

THE LAST WEEK OF THE LORD JESUS ON EARTH

IVy. Jesus' Final Day of Public Teaching (cont.)

Jesus Proclaims Truth (Part 21^e) First Watch c. 7:00 P.M.) Wednesday, 12th Nisán (April 1), A.D. 33. Lesson: **The Parable of The Fig Tree** Mt. 24:32-36; Mk. 13:28-33; Lk. 21:29-36).

Introduction: Having examined the Lessons that The Lord Jesus taught in The Temple to the multitude and His disciples during the day on Wednesday, we then considered:

I. His exit from The Temple and

II. His prophetic teaching on the journey up to and upon The Mount of Olives.

After answering the disciples three questions concerning when and what signs they were to look for to indicate the Time of His Return To Earth to set up His Kingdom, He then told The Parable of The Fig Tree followed by a description of life on Earth and told five more parables. It was noted that The Lord Jesus made a clear distinction between His return in the air and His Return to the Earth to set up His kingdom with some similarities in the signs before each occurrence with the seven year Tribulation period for Israel prophesied by Daniel to occur between the two phases of His Second Advent with the Rapture, Coming for His Church in the Air before The Tribulation and His Parousia, Coming back to Earth to set up His Millennial Kingdom after The Tribulation.

A-C. Answering the Three Questions asked by Four Disciples (c. 6:40-7:00 P.M.).

The Lord Jesus answered the three questions that Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him (Mk. 13:3,4) concerning when the destruction and demolishing of Jerusalem and the Temple, His coming Parousia to set up His Kingdom, and the consummation of The Age would take place. After answering these three questions (c. 6:40-7:00 P.M.), The Lord Jesus taught a very significant and pertinent parable to His disciples.

D. The Parable of The Fig Tree and All The Living Trees c. 7:00 P.M. (Lk. 21:29,30; Mt. 24:32-36; Mk. 13:28-33; Lk. 21:31-36).

There are six factors to be considered in connection with this unique parable concerning The Fig Tree and The Living Trees: The Symbolism of The Fig Tree and All The Living Trees, The Sign of The Fig Tree, The Significance of The Time, The Certainty of Termination, The Secrecy of The Exact Time, and The Seriousness for Every Regenerated Disciple to Continually Watch and Be Ready.

1. The Symbols of The Budding Fig Tree and All The Living Trees (Lk. 21:29).

“²⁹And He-told[said] a-parable to-them, Behold& the fig tree, and all the living trees!” (Lk. 21:29 APT).

a. The Fig Tree Symbolizes the Nation of Israel.

(A) The God's description of The Land (Deut. 8:6-8).

The God's Promise to the young generation of Israel, His chosen people, about to enter The Promised Land based upon keeping His commandments **or** perish! (Please read Deut. 8:6-8,11,19,20). And so it is with those claiming to be His people today, complete obedience to all His Word **or** perish!

The God Himself described the land as abundance in addition to wheat and barley, also as vines and fig trees (v. 8). Later in

Scripture The God referred to Israel as His Vineyard (Isa. 5:1-7) and as The Fig Tree (Hosea 9:10).

(B) The nation of Israel in The God's determined plan was for every man to dwell safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, which occurred under Solomon's peaceful forty year reign from c. 1003-963 B.C. (1 Kings 4:25). But soon thereafter Israel ceased to obey more and more until Isaiah in his day prophesied (c. 748-712 B.C.) of The Day of The LORD'S vengeance (34: 8) that "the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree" (Isa. 34:4). Then again Jeremiah prophesied (c. 628 B.C.) of that future day in which a nation, which the house of Israel knew, not shall eat up their vines and fig trees (Jer. 5:17). And more can be said of the mention of the fig tree(s) by Hosea, Joel, Amos, and Zechariah, who prophesied of The Coming Day of The God's Servant when The Lord Almighty shall call together every man under the vine and under the fig tree (Zech. 3:10).

b. All The Living Trees Symbolize all the Reestablished Gentile Nations Significant to Israel. So many nations have sprung up or battled into existence as a nation since Israel was declared a nation at Tel Aviv on May 14, 1948. The United Nations came into being on Oct. 24, 1945 with 51 nations ratifying the Charter of United Nations. Israel joined in 1949. By 1948 there were 60 nations. By 1980 there were at least 152 member nations with many more springing up in the succeeding thirty two years.

