:37-38 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones God's messengers! How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen protects her chicks beneath her wings, but you wouldn't let me. And now, look, your house is abandoned and desolate.

JESUS KNEW THAT BECAUSE ISRAEL REJECTED HIM AS THE KING, JUDGMENT WOULD COME AGAIN.

Well now, He's talking about that judgment, that not one stone would be left on top of another. Jesus said this in about 33 A. D. In 70 A. D., the Romans came, and they destroyed the temple. They destroyed the city. And so, Jesus was predicting Israel's future. So, Jesus says this about the building, the temple.,

Matthew 24:3 Later, Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives. His disciples came to him privately and said, "Tell us, when will all this happen? What sign will signal your return and the end of the world?"

So, they wanted to know: "When is it going to happen and how are we going to know that it's going to happen? What signs are going to let us know?" Well, Jesus answers this question in some way because the question was "when will the end of the age come". Jesus answers that in Matthew 24:29-30. We're going to walk through chapter 24, but I'm taking you now to the end. The Son of Man says

HE WILL RETURN AFTER THE TRIBULATION.

Of those days, he says,

Matthew 24:29-30 "Immediately after the anguish of those days,

the sun will be darkened,

the moon will give no light,

the stars will fall from the sky,

and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

And then at last, the sign that the Son of Man is coming will appear in the heavens, and there will be deep mourning among all the peoples of the earth. And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

I want to mention a couple of things here. They asked Jesus, "When will these things happen? And what is the sign of Your coming?" And what Jesus said is, the Son of Man will come after the Tribulation. When He comes, He's coming on the clouds of heaven. That is a quote from Daniel 7:13-14. We've already seen this. It speaks about the time when Messiah will bring the Kingdom to Israel. So,

WHEN IS GOD GOING TO BRING THE KINGDOM BACK TO ISRAEL? IT WILL BE AFTER THE TRIBULATION THAT THE KINGDOM COMES.

We'll be talking about that as we keep on studying our future hope.

Now, we're going to look detailed at Matthew 24 and God's plan for Israel. Matthew 24:4-28 is talking about the 70th week of Daniel's prophecy. You remember that in Daniel chapter 9, there were 70 units of 7; and each unit of 7 was 7 years. So, that is a total of 490 years. There were 69 sevens before Messiah comes and is killed. That was 483 years. The final 7 years comes later on. And so,

THIS PASSAGE IS TALKING ABOUT THAT FINAL 7 YEARS OF GOD'S PLAN FOR ISRAEL.

I like to think of it like a stopwatch. If you've ever used a stopwatch to time something, someone is running, or they want to see how fast they can do something. You start it; and then, you stop the clock when they stop running. Well, God has a time clock for Israel. It started with the decree of Artaxerxes in 444 BC. We saw this in Daniel; and it's going to run for 483 years. Then, Messiah is killed. That's when the watch stopped. Because Israel rejected the Kingdom, God has left the watch turned off. But when the 7 years begins, God will start the watch again. That's how long it will be.

And so, Matthew is talking about

THIS 70TH WEEK OF DANIEL. WE ALSO CALL IT THE TRIBULATION.

Matthew 24:4-8 talks about the events in the first half of this 70th week of Daniel, the first three and a half years. He gives a general description.

Matthew 24:4-8 Jesus told them, "Don't let anyone mislead you, for many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah.' They will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and threats of wars, but don't panic. Yes, these things must take place, but the end won't follow immediately. Nation will go to war against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in many parts of the world. But all this is only the first of the birth pains, with more to come.

When a lady goes into labor and she begins to have birth pains, she could have contractions long before it's actually time to have the baby. In the first half of the 7 years, the first 3.5 years, things are happening, but it's not time yet for Messiah to come.

Matthew 24:9-14 gives a general description of the second half of Daniel's 70th week. He talks about what it'll be like for believers during that time period, people who come to faith during the Tribulation. Jesus said,

Matthew 24:9-14 "Then you will be arrested, persecuted, and killed. You will be hated all over the world because you are my followers. And many will turn away from me and betray and hate each other. And many false prophets will appear and will deceive many people. Sin will be rampant everywhere, and the love of many will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come.

