

## Sermon to the Saints which are at Topeka, Kansas -- Sunday, July 11, 2021

Today we're going to make an examination of the next portion of the sermon Christ gave on Mt. Olivet, after telling the Jews that He had rejected their spiritless, tradition-filled religion and was not going to return until God granted ***"them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth"*** (2 Timothy 2:25) that He was their one and only Messiah. While speaking with His disciples He was asked when His kingdom was to come and bring with it the end of the world. As I have previously outlined, they believed that Christ's earthly kingdom was going to be then, and it would be set up in the beautiful buildings attenuated to the upgraded temple that the Roman ruler Herod had poured tremendous wealth into constructing. When Christ told them those buildings would be utterly destroyed, they understandably sought to know what would be the ***"sign of [His] coming, and of the end of the world?"*** (Matthew 24:3).

In the preceding sermons examining these of Christ's words, we have considered the millennia of false religious systems assaulting the true church and true Christians. We then looked at how the world learned to speak the language of violence and the remarkable capacity to see, hear, learn, and know stuff in the information age. Finally, we considered His words describing the worldwide distresses of violence, pestilence, famine, plagues, and the shaking of the heaven and earth. The conditions prophesied by Christ in His sermon mirror those conditions prophesied by John in the sixth chapter of the Revelation. That context brings us to examine the next cluster of words recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke regarding Christ's sermon:

***"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."*** (Matthew 24:9-12)

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***"But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. ... Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake:"*** (Mark 13:9, 12-13)

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***"But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. ... And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of***

***you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake."***

**(Luke 21:12, 16-17)**

Here's what I believe Scripture teaches about this portion of Christ's sermon: It describes an acute, worldwide condition, spurred on by prevalent sodomitical influences, wherein religious and civil (both administrative and police) authorities are increasingly united and engaged to silence the prophetic words of the revealed remnant of God's elect from the earth, leaving them fully exposed and without earthly remedy. So, as I run these traps about how this language unfolds, please keep this lens in your focus. I believe, in these words of Christ, He is describing the behaviors directed primarily at the Gentile saints in the earth. On January 5, 2020, I discussed in detail this same energy targeting the Jewish remnant by the world under the influence of Antichrist, as part of the examination of Daniel's vision of beasts in chapter seven. While we see much the same energy, the work against the Jewish remnant is discussed more specifically by Christ in later words in His sermon on Mt. Olivet.

So, giving some general framing to the language will be helpful. Here are the components of this assault on the believers alive as the day of the Lord begins to unfold, according to these of Christ's words:

Betrayal. There is a consistent tone of being betrayed by those with whom this body of believers have close relationships. ***"[Y]e shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends"***, and they will be ***"delivering you up"*** our friend Luke reports. Mark says ***"they shall deliver you up"***, and ***"the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son"***. Matthew reports that Christ promised this close enemy ***"shall [] deliver you up"*** and expressly that ***"shall betray one another"*** intimating that those who do the betraying are part of the group who is in this fight (at least nominally).

Heresy. Intrinsic to the prophesied division or schism in this body of believers is doctrinal error. Matthew records it as ***"many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many"***. Mark does not expressly report a doctrinal conflict, but alludes to it when he says ***"they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten"***. The word ***"councils"*** is the Greek ***"sunedrion"*** (***"soon-ed'-ree-on"***) and references a religious tribunal set to resolve matters of doctrinal application. So, while I would not suggest there is something so formal as the old Sanhedrin in existence within the church of Revelation, certainly for the body of believers to be resolving doctrinal conflicts would be in the nature of a church meeting. And if they are in raging internal conflict, it is altogether reasonable to anticipate the involvement of some formal, pseudo-religious body pretending to compel obedience in false doctrine upon the elect souls who are there engaged. Luke makes a similar reference with ***"delivering you up to the synagogues"***.

Apostasy. This condition includes those who are engaged in some pretense that the elect have doctrinal error, resulting in a grand schism among those professing the faith. But it is not the same energy. This

condition expresses the abandonment of the path of life and truth. ***“[B]ecause iniquity shall abound, the love [agape] of many shall wax cold”***, brother Matthew reports. This reflects that part of the winnowing of religious professors down to the called-out assembly of believers is due to the sheer weight of iniquity in the earth. Like when the four who were being escorted out of the raining fire of old Sodom, the weight of that moment revealed that Lot’s wife – likely a professing Christian for all the years of his sojourn into that vile place – was in fact a reprobate. These referred to by Christ are revealed as possessing a bloodless religion, and fall away. If we consider the words of Paul to the Thessalonians, there will indeed ***“come a falling away first” (2 Thessalonians 2:3)*** before ***“that man of sin [i.e., Antichrist]”*** is revealed, the ***“son of perdition.”*** Christ here articulates the same energy related to the same period of time.

