

The Harmony of the Holy “Week” Accounts

The Olivet Discourse:

Mt 24 - 25 vs. Mk 13 vs. Lk 17:22-37; 19:11-27; 21:5-36

Study by Jason Labonte

I. Chronology: Two Views (of a Very Many):

A. A More-Traditional View

1. Friday, 8th of Nisan¹ — Jesus arrives in Bethany from Jericho²
2. Saturday, 9th of Nisan — A normal sabbath³
3. Palm Sunday, 10th of Nisan — Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey⁴
4. Monday, 11th of Nisan — Jesus curses a fig tree and clears the temple
5. Tuesday, 12th of Nisan — The fig tree is found withered; Jesus teaches in the temple, then goes into hiding; **Jesus tells His disciples about the future while on the Mount of Olives**; a woman anoints Jesus
6. Wednesday, 13th of Nisan — Nothing is known.
7. Maundy Thursday, 14th of Nisan, Passover — Jesus eats the Passover meal, his last supper with his disciples.
8. Good Friday, 15th of Nisan — Jesus the Christ is crucified for the sins of the world
9. Black Saturday, 16th of Nisan — A normal sabbath
10. Easter Sunday, 17th of Nisan — Jesus the Christ is raised from dead! Hallelujah!

¹ also called Abib

² Some believe this trip was on Saturday, but they forget that Jesus would not have traveled on a sabbath day.

³ This view assumes that when John writes, “the next day” that he really means, “the next non-sabbath day”.

⁴ Some believe the triumphal entry was on Monday, falling on a 10th that year, such that he died on Passover instead of the day after.

B. An Alternate View

1. Friday, 8th of Nisan — Jesus arrives in Bethany from Jericho; a woman anoints Jesus
2. Saturday, 9th of Nisan — A normal sabbath, Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey (It may have been a sabbath day's journey⁵. It was also late⁶, so the sabbath may have been over.)
3. Sunday, 10th of Nisan — Jesus curses a fig tree and clears the temple
4. Monday, 11th of Nisan — The fig tree is found withered; Jesus teaches in the temple, then goes into hiding; **Jesus tells His disciples about the future while on the Mount of Olives**
5. Tuesday, 12th of Nisan — Nothing is known
6. Wednesday, 13th of Nisan — Jesus eats the Passover meal, his last supper with his disciples.
7. Thursday, 14th of Nisan, Passover — Jesus the Christ is crucified for the sins of the world
8. Friday, 15th of Nisan, 1st Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread — A high sabbath
9. Saturday, 16th of Nisan — A normal sabbath
10. Sunday, 17th of Nisan, The Feast of First Fruits — Jesus the Christ is raised from dead! Hallelujah!

II. The Olivet Discourse

A. This is the final of Matthew's five long sermons of Jesus.

B. Once again, from Luke, we learn that not all of what was said necessarily occurred on the Mount of Olives.

III. The Destruction of the Temple

A. According to Josephus, the Temple stones were either covered in gold or pure white. Some were 37' x 12' x 18'. Herod gave a gift of a golden vine, the grape clusters of which were as tall as a man, to decorate the Temple.

B. When the Temple was destroyed in AD 70 by the Romans, they burned the temple. Then, to ensure they could recover all of the melted gold, they literally pried apart and tore down every stone.

C. The disciples seemed to think that the destruction of the Temple would indicate the "end of the age".⁷

⁵ Acts 1:12

⁶ according to Mark

⁷ Matthew 24:3

IV. The Abomination(s) of Desolation

A. Daniel 9:24-27 speaks of 70 “weeks”, which are usually thought to be 7-year periods.

1. From the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem⁸ till the coming of the Messiah, there were supposed to be 69 “weeks” or 483 years⁹. Some believe this calculates out to the exact year that Jesus entered Jerusalem on the donkey.
2. The Messiah was prophesied to be “cut off” after the 69 weeks.
3. Then the city and Temple were prophesied to be destroyed. Some believe that this event occurs in a intermediary period between week 69 and week 70.
4. Whenever week 70 is or was, in the middle of it, there will be an “abomination of desolation”. Some believe this “abomination” is to be done by the Antichrist. Daniel refers to him here as a the “Prince”.

B. Daniel 11 speaks of the history of the Greek Empire.

1. He begins with Alexander the Great¹⁰ and covers in great historic detail the Ptolemies (who ruled the “South”, Egypt and Palestine) and the Seleucids (who ruled the “North”, Syria).
2. All Daniel describes from v. 1 to v. 35 matches with known history exactly, right up until the reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes.
3. In 168 BC, Antiochus Epiphanes built an altar to Zeus in the Temple and slaughtered a pig on it. This is called an “abomination of desolation” in v. 31.
4. After v. 36, what Daniel prophesies does not match with history, causing many to believe that Daniel is now using Antiochus as a type of the Antichrist.

C. Daniel 12 speaks of there being a “time of distress” greater than any in history.

1. Then there will be a resurrection to life or to judgment.
2. After “they” finish shattering the “hand of the holy people”, a time, times, and half a time¹¹ (3 ½ years, or half a “week” as in 9:27) will remain until the end.
3. This seems to be restated in vv. 11-12, when he writes that after an “abomination of desolation”, 1,290 days¹¹ (3 ½ years, or half a “week” as in 9:27) and/or 1,335 days will remain until the end.

⁸ This may have been the decree given to Ezra in 458 BC (Ezra 7:11) or the one given to Nehemiah in 445 BC (Nehemiah 1 - 2:10).

⁹ These may have been solar years or lunar years.

¹⁰ Daniel 11:3-4

¹¹ Revelation also uses this terminology for 3 ½ years as well as “42 months”.

D. There are many ideas and opinions as to what the abomination(s) is/are/were/will be.

1. In the context of the Olivet Discourse, Jesus perhaps is equating the “abomination of desolation” with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.
2. Josephus records that a great tribulation occurred when the Temple was destroyed, and Christians, then, fled into the Transjordan Mountains
3. Others link the “great tribulation” mentioned by Jesus with the one mentioned in the book of Revelation and the “abomination” with the “man of lawlessness” mentioned by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4.
4. In any case, Jesus seems to indicate that one (at least) would occur after His death, which implies that the event with Antiochus in 168 BC was a type of at least one more “abomination”.

V. The Return of Christ

- A. The first reference to the “Son of Man” is found in Daniel 7:13-14, where He is described as coming in the clouds.**
- B. Isaiah 13:6-13 describes a day of judgment (in context, to Babylon), which Jesus applies to the day of His coming by quoting, “The sun will be dark... and the moon will not shed its light” (v.10).**
- C. Isaiah 34:1-5 describes a similar or the same day of judgment, to which Jesus also seems to allude.**

VI. Discussion

Read through all of the passages and discuss the questions below.

- A. What do you think the main point of Jesus’ answers to the disciples’ questions is? What are the “take home” messages that should be clear regardless of one’s opinions on the interpretations of the Biblical prophecies?**
- B. What can we learn from the Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids?**
- C. What can we learn from the Parable of the Talents¹²/Minas¹³? What do talents/minas symbolize?**
- D. What can we learn from the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats? Who are Jesus’ brothers?**

¹² a weight (~75 lbs.) of money worth about fifteen year’s wages; equal to 60 minas

¹³ a weight of money worth about three month’s wages; equal to 100 drachmas