Now, this is talking about the end of the Tribulation. It's talking about before the second advent, before Jesus comes back to set up His Kingdom. The Gospel of the Kingdom will go to all the nations. That doesn't mean that the Gospel will go to all nations before the rapture happens. We'll talk about that later on.

GOD'S PLAN FOR THE CHURCH IS DIFFERENT THAN HIS PLAN FOR ISRAEL.

Right now, we're looking at Israel. And so, that's a general description of the second half of Daniel's 70th week.

Now, we slow down and look at that second half in more detail. We're still in the second half. Matthew 24:15-22 is about the antichrist breaking his treaty with Israel and others. You probably remember this from Daniel chapter 9.

AFTER MESSIAH IS KILLED, A RULER WOULD COME AND HE WOULD SET UP FALSE WORSHIP IN THE TEMPLE OF GOD.

Daniel and Matthew called it the abomination of desolation. It's something that defiles the holy place. We read about this in Matthew 24. Jesus is talking about the same thing Daniel talked about. He said,

*Matthew 24:15 "The day is coming when you will see what Daniel the prophet spoke about—the sacrilegious object that causes desecration standing in the Holy Place."
(Reader, pay attention!)*

Matthew 24:16- 28 "Then those in Judea must flee to the hills. A person out on the deck of a roof must not go down into the house to pack. A person out in the field must not return even to get a coat. How terrible it will be for pregnant women and for nursing mothers in those days. And pray that your flight will not be in winter or on the Sabbath. For there will be greater anguish than at any time since the world began. And it will never be so great again. In fact, unless that time of calamity is shortened, not a single person will survive. But it will be shortened for the sake of God's chosen ones.

"Then if anyone tells you, 'Look, here is the Messiah,' or 'There he is,' don't believe it. For false messiahs and false prophets will rise up and perform great signs and wonders so as to deceive, if possible, even God's chosen ones. See, I have warned you about this ahead of time.

"So if someone tells you, 'Look, the Messiah is out in the desert,' don't bother to go and look. Or, 'Look, he is hiding here,' don't believe it! For as the lightning flashes in the east and shines to the west, so it will be when the Son of Man comes. Just as the gathering of vultures shows there is a carcass nearby, so these signs indicate that the end is near.

First, the antichrist says that there will be peace towards all people, but he changes his mind.

WHEN THE ANTICHRIST BREAKS THE TREATY AT THE MIDDLE OF THE SEVEN YEARS, AT THE MIDDLE OF DANIEL'S 70TH WEEK, HE WILL PERSECUTE GOD'S PEOPLE.

It will be so bad that Jesus said as soon as this happens, you better run away and hide somewhere because it's going to be very hard for believers. Verses 29 through 31 talk about the second advent of Christ at the end of the great tribulation. Jesus said,

Matthew 24:29-30"Immediately after the anguish of those days,

the sun will be darkened,

the moon will give no light,

the stars will fall from the sky,

and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

And then at last, the sign that the Son of Man is coming will appear in the heavens, So,

**JESUS COMES BACK; THIS IS THE SECOND ADVENT OR SECOND COMING, AFTER THE
TRIBULATION.**

When He comes back, people will be mourning because He's coming to bring judgment on the unbelievers. He's coming to bring judgement on the world. Now, He says,

Matthew 24:30b-31 And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with the mighty blast of a trumpet, and they will gather his chosen ones from all over the world—from the farthest ends of the earth and heaven.

Do you see what Messiah is going to do?

WHEN HE COMES BACK AFTER THE TRIBULATION, HE'S GOING TO BRING ALL BELIEVERS TOGETHER. HE'S GOING TO FILL THE WORLD WITH PEOPLE WHO WORSHIP HIM. HE'S GOING TO RULE OVER GOD'S CREATION FOR GOD. HE'S GOING TO BRING GOD'S KINGDOM, THE PLAN THAT WE'VE BEEN WAITING ON ALL THIS TIME.

Jesus goes on to give an illustration of a fig tree to show that the coming of Christ will

Matthew 24: 32-33 “Now learn a lesson from the fig tree. When its branches bud and its leaves begin to sprout, you know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see all these things,

(the signs that Jesus spoke about in Matthew 24)

you can know his return is very near, right at the door.

