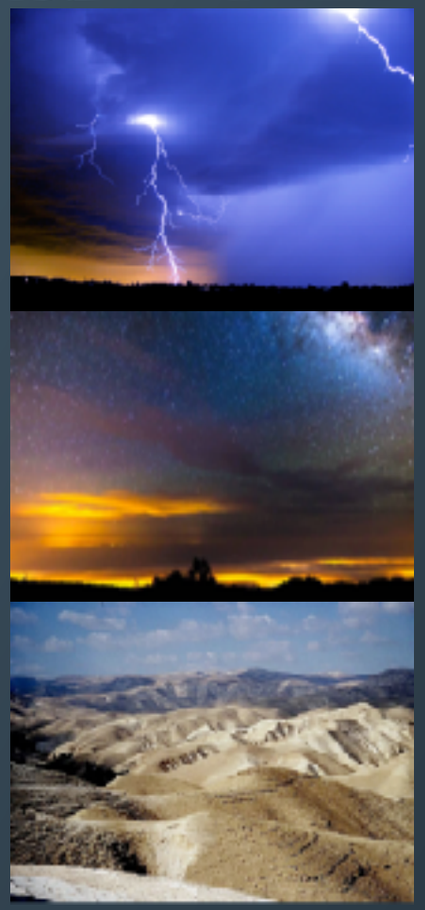
THE OLIVET PROPHECY

WITNESSING THE WAYS OF GOD



Session 5 - The Sun Shall Be Darkened

Reading - Matthew 24:29



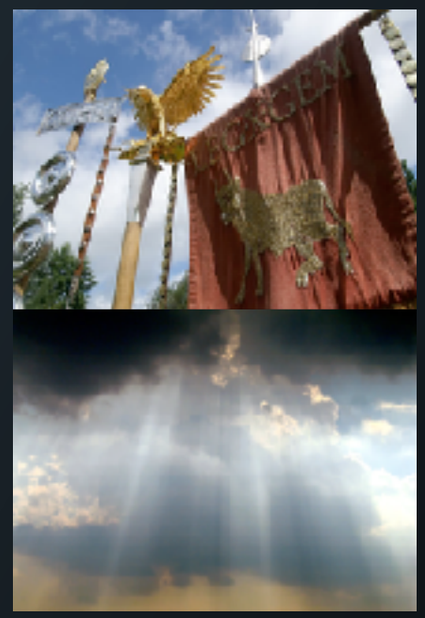
1 - From Abstract to Tangible

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.

5 - The Sun Shall Be Darkened

- Differing Views
- The Jewish Heavens
- An Old Testament Basis

Core: God is faithful.

Why: did the Lord use symbolic language to describe the Jewish nation?

It is at this verse that Christadelphian expositors began to diverge.

"There is described by Jesus an unbroken chain of events that links Matthew 24:29 with the events of AD 70." John Allfree, *The Lord's Mount Olivet Prophecy,* pg. 64

"It will be seen that the 'sun, moon and stars' in this portion of it relate to the Gentiles. That applies even to Matthew's statement. The word 'immediately' would seem to link his comments with those that precede them, and which relate to the overthrow of A.D. 70, but the word can be rendered 'suddenly', and perhaps relates to the suddenness by which current events will develop at the 'time of the end'." H.P. Mansfield, *Guidebook to the New Testament,* pg. 110

"The Olivet Prophecy up to Matt. 24:29a, Mark 13:25a and Luke 21:24a is unquestionably about the events of AD 70. However, from Matt. 24:29b, Mark 13:25b and Luke 21:24b the Lord shifts to the latter days."

DIFFERING VIEWS

So which is it?

The prophecy keeps going from what the Lord had said before.

Matthew 24:29 → "Immediately after the tribulation of those days"

AN INITIAL APPLICATION

εὐθέως → "immediately" "straightway" "forthwith" G2112

Matthew 4:22 Mark 1:21 Galatians 1:16

Matthew 24:29 NKJV - "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken."

Matthew 24:29 ESV - "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 heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken."

Matthew 24:29 YLT - "And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from the heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken."

Mark 13:24-25 - "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken."

ἡμέραι ἐκεῖναι → "those days"

Mark uses this over and over about AD 70!