2. The Sign of The Budding Fig Tree (Mt. 24:32,33; cf. Lk. 21:30,31)

This occurrence indicates two aspects of the impending Parousia, The coming Presence of The Lord Jesus Christ back to Earth.

a. The Summer is approaching and is near (Mt. 24:32 cf. Lk. 21:30).
"30Whenever at last they sprout^[cast forth], by yourselves see-and know^[from experience] that already the summer is near! (Lk. 21:30 APT).

The Summer is the time of intense heat as well as the season for reaping and gathering of the harvest. At the end of this season growth of vegetation ceases or is completed and becomes dormant. Prophetically summer indicates the fulfillment of Messianic teaching and the introduction to the final age before Eternity and the Millennial Reign of The Messiah and the gathering together of His Elect Ones from the four winds from an extremity to the extremities of The Heavens (Mk. 13:27; Mt. 24:31).

b. The Parousia, The Coming Presence of The Lord Jesus Christ, The King of kings and The Kingdom of The God is near at ^odoors (cf. cf. 24:36 cf. Mk. 13:26,32,33).

³¹So also yourselves, whenever &you- behold these-things- come-to-pass, know^[from experience] that The Kingdom of The God is near!" (Lk. 21:30 APT).

Not only shall the Jews be able to conclude that summer is near but also that the anticipated and longed-for Kingdom of The God is near and indeed at the doors.

3. The Significance of The Time (Mt. 24:34; Mk. 13:30; Lk. 21:32).

The four disciples inquired of The Lord Jesus how they would know the time of His Coming Parousia. His answer indicated what must take place first before He comes again to Earth.

"34Amen I-am-saying to-you&, 'The generation is this-one that

does- positively-not -pass-away until ever all these-things~ come-to-pass'' (Mt. 24:34 APT).

'This' is the translation of the feminine demonstrative pronoun οὗτος, αὐτή, τοῦτο. It stands in the predicate position, thereby calling for the copula verb is in order to give the accurate and precise translation. Therefore the proper rendering is, 'The generation is this-one that does- positively-not -pass-away until ever all these-things~ come-to-pass.' This generation refers to the generation of people referred to in the immediate context, namely those who behold The Fig Tree , namely Israel budding and all the living trees, namely the newly established or reestablished or reestablished Gentile nations sprouting up. This generation of those people shall not entirely (every single one of them) die off of themselves or through disasters or warfare until all these things come to pass (Lk. 21:29). Some one or several of these people shall still be living until all these things come-to-pass.

4. The Certainty of Termination of The Age (Mt. 24:35; Mk. 13:31; Lk. 21:33).

''³⁵The Heaven and the Earth of-themselves-shall-pass-away, but the words of-Mine do-positively-not-pass-away''(Mt.24:35 APT).

The Words of The God are sure words. They can never fail. And The Lord Jesus Christ is Son of The God. His words never fail. So all that He said concerning the Fig Tree (Israel) and all the Living Trees (the Nations) shall surely come to pass exactly as they were spoken by The Lord Jesus Christ, Who never spoke from His own thinking, but from His Father's (Jn. 7:17; 8:28; 12:49; 14:10). Therefore the termination of The Age By His Parousia is as certain as His birth, His perfect, sinless Life, His crucifixion, and His Resurrection-Ascension.