Hatred. We experience hatred. We’ve even experienced things that would make us have a reasonable perspective that we’re ***“hated of all nations [i.e., cultures]”***, as Matthew puts it, and ***“men”*** as Mark and Luke frame it ... for the name of Christ and His glorious word. But we’ve not experienced *this* hatred. As I articulated when discussing the removal of the first seal of Revelation six, it will not be until the purity of the doctrines of election and reprobation are known that the venomous hatred referenced in Christ’s words will be experienced. It is this hatred that we need to have in our view while we exercise our minds today.

Violence. This is not another sermon on the specifics of the violence that engulfs the earth during this period of Christ’s Revelation. I’ve examined this issue in multiple sermons, and specific to the 2<sup>nd</sup> seal of Revelation chapter six – as well as the earlier words of Christ in this sermon – in at least two previous sermons. The inhabitants of this earth have seen many world-engulfing conflicts among men during the past six millennia. In each of those, men have convinced themselves that the population of the earth will be erased in the horrors of wars. In each, we have seen the increasing capacity of men to be monsters. Yet, until God has brought upon this earth the conditions that will usher in Christ’s Revelation, none will truly know the level of granular undoing that is prepared for a rebellious world. Not since the great Flood was God’s wrath so devastating. Not since the microcosm of Sodom and Gomorrah has the power of God’s conflagration been on display as it will be brought in the final days of the earth’s inhabitants. So, let us please consider that what Christ is here describing goes well beyond the relatively pedestrian violence that vexes our hearts and minds at this hour. The violence expressed in these verses relate to how the men of the earth turn their hatred and wrath toward those of God’s who remain in the earth at that critical hour.

Affliction. The betrayal, the heresy, the apostacy, the hatred, and the violence are all the conditions of heart, mind, and behaviors that are expressed by the enemies of that little body of believers. The result is affliction. In each of these expressions, affliction is articulated through persecutions, beatings, imprisonments, and even death for members of the little church. As ***“evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Timothy 3:13)***, those ***“that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (id, v. 12)***, I believe at a level commensurate with the level of deterioration of the world’s population.

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I've asked a number of people in the church a question about these verses: Since we in this body ... and truly in every body of believers who have existed since the creation of the human race ... experience betrayal, heresy, apostacy, hatred, violence, and affliction at the hands of the unbeliever, how do we distinguish? How do we know that we are seeing what Christ is describing as integral to His return and to the end of the world? All of us who have lived long enough to have friends or children or brothers or sisters or spouses or parents who abandon the truth of God and betray what they know to be the right path of life, how do we identify this betrayal referenced by Christ? All of us who have lived through the remarkable ... truly inexplicable ... apostacy of one who professed these doctrines as the very essence of their lives, how do we measure the apostacy that opens the Day of the Lord? Do we not know of the hatred and violence and affliction of every stripe that has occurred to the saints of God throughout recorded history? Even if the reports of those matters have been exaggerated or embellished ... and from our personal experiences they likely have not been ... don't we know the heartbreaking, bone-crushing fear that rests upon these human bodies when our enemies are at our throats? Don't we feel quite intimately Paul's words:

***"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed" (2 Corinthians 4:8-9)***

If we have such experiences for ourselves and have recorded what others have experienced of these afflictions what, then, should be our expectation that might help sincere souls look at the society they are providentially to live within, and say in an objective and credible way that the words of Christ are truly on display and His Revelation is upon them?

Boiling down the answers, they can be captured with two terms: Severe and pervasive. Betrayal of the saints to whatever power and authority intended by Christ's words is grotesque and remarkably common and the outcome of that betrayal remarkably extreme. Heresy and apostacy seems to be happening so rapidly and broadly that one would expect there would be but a servant or two remaining in the church, who would be left to stamp out. It certainly is true that Scriptures teach only a remnant remains, and one so small Luke reports Christ asks the question: ***"when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8)***. Hatred and violence so extreme that one might expect the warning of King Saul's son Jonathan to the fleeing David: ***"abide in a secret place, and hide thyself" (1 Samuel 19:2)***.

