

Daily Bible Study

“When Will These Things Be?” Part - 2

Mark 1:5-23

May 13 – May 19, 2012

THE LORD’S DAY & MONDAY –This week we continue our study of our Lord’s “Olivet Discourse” as it is called. We are looking at part 2 of our lesson entitled *When Will These Things Be?* Our text is **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 along 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?

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

TUESDAY – **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 left off with these 3 verses last time and just briefly touched upon them in our lesson and message. You will remember that we mentioned this portion reads like an overview or summary of the book of Acts and Luke’s description of the lives of the Apostles after Jesus’ ascension. This is an important thing to notice as we deal with the question of “*when will these things be?*” “and the timing concerning the events Jesus is describing. 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 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?

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 – Before looking further we should mention again the statement of our Lord found in **verse 10** which causes many questions among Christians concerning the timing of these events. The verse reads, “*And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations*”. How should we understand this verse? Remember the answer of Jesus concerns the destruction of the temple He prophesied in **verse 2**. Jesus was telling the disciples signs they were to watch for and know that this event would happen soon. He said that before this took place the *gospel must first be preached to all the nations*. To the ethnos, defined among other things as “a race, nation or people group”. As we saw briefly last time the Apostle Paul records prior to A.D. 70 that this in fact did take place (**Romans 10:16-18, Colossians 1:5-6, 23**). Regardless of the timing pertaining to these words of Jesus we as Christians living in the year 2012 need to take to heart the principle of *preaching the gospel*. It is our responsibility to obey Jesus as His followers and preach the Gospel and make disciples of all nations teaching them to obey what Jesus has taught us (**Matthew 28:18-20**). Did not the Apostle Paul, echoing the prophet Isaiah speak concerning this wonderful responsibility to bring the good news to those who so desperately need to hear it?; wherever they may live among the nations? (**Romans 10:14-18, Isaiah 52:7**).

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

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thank You for being in control even in the spreading of the Gospel message. You have said that will save Your people. May I be diligent to obey You and find delight in being part of Your plan by preaching the Gospel to those among the nations that I come in contact with.

THURSDAY – Mark 13:12-13: “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.” These two verses conclude what we have called the “False Labor” signs given by Jesus. A very serious problem that plagued the early church was the fact that many betrayed the faith under persecution. Some scholars believe the book of Hebrews was written in large part to deal with this problem. We know of much horrific martyrdom suffered by so many Christians from this era including the using of the Christians as human torches burnt to death to light up Nero’s gardens. Various extra-biblical records provide us with information concerning these terrible persecutions. Jesus here predicts that the Christ-hating son is going to hand over his own brother to be put to death; the father his child; children their parents. We can trace this inner family hostility over the issue of love, loyalty, and obedience to Jesus all the way through Sacred Scripture beginning in **Genesis 4:1-8** see also (**Hebrews 11:4**). This fact of children abandoning the faith of their fathers is seen or implied in various places such as **Micah 7:6** and **Malachi 4:6**. On the other side of that same coin we see an example of this from Jesus earthly life, when he healed the man blind from birth (**John 9:1-41**) that it was the parents who in fear of the Jewish leaders and in being expelled from the synagogue behaved very cowardly and did not back up their own son who had been healed by Jesus. Sometimes it was a brother at fault, sometimes a father, sometimes a child. What is crystal clear is that these divisions and betrayals spoken of in our text are on account of Jesus (**Mark 13:9, for My sake** and **13, for My name’s sake**). We understand that this type of persecution and hatred does not end merely with the Apostles and early New Testament era Christians but throughout time this indeed will be the case (**John 15:18, 16:33, 2 Timothy 3:12, 1 John 3:13**). Because the world hates Christ it also hates his representatives. Finally Jesus offers the comfort, hope, and assurance as He says, “*But he who endures to the end shall be saved*”. This blessed truth was applicable and found fulfillment in this context to those who would and did see these things prophesied by Jesus. It also remains true to all of Christ’s people, regardless of when they lived, that they that remain loyal to Christ and stand firm through persecution and even martyrdom, they will be saved and will enter into glory. Jesus Himself illustrated this facing all of this culminating in the cross and then ascended into Glory.

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

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thank You that You are always with Your people, even in very difficult circumstances and will provide them with grace to stand obedient and loyal to Jesus.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY – Lastly concerning the previous verses, notice again the victorious ending. God’s people will remain steadfast to him eternally; they will be saved and be delivered through trial. We see this theme abundantly in the Revelation in passages such as **Revelation 2:7, 17, 26, 28, 3:5, 12, 20, 21; 7:9–17, 21:1–7**. All of God’s covenant children will be saved, He will lose none. In fact, not any of those who had been truly regenerated will perish in unbelief (**John 4:14, 10:28, Romans 8:37–39, Philippians 1:6**). Some false professors will abandon and turn from the faith but never the truly elect (**1 John 2:19**). The early church father Tertullian said, “Go on, rack, torture, grind us to powder: our numbers increase in proportion as you mow us down. The blood of Christians is their harvest seed.” Not even Satan and hell itself can prevail against the church. The church is safe because it is what Christ calls “*my church*.” **Mark 13:14**: “*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*”. We now after eliminating the false labor “signs” of Jesus prediction we come to the real “sign”. Remember they asked, “*Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?*” Jesus here refers to the prophecy of Daniel the prophet he received through the archangel Gabriel in **Daniel 9:20-27**. It is an obvious Messianic prophecy but it speaks also concerning the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem itself. There has been much scholarly debate concerning what the precise meaning of “*the ‘abomination of desolation’*” but there is general agreement that it refers to some sort of pagan desecration of the Temple. Some believe this prophecy was fulfilled in the second century BC when Antiochus Epiphanes sacrificed a pig on an altar in the Holy of Holies. Others believe Daniels vision referred to the time in AD 40 when Caligula attempted to erect a statue of himself in the Temple. Josephus, who was an eyewitness to the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 believed this in fact was what Daniel spoke too. We will look at these details together in service. I believe Josephus was right, not because of his testimony, but Scripture explains the “abomination” for us. Luke, in his parallel account of this discourse explains the “abomination of desolation” *standing where it ought not* (the Holy City Jerusalem) in **Luke 21:20**. Read his passage and its clear to see the answer to *when will these things be and what will be the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?* Jesus said and Luke records, “*But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.*” As foretold by Daniel, after the Messiah is cut off, “*...on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate*”.

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

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thank You that we as Your true, elect children will stand and be saved not because of our own faithfulness, but Yours. Thank You Jesus for suffering death and the penalty for sin in our place and for reigning in complete power and control over all the affairs of life.