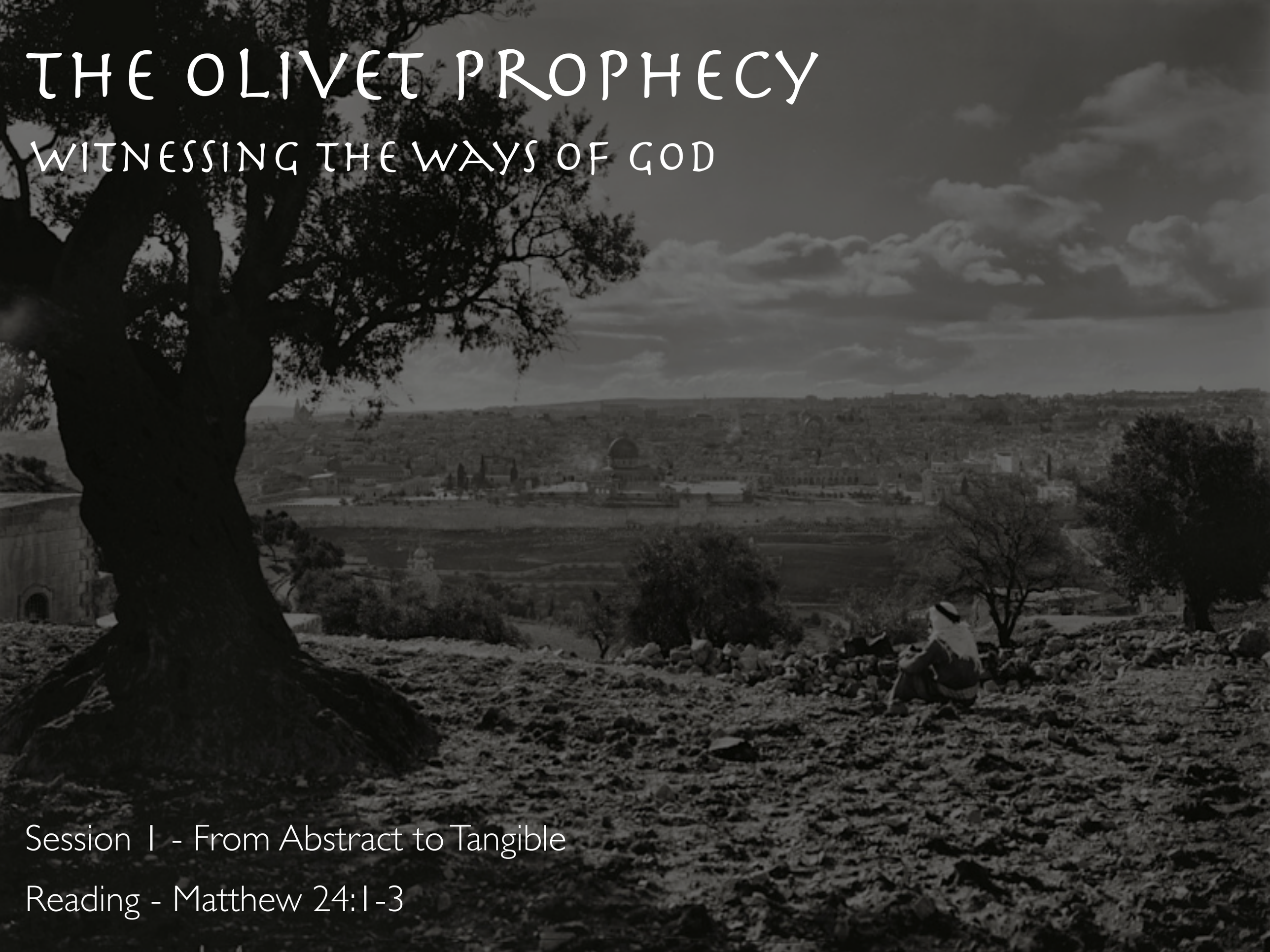
THE OLIVET PROPHECY

WITNESSING THE WAYS OF GOD



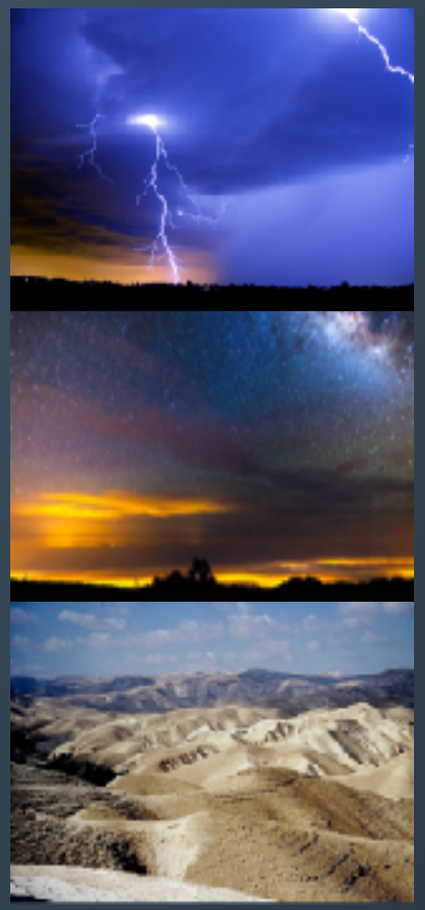
Session 1 - From Abstract to Tangible

Reading - Matthew 24:1-3





THE CHRISTADELPHIAN HERITAGE SCHOOL - CALIFORNIA



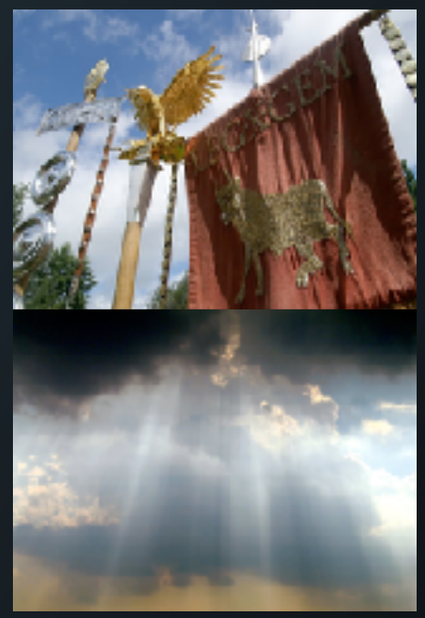
1 - From Abstract to Tangible

2 - For Then Shall Be Great Tribulation

3 - The Sun Shall Be Darkened

4 - The Coming of the Son of Man

5 - They Shall Gather Together His Elect



SERIES OUTLINE

Goal: to elucidate Christ's message in the signs of the Olivet prophecy, and to enhance our understanding of God's hand at work.

Core Message

1 - From Abstract to Tangible

2 - For Then Shall Be Great Tribulation

3 - The Sun Shall Be Darkened

4 - The Coming of the Son of Man

5 - They Shall Gather Together His Elect

God:

calls us to a life that is not easy.

can turn a day of terror into a day of salvation.

is faithful.

longs for His people to understand.

gives hope.

Three principles that will lead our studies.

1. Scripture gives details
2. Ask "why?"
3. The Word of God must be understood in its context

"Investigate everything you believe: if it is the truth, it cannot be injured thereby; if error, the sooner it is corrected the better…Never be afraid of results to which you may be driven by your investigations, as this will inevitably bias your mind and disqualify you to arrive at ultimate truth." - Brother John Thomas; Herald of the Kingdom Age to Come (1859)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