The prophet Micah was sent to prophesy of the destruction of Israel. In his words, it is evident that this horrifying event in Jewish history is an adumbration of the day when the Jewish remnant will be called forth, face a monstrous assault that crescendos in the work of the Antichrist beast, and then come to full at the battle of Armageddon. In that context, he describes the paucity of saints in the earth, as well as the treachery with which those souls will be treated by the world's population, including their closest friends and kin:

***“Woe is me! for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, as the grape gleanings of the vintage: there is no cluster to eat: my soul desired the firstripe fruit. The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net. That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward; and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up. The best of them is as a brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge: the day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh; now shall be their perplexity. Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom. For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man’s enemies are the men of his own house.” (Micah 7:1-6)***

Here again, we see the same energy of betrayal, heresy, apostacy, hatred, violence, and affliction that is found in Christ’s words. The earmarks of both severity and pervasiveness in these conditions. Again, altogether in line with a remarkable condition that – under the slaughter of ancient Israel by the Assyrians – existed in a small part of the world and will be repeated on the much grander scale of all the human race when Christ returns. Severe. Pervasive. King David uttered a short psalm describing this time and condition, again reflecting these key components, though the element of betrayal is to be interpolated, rather than expressed:

***“The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one. ¶ Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD. There were they in great fear: for God is in the generation of the righteous. Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because the LORD is his refuge. Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.” (Psalms 14:1-7)***

The prophecy of Zephaniah, though historically warning of the promised captivity of Judah by Babylon, is clearly also referencing that greater Day of the Lord, as indicated by the expositor Matthew Poole in his introductory discussion of that book:

*“By promises, and encouragements [Zephaniah affectionately exhorts] to expect mercy upon their hearkening to his counsel, he foretells the coming of the Messiah, the calling of the Gentiles, the preserving of a remnant of them amidst all the troubles and wasting judgments that should follow them, and a return out of captivity, with the re-establishing them as the church and people of God; which promise closeth his prophecy, and for which he calls on them to be thankful to and rejoice in*

*their God, who in the midst of their sins, and his wrath for those sins, yet remembered his own mercies and covenant for them.”*

In the prophecy, Zephaniah includes multiple references to the oppression and reproaches and revilings that were heaped upon his servants by their enemy – including that most grievous work of Antichrist. Then, he articulates in a most telling manner the nature of the punishment those enemies will receive; being reduced to the state of the destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (Zephaniah 2:9). I submit that nearly any place in Scripture where you find a prophetic discussion of these last days, you will find reference to most if not all of these six identified conditions within Christ’s words. It is, I think, fairly understood by most students of eschatology, because while these are important things to look upon, they are not the sum of the conditions to consider.

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I believe there needs to be two additional components to the conditions articulated by Christ. This will require us to look at some other words He speaks in relation to eschatology to fully accentuate the words that we’re considering today. The world condition of sodomitical influence and the condition of near complete absence of any earthly remedy for those saints.

On the first issue, it is an interesting study of Bible passages – one which I encourage each and every one of you in this house today to engage in – to discover that every one of the 27 times Sodom is expressly mentioned following that horrific destruction of Genesis 19, the passage is either directly or metaphorically in reference to the Day of the Lord. I think it is necessary to take a closer look at what we learn in Scripture about the relationship between sodomites and the return of our Savior. In another passage recorded by Luke, we find a brief discussion by Christ regarding this same period of time, to wit:

***“And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them. For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day. But first must he suffer many things [i.e., be crucified and slain], and be rejected of this generation. And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.” (Luke 17:20-30)***

So, Christ tells His disciples that He understands they will come to believe that His earthly kingdom will be set up while they are yet alive, but that they will in fact not see such an event. He tells them that others will be vehemently declaring that Christ's day is upon them during their generation, but that they should not buy into that folly. Christ's warning of such false doctrine actually realized at the church in Thessalonica, where Paul warns them not to fall for the suggestion by many **"that the day of Christ is at hand" (2 Thessalonians 2:2)**, after which he provides some wonderful markers for identifying Antichrist and the return of the Savior. Instead, Christ tells them of what signs will actually attend His return, and among them are a similarity to the days of Noah and the days of Lot. In the passages we're considering about Christ's words to His apostles in today's sermon there is also a reference to the days of Noah – at least in Matthew's account.

