

Sunday school lesson

I. Introduction

a. The Olivet discourse

II. Gods people

a. History

i. The Messiah, was ready to anointed the most holy King.

ii. They sensed that the Son of Man would very soon be given dominion and glory in an eternal kingdom.

iii. He would set the Roman Empire in its place

b. But Rome was just the latest of the conquerors of Gods people.

c. History of the people of God,

i. After the Exile and the Jews entered the promise land they were ruled by Judges for a approximately 350 years

1. The book of Judges list 12

2. After Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, Joshua led them into the promised land.

3. When Joshua and his generation died, so did the Israelites' knowledge of God

a. Judges 2:10 And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers;

and there arose another generation
after them who did not know
Yahweh or even the work which
He had done for Israel. .

4. They began worshipping other gods. So the Lord handed them over to their enemies and used the surrounding nations to test them, seeing whether they would walk in his ways as their ancestors did (Judges 2:22).
5. That's when the judges came in:
6. "Then the Lord raised up judges, who saved them from the hands of those who plundered themraiders." —Judges 2:16
7. But every time a judge died, Israel went astray again, returning to sinful practices and idolatry.
8. It was a constant cycle of sin and deliverance.
 - a. Israel rebels. God disciplines them.
Israel repents. God delivers them.
 - ii. Around the year 1040 BC The people of Israel demanded a king .
 - iii. 1 Samuel 8:4-7 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah; 5 and they said to him, "Behold,

you have grown old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations.” 6 But the thing was evil in the sight of Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to judge us.” And Samuel prayed to Yahweh. 7 Then Yahweh said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them.

1. Saul became king around 1040 BC

iv. After King Saul King David Ruled from 1003-971 BC

v. Than David’s son Solomon became King

1. He reigned 40 years from 971-931

vi. After King Solomon the nation was divided into two

1. The 10 tribes in the North were called Israel- Asher, Dan, Ephraim, Gad, Issachar (ie-sa-car) , Manasseh, Naph-ta-li, Reuben, Simeon, and Zebulun

2. The 2 Tribes in the South were called Judah-Judah and Benjamin

d. The conquers

i. The Assyrian conquered the 10 tribes in the North the Nation of Israel in the year 734 BC.

1. The Ten tribes of Israel became known as the Lost tribes because
2. The ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom never had a foreign edict granting permission to return to Israel and rebuild their homeland.

ii. The Babylonians

1. God used Babylon as His agent of judgment against Israel for their sins of idolatry and rebellion against Him.
2. There were actually several different times during this period (607-586 B.C.) when the Jews were taken captive by Babylon.
3. With each successive rebellion against Babylonian rule, Nebuchadnezzar would lead his armies against Judah until they laid siege to Jerusalem for over a year, killing many people and destroying the Jewish temple, taking over 18,000 people into captivity back to Babylon and leaving Jerusalem in ruins.

- iii. The Babylonians were defeated by the Persians in 539 BC
 - 1. As prophesied in Scripture, the Jewish people would be allowed to return to Jerusalem after 70 years of exile.
 - 2. That prophecy was fulfilled in 537 B.C., and the Jews were allowed by King Cyrus of Persia to return to Israel and begin rebuilding the city and temple.
 - 3. The return under the direction of Ezra led to a revival among the Jewish people and the rebuilding of the temple.
- iv. They had experienced the Babylonian captivity in the taking away of the southern kingdom, Judah.
- v. They had gone through the Persian rule and the Greek rule and now the Roman oppression, and they'd had enough of all of that.
- e. So again imagine what they thought as they sat with Jesus.
 - i. They were looking for the day when they would be free again and they would be ruled again by a righteous king and they would know the kingdom God had promised them with the flourishing of all of its benedictions

and blessings promised in the Old Testament.

III. The Temple

a. Since the Temple has been a focal point of Jewish history and also for what will transpire during the last days, it is important to understand some of its history.

b. The Tabernacle of Moses

i. In Exodus 25 Moses was instructed to build the tabernacle to house the Ark of the Covenant

ii. Video

iii. Slide #1

c. Solomon's Temple

i. Slide #2

ii. According to 2 Samuel 7, King David wanted to build a Temple for the Lord, but God would not allow him to do so because he was a man of war and bloodshed.

iii. God told David that his son, Solomon, would build the Temple because he would be a man of peace.

iv. Solomon's Temple was considered one of the great wonders of the ancient world.

v. But Solomon's Temple was completely destroyed in 586 B.C. when the Babylonians

destroyed the city and took most of the population into exile in Babylon.

