



MJAA SE Regional Conference

“Yeshua’s Difficult Words On The Mount of Olives”

December 19, 2021

Good morning! I want to speak to you this morning about truth. ADONAI said in Isaiah 1:18 “Come let us reason together. Even if your sins are like scarlet, they will become white as snow.” ADONAI said that “He wants to forgive our sins, to make them as white as snow.” But first, He said “Come let us reason together.” Reason is translated from the Hebrew word *yakach* which can be understood as “to decide, to adjudge, or to prove.” Essentially, it means “to be right.” Within the body of Messiah, there seem to be many different truths. At least, we understand what ADONAI is saying differently. We must decide, prove what ADONAI is saying as He said through Isaiah.

Our conference theme is “*Chazak, Be Strong,*” and I’m sure that you have already heard it several times this weekend. In Joshua chapter 1, he spoke this word several times. He said: <1> 7 “*Only be very strong, and resolute to observe diligently the Torah which Moses, My servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so you may be successful wherever you go.*” (Joshua 1:7 TLV). It does mean to diligently observe *Torah*, but it also means that we must do our best to understand *Torah*, ADONAI’s teaching and instruction from Genesis to Revelation. Before we can obey, we must understand. Our custom as we complete the reading of each book of *Torah* follows Ashkenazi tradition. If we had been in our synagogue yesterday, at the end of our *Torah* service we would have recited together: *Chazak, chazak, v’nitchazek!* Be strong, be strong, and let us be strengthened! It means that our goal is to not only be obedient to that which we are called to obey, but also to understand it. And that requires study.

Several years ago the book “*The Non-Torah: Exposing the Mythology of Divine Oral Torah*” was published by our alliance, the IAMCS. Its basic premise is that there is no such thing as an “oral *torah*” given by G-d to the Jews. I agree with the book. Since there is no oral *torah* upon which *gemara* can be based, there is also no authoritative *talmud*. According to rabbinic Judaism, there are two *torahs*, *Torah Shebiktav*, ADONAI’s written *Torah* and *Torah Shebe’al Peh*, the *Torah* of the mouth, the Oral *Torah*. But, there was no oral *torah* passed down from Moses to Joshua and so on and so forth through the years. Read the book. We must only base our understanding of what ADONAI requires of us on His written Word. This is not to say that we don’t love many of the liturgies and rituals which have been passed down to us. And, we accept and lovingly carry out as beautiful traditions those things which do not disagree with the written Word. But, our obedience can only be to truth and ADONAI’s written Word is His only authorized revealed truth. We can learn from the *Talmud*, but we cannot equate it with the written *Torah*.

Two days before Yeshua died on the stake, He spoke to his disciples on the Mount of Olives about the future. Within the time that we have today, we will consider some of the things which He said. Our focus is on context, the *p’shat*, the plain meaning of Yeshua’s words. His words are a picture of what would happen in Jerusalem within the next 40 years and then through all the centuries leading up to His return to earth. But, understanding the

words He spoke is difficult. We don't have other clear cut Scriptures describing these events. The verses from other sources that we do have are many times mystical and raise even more questions. Yeshua's own words regarding these things are also difficult to understand. Is it possible that He said these things in that way so that we would not completely know the answer? If we knew exactly what was going to happen and when He was returning, it would take away some of our need for study and faith as we wait.

The first subject, the beautiful stones of the Temple, show us the initial time frame of Yeshua's words. *1 Now when Yeshua went out and was going away from the Temple, His disciples came up to point out to Him the Temple buildings. 2 "Don't you see all these?" He responded to them. "Amen, I tell you, not one stone will be left here on top of another—every one will be torn down!" 3 As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things happen" (Matthew 24:1-3a)? (also Mark 13:1-4a and Luke 21:5-7a).* Yeshua's statement about the stones prophesied the coming destruction of the Temple. They asked Him when this would happen.

He told them when it would happen when He said: *14 "But when you see 'the abomination of desolation' standing where it should not be [on the Temple mount] (let the reader understand), then those in Judea must flee to the mountains. 15 The one on the roof must not go down, nor enter to take anything out of his house. 16 And the one in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. 17 Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 18 Pray that it will not happen in winter. 19 "For in those days there will be trouble such as has never happened, not since the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never will. 20 And unless Adonai had cut short those days, no one would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, whom He chose, He cut short the days" (Mark 12:14-20 TLV). (also Matthew 15-22 and Luke 20-24).* In saying this, Yeshua revealed that the "abomination of desolation" is not the Anti-Christ, a human being. He said: *'the abomination of desolation' standing where it should not be.* An "it" is not a person. It is a thing; a something. The "abomination" is also spoken of in the Matthew Scripture, and is also not identified there as a person. Matthew refers to it as: *"the abomination of desolation",* but adds, *"which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet."* In saying this, Yeshua warned His disciples about these coming events. He said to those who were in Judea "to get away from there when they saw these things happening."

