

## Daily Bible Study

### *“When Will These Things Be?” Part - 1*

*Mark 1:5-23*

*April 22 – April 28, 2012*

**THE LORD’S DAY & MONDAY** –This week we continue our study of our Lord’s “Olivet Discourse” as it is called. Our lesson entitled *When Will These Things Be?* Will be the first part of a multi-part look at **Mark 13:5-23** where Jesus answers the disciples question, “*Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?*” As we move through this text we will study the various things Jesus told these men concerning future events as they sat there on the Mount of Olives rising about 2,700 feet above sea level and sitting about 100 feet higher than Jerusalem. **Mark 13:5-23:** “*And Jesus, answering them, began to say: “Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’ and will deceive many. But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled; for such things must happen, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles. These are the beginnings of sorrows. “But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them. And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations. But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. Now 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. And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. “So when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not” (let the reader understand), “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down into the house, nor enter to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! And pray that your flight may not be in winter. For in those days there will be tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the creation which God created until this time, nor ever shall be. And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days. “Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or, ‘Look, He is there!’ do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand.”*

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

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Suggestion for Prayer: Father, teach me from Your Word as I study this piece of Scripture.

**TUESDAY** – **Mark 13:5-6:** “*And Jesus, answering them, began to say: “Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’ and will deceive many.”* One of the things that is so wonderful about our Lord is the fact that He takes the time to answer the

questions of His followers. He may not always give us the answer we desire, but He has and does give us answers to our troubling questions concerning life through His Word and wisdom. Jesus first response to these men and their question is an interesting exhortation which reminds us that the topic of future things is overflowing with potential for deception. He said, *“Take heed that no one deceives you...”* The reminder still rings true for us today, we must be alert to this fact. Jesus first answer to *what will be the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?* Is the appearance of pretenders and or false Messiahs. This is a point which definitely had a first-century fulfillment. The Jewish Encyclopedia says: From Josephus it appears that in the first century before the destruction of the Temple a number of Messiahs arose promising relief from the Roman yoke, and finding ready followers. Josephus speaks of them thus: "Another body of wicked men also sprung up, cleaner in their hands, but more wicked in their intentions, who destroyed the peace of the city no less than did these murderers [the Sicarii]. For they were deceivers and deluders of the people, and, under pretense of divine illumination, were for innovations and changes, and prevailed on the multitude to act like madmen, and went before them in the wilderness, pretending that God would there show them signs of liberty" (Josephus, "B. J." ii. 13, §; 4; *idem*, "Ant." xx. 8, §; 6). We know that Satan has always been about counterfeiting. He is a liar and the father of lies (**John 8:44**). The early church father Origen said, “Christ is truth. Antichrist falsifies truth. Christ is wisdom. Antichrist deftly simulates wisdom. All genuine excellences have a correspondence with Antichrist. For each variety of good which Christ embodies in Himself to build up the faithful, the demonic will find a way of mimicking in appearance to deceive the faithful”. Read **1 John 4:1-6**.

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

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Suggestion for Prayer: *Father, help me to be discerning and careful not to trust in any and everything and everyone that claims to be from You. Help me always compare and “test the spirits” against the revelation I receive and read from Sacred Scripture concerning Jesus.*

**WEDNESDAY** – **Mark 13:7-8a:** *“But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled; for such things must happen, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.”* As Jesus continues with His answer to the disciples He warns them about being cautious and observant when they consider the events that will unfold before them. We see this in **verse 7**, *But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled; for such things must happen, but the end is not yet.* He tells them they will hear of wars and rumors of wars but they are not to overreact to everything that happens *“in the news”* so to speak. Jesus is saying if you will, “Not everything that looks like a sign is a sign”. When Jesus speaks these words in our text we know from history that the Roman empire was in the midst of long period of peace. But within a few decades political turmoil would arise so much that on the heels of Nero’s death in A.D. 68 Rome would see four emperors come to power in one year: Galba, Otho, Vitellus, and Vespasian. Previous to that event we understand that many conflicts and rumors arose during the lifetimes of the disciples. For example, Josephus records that in A.D. 40 Emperor Caligula in an attempt to set up a statue of himself in the Temple sparked violent

protests in Jerusalem. There were many rumors and turmoil in these years which led to the Jewish revolt against Rome in A.D. 66 which in turn led to the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70. Amidst all these violent revolts and insurrections Jesus counsel to the disciples was *do not be troubled; for such things must happen, but the end is not yet*. There indeed would be a clash of power between differing *nations and kingdoms*. As mentioned earlier we understand the ultimate picture in view of a “clash of powers” has been raging since the fall of Lucifer and the entrance of sin into God’s creation. Thankfully God is sovereign and is and has been in complete control of it all and has given the authority to reign in power over all things to His resurrected Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Read **Psalm 97** and **Psalm 110**.

*(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?*

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*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me see Your patient yet powerful providence over all things. You are the Almighty creator of all things; I praise & worship You. Thank You Jesus for reigning even in the midst of turmoil and being steadfast and sure even though at times I may fear the future and unknown.*

**THURSDAY –Mark 13:8b:** “*And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles. These are the beginnings of sorrows.*” As we continue we see that Jesus also listed *earthquakes in various places, famines and troubles* to His list of signs that are answering the questions of His men. As we have been seeing many of these predictions by Jesus found their fulfillment in the first century preceding the fall of Jerusalem in 70A.D. History is clear to that facts concerning the *earthquakes, famines and troubles* spoken of by Jesus. In **Acts 11:28** we read, “*Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar.*” Agabus prophesied a great famine and the Scripture itself confirms the famine did occur with the words “*... which also happened...*” Tacitus writing in AD 109 and Eusebius (AD 260–340) also confirm this famine taking place during the reign of Claudius Caesar. Josephus states the following with regard to this prophecy by Agabus: “*...Helena, queen of Adiabene [who was queen during the period of AD 66–70]...[during the time of] Claudius Caesar...Now her coming was of very great advantage to the people of Jerusalem; for whereas a famine did oppress them at that time, and many people died for want of what was necessary to procure food withal, queen Helena sent some of her servants to Alexandria with money to buy a great quantity of corn, and others of them to Cypress, to bring a cargo of dried figs; and as soon as they were come back, and brought those provisions, which was done very quickly, she distributed food to those that were in want of it ...and when her son Izates was informed of this famine, he sent great sums of money to the principal men in Jerusalem...*” (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 20, Chapter 2, Paragraph 1, 3, 5). Regarding *earthquakes*, Philostratus records in the life of Apollonius that earthquakes occurred in Crete during the reign of Claudius. He also records earthquakes during that time period in Chios, Miletus, Samos and Smyrna. Tacitus, a Roman Senator and historian mentions earthquakes in Laodicea and Rome during the reign of Nero as

well as in Colossae and Hierapolis (Tacitus, *The Annals*, Book 12 and 14, written in approximately AD 109). The Roman philosopher Seneca (3 BC–AD 65) records an earthquake at Campania and Suetonius (AD 75–160) records an earthquake in Rome during the reign of Galba (AD 68–69). Josephus writes of an earthquake in Judea, "...for there broke out a prodigious storm in the night, with the utmost violence, and very strong winds, with the largest showers of rain, with continual lightnings, terrible thunderings, and amazing concussions and bellowings of the earth, that was in an earthquake...anyone would guess that these wonders foreshadowed some grand calamities that were coming" (*The Wars of the Jews*, Book 4, Chapter 4, Paragraph 5). Read **Psalm 46**.

*(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?*

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*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, again I ask You to help me understand Your power and providence. Thank You for calming my fears and reminding me of Your love & care for me as Your child by grace.*

**FRIDAY & SATURDAY – Mark 13:9-11:** “But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them. And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations. But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.” We will only be able to introduce this next portion of our text which reads like an overview or summary of the book of Acts and Luke’s description of the lives of the Apostles after Jesus’ ascension. The things we read here are clearly fulfilled by the “you and yourselves” of **Mark 13:9**. Luke speaks concerning the things mentioned here in our text such as the spread of the gospel in the first century and how the Apostles were repeatedly subjected to persecution by both Jewish and Roman authorities. One instance of this is found in **Acts 4:1-22** which records the time Peter & John were questioned by the Sanhedrin. They were also in fact *beaten...* such as in **Acts 5:40-41**. In **Acts 25-26** we are given an example of being *brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them*. It is most definitely clear and obvious that the Apostles actions and attitudes throughout Acts bare witness that they were aware and trusting of Jesus’ words given to them in this Olivet Discourse. Truly the Holy Spirit was with these men as they bore witness to the Christ, the Lord Jesus. Read **John 15:26-27, Acts 4:33**.

*(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?*

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*Suggestion for Prayer: Jesus, thank You for leaving Your Holy Spirit & for helping Your people testify.*