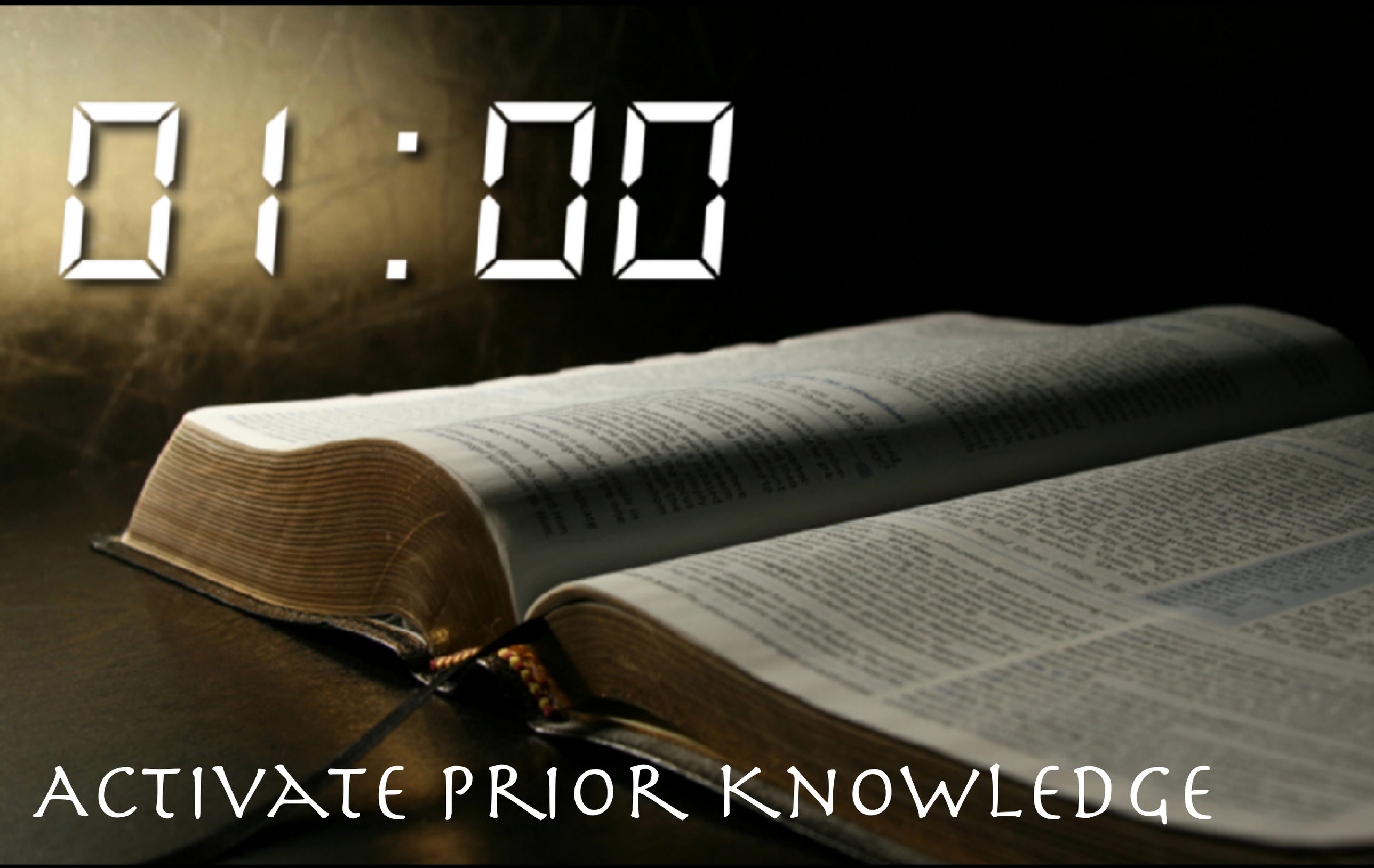
I - From Abstract to Tangible

- The Disciples' Questions
- Two Comings
- Many Shall Come in My Name

Core: God calls us to a life that is not easy.

Why: did the Lord warn the disciples of pretenders?

Take a minute to discuss everything you know about the Olivet Prophecy…



…and anything that you want to know.

THE DISCIPLES' QUESTIONS

Let's take a look at each of these questions.

Matthew 24:3 → "When shall these things be"?

"What shall be the sign of thy coming"?

"And of the end of the world?"

WHEN SHALL THESE THINGS BE?

What things?

With that in mind, Matthew 24 is the last week of Christ's life.