The abomination of desolation, the "it" which Yeshua spoke of in Mark was spoken about by Daniel in Daniel chapter 11, verse 31. In the year 30 CE when Yeshua was speaking, the first appearance of the "abomination of desolation" had occurred at the time of the Maccabees about 200 years earlier. It was when the Syrian army invaded Jerusalem and desecrated the Temple in about 167 BCE. The abomination was the presence of the pagan Syrian army in the Temple. The dictionary tells us that an abomination is a thing which causes disgust or hatred. Desolation is a state of complete emptiness or destruction. Yeshua referred to it in the days of the Maccabees and also said that another appearance of it was coming.

The coming abomination which Yeshua warned about was in the near future of His disciples. From history, we know the coming abomination to be the pagan Roman army which destroyed the Temple in the year 70, about 40 years in the future. Their destruction of it made it desolate; empty. Yeshua told His disciples to pray that this would not happen in winter and it didn't. It happened in the spring. In the year 70 CE, Titus's Roman legions

breached the walls of Jerusalem and entered. According to Josephus, the Jewish historian, they slaughtered almost the entire population of Jerusalem.

Yeshua also told His disciples that that coming time would be the worst that happened in Jerusalem, ever! He said: *21 For there will be trouble (tribulation) then (in 70 CE) worse than there has ever been (very great tribulation) from the beginning of the world until now, and there will be nothing like it again!* (Matthew 24:21). The King James Bible tells exactly what it was: *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."* (Matthew 24:21 KJV). What happened in Jerusalem in the year 70 was the "Great Tribulation." How bad was it and what made it a "great tribulation?" It is estimated that the population of Jerusalem in the year 70 was 600,000. But, Josephus reported that as many as 1,100,000 were killed during the siege of Jerusalem and that 97,000 more Jews were sold as slaves. That's almost 1.2 million! How could that happen in a city of 600,000? The answer is that nearly a million others came to Jerusalem for Passover. Josephus tells us that the Roman army's initial siege took place during Passover. That was when the city was surrounded and blockaded. No one could get in or out. Many of those killed were not residents of Jerusalem, but pilgrims who had travelled there for Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. That accounts for the greater number of dead, many of whom starved to death. Almost all of the people that were within the walls of Jerusalem were either killed, died of starvation or sold as slaves. They were trapped inside the city for about 110 days, from just before Passover until the 9th of Av when the Romans broke through and destroyed the Temple. That's a great tribulation! The *p'shat*, the plain meaning of Yeshua's words here, "great tribulation," were a reference to an event in Jerusalem, not something coming to the entire world in the future. Something worse than that would have to happen to Jerusalem today for it to be a greater time of tribulation. But, that won't happen because Yeshua said: *there will be nothing like it again!* That which happened in Jerusalem in the year 70 CE was the "Great Tribulation."

Then Yeshua said: *20 And unless Adonai had cut short those days, no one would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, whom He chose, He cut short the days*" (Mark 12:20 TLV). The siege could have been longer, but ADONAI cut short the time in order to allow some to live. The elect were those who survived the Romans to carry on the ministry of the Kingdom. Some of them managed to get away. Luke added something about this which was not told in either Matthew or Mark. Yeshua said: *24 "They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away captive into all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled"* (Luke 21:24 TLV). There are two stages in His prophecy. First, over a million were killed and almost 100,000 were sold as slaves in the year 70. Second, Yeshua prophesied about Jerusalem in the far future, saying that: "it would be under the control of Gentile nations until it was time for that control to come to an end." It came to an end in July of 1967 during the Six Day War when the Israeli army recaptured and gained control of Jerusalem for the first time since Yeshua uttered those words.

