

The Gospel of Mark

Lesson 18

Mark 13:1 – 37

Review

- Baptism and Temptation (1:1-13)
- Year-Long Ministry in Judea (John 1:19-4:45)
- Galilean Ministry (1:14-7:23)
- Withdrawal with Disciples into Various Gentile Regions (7:24-8:26)
- The Road to Jerusalem (8:27-10:52)
 - The First Passion Prediction Unit (8:27-9:29)
 - The Second Passion Prediction Unit (9:30-10:31)
 - The Third Passion Prediction Unit (10:32-52)
- The Passion Week (11:1-15:47)
 - The Date of the Triumphal Entry
 - Sunday The Triumphal Entry
 - Monday Cursing the Fig Tree
 Driving Out Money Changers from the Temple
 - Tuesday Teaching on Faith and Forgiveness
 Jesus' Authority Questioned
 Parable of the Vine-growers
 Jesus Answers Religious Leaders – Priorities, Resurrection, Greatest Commandment
 Jesus Questions Religious Leaders
 Hypocrisy Condemned
 The Widow's Mite
- The Resurrection (16:1-20)

The Olivet Discourse

- This section of Mark (Chap 13) (cf. Matt 24-25 and Luke 21:5-36) is called the Olivet Discourse as it is a unit of teaching from Jesus to the disciples as they sat upon the Mount of Olives on Tuesday. This section answers the disciples' question to Jesus concerning the events after this present age.
- The Olivet Discourse deals with the 70th week of Daniel. This is understandable since the 70th week deals with the Nation of Israel and Jesus is teaching Jews.

²⁴“Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy *place*.²⁵“So you are to know and discern *that* from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince *there will be* seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.²⁶“Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end *will come* with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.²⁷“And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations *will come* one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.” Dan. 9:24-27
- We will interpret Mark 13 in the context of the systematized eschatological doctrine of Pre-millennialism (Jesus' 2nd coming will precede the Millennial Kingdom) and Pre-Tribulationalism (the Rapture will occur before the Tribulation) as depicted below.



Proposed Chronology of the Tribulation

Rapture (Unspecified Time)

Tribulation begins – Signing of a seven year peace treaty with Israel (Dan 9:27)

Seal 1 (6:1-2) – “Cold war”; Conquering by talking of peace and safety (1 Thess 5:3)

Seal 2 (6:3-4) – Open warfare

Seal 3 (6:5-6) – Famine

Seal 4 (6:7-8) – Death; 25% of the earth’s population dies by war, famine, and wild beasts

Seal 5 (6:9-11) – Martyrdom of Tribulation Saints early in the Tribulation

Seal 6 (6:12-17) – Cosmic disturbances

Seal 7 (8:1-6) – Silence in heaven

Midpoint of the Tribulation – The Abomination of Desolation demands to be worshiped.

Trumpet 1 (8:7) – Destruction of vegetation

Trumpet 2 (8:8-9) – Destruction of seas

Trumpet 3 (8:10-11) – Destruction of fresh water

Trumpet 4 (8:12-13) – Destruction of celestial bodies (1/3 of sun, moon, and stars)

Trumpet 5 (9:1-12) – First Woe - Scorpion locusts to torment unbelievers for five months

Trumpet 6 (9:13-21) – Second Woe – 1/3 of the earth’s population killed by a demon army

Trumpet 7 (11:15-19) – Third Woe – The end is near – The bowl judgements

Bowl 1 (16:2) – Open sores on unbelievers

Bowl 2 (16:3) – Sea turned to blood and all sea creatures die

Bowl 3 (16:4-7) – Fresh water turned to blood

Bowl 4 (16:8-9) – Sun scorches men

Bowl 5 (16:10-11) – Antichrist’s kingdom is filled with darkness

Bowl 6 (16:12-16) – Euphrates River dried up

Bowl 7 (16:17-21) – Earthquake and hailstones

The battle of Armageddon

Jesus the Christ returns

Things to Come – The Destruction of Jerusalem

¹As He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, “Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!” ²And Jesus said to him, “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down.”

³As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew were questioning Him privately, ⁴“Tell us, when will these things be, and what *will be* the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?”

- One of His disciples – This vocal disciple is not mentioned (Peter?), but he spoke for the twelve as Matthew and Luke’s accounts indicate that “the disciples” came to Him and commented on the temple buildings.
- (The temple) was considered an architectural wonder of the ancient world. It was built with large white stones, polished and generously decorated with gold (Josephus *The Antiquities of the Jews* 15. 11. 3-7). It covered about 1/6 of the land area of old Jerusalem. To the Jews nothing was as magnificent and formidable as their temple. The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament
- Jesus responds with a prediction of the temple’s destruction. This prediction was fulfilled in A.D. 70 when the Romans attacked Jerusalem, killed one million Jews, and leveled the temple to the foundation.
- The disciples believed that Jesus was about to usher in the kingdom. They ask Jesus two questions: 1) When would these things (the temple be destroyed and the kingdom begin) be? and 2) What would be the sign of their fulfillment? Jesus answers the second question first describing the Tribulation through His second coming to set up the kingdom and answers the first question by providing a parable indicating imminency.