Mark 13:17 → "Woe to them that are with child…in those days"

Mark 13:19 → "For in those days shall be affliction"

Mark 13:20 → "And except that the Lord had shortened those days"

"Having ascertained that the great tribulation, or 'distress in the land, and wrath upon Israel,' was concurrent with the lifetime of the disciples who were taught by the Lord himself, we are obliged to fix the eclipse and fall of the political luminaries at that crisis; for it was to be 'immediately after the tribulation of those days.' The eclipse and fall were the result of the tribulation which shook 'the powers of the heavens,' civil and ecclesiastical." John Thomas; *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come;* 1853

Thus, this idea of the sun, moon, and stars is all about AD 70.

Matthew 24:29 - “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.”

Christ describes the darkening of the sun and moon, and change in the pattern of the stars and the heavens.



PICTURING THE DESCRIPTION

That would seem to be very unlikely.

1 - "the powers of the heavens shall be shaken"

2 - This heaven and earth will be destroyed - Matthew 24:35

IS THIS LITERAL?

3 - Scripture has a symbolic definition of the "heavens" and "earth" that fit perfectly with the subject of the prophecy

The Israelite nation was more than just a nation.

The book of Exodus records its details.

Consider some of the initial indications:

Exodus 1:7 → "were fruitful…multiplied…and the land was filled with them"

Genesis 1:28 → "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth"

פָּרָה H6509 רָבָה H7235 אֶרֶץ H776 מָלָא H4390

STARTING AGAIN

After they have been saved from Egypt, Exodus details their creation as a nation.

The focal point of this creation was the tabernacle.

The instructions for the tabernacle are given from Exodus 25-31.

A SECOND CREATION

They are broken into *seven sections*. Just like Genesis.

And each begins with Scripture's declaration that God is speaking. Just like Genesis.

Divisions of the Second Creation	Divisions of the First Creation
1 - Exodus 25:1 "And the LORD spake unto Moses"	1 - Genesis 1:3 "And God said"
2 - Exodus 30:11 "And the LORD spake unto Moses"	2 - Genesis 1:6 "And God said"
3 - Exodus 30:17 "And the LORD spake unto Moses"	3 - Genesis 1:9 "And God said"
4 - Exodus 30:22 "the LORD spake unto Moses"	4 - Genesis 1:14 "And God said"
5 - Exodus 30:34 "the LORD said unto Moses"	5 - Genesis 1:20 "And God said"
6 - Exodus 31:1 "And the LORD spake unto Moses"	6 - Genesis 1:24 "And God said"

And consider the focus of the 7th section:

7 - Exodus 31:12-13 - "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you."

7 - Genesis 2:2 - "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made."

The construction of the tabernacle is recorded in Exodus 35-39.

That record continues the creation echoes.

Exodus 35-40 → "as the LORD commanded Moses" over and over…

Genesis 1 - "God saw that it was good" over and over…

A SECOND CREATION

Exodus 39:32 → "Thus was all the work of the tabernacle…finished"

Genesis 2:1 - "Thus the heavens and the earth…finished"

Exodus 39:42 → "And Moses did look upon all the work, and, behold, they had done it as the LORD had commanded"