23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here's the Messiah,' or 'There He is,' do not believe it. 24 For false messiahs and false prophets will rise up and show great signs and wonders so as to lead astray, if possible, even the chosen" (Matthew 24:23-24 TLV). (also Mark 13:21-22). There have been many who claimed they were the Jewish Messiah. After Yeshua's resurrection and even before the Temple was destroyed, Theudas led a rebellion and claimed to be the Messiah. The most famous false Messiah was *Bar Kochba*, the leader of the 2nd Jewish rebellion against Rome about one hundred years after Yeshua. There are reports that there have been 25 or more false Messiahs to appear through the centuries. The latest I

know of was *Rabbi Menachem Schneerson*, the *Lubavicher rabbi* of New York City who died in 1994. His followers still believe that he will rise from the dead.

Regarding Yeshua's return, there was expectation among His disciples that He would return soon, possibly even in the 1st century. Today, many of His followers do not even think about His return, believing that it is too far in the future. Some don't believe that He will return at all. We definitely believe that He will return, but no one knows the day or the hour. Even though we don't know when, we must remember that Yeshua taught us to pray: "Your Kingdom come!" 9 *"Therefore, pray in this way: 'Our Father in heaven, sanctified be Your name. 10 Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."* (Matthew 6:9-10 TLV). We are to pray for it and to look for it.

Next, in Matthew we find this advice from Yeshua: 25 *"See, I have told you beforehand. 26 'So if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the wilderness,' do not go out. Or, 'Look, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. 27 For just as lightning comes from the east and flashes as far as the west, so also will be the coming of the Son of Man. 28 For wherever the carcass is, there the vultures will gather"* (Matthew 24:25-28 TLV). We are not to believe anyone who tells us that Yeshua has already come. That's because it will not be a secret. Everyone will know it at the same time. We will all see Him in the heavens when He comes. His appearance will be as clear and as bright as a bolt of lightning which can be seen from wherever you are watching. "For wherever the carcass is, there the vultures will gather" is a reference to Yeshua in the clouds. Because the dead and the living will rise to meet Him in the air, Yeshua used these words as a picture of His righteous ones streaming upward toward Him like vultures toward a carcass.

Yeshua then said: 29 *"But immediately after the trouble of those days, 'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light and the stars will fall from heaven and the powers of the heavens will be shaken"* (Matthew 24:29 TLV). He also spoke about this in Mark 13:23-25 and Luke 21:25-26. But only in Matthew did Yeshua say "immediately after the trouble of those days." What are "those days" of which Yeshua spoke? We know that it was not about the Great Tribulation in Jerusalem because it has already occurred. The days to which He was referring were future days and immediately preceding His return. The trouble of those days is the present trouble of our days. We've reached that time. We're experiencing those troubles now and the coming signs in the heavens are somewhere in our near future. In Luke, Yeshua adds this: 26 *"People will lose heart from fear and anticipation of what is overtaking the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken"* (Luke 21:26 TLV). Yeshua said that we are to be forewarned about this. Expect it to happen. And, these things will happen just before He returns. But, we are not to be like those who fear and lose heart. The ones who will be in fear are the ones who have not trusted Yeshua and who do not understand His words. To understand His words, we must be diligent searchers of the Scriptures just like the Berean Jews. They didn't just believe what *Sha'ul* was telling them without verifying it in Scripture: 11 *Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, because they received the message with goodwill, searching the Scriptures each day to see whether these things were true.* (Acts 17:11 TLV).

30 *"Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the land will mourn, and they will see 'the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven' with power and great glory. 31 He will send out His angels with a great shofar, and they will gather together His chosen from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other"* (Matthew 24:30-31 TLV). (also Mark 13:26-27 and Luke 21:27-28). The sign of the Son of Man is His

appearance in the heavens itself. He is the sign. The clouds are significant. He referred to Himself frequently as “the Son of Man.” Daniel said: 13 *“I was watching in the night visions. Behold, One like a Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven.”* (Daniel 7:13 TLV). We see Him in His departure from this world in Acts: 9 *After saying all this—while they were watching—He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.* (Acts 1:9 TLV). The angels who appeared there said that He would also come back in the clouds: 11 *They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you keep standing here staring into heaven? This Yeshua, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven.”* (Acts 1:11 TLV). He is coming back on the clouds and we may even see His crucifixion wounds. That would be a good time for Zechariah’s prophecy to be fulfilled: 10 *“Then I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication, when they will look toward Me whom they pierced. They will mourn for him as one mourns for an only son and grieve bitterly for him, as one grieves for a firstborn”* (Zechariah 12:10 TLV). The tribes of *eretz Yisra’el*, the land of Israel, and not the people of the world are the Tribes of the Land. They, the un-regenerated, but soon to be regenerated Israel, will mourn for Yeshua.

