

The Gospel of Matthew

"The Beginning of Birth Pangs"

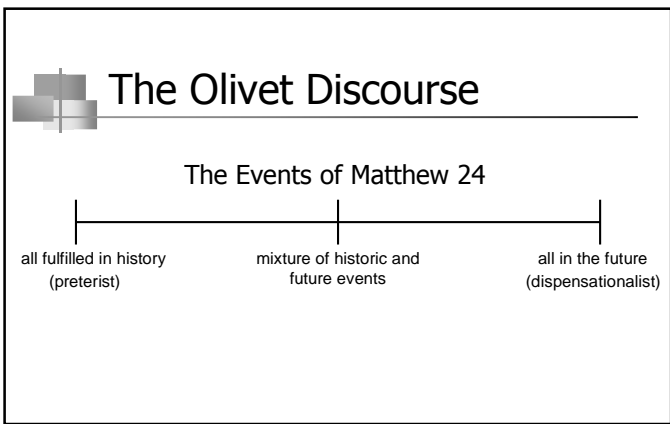
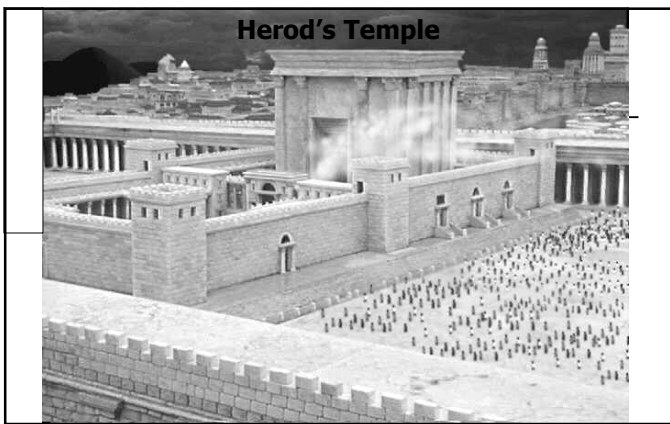
Matthew 24:1-14

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

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."

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 24:1-3



The Olivet Discourse

Overview

- Jesus warns that there will be a delay before the End – a delay characterized by persecution and tribulation for His followers

And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you.

For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many.

And you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end.

For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.

But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs.

Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name.

And at that time many will fall away and will deliver up one another and hate one another.

And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many.

And because lawlessness is increased, the love of the many will grow cold.

But the one who endures to the end, he shall be saved.

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come.

Matthew 24:1-14

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Characteristics of this Age

- these "signs" mark the entire period between Jesus' leaving and His coming at the End
- "labor pains" – time of distress of indefinite duration preceding a climax

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Characteristics of this Age

- false messiahs
- political upheaval
- natural disasters
- persecution of believers
- apostasy of many
- many false prophets
- worldwide gospel proclamation

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Pastoral Implications

1. Do not be frightened
 - trust in God's providence in world events
 - fix your hope on the coming of Jesus

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Pastoral Implications

2. Prepare for persecution
 - being a faithful witness of Jesus will bring hostility, opposition, even violence
 - the exclusivity of Jesus' claims and demands are an offense to the world



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Pastoral Implications

3. Persevere until the end
 - be on guard against the influence of lawlessness that will extinguish our love for God
 - without perseverance we will not be saved



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Pastoral Implications

4. Preach the gospel to all nations
 - this is the primary task of the church
 - this task will not fail!