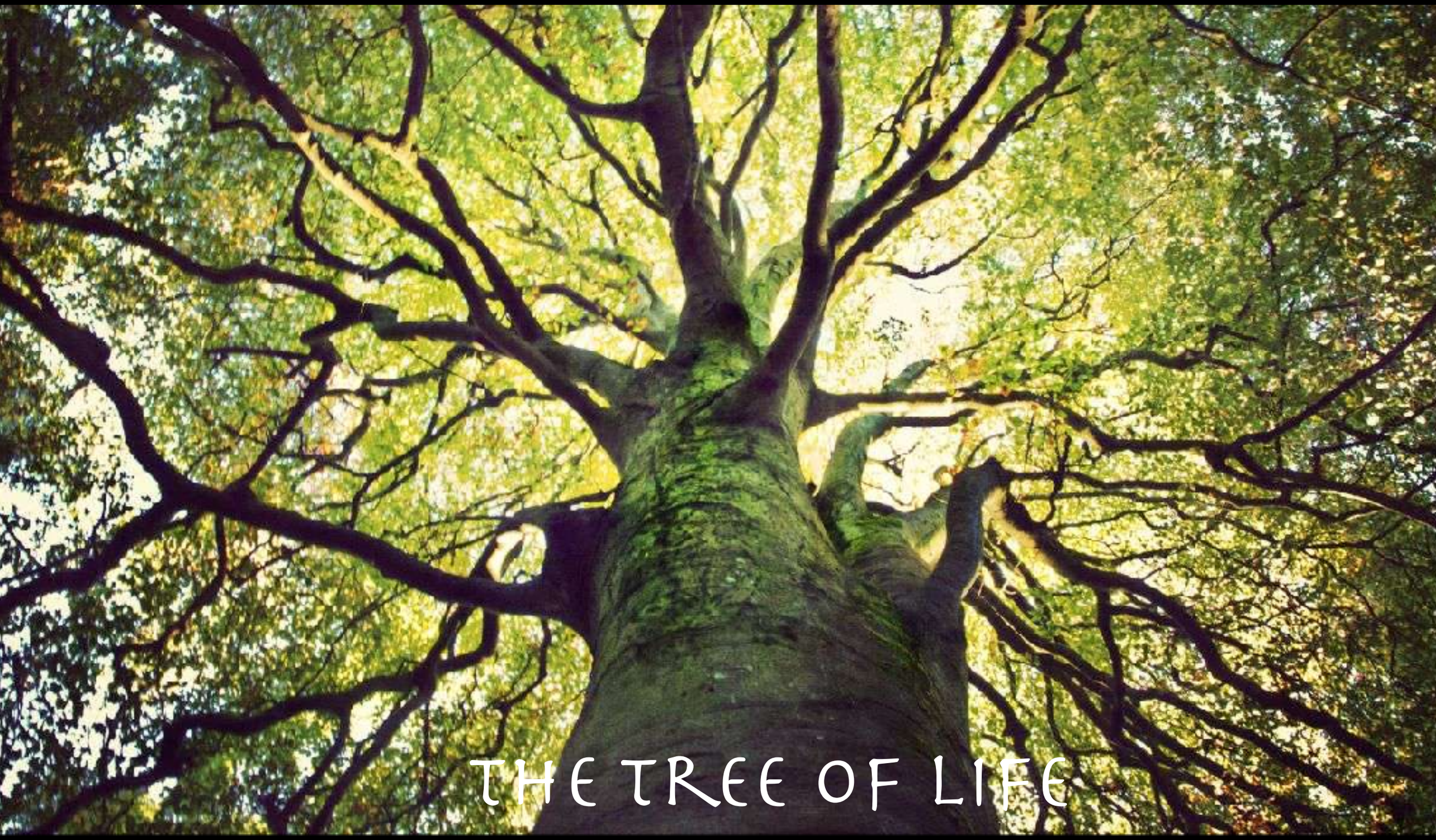
Genesis 1:31 - "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good"

Thus, the record of the tabernacle's creation ends:

Exodus 39:43 → "And Moses blessed them"

Genesis 2:3 - "And God blessed the seventh day"

Thus, just as creation had the *tree of life* in its *midst*… Genesis 2:9



So the legal creation had *God's presence* in its midst. Numbers 2:17

God placed cherubim to guard the tree of life. Genesis 3:24

And the cherubim also guarded the way to God. Exodus 36:35

Which happened to be placed facing east. Genesis 3:24

Just like the veil. Numbers 3:38

Because Eden had not filled the earth with God's glory.

OVER AND OVER, SINAI PARALLELS EDEN.

This was now a new creation.

THE JEWISH HEAVENS AND THE EARTH

And therefore, consider what the children of Israel are constantly called:

Deuteronomy 32:1 → "Give ear, O ye heavens…and hear, O earth"

1 Chronicles 16:31 → "Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice"

Isaiah 1:2 → "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth"

Isaiah 51:6 → "the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth…"

Thus, the Jewish "world" was symbolized as *the heavens* and *the earth.*

Primarily, in Scripture, the "heavens" and the "earth" are connected to *Israel.*

Other nations followed Israel's pattern. Deuteronomy 32:8

So occasionally, the "heavens" also referred to *their* government… Isaiah 14:12-13

…and the "earth" to *their* people. Isaiah 14:7

In our study, we'll see the former definition used.