Things to Come – The Tribulation

⁵And Jesus began to say to them, “See to it that no one misleads you. ⁶“Many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am *He!*’ and will mislead many. ⁷“When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be frightened; *those things* must take place; but *that is* not yet the end. ⁸“For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will *also* be famines. These things are *merely* the beginning of birth pangs.

⁹“But be on your guard; for they will deliver you to *the* courts, and you will be flogged in *the* synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them. ¹⁰“The gospel must first be preached to all the nations. ¹¹“When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but *it is* the Holy Spirit. ¹²“Brother will betray brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. ¹³“You will be hated by all because of My name, but the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.

¹⁴“But when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. ¹⁵“the one who is on the housetop must not go down, or go in to get anything out of his house; ¹⁶and the one who is in the field must not turn back to get his coat. ¹⁷“But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! ¹⁸“But pray that it may not happen in the winter. ¹⁹“For those days will be a *time of* tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never will. ²⁰“Unless the Lord had shortened *those* days, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom He chose, He shortened the days. ²¹“And then if anyone says to you, ‘Behold, here is the Christ’; or, ‘Behold, *He is* there’; do not believe *him*; ²²for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order to lead astray, if possible, the elect. ²³“But take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance.

- In this section verses 5-13 occur during the first 3 _ years of the Tribulation, verse 14 occurs at the midpoint, and verses 15-23 occur in the last 3 _ years of the Tribulation. While Jesus is teaching His disciples concerning the end of the age, Mark expects this to be of great importance to his readers as well (c.f. 13:14).

- There will be false Christs (v6), hearing of wars and rumors of wars where nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom (v7-8), earthquakes (v8), and famines (v8).
- These are merely the beginning of birth pangs – Birth pangs are what signal the end of pregnancy. There are false ones sometimes. When the true birth pangs start they are infrequent, but increase in severity and frequency as the end draws near. Here as well this is only the beginning-the end will be severe and fast paced.
- There will also be martyrdom (v9-13) as Tribulation Saints take the gospel to all the nations. When the believers are delivered up because of their faith, they should not be anxious but rely on the Holy Spirit for guidance as they provide a *defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence* (1 Pet 3:15).
- The one who endures to the end – This endurance does not produce salvation; it is Spirit-empowered perseverance and proof of the reality of salvation in the one who endures. The MacArthur Study Bible Page 1491
- The Abomination of Desolation – At the midpoint of the Tribulation the Antichrist will set up an image of himself in the temple (indicating the temple will be rebuilt by the midpoint of the Tribulation). Standing, continuous action, indicates the desecration will last the 3 _ years remaining in the Tribulation.
- When this event occurs the end is near and believers should flee Judea.
- A time of tribulation such as not occurred... – After this point the birth pangs get intense. All life, including believers (the elect), will be destroyed if the Lord does not cut those days short.

Things to Come – The Second Coming of Christ

²⁴“But in those days, after that tribulation, THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, ²⁵ AND THE STARS WILL BE FALLING from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶“Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN CLOUDS with great power and glory. ²⁷“And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven.

- But... Contrasting the false Christs with the true Christ who comes in clouds with great power and glory without deception. At the end of this unparalleled time of tribulation on the earth is the time of the coming of the Son of Man.
- Great cosmic disturbances will accompany Jesus’ 2nd advent. After the last 7 years and particularly the last 3 _ years this will be too much to take for those that remain. Luke relates:

²⁵“There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and **on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves,** ²⁶ **men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.** ²⁷“Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory. ²⁸“But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” Luke 21:25-28
- Then Jesus will come clothed in glory and power.
- He will gather His elect from all over the world. Many believe this will include OT saints and believers who were martyred during the Tribulation as they are resurrected.

The Parables of the Fig Tree and the Absent House Owner

²⁸“Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹“Even so, you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that He is near, *right* at the door. ³⁰“Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. ³¹“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. ³²“But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father *alone*.

³³“Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the *appointed* time will come. ³⁴“ *It is* like a man away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, *assigning* to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert. ³⁵“Therefore, be on the alert—for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows in the morning— ³⁶in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep. ³⁷“What I say to you I say to all, ‘Be on the alert!’”

- Jesus answers the “when” of the disciple’s question.
- As the fig tree changes as summer grows near so when the events that Jesus just described occur know that the coming of the Son of Man is near.
- This generation – The generation living at the time of the Tribulation who will see all these things.
- This heaven and earth will pass away, but Jesus promises will not.
- In His incarnation Jesus voluntarily restricted the use of certain divine attributes in subjection to the Father’s will.
- Be on the alert... Keep watch – They should not be found asleep, but vigilant, on guard for His coming.
- Such vigilance is the responsibility not only of the Twelve (cf. Mark 13:3) but also of every believer in every generation during this present Age. Believers should be watching and working (cf. v. 34) in light of the certainty of His return, though its time is unknown except to the Father. The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament