

“Words That Last Forever” Mark 13: 1-37 (Matt 24 / Luke 21)

TODAY we look at Mark 13 – Jesus’ “Olivet Discourse” given on the Mount of Olives at the end of Tuesday of Passion week about the “when and what” of the End Times

Other accounts of this discourse are in Matthew 24 and Luke 21.

This is one of the most DIFFICULT of Jesus’ words – steeped in Jewish language and images.

These words of prophecy will literally last forever – and we “mark” the words of Jesus in 13:31 where He says: “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.”

THE TEXT

- 1 And as He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!"
- 2 And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down."
- 3 And as 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?"
- 5 And 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 "And 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 arise 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 "And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations.
- 11 "And 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 "And brother will betray brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.
- 13 "and you will be hated by all on account of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved.
- 14 "But when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.
- 15 "And let him who is on the housetop not go down, or enter in, to get anything out of his house;
- 16 and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak.

- 17 "But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes 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 shall.
20 "And 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;
22 for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order, if possible, to lead the elect astray.
23 "But take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance.
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 " And then they shall 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.
28 "Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that the 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 is.
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, at cockcrowing, or in the morning--
36 lest in he come suddenly and find you asleep.
37 "And what I say to you I say to all, 'Be on the alert!'"

THE DAY OF THE LORD

A term and concept fully a part of Jewish thinking and writings (including Scripture)

This is God's intervention into the affairs of man--after which the Messiah rights all wrongs

This will be a time of terror and judgment against the world

Amos 5: 18-20 Alas, you who are longing for the day of the Lord, for what purpose will the day of the Lord be to you? It will be darkness and not light; as when a man flees from a lion, and a bear meets him, or goes home, leans his hand against the wall, And a snake bites him. Will not the day of the Lord be darkness instead of light, even gloom with no brightness in it?

Isaiah 13: 6-9 Wail, for the day of the lord is near! It will come as destruction from the Almighty. Therefore, all hands will fall limp, and every man's heart will melt. And they will be terrified, Pains and anguish will take hold of them; they will writhe like a woman in labor, they will look at one another in astonishment, their faces aflame. Behold, the day of the Lord is coming, cruel, with fury and burning anger, to make the land a desolation; and He will exterminate its sinners from it.

Joel 2: 2,11; 3:14 Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming; surely it is near, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness. The day of the lord is indeed great and very awesome, and who can endure it? Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.

APOCALYPSES (unveilings) – popular in Jewish literature of the day: dreams, visions, OT imagery, poetry, impressionism. REVELATION is the one in our canon of Scripture.

MARK 13: A COLLECTION OF JESUS' SAYINGS ABOUT THE FUTURE

5 THREADS OF THOUGHT IN MARK 13

1. The destruction of Jerusalem (v. 1-2, 14-20)
2. Persecution of believers (v. 9-13)
3. False Christs (heresy) (v. 5-6, 21-22)
4. Signs of the End (v. 7-8, 24-27) - 2nd Coming and Day of the Lord
5. Warnings to Watch (v. 28-37)

1. DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

1. Every temple stone leveled (v. 2) – A.D. 70 under Titus
2. The temple desecrated – “abomination of desecration” (v. 14)
 - a. Antiochius c. 300 B.C. (swine offered, brothels in the temple, idol of Zeus)
 - b. Foreshadowing “Antichrist” (2Thess. 2:3 – the “man of sin”)

3. Jerusalem besieged (v. 14b-19) Those flocking to the city were starved out and killed – Josephus: 97 K captured, 1,100 K killed
4. Time shorted by the Lord to protect the elect

2. PERSECUTION

1. “Court” and Synagogues” – religious persecution (v. 9)
2. “Governors” and “Kings” – political persecution (v. 9) (like Paul before Felix, Festus & Agrippa in Acts 24-26)
3. Gospel preached to all (v. 10) – both Paul in Acts and prophesy before the end
4. Holy Spirit directing what to say (v. 11)
5. Family betrayal and hatred (v. 12, 13a)
6. Those who endure to the end will be saved (v. 13) - an endurance race

3. HERESY – 5 Causes

1. Twisting doctrine to suit oneself (ex: “no God”, grace available so sin away)
2. Overstressing one truth (ex: holiness = no intimacy, justice = fear)
3. Make the message popular and attractive (watered down gospel; prosperity gospel)
4. Separate from the church body and accountability (the church is Christ’s bride)
5. Attempt to make Christianity fully understandable (faith is lessened, God is explainable, all is logical, no “mystery of faith”)

4. SIGNS OF THE END

1. Wars, Earthquakes, Famine (v. 7-8)
(Parthians invading Rome / Laodicean earthquake / Mt. Vesuvius leveling Pompey / famine in Rome under Claudius)
2. Sun, Moon, Stars darkened (v. 24-25)
3. Gathering of Jews (v. 26)

KEY: The Son of Man = Messiah = Jesus will RETURN (Rev. 1:7; Acts 1:11)

5. WATCH!

1. This generation / race will not pass away until - double meaning (v. 30)
2. Jesus’ words (of end time prophesy particularly) will last FOREVER (v.31)
3. Even Jesus did not know the time – when on earth (v. 32)
4. BE READY (holy and sharing)

PERMANENT TRUTH - “words that last forever”

1. Only God sees the future – and only His followers get a glimpse
2. History is going somewhere – God will prevail! We must regard his warning!
3. Keep eternity in perspective with today – don’t forget our future!