Especially with this prophecy's focus on Israel.

Thus, the "heavens" refer to Israel's government, and the "earth" to the people.

With all of that in mind, what would the sun and the moon represent?

THE SUN, MOON, AND STARS

Genesis 1:16 - "And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also."

Sun, moon, and stars represent rulers and leaders of peoples.

Just like the heavens and the earth, they typically refer to the rulers of Israel:

Numbers 24:17 - "I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth."

Revelation 22:16 - "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."

But not always:

Isaiah 14:12 → "O Lucifer, son of the morning"

ESV - "O Day Star, son of Dawn"

NASB - "O star of the morning, son of the dawn!"

NIV - "Morning star, son of the dawn!"

In summation of v. 29:

The Jewish rulers would be eclipsed.

All of them would fall from the Jewish heaven (singular).



HEAVEN AND EARTH WILL PASS AWAY

Therefore, the Jewish heaven would become desolate.

Matthew 24:35

And thus the powers in the heavens would be shaken.



These words were bold.



But the Lord did not make them without the Old Testament's support.

Throughout the last week of his life, the Lord had been alluding to Isaiah.

Isaiah 5:1-7 → Isaiah's song of the vineyard

Matthew deliberately brings out these allusions.

Isaiah 5:2 - "And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes."

Matthew 21:33 - "Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country."

Isaiah 5:4 → "What could have been done"?

Matthew 21:40 → "What will he do"?

Isaiah: τί ποιήσω

Matthew: τί ποιήσει

Isaiah then gives a list of 6 "woes" against the people.

No other list like this occurs in all of the Old Testament.

Isaiah 5:8 → "Woe unto them that join house to house"

Isaiah 5:11 → "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning"

Isaiah 5:18 → "Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity"

Isaiah 5:20 → "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil"

Isaiah 5:21 → "Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes"

Isaiah 5:22 → "Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine"

"Woe" → הוי H1945

Shortly after the parable of the vineyard, Christ began a list of woes.

Matthew 23:13 → "But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"

Matthew 23:14 → "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"

Matthew 23:15 → "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"

Matthew 23:16 → "Woe unto you, ye blind guides"

Matthew 23:23 → "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"

Matthew 23:25 → "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"

Matthew 23:27 → "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"

Matthew 23:29 → "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"

"Woe" → οὐαί G3759 the words are the same!

Isaiah 5:26, 29 → "they shall come with speed swiftly"

"they shall roar, and lay hold of the prey…none shall deliver"

Isaiah 5:30 - "And in that day they shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea: and if one look unto the land, behold darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof."

Luke 21:25 → "the sea and the waves roaring"

"land" LXX → γῆ G1093 "the earth"

"sorrow" LXX → ἀπορία G640 "perplexity"

Luke 21:25 → "upon the earth, distress of nations, with perplexity"

Matthew 24:29 → "sun shall be darkened…moon shall not give her light"

But Isaiah's prophecy doesn't simply end with Israel's destruction.

Consider the next chapter's picture:

Isaiah 6:1-4 → Isaiah saw God's glory.

And he recognized that his people were terrible!

Isaiah 6:5 → "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips"

BUT WHAT DID GOD DO?

Isaiah 6:6-8 → "thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged"

Cleansed by the seraphim…

…and then sent to preach to the Jews.

Christ's Old Testament basis did not leave the Jews without hope.

Because God is faithful,

This same steadfastness is brought out in another connected passage:



Jeremiah 31:35 → "sun…moon…stars…sea when the waves thereof roar"

Only place in the Old Testament with all of these ideas

Jeremiah 31:36 → "If those ordinances depart from me"

"then the seed of Israel shall cease…for ever"

JEREMIAH'S PROMISE

But didn't Christ prophesy about the destruction of these ordinances?

Jeremiah was speaking about the literal.

NOT ENTIRELY.

Christ was speaking about the symbolic.

Implicit in Christ's language of destruction…

…is an allusion back to God's promise of hope for Israel.

Because God is faithful,

And so Jeremiah continued:

Jeremiah 31:38-40 - "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the city shall be built to the LORD from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath. And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto the LORD; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever."

Because God is faithful.

Romans 8:39