

MARK Lesson 13

Mark Chapter 13

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Memory verses for this week: *Mark 13:31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.*

Introduction: We continue with our study of Mark this week as we cover Chapter 13. In last week's lesson, the Sadducees came with their strange question about the man who had no children and was married by each of the seven brothers and none had children. They wanted to know whose wife she would be in the resurrection. The scribe then questioned Christ about the Great Commandment. We closed with the record of the gift given by the poor widow. Christ said the little she gave was more than all the rich gave because it was all of her lively hood.

I. The Disciple's Questions

Mark 13:1 And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!

Mark 13:2 And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

The disciples beheld the beauty of the temple. One of the disciples calls attention to Christ about the stones that were in the temple wall. Josephus, the great Biblical historian, wrote, "Now the temple was built of stones that were white and strong, and each of their length was twenty five cubits, their height was eight, and their breadth about twelve." The sanctuary was said to have been over a hundred feet high, with walls of white marble and a roof that had a thin layer of gold. You know this had to be a beautiful and impressive sight. Jesus tells the disciples that there would not be one stone upon another that would not be thrown down. To imagine the impact of that statement, imagine if that were to be our church building that was to be destroyed. The very place where the worship of God takes place. This had to be upsetting to the disciples.

Mark 13:3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately,

Mark 13:4 Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?

The four apostles ask Him privately about the temple. They are on the Mount of Olives which overlooks the temple and Jerusalem. The disciples greatly admired the temple and called Christ's attention to it. Jesus flatly predicted its complete destruction. Imagine their surprise at this news.

Their question contains several parts. "When shall these things be?" and "what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?" This prediction Christ made come to pass as does all true prophecy from God's Word. In A.D. 70, the Roman armies under Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the temple.

II. The Course of this Age

Mark 13:5 And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you:

Mark 13:6 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

Jesus answers their questions by beginning with a warning... Take heed lest any man deceive you. He predicts that many would come in His name and say that they were Christ. In our own generation, we have seen many make claims like this. Jim Jones led a large number of people to their death as did David Koresch. Had the people who followed these men knew their bible, they would have recognized these men for who they were... false christs that have no power whatsoever with the Heavenly Father. The Christ we worship today sits on the right hand of God, and the next word we will get from Him is when we see Him coming in the east at the shout of the Archangel.

Here the lord is telling about the first half of the 7 year tribulation. There will be deception of false Christs. . People today are deceived by false teachers. Wars and rumors of wars have continued to increase since the days of Christ.

Mark 13:7 And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet.

Mark 13:8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows.

The disasters of this age are as birth pangs.

"Sorrows" in this verse refers to the birth pangs of child birth.

1 Thess. 5:3, For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

Jer. 4:31, For I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, and the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child, the voice of the daughter of Zion, that bewaileth herself, that spreadeth her hands, saying, Woe is me now! for my soul is wearied because of murderers.

Does this not sound familiar? We would hear of wars and rumors of wars. In addition to international wars, there will be earthquakes and famines. We know that almost every month we hear of an earthquake in places that normally don't have them. There are all sorts of troubles that face people today. We have outbreaks of illnesses that sometimes have never been heard of before. Twenty years ago, there was no Aids virus. How about this new SARS disease that attacks the pulmonary breathing functions of the body? Many have died from this, particularly in China.

The dictionary defines famine as:

- 1. extreme food scarcity:** a severe shortage of food resulting in widespread hunger
- 2. deficiency of something:** a severe shortage of something
- 3. extreme hunger:** extreme hunger and starvation

There are people starving to death in many areas of the world. What represents a famine? We think of it as a time of shortage and people with widespread hunger. When Sam Varugheses, a missionary to India, was with us in March of 2012, he pointed out the number of people in India today, and the numbers were staggering. India is primarily a Hindu nation, but it has the second largest number of Moslems of any country in the world. Just due to the sheer numbers of people in the limited amount of space there, they will most likely continue to have food shortages. Some of the saddest images of our recent war in Iraq was seeing those people without food and water. God help us to appreciate what we have, and to open our eyes to the fact that we are nearing the end times.

Matthew Henry points out some interesting points in his commentary on Mark.

I. They must take heed that they be not *deceived* by the *seducers* and *imposters* that should now shortly arise (v. 5, 6); "*Take heed lest any man deceive you, lest, having found the true Messiah, you lose him again in the crowd of pretenders, or be inveigled to embrace others in rivalry with him. Many shall come in my name (not in the name of Jesus), but saying, I am the Christ, and so claiming the dignities which I only an entitled to.*" After the Jews had rejected the true Christ, they were imposed upon, and so exposed by many false Christs, but never before; those false Christs *deceived many*; Therefore *take heed lest they deceive you*. Note, When many are deceived, we should thereby be awakened to look to ourselves.