Consider what they had heard in the last few days…

Matthew 21:43 → "The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you"

Matthew 22:7 → "Destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city"

Matthew 23:35 → "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed"

Matthew 23:38 → "Your house is left unto you desolate"

Matthew 24:1-2 → "There shall not be left here one stone upon another"

They *knew* that Jerusalem was going to be destroyed.

But when?

The disciples were asking about when he would return to the earth!

Except that was impossible.

WHAT SHALL BE THE SIGN OF THY COMING?



Like those around them, the disciples expected Christ to set up the Kingdom.

Matthew 3:1-2 → "the kingdom of heaven is at hand"

Matthew 4:17 → "the kingdom of heaven is at hand"

This was what Christ preached everywhere!

And then one day…

Matthew 10:5-7 → "the kingdom of heaven is at hand"

Even at the end of his life, this was their expectation. Luke 19:11

Thus, when Jesus told them that he was going to go and return, they could not understand.

John 14:3-5

John 16:16-18

So what did they mean?

Joel 2:1, 11

Isaiah 13:3-5

Jeremiah 5:9 - "Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

Jeremiah 9:9 - "Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

Jeremiah 50:31 - "Behold, I am against thee, O thou most proud, saith the Lord GOD of hosts: for thy day is come, the time that I will visit thee."

IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

WHEN WOULD HE COME TO DESTROY?!

Unlike the others, this question is much more straightforward.



THE END OF THE WORLD

"the end of the age" NKJV ESV NASB

They were asking when the Lord would set up the Kingdom age.

"When shall these things be"?

"What shall be the sign of thy coming"…

…"and of the end of the age?"

REVISITING THE QUESTIONS

In light of what the disciples knew and understood, it would seem as though their questions meant:

1 - When will the temple be destroyed?

2 - When will you come to Jerusalem—to judge the rulers and to be accepted by the people…

3 - …thus ushering in the Kingdom age?

The disciples saw no difference between the overthrow of the religious order…

…and the setting up of the Kingdom.

At that point in their minds, these were contemporary events.

Matthew 21:43 → "The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you"

Matthew 22:2, 7 → "The kingdom of heaven…destroyed those murderers"

The Olivet prophecy answers their questions.

And shows that distinction in Christ's words.

TWO SEPARATE COMINGS

G3952
παρουσία
parousia
par-oo-see'-ah
From the present participle of G3918; a being near, that is, advent (often, return; specifically of Christ to punish Jerusalem, or finally the wicked); (by implication) physical aspect: - coming, presence.

G2064
ἔρχομαι
erchomai
er'-khom-ahee
Middle voice of a primary verb (used only in the present and imperfect tenses, the others being supplied by a kindred [middle voice] word, ἐλεύθομαι eleuthomai or ἔλθω elthō; which do not otherwise occur); to come or go (in a great variety of applications, literally and figuratively): - accompany, appear, bring, come enter, fall out, go, grow, X light, X next, pass, resort, be set.

Matthew 24:3 - "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"

Matthew 24:27 - "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

Matthew 24:37 - "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

Matthew 24:39 - "And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

"PAROUSIA"—THE PRESENCE

upon a Stone; all will be overthrown."

3 And as he was sitting on the MOUNT of OLIVES, the DISCIPLES came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when these things will be?" and "What will be the SIGN of THY presence, and of the CONSUMMATION of the AGE?"