Then, he says this,

I tell you the truth, this generation will not pass off the scene until these things take place.

He gives the certainty of this promise by saying,

Matthew 24:34 I tell you the truth, this generation will not pass from the scene until all these things take place.

Notice what he said. “This generation will not pass from the scene until these things take place.” You know what some people do? Some people read Matthew 24 and they say, “Well, Jesus said those words to the disciples, and these things did not happen in the generation of the disciples. So, God's not keeping His word.” No, Jesus said, “Heaven and earth will disappear, but my word will never disappear.” When Jesus said, “this

generation will not pass off the scene until these things were fulfilled”, He's talking about the generation that's living when these signs take place, He's talking about the generation that sees the great tribulation. They will not pass off the scene until Messiah comes. So, they're going to know that it's close. They don't know the day. They don't know the hour, but they know it has to be close.

He goes on to give a reference to Noah to show that the Son of Man will come when He is not expected. So Jesus said,

Matthew 24:36 “However, no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows.

I understand why this is kind of confusing. We know He comes back at the end of the seven years of Tribulation, but He also says that the days are cut short. You don't know the day or the hour. So, it's going to be a surprise even though believers will know that it can't be too far away. He says,

Matthew 24:37-39 “When the Son of Man returns, it will be like it was in Noah’s day. In those days before the flood, the people were enjoying banquets and parties and weddings right up to the time Noah entered his boat. People didn’t realize what was going to happen until the flood came and swept them all away. That is the way it will be when the Son of Man comes.

Think about this. Did Noah warn people around him that the flood was coming? Yes. 2 Peter says, Noah was a preacher of righteousness. Noah was telling the world what was going to come. But it surprised them because they did not believe his message. God has shown us in His Word, that the Tribulation will come at the end. Then, the Son of Man will come at the end of the Tribulation. But it will surprise people because they do not believe God's Word. Jesus goes on to speak about this some more. He says,

Matthew 24:40-42 “Two men will be working together in the field; one will be taken, the other left. Two women will be grinding flour at the mill; one will be taken, the other left.

“So you, too, must keep watch! For you don’t know what day your Lord is coming.

I'm going pause there for a second. When it says two will be there and one is taken, one is left, it's not talking about the rapture. It's talking about people being taken away to judgment. Jesus talks about this in Luke's Gospel. He talks about them being taken away to judgment. So,

WHAT GOD IS GOING TO DO WHEN JESUS COMES BACK AT THE SECOND ADVENT, GOD IS GOING TO REMOVE THE WICKED PEOPLE FROM THE EARTH. HE'S GOING TO REMOVE THE WICKED PEOPLE SO HE CAN START AGAIN WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS ON THE EARTH.

You know what? That fits with the way God works in history. God removed the wicked people and started new with Noah after the flood. God sometimes brings judgment. God sent judgment at Babel. Then, He started again with Abraham. So, God is going to remove the wicked, and He's going to set up His Kingdom when the Son of Man comes.

Then Jesus said,

Matthew 24:43-44 Understand this: If a homeowner knew exactly when a burglar was coming, he would keep watch and not permit his house to be broken into. You also must be ready all the time, for the Son of Man will come when least expected.

Again, He's talking about the second advent. So, what Jesus shows us in Matthew 20:4, is that the Kingdom will come later. It will come when the Son of Man comes back again. When He comes back again, there will be some Israelites who have come to faith in Jesus, and there will be some who do not believe.

Well, Jesus is going to go from here to the cross. He's already been rejected by the Jews. We saw in Matthew 12, that they made a plan to have Him arrested and put to death. So, Jesus is arrested and taken to the High Priest.

Matthew 26:63-64 Then the high priest said to him, "I demand in the name of the living God—tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God."

Jesus replied, "You have said it. And in the future you will see the Son of Man seated in the place of power at God's right hand and coming on the clouds of heaven."