***"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."* (Matthew 24:37-39)**

Now over the years we've looked at these parts of Christ's words – perhaps in a manner a bit isolated from the context in which He uttered them – so they're not unfamiliar to us as a starting point in our analysis. That is, I think it is a well-known truth that Christ instructed that these ancient events are indicative of how things will be at His coming. What I would like to examine is, in our current context, can these two events help us to better understand what is happening *to the saints* in the earth as the Day of the Lord is upon them? The use of these two events can be said to capture at least two palpable conditions that will be on full display: (1) Decreed deliberate ignorance of Christ's return, and (2) venomous mockery and rage against the Lord's saints.

In the matter of deliberate ignorance, we have Peter telling this coming generation that they are **"willingly ... ignorant"** of the clear Bible and historical truth that just as the world was destroyed by the flood in Noah's day, that same earth is **"reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."** (2 Peter 3:5, 7). Where Christ, in Luke 17, is said to describe the condition of "ho-hum, life goes on" within the antediluvian world, the expositor John Calvin gives a satisfactory analysis of the words' import with regard to this condition:

*"When [Christ] says that men were giving their whole attention to eating, drinking, marriage, and other worldly employments, at the time when God destroyed the whole world by a deluge, and Sodom by thunder; these words mean that they were as fully occupied with the conveniences and enjoyments of the present life, as if there had been no reason to dread any change. And though we shall immediately find him commanding the disciples to guard against surfeiting and earthly cares, yet in this passage he does not directly condemn the intemperance, but rather the obstinacy, of those times, in consequence of which, they despised the threatenings of God, and awaited with indifference their awful destruction. Promising to themselves that the condition in which they then were would remain unchanged, they did not scruple to follow without concern their ordinary pursuits. And in*

*itself it would not have been improper, or worthy of condemnation, to make provision for their wants, if they had not with gross stupidity opposed the judgment of God, and rushed, with closed eyes, to unbridled iniquity, as if there had been no Judge in heaven. So now Christ declares that the last age of the world will be in a state of stupid indifference, so that men will think of nothing but the present life, and will extend their cares to a long period, pursuing their ordinary course of life, as if the world were always to remain in the same condition."*

While I take some umbrage to the notion that this indifference is "stupid" – as I believe that it is motivated by much more than mere ignorance or stupidity – I think it is without quarrel that they have an acute level of indifference to the warnings and wrath of God. It is, I believe, judicial rather than merely accidental, since we're told in the plainest language that our God ***"knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve [i.e., render unable to do any differently] the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished"*** (2 Peter 2:9). Indeed, Paul tells the Thessalonians that it is the result of a ***"strong delusion"*** with the designed result ***"that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."*** (2 Thessalonians 2:11-12)

To examine the other condition, of mockery and rage against the saints, the analysis involves a number of passages to pull them together. Turning our attention to the reference to Lot, we can begin with the words tucked into the description of that event when Lot cautioned the crowd of Sodomites, ***"do not so wickedly."*** (Genesis 19:7) In response, the filthy perverts said ***"Stand back ... This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them."*** (id. v. 9) Expositor Albert Barnes provides this insight: *"Stand back.' This seems to be a menace to frighten Lot out of the way of their perverse will. ... 'He will needs be a judge.' It is evident Lot had been in the habit of remonstrating with them."* I think this sentiment is obvious from the context, particularly since it is said of these vile people that they ***"vexed [Lot's] righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds"*** (2 Peter 2:8). Lot lived in that increasingly lawless mess that is integral to any society dominated by these filthy creatures. As they overtake this nation, the violence and chaos skyrocket. Crime statistics skyrocket. Drug and alcohol abuse skyrocket. Strange afflictions and plagues skyrocket. They put on a show of kind, peaceful, and innocent persons while all their lives' policies undo every decent and clean and righteous and lawful component to the society. This has a vexatious impact on those of God's servants dwelling in their midst, even before we get to the increasingly outpouring of violence directed at those righteous souls.