5. The Secrecy of The Exact Time (Mk. 13:32,33; Mt. 24:36 cf. v. 30c).

''³²Now concerning that /day and /hour not-one perceives^[is-aware], neither the angels, the ones in ⁰Heaven, nor The Son, except The Father. ³³Constantly-beware&! ^[Sleeplessly]Diligently-watch& and persistently-pray&! For you-perceive not at-what-time the appointed time is'' (Mk. 13:32,33 APT).

Although The Lord Jesus gave full and complete conditions that must be fulfilled first before His Parousia can occur and from all those considerations an exact time was not given but those stipulations of what must precede His Parousia gave indication which can enable discernment of the nearness thereof but leaving a certain indefiniteness thereby encouraging, yea urging persistency of focus and keeping constantly in mind that He is coming soon.

6. The Seriousness for Every Regenerated Disciple to Continually Watch and Be Ready (Lk. 21:34-36).

''³⁴But hold-fast-on-guard to-yourselves, lest-ever the hearts of-yours be-overburdened in drunken-nausea and with intoxication and with anxious-interests^[cares] pertaining-to-daily-living^[means of life, livelihood] and that unexpected /day surprise upon you& ³⁵For as a-snare it-will-alight-upon all the-ones sitting upon ⁰face of-the whole Earth. ³⁶Therefore^[sleeplessly] diligently-watch& and persistently supplicate-for-yourselves in every season-of-time! in-order-that: &you-be-accounted worthy to-successfully-escape all these-things which^[article as pronoun] are- about-to come-to-pass and

to-stand in-front-of^[the face] of-The Son of-The^[Hu]Man” (Lk. 21:34-36 APT).

After reading this passage, one becomes reminded of the Parable of The Sower and the Four Soils upon which the seed was sown recorded in Matthew 13, especially that seed which was sown among thorns and “the anxious interest of this age and the enticement of wealth continually suffocated The Word.” The Lord Jesus warned his disciples of being taken by surprise which will happen to those who become lax in their focus upon The Lord Jesus Christ and allow other interests and the challenge of living in these troublesome times.

This is a serious matter and deep concern that The Lord Jesus had for His Disciples and for us both you and me. He urged us to supplicate, to implore, to earnestly and urgently intreat The Throne of Grace for ourselves to be faithful and persistently endure to the end. We all must take heed seriously to His warning to diligently watch and while watching persistently supplicate for ourselves in every season of time, whether it seems that the time is getting closer or there is a seeming respite of disaster occurrences or other kinds of disturbance.

Conclusion: Today we continued to consider The Lord Jesus Christ’s teaching and prophesy upon The Mount of Olives. We reviewed His answers to the questions that Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked after He sat down upon the Mount of Olives directly in view of The Temple. Today we considered the very significant and pertinent parable that The Lord Jesus taught to His disciples, The Parable of The Fig Tree and All The Living Trees. We considered six factors in connection with this unique parable concerning The Fig Tree and The Living Trees: The Symbolism of The Fig Tree and All The Living Trees, The Sign of The Fig Tree, The Significance of The Time, The Certainty of Termination, The Secrecy of The Exact Time, and The Seriousness for Every Regenerated Disciple to Continually Watch and Be Ready.

At the close of relating this parable, He warned again of the seriousness to persist to the end keeping our focus upon our beloved Lord Jesus Christ. Are you, am I, prepared, ready, being vigilant, enduring to the end and anxiously looking for His shout in the air to be taken up with Him forevermore first in Heaven, then to descend with Him to Earth to reign with Him in The Millennium and thereafter for Eternity?

Application: Beginning today what steps will you and I take to be faithful, spiritual, and endure to the end to meet The Lord Jesus Christ in the air should He come today?

Dr. Fred Wittman

For next week: **Read and meditate upon: Jesus’ Final Day of Public Teaching** (First Watch of Night c. 7:15 P.M.): **Conditions on Earth When The Son of the (Hu)Man Returns to earth** (Mt. 24:37-42; Mk. 13:32-37).