You know what Jesus told the High priest? He said, "I am the Messiah of Daniel 7. I am the Son of Man who's going to come in the clouds of Heaven and bring God's Kingdom to the earth." Well, the High Priest did not believe him. He tore his clothing to show his horror, and he said, "Blasphemy! Why do we need other witnesses? You have all heard his blasphemy. What is your verdict?" "Guilty!" they shouted, "He deserves to die." So, they crucify Him for claiming to be the Christ. And you know what? He is the Christ; and they will not see Him again until they say blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord.

We know that Jesus was crucified. We know that He rose again from the dead; and following His resurrection, Jesus gave the Great Commission. He gave the command to the disciples to take the Gospel to the nations.

Acts 1:6 So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, "Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?"

You know what they're asking? "Are we going to have the kingdom now?" They've been waiting since all the way back to Genesis when God promised that kings would come from Abraham, that the line from the tribe of Judah would rule over the nations, that

David's kingdom would last forever, and that God would restore David's kingdom after the Babylonian captivity. And yet, it's not time.

Acts 1:7 He replied, "The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know."

So, Jesus doesn't say that the Kingdom has been canceled. He just said it's not time yet. And until it's time, we have a job to do. Jesus said,

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

So, Jesus ascends into the clouds, goes back to heaven and He's waiting there until it's time for Him to come back again.

GOD'S PLAN FOR ISRAEL IS THAT THE KINGDOM WILL COME AFTER THE GREAT TRIBULATION.

You remember from our study, that Israel did not learn from 70 years in captivity. Then, we found that Israel did not learn from all those years after the captivity until Jesus came. But they will learn during the 70th week of Daniel. That time period is also called the Time of Israel's Trouble. Jeremiah chapter 30 verse 7 calls it that. It's called Israel's Trouble because it's a time period where God will bring Israel to a place of desperation, where they will believe that Jesus is the Messiah, and many Jews will come to faith in Him. We'll see that in a later study.

In summary, the Messiah came during the 4th Kingdom, Rome, just as God had promised. He came proclaiming that the Kingdom of God is near, but the Jewish leaders rejected Jesus' claim to be Messiah. They made a plan to put Him to death. Because of that, Jesus began to speak about His death, resurrection and also the building of something new, the Church. We're going to look at that soon as well. A mystery form of the Kingdom would be in place until the second advent. Israel would face great tribulation. Immediately after that Tribulation, the Son of Man would come to establish God's Kingdom.

I want to go back to our timeline to end this session. We looked at this chart from Daniel. We saw that there would be four kingdoms: Babylon, Medo Persia, Greece and Rome. In the days of those kings, the days of Rome, the God of Heaven would set up a kingdom, the Kingdom of God, that would never be destroyed. So, both Daniel 2 and Daniel 7, expected that after those four kingdoms, Messiah would come and set up a kingdom.

What we find when we get to Matthew, is that those four kingdoms came. Then, Messiah comes. He offers the kingdom. He says, "Repent. The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." But they reject the King because He does not keep their traditions. They made a plan to put Him to death, and they killed Him; but when they killed Him, they fulfilled the prophecy about Him.

That's what we saw in the Daniel study. I noticed that in the chart now, I have a reference to the Church. What they did not know in Daniel's day, is that Israel would reject Messiah, the Kingdom would be delayed until a later time and there would be the Church Age in-between the 69th and the 70th week of Daniel, in between this time period here. So, the time between the 1st and 2nd advent is what Jesus called the mystery form of the Kingdom. It's what we call the Church Age. In this age, the Gospel is going to the nations.

Remember Matthew 24 starts over here in the seven years when the Church age is over. God goes back to the stopwatch for Israel, and He says, "We've got seven more years to go, and the first half will be fairly peaceful. But at the middle point, the antichrist turns on Israel. He begins to persecute believers during the Tribulation." But Jesus said that the Son of Man will come at the end of that time period and establish His Kingdom. So now, the Kingdom of God is moved to the end of the Tribulation when the Son of Man comes. And Paul can say in Colossians, that God placed us from the Kingdom of Darkness into the Kingdom of His Son. We are sons and daughters of the Kingdom; but the Kingdom doesn't come until the King comes at the second advent. So, Israel's future hope and the time that the Kingdom will happen is when Jesus comes back again at the second advent. That is God's plan for Israel.