4 And JESUS replying to them said, †"Beware

Matthew 24:3 Diaglott

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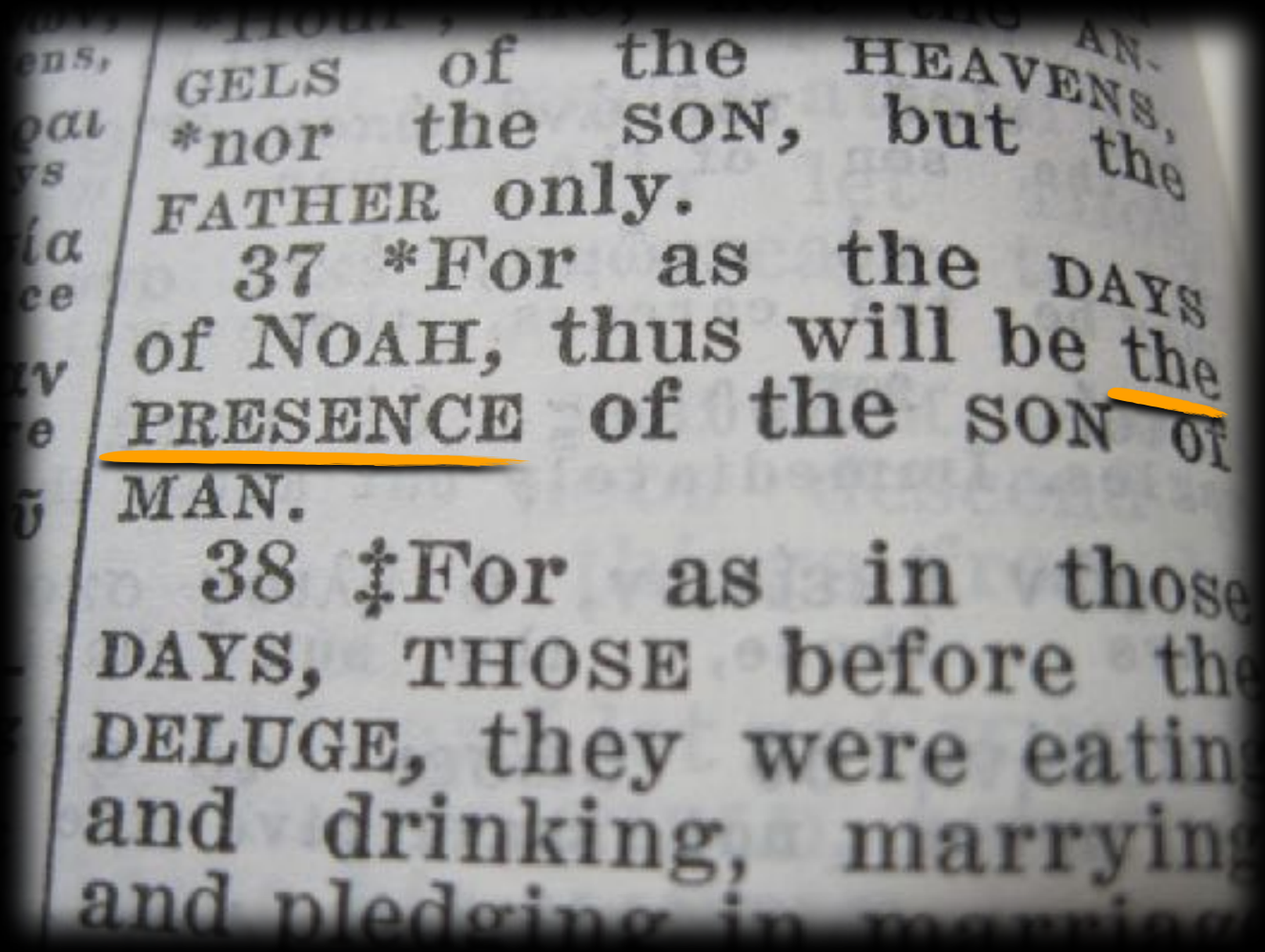
in the DESERT!' go not forth; or, 'Behold, he is in SECRET APARTMENTS!' believe it not.

27 ‡For as the LIGHTNING emerges from the East, and shines to the West; so will be the PRESENCE of the SON of MAN.