Lot, and his guests, were not just victims of opportunity. Lot was a target in that city. Lot was renowned for preaching the truth of God and warning those vicious and grotesque perverts about the judgment of God against them and against their filth. Like when we entered San Francisco on February 22, 1994, to picket the funeral of a dead pervert who was a fag icon, from the moment we landed we were tracked by the monstrous sinners of that city and were set upon as quickly as they were able to attack our vehicle slowed by traffic. Those violent freaks didn't just happen upon us ... they were organized and focused with the intent to stop us before we reached the funeral picket

location. It would be good to consider this dynamic existing all around those precious souls – all day, every day – when the last days are upon us. When Ezekiel describes the nature of that old filthy city/state, consider how the treatment of those who were God’s elect among the population stands out in the description of their malicious character:

***“Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me:” (Ezekiel 16:49-50)***

This language I have underlined has a twofold application. First, the saints of God are depicted throughout the Scripture as ***“poor and needy”*** because they are the most systematically disenfranchised among the population. Everything that is considered by reprobate men of the earth to capture what is a “good life” – renown, wealth, health, security – is counted ***“but dung”*** to us next to ***“the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus”*** in this flesh (Philippians 3:8). We are ***“the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day”*** (1 Corinthians 4:13) since we will not assent to their idolatry, fornication, adultery, murders, etc., but rather warn them daily against such behaviors. So many passages can be brought to bear to support the conclusion that the primary import of such words in Scripture relates metaphorically to the elect of God. But it is a secondary – truly symptomatic – reality where these beasts rule, that humans are disposable. It is a stark thing to behold that while they present as progressive and empathetic, in practice they leave the most severe hardships in their structural wake. As their self-indulgence climbs, the mountains of death, disease, chaos, poverty, and other human horrors are what their hedonistic lifestyles stand upon. They are expert in the tearing down of every aspect of society that does not worship them or feed their ego-driven lust for honor and respect.

Is it not an amazing fulfillment of God’s prophecy about the world slouching toward Sodom and Gomorrah that the single word that His prophet uses to describe the essence of that filthy lifestyle is the same word that symbolizes their presence in the earth ... PRIDE? Pride, so far from causing the whole world to shrink back in terror from such audacious error warned against in Scripture, has overtaken the whole world in every detail! After generations of pumping that poisonous energy into every child on every front of their lives, the population was ripe for these filthy dreamers to drink in the wine squeezed from ***“the vine of Sodom, and the fields of Gomorrah”*** (Deuteronomy 32:32). Now drunk on those ***“grapes of gall [and bitter] clusters”***, they will soon fly under the antichristic flag of pride above all other entities whether civil, military, or religious. Indeed, one of the descriptions of the Antichrist beast in Daniel’s final vision is that will not have any interest in ***“the desire of women”*** (Daniel 11:37). Now that language may intend only that his disposition is simply against an inclination that he should respectfully engage with women (i.e., being married) – which in this day is not even a remarkable trait – or it may reflect that he is a sodomite. A proud, primping, filthy sodomite! It would be altogether fitting that the most egregious of sins against the symbol of Christ and His Bride the church would attenuate to the most ferocious of Christ’s enemies. It would also fit that the battle cry of PRIDE would attend his work. Regardless, it is unmistakable

that sodomites are in rule across the globe as part of the grievous onslaught against the saints as the Day of the Lord comes upon us.

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The next component that I see in this assault on the saints in this dark time is the absence of any human-based remedy. I believe it is a necessary implication or extrapolation from Christ's actual words recorded in these passages, though He does not specifically state it here. It is found in examining these events Christ references from history.

***“And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.” (Genesis 18:20-21)***

**“Cry”** means a thing that the expositors do not help us to examine. In this quoted passage, two different – though related – Hebrew words are used. The **“cry of Sodom”** is **“za’aq”** (**“zah’-ak”**) and denotes an **“outcry, cry of distress”**. In the next verse, where Christ is going to see if the condition is according to **“the cry of it”**, the word used is **“tsa’aqah”** (**“tsah-ak-aw”**) which also denotes an **“outcry, cry of distress (especially as heard by God)”**. They both come from root words that express the idea of help being called for or summoned. When Lot lived every day in the increasingly violent and predatory behaviors of the **“filthy dreamers [who not only] defiled the flesh, [but] despise[d] dominion, and [spake] evil of dignities” (Jude 1:8)**, he lived in perpetual fear for his life. What level of perpetual fear would a human being live with that would convince him that the lesser of the evil alternatives he faces is to turn his own daughters out to be violently raped by a mob of perverts? How severe must it have become for Lot to know absolutely – not just forensically speculate about – that all sources of earthly help were part of the violent mob? There was no earthly option. And I believe that when these matters come upon that final little body of believers, they will be utterly without an option for defense. So far from the death of one or more of their number being the ultimate expression of their misery ... in truth the *remarkable* thing becomes that any would survive.