We have two witnesses of Yeshua appearing in the heavens from *Sha’ul*, 1Thessalonians 4:16-17 and also 1Corinthians 15:51-52. 16 *“For the Lord Himself shall come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the blast of God’s shofar, and the dead in Messiah shall rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who are left behind, will be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air—and so we shall always be with the Lord.”* (1Thessalonians 4:16-17 TLV). 51 *“Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last shofar. For the shofar will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed.”* (1Corinthians 15:51-52 TLV). Every eye will see Him when He comes on the clouds, including those who don’t know Him. For those who have not trusted Him it will be too late: 28 *...so also Messiah, was offered once to bear the sins of many. He will appear a second time, apart from sin, to those eagerly awaiting Him for salvation.”* (Hebrews 9:28 TLV). Those of us who know Him are eagerly awaiting His return for our salvation, our deliverance from the troubles of this world. But, He is not coming to deal with unrepented sin. He has already come once for that. Sin must be repented before He comes again.

The last thing that we see in this group of verses is this: 31 *He will send out His angels with a great shofar, and they will gather together His chosen from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other”* (Matthew 24:31 TLV). Some see this as the physical regathering of Israel back to the land which began in the last several centuries and is continuing today. That could be one meaning, but I believe that this verse is a reference to what *Sha’ul* spoke of in 1Thessalonians 4 and 1Corinthians 15, the resurrection of the righteous dead and the rising of the living to meet Yeshua in the clouds. When the *shofar* sounds, all who have trusted Yeshua will rise. They are “His chosen” and this group will include “all Israel” whom I believe will have trusted Him before He comes in the clouds.

Yeshua spoke about the fig tree: 29 *Then Yeshua told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees. 30 As soon as they sprout their leaves, you see it and you know at once that summer is near. 31 So also, when you see all these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near”* (Luke 21:29-31 TLV). (also Matthew 24:32-33 and Mark 13:28-29). Just as we know that summer is near when fig trees and as Yeshua said in Luke, “all trees”

sprout their leaves, we know that when we see the things which Yeshua spoke of happening, we know that the Kingdom of G-d is near; that Yeshua's appearance is near.

Yeshua said: 32 *"Amen, I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things happen"* (Luke 21:32 TLV). (also Matthew 24:34 and Mark 13:30). We know that the Nations, the Gentiles, are a part of Yeshua's salvation and also His judgment. But, the context of His talk on the Mount of Olives is primarily to the Jews. "This generation" is a generation of Jews. We know that Isaiah and Micah speak of Israel symbolically as a fig tree. If their reference is to Israel as a nation, then the fig tree sprouting could very well refer to the re-established nation and its people. And, because Luke also says "all trees," it is likely that the sprouting of the leaves represents the time element. The sprouting of the leaves signifies that summer is near. The re-establishment of Israel as a nation, the springtime of end-time events, leads to the summer and the return of Israel's Messiah. With regard to Yeshua's words: *"when you see all these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near,"* we understand that the things that we see happening are the wars and rumors of wars and the unrest in the nations. There is also worldwide tribulation now and always has been. We have also seen the end of Jerusalem being controlled by the Gentiles. If Israel is the fig tree in the parable, then it would seem that the generation to which Yeshua was referring is the generation of Jews which would be living in the time since Israel became a nation again. That generation would be the generation of those born in 1948 after Israel became a nation. A person born in 1948 would be 73 today. Based upon the fulfillment of two very important prophecies, Isaiah 66:8, that Israel miraculously became a nation in 1948 and Luke 21:24 that Gentile rule in Jerusalem ended in 1967, we have to know that the Kingdom of G-d is near. 8 *"Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Can a land be born in one day? Can a nation be brought forth at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, she gave birth to her children."* (Isaiah 66:8 TLV) 24 *"They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away captive into all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."* (Luke 21:24 TLV). If that generation will not pass away before all these things happen, Yeshua's return will occur before the generation ends. How long could that generation last? It could be at least another 30 years or more if a person born in 1948 lives to be 100. But Yeshua didn't say that all of that generation would have to pass away, just that the whole generation would not pass away before all those things happened. If the current generation in the Nation of Israel is that generation, Yeshua could return sometime within the next 30 years or sooner. We don't know the day or the hour, but we are commanded to know the season.

