

Daily Bible Study

“When Will These Things Be?” Part - 3

Mark 1:5-23

May 20 – May 26, 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 3 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?*” We will focus our study primarily on **verses 14-23** as we draw this section to a close. For context lets again read the entire portion from **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 13:14-16**: “*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.” Remember the last few weeks we have been eliminating the false labor “signs” of Jesus’ prediction and then we finally arrived in **verse 14** at the real “sign” that the disciples were to look for (So when you see...). As we mentioned last week there have been many interpretations concerning the “*abomination of desolation*” but Scripture seems to point us to what it actually was. Luke records in the place of the phrase, “*But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.*” The people would not only fall by the edge of the sword, but Jerusalem would be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled (**Luke 21:24**). We now move along and read more of what Jesus said would take place and what these men were to do when they saw *the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not*. We see some pretty straightforward and specific warnings that there should be no delay once the people saw the “sacrilege that makes desolate”. Jesus tells these men that not only should those who are in Jerusalem get out, but also those in the country must *not enter her* (the city - **Luke 21:21**). This is contrary to the knowledge of the day as people fled into not away from cities which were walled and regarded as the safest places. People came from villages and countryside and packed Jerusalem where 1.1 million Jews were slaughtered. Luke also adds in **Luke 21:22**, “*For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.*” We see if nothing else from this text the importance of obedience to the very Words of God; historians and eyewitnesses to the fall of Jerusalem and the Temple destruction tell us that those who heeded the words of Jesus escaped death and survived. According to the early church Bishop and historian Eusebius (Hist. Eccl., lib. 3, ch. 6) the directions for leaving and that with haste were followed. “It is said that the Christians, warned by these predictions, fled from the city to Pella, and other places beyond Jordan; so that there is not evidence that a single *Christian* perished in Jerusalem.” This is precisely what God’s Elect do. They obey Him and they too escape the ultimate destruction of hell through faith in Jesus which produces obedience (**Romans 1:5, James 2:17-18**).

(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 listen to You speak through Sacred Scripture and help me to be obedient. Thank You that in Your grace you have chosen to save me from destruction and help me to produce fruit that pleases and glorifies You!*

WEDNESDAY – Mark 13:17-18: “*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.*” As we move on we are brought face to face with the sympathetic heart of our Lord. It has been seen many places throughout Marks, record (**1:41, 2:15, 17, 5:34, 41–43, 6:50, 8:2- 3, 10:13–16, 21**). Jesus sympathizes specifically concerning two things in these verses. 1. The plight of women and 2. Travel difficulties during winter. In a time and day when women in general were underrated by many, and even despised by some, Jesus showed special kindness to them. Remember Jesus even cared for His mother Mary as He was as He was dying on the cross (**John 19:26-27**). Ladies, It is

to *Him*—the Lord Jesus and not to some liberation movement that you need to turn for direction, help, and comfort. In the present passage the Lord reveals His sympathy for women who would be pregnant and nursing babies at that time. He also tells His disciples to *pray that your flight may not be in winter*. It is interesting that God who controls all things including when and how much snow and rain falls to the earth (**Job 37:6**) tells His followers to pray for a favorable weather situation in that day. Does prayer work concerning the weather? Elijah *prayed* and the rains were withheld and he *prayed again* and the “*heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth its fruit*” (**1 Kings 17:1; 18:1; James 5:17, 18**). Another interesting note is that **Matthew 24:20** adds “*And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.*” This interesting bit helps us place the time and era of this warning as it was back in these days were the law was still carefully observed that the city gates were closed to travel on the Sabbath day (**Nehemiah 13:15-22, Jeremiah 17:24**).

(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 Sovereign over all things including what weather we get and yet for figuring even my little prayer requests into Your Divine providence. You are so gracious.

THURSDAY – Mark 13:19-20: “*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.*” Here is where many Christians turn right leaving the highway (Rte. A.D. 70) and the events surrounding it and exit off the ramp toward the final second coming of Christ. These verses are also where the origin of the term Great Tribulation comes from (see also **Matthew 24:21**). It is understood and acceptable that Christians see some of these things differently but before we rush everything into a yet future time frame lets again see that Luke explains what specific things will make up this great tribulation. **Luke 21:24**, “*And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.*” This is precisely what did happen; they were slaughtered by the sword in great numbers, many people were taken captive into Egypt and various other places as slaves (97,000+), and JERUSALEM as a city was trampled. We will discuss the last phrase of **verse 19** (*nor ever shall be*) this Lord’s Day but suffice to say now; no city and people as a nation suffered such direct judgment that was tied to the specific act of crucifying the Lord Jesus and continuing to miss the point of His death and resurrection by worshipping with the shadows and not the substance as this group. I will again hasten to say that I do not have all the answers for the interpretation of Sacred Scripture and neither do you. I want to be fair and accurate in handling the text and it is this that makes me first see first century fulfillment obviously all over this discourse. That said, there are many things that seem to indicate a yet future fulfillment of things Jesus said in this discourse. For example, William Hendriksen comments, “It should hardly be necessary to add that justice is not done to the concept of this tribulation, one that immediately precedes the close of the world’s history and

surpasses any other distress in its intensity, if it is referred *solely* to the sorrows experienced during the fall of Jerusalem.” We will discuss this further this Lord’s Day. To add to the discussion, there are Biblical Scholars (I.E. Vincent Taylor) who believe that **verse 20** is not necessarily an authentic saying, one actually uttered by Jesus. I say that to remind you that there are men who love Jesus who disagree on some of the interpretations of Scripture. Remain humble and prayerful and diligent in study. Regardless, we do see that God in His mercy and grace *shortened the days* of this specific horror. We read *...but for the elect's sake*. The elect here doubtless means Christians (**1 Peter 1:2, Romans 1:7, Ephesians 1:4, 1 Thessalonians 1:4**). The word *elect* means chosen, to choose and it is given to Christians because they are in fact, “*chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth,*” **2 Thessalonians 2:13**. It is recorded by Josephus that Titus at first resolved to take the city by famine. Titus was also needed in Rome at that time so contrary to his original intention, he pressed the siege, and took the city by storm. In this, he *shortened* the time that would have been had they starved the city to death by famine. This, apart from his knowledge was for the benefit of the *elect*. Even the plans of wicked men are intended, guided, and orchestrated by God for the good of his chosen people.

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

Suggestion for Prayer: God, help me believe Your Sovereign providence works all things for my good.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY –Mark 13:20-23: ““*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.*” Jesus again mentions the proliferation of false Messiahs and prophets as in **verse 6**. We have seen previous that history in fact records many did arise in those days (see part 1 for details). Remember the Jews expected the Messiah to deliver them from Roman oppression. They would be especially vulnerable and anxious for this in a time of great calamity. Men would claim to be Messiah, many would follow and Jesus warns to *not believe it*. They would also *show signs and wonders*. Josephus records false Christs and prophets appeared as magicians and sorcerers. He says they led the people out into the deserts, and promised to work miracles to deliver them. We understand from Jesus words that true faith in Him is safe and secure by His power and His elect can’t be ultimately deceived; it is not possible. After listing the sign and all His words of instruction and warning to watch, Jesus tells His disciples, *But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand*. Jesus said, don’t forget, watch, I have told you. He had answered their question of “*when...*” thoroughly.

(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 I am “kept by the power of God through faith”.