When we consider what Scripture provides us regarding the conditions of the earth when Noah was sent to preach to that world and condemn it (Hebrews 11:7), there is an opportunity to open up a term used only eight times in the New Testament; **“ungodly”**. We’re told that the triggering condition to Noah being sent to preach, and the world being destroyed, was that **“the earth was filled with violence”** through the corruption of the inhabitants. (Genesis 6:11, 13). Dr. Gill gives some flavor to this energy about the earth being filled **“with doing injury to the persons and properties of men; with oppression and cruelty, by tyrannical decrees and unrighteous judgments; or with rapines and robberies, as the Targums and Jarchi; and with rapes, as Aben Ezra adds: the account that Lucian gives from tradition agrees with this; that the present race of men is not the first, they totally perished by a flood; and those men were very insolent and addicted to unjust actions; for they neither kept their oaths, nor were hospitable to strangers, nor gave ear to suppliants, for which reason they were destroyed.”**

When Peter references this antediluvian population, he says that Noah was saved by God, who did so by ***“bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly”*** (2 Peter 2:5). This word ***“ungodly”*** is defined as *“destitute of reverential awe towards God, condemning God, impious”*. A fair interpolation here is that the world had reached a point where they had gone far past sin ... far past unrighteousness ... and had reached a point where they condemned God, His word, and His people. They collectively had become so violent in their opposition to the Creator, that Noah had no remedy. He had no human resource that could save him from the unchecked debauchery and violence of the men of the earth. He had nothing but that unprecedented remedy provided by an enraged God, determined to bring an end to all flesh. That energy and condition again infects the whole of the population of the earth, except those gentle souls who will be required to cry unto their God that He bring the promised end ... this time not with water, but fire (2 Peter 3:7)

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The final thing I want to cover with regard to these words of Christ is that, like those other conditions we’ve covered from this portion of His sermon, this condition mirrors what John the Revelator says in Revelation chapter six under the fifth seal:

***“And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.”*** (Revelation 6:9-11)

We’ve covered the portion of Christ’s words that meet this language of John as it respects the crying out to the Lord and that treatment for which they are engaged in this crying of betrayal, heresy, apostasy, hatred, violence, and affliction. When I preached on this seal’s opening before, I explained the component of the saint’s renewed ability to reveal through preaching additional and specific components of Christ’s Revelation that angers the inhabitants of God afresh, bringing upon them the venomous and unprecedented rage. Much like Noah’s preaching about the flood did his generation. Much like Lot’s warnings about the conflagration did his city, causing them to see him as mocking them. Previously in this sermon I’ve not laid out that preaching component from Christ’s words. Here they are:

***“this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.”*** (Matthew 24:14)

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***“And the gospel must first be published among all nations. But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.” (Mark 13:10-11)***

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***“And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.” (Luke 21:13-15)***

We have used these words to prepare our hearts in going before the men of this earth for the decades we have been allowed to preach our Savior’s blessed words of peace and repentance. I agree that they are relevant for every generation of God’s elect servants who are – in their times and in their places – compelled to face the hatred of their extant populations against God. But I believe the primary intent of these words in this place among Christ’s eschatological sermon on Mt. Olivet is that same energy described in so many other places of Scripture about this time. This is a dispensation unique to all those that have gone before it ... and unique from that dispensation of Christ’s millennial reign that will follow it. Unique, therefore, to that generation is a testimony that articulates the specifics of how God is undoing the earth. Like Jeremiah, Elijah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and other prophets of old were prepared and empowered to do when the earth-judgments were specifically presaged. A uniquely hostile response came to most of them, as a uniquely hostile response will come to these servants in the last times. Since I culled so many of those passages before, I will not repeat that exercise here. I believe that these cautions against fretting about what the answer will be for these trembling servants against a world of betrayal, heresy, apostacy, hatred, violence, and affliction are Christ’s indication that those prophecies will be given to those souls to speak boldly.

I often feel as though we have yet to fully attain to the jewels contained in Christ’s words to his apostles on Mt. Olivet. They are so pregnant with meaning, we can comb through them time and time again and as our eyes are given more light we joyfully share that light in our communion with each other. That is a process, not a single event. For now, I understand Christ to be telling his fretting friends that when His day is upon the earth dwellers, those who are chosen out for His work will face these conditions like no generation before them ... sodomites will be leading the energy of Antichrist against them ... there will be no earthly remedy whatsoever, so they will cry mightily to their God for strength, patience, faith, and deliverance. It will be like no time before in the earth when so many seek to crush so few, and it will all be in perfect accordance with the providential dictates of a sovereign God.

I love you all. Amen.