Because of the signs of the times today, what Yeshua said next is extremely important to us today. 35 *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away."* (Matthew 24:35 TLV). If we understand the Book of Revelation correctly, soon after Yeshua's return the old heaven and earth will become the new heaven and the new earth. They will change, but Yeshua's words will not change. They remain in effect and will never pass away. That's why it is so important that we "study to show ourselves approved" today. Don't depend on someone else to do it for you. Each of us must study!

36 *"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven nor the Son, except the Father alone."* (Matthew 24:36 TLV). The day and the hour to which Yeshua was referring is His coming on the clouds of heaven to receive His faithful to Himself. He didn't know when at that time, but I would suspect that since He is now at the right hand of the Father that He knows.

37 *“For just as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. 38 For in those days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark. 39 And they did not understand until the flood came and swept them all away. So shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man”* (Matthew 24:37-39 TLV). The people of Noah’s day were scoffing at him and going on with their lives. Crazy old Noah! Building a boat where there is no water. It’s that way today. Many say: “yes, I am going to follow Jesus, but not right now.” Others just choose their own gods to follow, ignoring ADONAI’s Spirit which is speaking to their hearts. And others say: “There is no G-d. I only trust in what I can see.” If you have not trusted in Yeshua before He returns, it will be too late. For those unbelievers today, it will be like the scoffers of Noah’s day beating on the closed door of the ark in fear.

40 *“Then two men will be in the field, one taken and one left. 41 Two women will be grinding at the mill, one taken and one left. 42 Therefore stay alert; for you do not know what day your Lord is coming”* (Matthew 24:40-42 TLV). This will happen when Yeshua appears in the clouds. One man in the field is a believer and rises to meet Yeshua. The other does not know him and is left. One of the women at the mill is a believer and rises to meet Yeshua. The other doesn’t know Him and is “left behind.” This is not the Rapture. The Rapture is a theological term from Dispensational theology which refers to what *Sha’ul* spoke about in 1Thessalonians 5 and 1Corinthians 15. But, when described as “the Rapture,” it is not just an event but a whole doctrine. To believe in “the Rapture” is to believe in the AntiChrist and that the Great Tribulation is a future event for the whole earth. The Greek word *harpazo*, meaning a catching or snatching away, translates to *Sha’ul*’s words “caught up” in the TLV. We definitely believe we will be caught up to meet Yeshua, but not in the doctrine of the Rapture. It is a false teaching.

Who is going up is already settled for the dead in Messiah. But it is not settled for the living. You and I know in whom we have trusted. But, as each day passes, these words of Yeshua become more and more urgent for those who don’t know Him. We are living in the season of His return. It could be any one of the next 30 years or so. We are not expecting an AntiChrist to come and rule the world in order to know that Yeshua’s return is near. We know the time is near and we who are Yeshua’s followers must stay alert. We must stop playing and get serious about being His disciples.

Regarding staying alert, Yeshua added this: 43 *“But know this, that if the master of the house had known what time the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and not let his house be broken into. 44 So you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect”* (Matthew 24:43-44 TLV). Yeshua has warned us. Just as He warned His disciples about the coming Roman devastation, He has warned us about our souls. We are the masters of our houses, our lives. We must be spiritually ready for Yeshua’s return. This means that we must be in and remain in right relationship with Him. Repent frequently.

Our goal is truth, ADONAI’s truth, and we have to be careful where we look for it. There are many theologies out there which tell us that they are truth, but are not. We can only trust in G-d’s written Word, His *Torah* from Genesis to Revelation. Don’t believe that there is a coming Anti-Christ and a coming Great Tribulation. There is no Anti-Christ and the Great Tribulation has already happened. I leave you with this verse: 27 *“Then he will make a firm covenant with many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing of abominations will come one who destroys, until the decreed annihilation is poured out on the one who destroys.”* (Daniel 9:27 TLV). Who is this?

It's not the Anti-Christ. Read the book "Daniel Unsealed" by Dan Bruce. You can get a free download at www.prophecysociety.org. It's not *Torah*, but the best explanation of Daniel's prophecies that I have seen. I won't keep you in suspense. Yeshua is the one who makes the covenant and ends sacrifice and offering by dying on the stake for our sins in the middle of His last week on earth. The Romans are the coming "abomination of desolation," the one who destroys. Please read the book and pray about all these things. **<23>** *Shalom aleichem!*