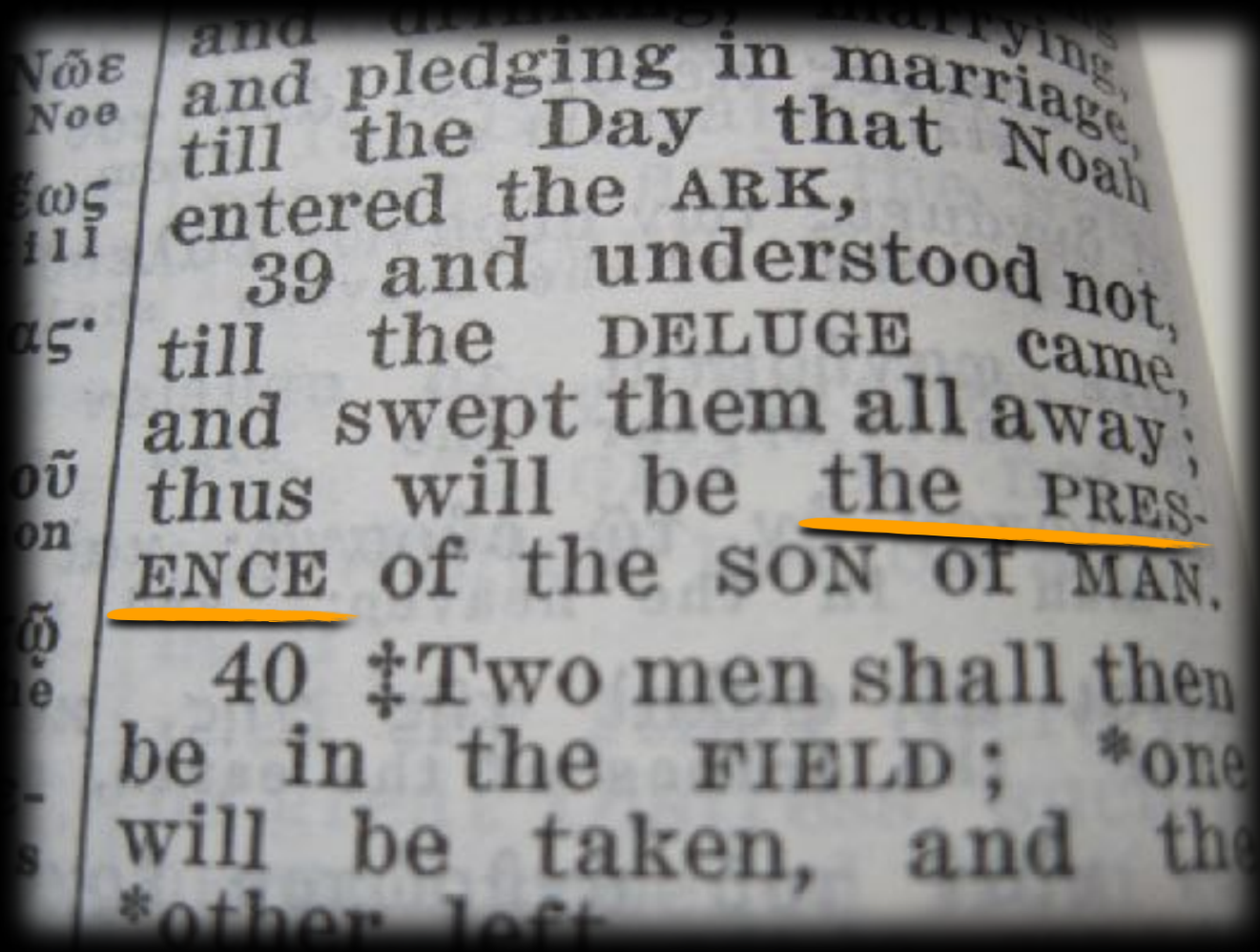
28 Wherever the DEAD CARCASS may be, there the ‡EAGLES will be collected.

Matthew 24:27 Diaglott

Matthew 24:37 Diaglott


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ANGELS of the HEAVENS,
*nor the SON, but the
FATHER only.
37 *For as the DAYS
of NOAH, thus will be the
PRESENCE of the SON OF
MAN.
38 ‡For as in those
DAYS, THOSE before the
DELUGE, they were eating
and drinking, marrying
and pledging in

Matthew 24:39 Diaglott


Νῶε
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and pledging in marriage,
till the Day that Noah
entered the ARK,
39 and understood not,
till the DELUGE came,
and swept them all away;
thus will be the PRES-
ENCE of the SON of MAN.
40 ‡Two men shall then
be in the FIELD; *one
will be taken, and the
*other left

This is likely a reference to AD 70, speaking of the Lord coming at the head of the Roman armies.