- vi. The Temple was burned to extract the gold, which had made it so famous.

d. The second Temple

- i. According to the Book of Ezra, construction of the Second Temple was called for by Cyrus the Great and began in 538 BCE,[12] after the fall of the Neo-Babylonian Empire.
- ii. But the second Temple lacked the glory of Solomon's Temple.

e. Herod's Temple

- i. Slide #3
- ii. Almost 500 years later, Herod the Great decided to rebuild the Temple, adding height, length, and splendor to it, hoping to make a name for himself along the way.
- iii. Herod spared no expense. He employed thousands of the best architects, craftsmen, and stonemasons to build the Temple.
- iv. Herod built the Temple with great white marble on slabs of rock that were sometimes 50' x 11' x 16.5' and weighing 500 to 600 tons.

- v. Each block was carved and ground into squared edges to create joints, so they would fit perfectly.
- vi. So, the disciples, still not understanding what Jesus had said just moments before began to point out to Him the magnificence of Herod's Temple as they were leaving.
- f. Their comments prompted Jesus to say, "Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down."

IV. Our Eschatology

- a. Views of the End of days
- b. Tribulation
 - i. Pre-
 - ii. Middle-at 3.5 years
 - iii. Post
- c. Millennial Kingdom
 - i. Post Millennial Post-Millennialism, in stark contrast to Pre-Millennialism, believes that the Millennium occurs before Jesus' Second Coming rather than after.
 - 1. Since Scripture speaks of the Millennium as a time of great prosperity for the kingdom of God, post-mills are inherently optimistic.

2. The world, as they see it, is in an ongoing golden process of progress. Although this view is scarcely mentioned by the Fathers, it was championed by many of the English Puritans who believed that a huge awakening was soon to occur amongst Jews and Gentiles before the Lord's return.
 3. The 1,000 years do not have to be literal in post-mill thought. They merely symbolize a long time of advancement for the cause of the Gospel. Post-Millennialism reached its zenith amidst the cultural buoyancy of the nineteenth-century; but it was promptly struck down following the horrific tragedies that characterized the two World Wars in the first-half of the twentieth-century.
- ii. A Millennial - means 'no Millennium'. So what about Revelation 20:1-7?
1. Well, it would be unfair to say that a-mills do not believe in a Millennium; they simply believe that it is a symbolic, heavenly reality and not an earthly one.

2. Christ is ruling right now over His church from heaven alongside his saints. And Satan is currently bound in the sense that he cannot prevent people from hearing the Gospel and believing in Christ.

3. Like Pre-Millennialism, Amillennialism enjoyed good standing amongst the Church Fathers.

4. But unlike the pre-mill stance, a-mills are persuaded that Christ will not establish a 1,000 year reign on the earth after His Second Coming.

5. Once He comes back, there will be a new heaven and a new earth. And what do a-mills think about the Rapture? Quite simply, they do not believe that there will be one.

iii. Pre Millennial I believe and teach pre-millennial eschatology

d. Premillennialism is the view that Christ's second coming will occur prior to His millennial kingdom, and that the millennial kingdom is a literal 1000-year reign of Christ on earth.

i. In order to understand and interpret the passages in Scripture that deal with end-

times events, there are two things that must be clearly understood: a proper method of interpreting Scripture and the distinction between Israel (the Jews) and the church (the body of all believers in Jesus Christ).

- ii. First, a proper method of interpreting Scripture requires that Scripture be interpreted in a way that is consistent with its context.
- iii. This means that a passage must be interpreted in a way that is consistent with the audience to which it is written, those it is written about, whom it is written by, and so on.
- iv. It is critical to know the author, intended audience, and historical background of each passage one interprets.
- v. The historical and cultural setting will often reveal the correct meaning of a passage.
- vi. It is also important to remember that Scripture interprets Scripture.
- vii. That is, often a passage will cover a topic or subject that is also addressed elsewhere in the Bible. It is important to interpret all of these passages consistently with one another.

- viii. Finally, and most importantly, passages must always be taken in their normal, regular, plain, literal meaning unless the context of the passage indicates that it is figurative in nature.
- ix. Applying these principles of biblical interpretation, it must be seen that Israel (Abraham's physical descendants) and the church (all New Testament believers) are two distinct groups.
- x. It is crucial to recognize that Israel and the church are distinct because, if this is misunderstood, Scripture will be misinterpreted.
- xi. Especially prone to misinterpretation are passages that deal with promises made to Israel (both fulfilled and unfulfilled).
- xii. Such promises should not be applied to the church. Remember, the context of the passage will determine to whom it is addressed and will point to the most correct interpretation.
- xiii. With those concepts in mind, we can look at various passages of Scripture that produce the premillennial view. Genesis 12:1-3:
"The LORD had said to Abram, 'Leave your

country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.'"

- xiv. God promises Abraham three things here: Abraham would have many descendants, this nation would own and occupy a land, and a universal blessing will come to all mankind out of Abraham's line (the Jews). In Genesis 15:9-17, God ratifies His covenant with Abraham. By the way this is done, God places sole responsibility for the covenant upon Himself. That is, there was nothing Abraham could do or fail to do that would void the covenant God made. Also in this passage, the boundaries are set for the land that the Jews will eventually occupy. For a detailed list of the boundaries, see Deuteronomy 34. Other passages that deal with the promise of land are Deuteronomy 30:3-5 and Ezekiel 20:42-44.

xv. In 2 Samuel 7:10–17, we see the promise made by God to King David. God makes some special promises concerning one of David's sons: God will establish his kingdom (verse 12), be his father (verse 14), and never remove His love from him (verse 15). In addition, God says this son “will build a house for my Name” (verse 13). These promises were fulfilled in Solomon. However, part of God’s promise was that David’s son’s throne would be established “forever” (verse 13). This part of the prophecy could not refer to Solomon, because Solomon died and did not retain the throne forever. Thus, we have a prophecy with a dual fulfillment: it was fulfilled partially in Solomon and fully in Jesus Christ, also called the Son of David (Matthew 1:1). Solomon did, in some ways, prefigure Christ in his kingship, wisdom, and peaceful reign. Of course, Jesus is greater than Solomon in every respect (Matthew 12:42). So, 2 Samuel 7 makes reference to Solomon’s temporary rule and to Christ’s rule during the millennium and forever.

- xvi. King Solomon could not be the ultimate fulfillment of the promise made to David; it is a covenant that has yet to be fully realized.
- xvii. With all this in mind, examine what is recorded in Revelation 20:1–7. The thousand years repeatedly mentioned in this passage corresponds to Christ’s literal 1000-year reign on the earth.
- xviii. Premillennialism sees this passage as describing the future fulfillment of the promise that Christ would be seated on David’s throne.
- xix. God made unconditional covenants with both Abraham and David.
- xx. Neither of these covenants has been fully or permanently fulfilled.
- xxi. A literal, physical rule of Christ is the only way the covenants can be fulfilled as God promised they would.
- xxii. Applying a literal method of interpretation to Scripture results in the pieces of the puzzle coming together.
- xxiii. All of the Old Testament prophecies of Jesus’ first coming were fulfilled literally. Therefore, we should expect the prophecies

regarding His second coming to be fulfilled literally as well. Premillennialism is the only system that agrees with a literal interpretation of God's covenants and end-times prophecy.

- e. God is not a liar the promises made to Abraham will come to fruition
- f. There are two great elect people in the Bible: Israel and the church; and Israel is elect, as the church is elect - the New Testament is full of comments about the church being the elect.
 - i. But in the Old Testament - for example, Isaiah 45:4: "Israel, Mine elect. I have even called thee by thy name" Isaiah 65:9: "Mine elect shall inherit it" - the promises of God.
 - ii. One more passage I want you to consider Isaiah 53;
- V. Reasons that the Olivet Discourse has not occurred
 - a. There are some biblical scholars who believe that the Olivet Discourse has already come to fruition with the destruction of the temple in 70 AD
 - b. John Macarthur gives seven indicators in the message itself that it refers to the distant future and could not apply either to the events related to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, as many

interpreters have suggested, or to the church age, as others propose.