II. They must take heed that they be not disturbed at the noise of wars, which they should be alarmed with, v. 7, 8. Sin introduced wars, and they come from men's lusts. But at some times the nations are more distracted and wasted with wars than at other times; so it shall be now; Christ was born into the world when there was a general peace, but soon after he went out of the world there were general wars; Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And what will become of them then who are to preach the gospel to every nation? The clash of arms, the voice of law is not heard. "But be not troubled at it." 1. "Let it be no surprise to you; you are bid to expect it, and such things must needs be, for God has appointed them, in order to further accomplishment of his purposes, and by the wars of the Jews" (which Josephus has given us a large account of) "God will punish the wickedness of the Jews." 2. "Let it be no terror to you, as if your interest were in danger of being overthrown, or your work obstructed by these wars; you have no concern in them, and therefore need not be apprehensive of any damage by them." Note, Those that despise the smiles of the world, and do not court and covet them, may despise the frowns of the world, and need not fear them. If we seek not to rise with them that rise in the world, why should we dread falling with them that fall in the world?

Mark 13:9 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.

Jesus warns them that they would be delivered up to councils and be beaten in synagogues. If they hated the master, they will hate us who follow him. These predictions refer to some of the early Jewish persecution of the believers.

Acts 4:1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them,

Acts 4:2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

Acts 4:3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide.

Acts 4:4 Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.

Acts 5:17 Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation,

Acts 5:18 And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.

Acts 5:19 But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said,

Acts 5:20 Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.

.... Acts 5:27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,

Acts 5:28 Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

Acts 5:29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

After this, many were brought before Gentile rulers and kings for a testimony to them. Paul stood before many of these Gentile rulers and testified of Christ.

Mark 13:10 And the gospel must first be published among all nations.

Mark 13:11 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 13:12 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.

Mark 13:13 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

The gospel was to be preached among all nations. There was a partial fulfillment of this recorded in Acts 2:5.

Acts 2:5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

Acts 2:6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

Acts 2:7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?

Acts 2:8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

Acts 2:9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

Acts 2:10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,

Acts 2:11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

Acts 2:12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

Christ tells of the persecution of God's people. The gospel will be preached among all nations during the Tribulation. We are told how this will happen.

In Revelations Chapter 7, we read of the 144,000 converted of Israel.

Rev. 7:4, And I heard the number of them which were sealed: [and there were] sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

Great multitudes will be redeemed from all nations.

Rev. 7:9, After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. Rev 7:14, And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

In Revelation Chapter 14, we read of the angel with the everlasting gospel.

Rev. 14:6, And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.

Christ told them as they came before the councils, God would give them words to speak in that hour. What confidence this must have given the disciples. God is always with us as walk in the direction of the Holy Spirit. Evil may befall us, but God knows all about it and works it all to our own good. He warns in verses 12 and 13 that Christ's followers would be hated of all men. Being saved during the seven years of tribulation will be difficult. But those that endure to the end of the tribulation will be blessed of the Lord at this time and delivered.

Mat 5:11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Mat 5:12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

III. The Great Tribulation

Mark 13:14 But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains:

Jesus gives instructions for those that may be living during the tribulation. This is primarily written to the Jews that will be living during this time. The abomination of desolation spoken by Daniel concerns his words about the man of sin and his reign here on earth.

Dan 8:13 Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?

Dan 8:14 And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.

2 Th 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

2 Th 2:4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

Mark 13:15 And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take any thing out of his house:

Mark 13:16 And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment.

Mark 13:17 But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

Mark 13:18 And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.

Mark 13:19 For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.

Mark 13:20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.

Jesus tells of the greatness of this tribulation. It is called the time of Jacob's trouble and a time of wrath.

Jer. 30:7, Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.

Zeph. 1:15, That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness.

It will also be a time of indignation.

Isa. 26:20-21, Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

Jesus warns of some of the hardships the people will endure during this time. There will be affliction like has never been seen. The elect of Israel will be saved and delivered at the close of the tribulation.

Mark 13:21 And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; believe him not:

Mark 13:22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.

Mark 13:23 But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.

False Christs will seduce many, but not the elect. These signs and wonders come from Satan. People are easily deceived by so-called signs and wonders today. Jesus again warns about false christs that will come. There will be many false prophets and they will have great powers to seduce people. It says they would even fool the elect if it were possible. Believe me, Satan has a tremendous amount of power, and he will empower a lot of false prophets during this time. The man of sin, the Anti-Christ, will rise up and come on a platform of peace. He will be very believable, and the world will buy into his program. The greater fulfillment of this prophecy will come during the seven years of tribulation.

