



“When?”



Text: Matthew 24:3-51, -25:1-46 (King James Version)

Our message this month finds Jesus sitting with his disciples on the Mount of Olives discussing the end times. They asked him a pivotal, monumentally important question, “Tell us when these things shall be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” Yes the question was complex and it took Jesus the remainder of Chapters 24 and 25 to respond. Oh! how upon this simple adverb, WHEN, swings the anxieties, the hopes, the plans and the wishes of each and every one of us. We ponder when we will attain what we most desire; a career that has eluded us or the resolution a persistent conflict. We seek an answer regarding an illness that will not go away and a family relationship that won’t heal. We attempt to forecast and anticipate the outcome of certain situations. Although we are in the present today, life would be much easier if we could eliminate the troubling unknown.

Certainly, the most important when is the one posed by the disciples, that is, when the world will end. And amazingly, Jesus answered, I don’t know, only my Father, God, knows-vs. 36. But in his response he delineates indicators that the end is near, and how we should prepare:

Indicators

Vs. 6 “And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars.”

Vs. 7 “For nation shall rise against nation...and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers place.”

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

Vs. 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.”

Vs. 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.”

Vs. 30 “And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven...”

Vs. 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”

Preparation

Vs. 42 “Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.””

Vs. 44 “Therefore be ye also ready...”

Vs. 46 “Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing..” (Translation – we should be working in his vineyard, working in the ministry you were call to do).

25:14-30 Parables of the Talents (Talent -ancient currency weight measurement). Reference here is to use the gifts God has given you to his glory.”

25:35-36 (Care for those who are hungry, thirsty, naked and incarcerated)

Jesus’ answers were satisfactory to the disciples, as scripture does not record further discussion on this matter. The application and inspiration we can draw from this message is this, always seek the Lord for answers regarding life’s concerns: “Be careful for nothing (don’t worry), but in everything (every question about what, when, how and why) by prayer, and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace (wholeness, nothing left doubting, anxiety eliminated) of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”---Philippians 4:6-7.

I close with the chorus from Charles Tindley’s Hymn Leave It There – “Leave it there, Leave it there, Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there, If you trust and never doubt, he will surely bring you out-Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there.”

Yours in Christ,

Dempsey Scott Harrison, Jr.