

42- The Signs of the Times

Mark 13:1-23

The subject of the end times, known as eschatology, is one that intrigues, excites, and fascinates us to say the least. Men do some weird things in order to know the future including tarot cards, palm readers, and other things to try to know the future. God said in *Isaiah 46:9-10 Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done...*

So the one who holds, knows and declares the future is none other than God Himself. We come to the portion of Mark that we could spend a great deal of time on. We will take two sessions to explore Mark chapter thirteen. This section is known as the Olivet Discourse because Jesus spoke to them on the Mount of Olives. Matthew 24 take about 48 verse for the discourse while Mark uses only 37. You might want to read Matthew 24 along with this section of Mark.

I- Prophecy of Temple Destruction:

Mark 13:1-2 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! 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.

Jesus exits the temple and is only His way across the Kidron Valley to the Mount of Olives. Perhaps as they looked back and admired the temple the conversation took place. Jesus told them that it was indeed a beautiful and great building but it would be destroyed. This prophecy came true in AD 70 when Titus tore the stone apart to get the gold inlaid. One Old Testament place of interest that related to this is in *1 Kings 9:7-8 Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people: 8 And at this house, which is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and to this house?*

The destruction of the temple had been prophesied about before Jesus. Why is this important? Because the prophecies that have come true in the past give credibility to the one yet to come.

II- The Request of the Disciples:

After they depart from the temple they go to the Mount of Olives. There we see that some of the disciples asks Jesus to tell them about the events of the end time.

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

So what did Jesus say and teach? We must preface this with a little understanding. It is understood by those who look for the rapture of the church as the next event on the prophetic calendar of God that nothing has to come to pass before that. Therefore, when we talk about all these signs it is for Jesus second coming which is the time He sets up the millennium reign. This, I think, makes these signs of the times take place after the rapture, during the great tribulation and prior to His second coming. Due to the nature of this work in Mark we will not exhaust nor attempt to cover this completely. This section could be a study itself of several weeks or months.

We see that there will be much deception and confusion according to Jesus in *Mark 13:5 And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you...*

III- False Messiahs:

Two times during this discourse Jesus talked about false messiahs that would come.

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

Mark 13:21 And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; believe him not: 22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. 23 But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.

IV- International Conflict:

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. 8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

We can look around and see that this has been the history of mankind. There are some nations that have been at perpetual war for years. However, we see more unrest and trouble today than in any time perhaps since the great war.

V- Natural Disasters:

Mark 13:8 ...and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows. The frequency of natural disaster is better reported today than ever before. The number of earthquakes and other things are drastic in our world today. However, I do not think these can begin to touch what will happen during the time to come after the rapture.

VI- Religious Persecution:

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. 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.

We live in a time when it is a sentence of death for many who would dare to preach the gospel, or yet to simply convert to Christ from some other religion.

Mark 13:10 And the gospel must first be published among all nations. Remember that we are talking about the time frame of the great tribulation. The gospel will go into the four corners of the world. **Revelation 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,

We see that this persecution will even cross the blood lines of families. Notice **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. 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.

This phrase on the end of this section is another indicator to me that this is during the great tribulation. We live today in the day of grace, during the great tribulation we know that anyone who takes the mark of the beast is doomed. Those on the earth will have to endure until death and not take this mark. The pressure will be great.

VII- Desecration of the Temple:

The Jewish temple will be rebuilt during this time but there will be events that desecrate the temple by the anti-Christ.

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:

This is spoken of in **Daniel 9:27** And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

This will bring on greater trouble and judgment than ever before.

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: 16 And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment. 17 But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! 18 And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter. 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. 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.

So we can conclude that there will be a time of trouble that makes anything that has happened before seem like a Sunday picnic. We know this as the great tribulation period that we see that most of the book of the Revelation gives us information about.

The most important thing is that we do all diligence to be prepared by faith in Christ and be attentive to warn others of the danger that lies ahead for those thrust into this time if they miss the rapture.