- c. The first indicator will be like birth pains, of which the false Christs (Matt. 24:5), international warfare (vv. 6–7a), and famines and earthquakes (v. 7b) are “merely the beginning” (v. 8).
 - i. The figure of birth pains was commonly used by ancient Jewish writers, especially in regard to the end times.
 - ii. Labor pains do not occur at conception or throughout pregnancy but just before birth.
 - iii. The figure of birth pains would not have been appropriate to represent either the destruction of Jerusalem, which occurred very near the beginning of the church age, or the church age as a whole.
 - iv. Paul reminded the Thessalonians that the return of Christ would come as a thief in the night—unexpectedly, quietly, and suddenly.
 - v. Using the same figure Jesus used in the Olivet discourse, the apostle said that “while they are saying, ‘Peace and safety!’ then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape” (1 Thess. 5:1–3).

- vi. Labor pains do not begin until shortly before delivery time, and they occur with increasing frequency until the baby is born.
 - vii. In the same way, the events connected with the Lord's return will not begin until just before His return, and they will occur with increasing rapidity, building up to an explosion of catastrophic events.
 - viii. The same period is pictured in the book of Revelation, as the seal judgments unfold over a period of years (see 6:1–8:1–6), the trumpet judgments over a much shorter period of time, perhaps weeks (see 8:7–9:21; 11:15–19), and the bowl judgments over the period of perhaps a few days or even hours (see 16:1–21).
- d. The second indicator that those events are future is found in Matthew 24:13–14, in which Jesus speaks of believers who will endure the birth pains to the end.
- i. Since the disciples obviously did not live to the end of the age, the events of chapters 24–25 could not apply to them or to any other believers up to and including the present time.

- ii. Because all believers living then will be raptured just before the Tribulation (1 Thess. 4:17), the events could not apply to any Christian living before that time.
 - iii. They can apply only to those who come to belief in Christ during the Tribulation, those whose genuine faith is proved by their endurance to the end (Matt. 24:13).
- e. A third indicator is the worldwide proclamation of the gospel (Matt. 24:14).
- i. That event absolutely rules out any time during the apostolic age, when even the Roman empire was only partially evangelized.
 - ii. It could not even apply to modern times, when, despite the spread of the gospel through modern mass media to most parts of the world, there are still billions of people who have never heard the gospel.
 - 1. David Platt informed the Southern Baptist Over 3 billion people in over 7,000 people groups are currently unreached by the gospel.
 - iii. As implied in Matthew 24:14 and made clear in Revelation 14:6–7, the future

worldwide declaration of which Jesus spoke will be miraculous and instantaneous.

- f. A fourth indicator is “the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet” (Matt. 24:15).
 - i. Daniel predicted that just before the Messiah sets up His kingdom and judges the world, the Antichrist “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” (Dan. 9:27).
 - ii. That is yet to occur.
- g. A fifth indicator that Jesus is speaking of a future time is the “great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall” (Matt. 24:21).
 - i. The terrible events Jesus describes in this message will be the worst of all human history and will occur at the very end of the present age, when God’s full and final judgment is meted out on ungodly men. Jesus is referring to the time predicted by Daniel when “there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a

nation until that time” and which will be accompanied by the resurrection of the righteous to everlasting life and of the wicked to everlasting condemnation (Dan. 12:1–2).

- h. A sixth indicator is that “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, and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky” (Matt. 24:29–30).
 - i. Those supernatural events obviously have not yet transpired.
- i. The seventh and last indicator that Jesus was speaking of the distant future is the figure of the fig tree (Matt. 24:32–35).
 - i. Just as the budding leaves of a fig tree signal that summer is near, so the occurring of the events Jesus mentions here will signal His imminent return. “This generation,” that is, the generation living during the time of those end-time events, “will not pass away until all these things take place” (v. 34). The signs of Matthew 24–25 will all be fully experienced within one generation, a

generation that could be no other than the generation living when Christ returns.

- j. The whole fulfillment of the Olivet discourse, therefore, is future.