He was not literally there, but his presence was.

"PAROUSIA" = [redacted]

AD 70

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AD 70

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AND Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.

2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 ¶ And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

8 All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

16 Then let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains:

17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here *is* Christ, or there; believe *it* not.

24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

25 Behold, I have told you before.

26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers; believe *it* not.

27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

29 ¶ Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

32 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer *is* nigh:

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, *even* at the doors.

34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

36 ¶ But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

37 But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

42 ¶ Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

43 But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

46 Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

"ERCHOMAI"—LITERAL COMING

Matthew 24:30 - "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

Matthew 24:42 - "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."

Matthew 24:44 - "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

Matthew 25:13 - "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

Matthew 25:31 - "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory."

"PAROUSIA" =

"ERCHOMAI" =

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and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.

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17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

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51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

"ERCHOMAI" = [redacted]

RETURN

RETURN

RETURN

RETURN

THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet [c] the bridegroom.

2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

3 They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

4 But the [/] wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

5 While the bridegroom [g] tarried, they all [i] slumbered and [k] slept.

6 And at midnight there was [l] a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

7 Then all those virgins arose, and [m] trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are [z] gone out.

9 But the wise answered, saying, *Not so*; [p] lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and [r] they that were ready went in with him to the [s] marriage: and [t] the door was shut.

11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, [x] Lord, Lord, open to us.

12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, [y] I know you not.

13 [z] Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

14 [a] For [d] *the kingdom of heaven is* as a man [e] travelling into a far country, *who* called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

15 And unto one he gave five [y] talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

16 Then he that had received the five talents went and [b] traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents.

17 And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two.

18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and [h] reckoneth with them.

20 And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.

21 His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been [n] faithful over a few things, [o] I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into [q] the joy of thy lord.

22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.

23 His lord said unto him, [u] Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, [a] I knew thee that thou art an [b] hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast [/] *that is* thine.

26 His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and [a] slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the [b] exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents.

29 [d] For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

30 And [k] cast ye the [l] unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

31 [illegible] the Son of man shall come [illegible] his glory, and all [illegible] angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

32 And [p] before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall [q] separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* [r] sheep from the goats:

33 And he shall set the sheep [illegible] on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, [s] inherit [t] the kingdom [u] prepared for you [v] from the foundation of the world:

35 [/] For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was [g] a stranger, and ye [h] took me in:

36 [i] Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye [k] visited me: [l] I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or thirst, and [illegible] thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, [c] Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, [e] Depart from me, ye cursed, [/] into everlasting fire, [g] prepared for [h] the devil and [i] his angels:

42 For I [m] was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not [e] minister unto thee?

45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, [n] Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me.

46 And these shall go away into [s] everlasting punishment: but the righteous into [t] life eternal.

CHAPTER 26.

1 The rulers conspire against Christ. 14 Judas selleth him. 17 Christ eateth the passover; 26 instituteth his holy supper; 36 prayeth in the garden; 57 is led to Caiaphas, 69 and denied of Peter.

AND it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples,

2 [m] Ye know that after two days is *the feast of* the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

It might seem surprising that Matthew 25 is all about the second coming.

Consider that the Olivet prophecy is included in both Mark and Luke.

But the parables of Matthew 25 are unique to Matthew.

Matthew 24:3 - "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"

Mark 13:4 - "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?"

Luke 21:7 - "And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?"

"PAROUSIA" =

"ERCHOMAI" =

AD 70

AD 70

AD 70

AD 70

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and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.

2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 ¶ And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

8 All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

11 And many false prophets

unto all nations, and then shall the end come.

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

16 Then let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains:

17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here *is* Christ, or there; believe *it* not.

24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

25 Behold, I have told you before.

26 Wherefore if they shall

say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers; believe *it* not.

27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

29 ¶ Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

32 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer *is* nigh:

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, *even* at the doors.

34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

36 ¶ But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

37 But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

42 ¶ Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

43 But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

46 Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

TWO HALVES

The Signs

Matthew 24:4-31

- False Prophets, Earthquakes, Famines
- The Abomination of Desolation
- The Sun, Moon, and Stars
- The Sign of the Son of Man

The Parables

Matthew 24:32-51; Matthew 25

- The Fig Tree
- The Days of Noe
- The Thief
- The Servants
- Wise and Foolish Virgins
- The Talents
- Sheep and Goats

But, let's support this framework with more than just a word study.

And that leads us to our *why* question.

Consider the first sign:

Mathew 24:5 - "For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many."

SAYING, I AM CHRIST

1 - They would come on his behalf (not that they would be him!)

2 - They would say "I am Christ."

The Gnostics:

- Two gods—one who was evil and one who was good
- The evil god created what was tangible and the good god was connected with the intangible
- Sin was not the issue—enlightenment was
- In order to reach full enlightenment, an individual must unlock their "gnosis"
- And full enlightenment brought something astonishing…

"They move in order up to the father. They surrender to the powers, and become the powers, and are in god. This is the good, the aim of those who have gnosis: to become god." *The Gnostic Bible,* pg. 509, "Entering the Eighth and Becoming Divine"

"You saw the Spirit, you became spirit. You saw Christ, you became Christ." *The Gospel of Philip,* 2:3:31-30

"You are no longer a Christian, but Christ." *The Gnostic Bible,* pg. 277 "Truth and Nakedness"

"Jesus is the inward guide, and when they reach the stage of enlightenment where the darkness has fallen away and their divine spark has merged into the ocean of Light, they, too, will have become Christ, no longer different or separate from him." Meera Lester, *The Everything Gnostic Gospels Book*, pg. 64

"Whoever achieves *gnosis* becomes 'no longer a Christian, but a Christ'… Gnosticism also included a religious perspective that implicitly opposed the development of the kind of institution that became the early catholic church. Those who expected to 'become Christ' themselves were not likely to recognize the institutional structures of the church." Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels*

But there is even more—intimately connecting this group to Christ's prophecy.

The Lord described these kinds of people again:

Matthew 24:24 - "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

This is exactly what the Gnostics did!

SIGNS AND WONDERS

Acts 8:9-11 → "used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria"

"This man is the great power of God"

"he had bewitched them with sorceries"

Acts 8:19 → "that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive…"

But what does this have to do with Gnosticism?

"Later references in certain early Christian writings identify him as the founder of post-Christian Gnosticism, a dualist religious sect advocating salvation through secret knowledge…Other Christian documents of the 3rd century state that Simon Magus, in the role of false Messiah, had further confrontations with St. Peter at Rome [other than the confrontation in Samaria]." *Encyclopedia Britannica,* "Simon Magus"

One of Christ's signs stated that *many* would:

- Come in Christ's name
- Claim to be Christ
- Perform signs and wonders
- And deceive many of the brethren

This was perfectly fulfilled in the days leading up to AD 70.

The Sign	Matthew 24	Mark 13	Luke 21
1 - False Christs who would deceive many	v. 5	v. 6	v. 8
2 - Wars and rumors of wars	vs. 6-7	vs. 7-8	vs. 9-10
3 - Famines	v. 7	v. 8	v. 11
4 - Pestilences	v. 7?		v. 11
5 - Earthquakes	v. 7	v. 8	v. 11
6 - Before councils and synagogues		v. 9	v. 12
7 - Before rulers and kings		v. 9	v. 12
8 - Beaten and Imprisoned		v. 9	v. 12
9 - But the Holy Spirit would speak through them		v. 11	vs. 14-15
10 - Hated of all for Christ's sake	v. 9	v. 13	v. 17
11 - Betrayed by family members, and friends	v. 10	v. 12	v. 16

The Sign	Matthew 24	Mark 13	Luke 21
12 - Afflicted and Killed	v. 9	v. 12	v. 16
13 - False prophets would deceive many	v. 11		
14 - The love of many would wax cold	v. 12		
15 - The gospel preached in all the world	v. 14	v. 10	

Just imagine life for the brothers and sisters!

God calls us to a life that is not easy. Matthew 14:13-14

Acts 16:22-25

But, it is this suffering that makes us *like Christ.* Hebrews 5:8