J. Vernon McGee said this about these promises.

This is the beginning of the Great Tribulation. The first three and a half years of it are comparatively quiet; it is the false peace of the Antichrist. Then, in the midst of it, there

appears this “abomination of desolation” spoken of by Daniel the prophet. It will stand where it ought not, that is, in the Holy Place. You see, if Mark had said to the Romans that the abomination of desolation would stand in the Holy Place, they would have said, “Where is that?” He says it will stand where it shouldn’t stand. That’s more understandable to many of us too. We need to understand that the Holy Place was given only to the nation Israel. It was a specific place in the temple on earth. The church has no Holy Place.

IV. The Lord’s Return in Glory

Mark 13:24 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,

Mark 13:25 And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

Mark 13:26 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.

Mark 13:27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

There will be unusual happenings in the heavens. Christ will come back in great power.

Zech. 14:4-5, And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south ... and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.

II Thess. 1:7-8, And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There will be a gathering of the elect remnant of the Jews as is mentioned in verse 27. This is not the rapture of the saints, which happened years before the start of the tribulation. They will see their Messiah and be saved.

Zec. 12:10, And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

Zech. 13:1, In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

Jesus tells us that when our Lord returns in power and great glory, the sun will be darkened and the moon turned to blood. On that day, the stars of heaven will fall. This is not the rapture of the church (which happens before the beginning of the tribulation in our pre-trib view), but speaks of when Christ come in power and great glory at the end of tribulation when he will fight the great battle of Armageddon. It says that Jesus sends his angels to gather together his elect (Israel the nation) from out of every part of the earth.

V. The Parable of the Fig Tree

Mark 13:28 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near:

Mark 13:29 So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.

Mark 13:30 Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.

The budding trees reveal the coming of summer. In like manner the signs given point to Christ's soon coming. The generation that will see these things, will not pass until all these things are completed.

In the parable of the fig tree, Christ teaches his disciples about the end time. The fig tree of course typifies Israel. Jesus tells them that when we see Israel gathering back to their country the coming of the Lord is near. When a tree buds, we know that summer is near. Here in Texas, we can almost always be sure that there will be no more freezing weather when the mesquite trees bud out. In 1948, Israel again became a nation and God has been gathering the people back to their homeland ever since.

This is a clear indication that the coming of the Lord is near. It says this generation shall not pass till all these things be done. How long is a generation? 50 years. Then Christ would have returned by 1998. 70 years would 2018. I don't know exactly how long a generation is, but be sure of this, it isn't long until Christ is coming back. It might be today. He says it will be at a time when we think not. Are many looking for his soon coming? I think not.

Mark 13:31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

Mark 13:32 But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

Mark 13:33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

We can rest secure in two things that are a surety. One is our salvation if we know Christ as our Savior. The second is the Bible. God promises that 'my words shall not pass away'. If God says it, you can count on it. Not a single promise God ever made has failed, and not one ever shall.

God's Word, including His prophecies, will remain. While this we know, the day and hour of His coming not known. Saints today do not know the time of the rapture, or the time of His revelation. Beware of those that set dates.

Tribulation saints may well know the time of His revelation. They may count from the beginning of the tribulation. Verse 33 gives us an exhortation for all saints to watch and pray at all times. We should all be looking for His Coming every day. For us it will be the rapture.

Job knew how important God's word was.

Job 23:12 Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.

Psa 119:89 LAMED. For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

Psa 119:90 Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.

2 Pet 1:19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

2 Pet 1:20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

2 Pet 1:21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

One thing is certain. If someone says they know they know when Christ is coming back, they are not a true teacher. Jesus says no man knows the hour when he will return except God Himself.

VI. Watchfulness in View of the Return of Christ

Mark 13:34 For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

Jesus would have us learn something important by this verse. He wants us to be responsible and be about our work for the Lord, and we are to be watching for the soon return of Christ.

1 Th 1:6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:

1 Th 1:7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

1 Th 1:8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

1 Th 1:9 For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

1 Th 1:10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

Mark 13:35 Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrow, or in the morning:

Mark 13:36 Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.

Mark 13:37 And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

Christ gives us a message for saints today. The son of man is Christ, and the far journey was His ascension back to heaven. The house He left is His Church.

The authority given is to His servants in the Church. Matt. 28:16-20

Every man in that house (church) has his work. The porter may be the minister and/or the Holy Spirit. We are to be watching and expecting his coming at any time. We should strive to not be slothful servants caught in spiritual slumber. The final warning in verse 37 is to watch.

In these verses, the Roman time is used. At Even speaks of the time 6 to 9 in the evening. Midnight speaks of 9 to 12. The cock crowing is 12 to 3, whereas the morning is 3 to 6. We are warned to not 'be asleep' when Jesus comes. We are commanded to watch. I'm afraid many times we don't look as much as we should.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.