



Mark - Lesson 13A

Chapter 13:1-13

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- Tonight, we pick up at an exciting and monumental point in the Gospel record and that is dealing with the Olivet Discourse and the discussion of end time matters.
 - We are in the final week of Jesus' earthly life and just a few days away from Passover and the death of Christ on the cross.
 - The day is still Tuesday, and the afternoon is approaching.
 - Jesus has spent countless hours in the temple teaching and being questioned by the religious leaders.
 - Jesus has been inspected, vetted, and has proven to be the lamb who will be slain for Israel's sins and for the sake of the many who will come to place faith in Him.
 - It's at the end of Jesus' inspection period that He pronounced a heavy condemnation on these men for their hypocrisy and poor leadership.
 - These men used their religious positions as a means of dishonest gain by taking advantage of the most vulnerable in society.
 - Matthew's gospel provides even more detail pointing to these leaders being excluded from the Kingdom and facing their fiery demise in hell.
 - If you recall earlier in our Mark study, it is the leadership of Israel that has caused the offer of the Kingdom to be rescinded.
 - Rather than leadership attributing Jesus' works to God, through the Holy Spirit, they said it was from the power of Satan.
 - Therefore, because that generation blasphemed the Holy Spirit it led to that generation not seeing the Kingdom come right then and there.
 - The consequences of Israel's leadership would now move Jesus' focus to further preparing the disciples for the Church Program (Kingdom Program).
 - And from there the momentum and thrust of Jesus' sentence to the cross begins to increase even more.
 - As Jesus and the disciples move from the court of Gentiles to the court of women, Jesus positions them across the temple treasury.
 - And it is there that Jesus provides a beautiful contrasting picture for the twelve.
 - He explains that the giving of the rich and the poor demonstrated a particular measure of the heart.
 - That where the rich gave in their surplus, the widow gave her all.
 - This ultimately painted a picture of great sacrifice in that although the rich gave what they had, which was honorable, the widow gave all she had.
 - She demonstrated great faith in the Lord, knowing that God is her sustainer and provider and that because she is His, her needs would be met, regardless of her circumstances.
 - This very truth would need to be etched into the disciples' minds because in the coming weeks their teacher, Rabbi, and Messiah would no longer be with them.
 - They would need to hold near and dear to every word that proceeded from His mouth.
 - For once He was no longer with them, the pressure cooker would be turned up.

- They would need to trust and know what was given to them was worth the pain and suffering they would come to endure.
- So, with that moment having closed, Jesus and His disciples now make their way back to Bethany.
 - And as they leave the temple, they are going to witness both a beautiful sight and breath-taking news.
- If I were to outline our time in the text tonight, we will see the following things:
 - Destruction of the Temple Foretold: Landmark as reference - (v.1-2)
 - The Disciples' Questions - (v.3-4)
 - Jesus provides a Response - (v.5-7)
 - The Signs of the End of the Age - (v.8)
 - Warning for the Apostles - (v.9-13)
- If I were to put a tag on tonight's text, it would simply be: "Things to Come": The Olivet Discourse (Part 1).
 - With that being said, I invite you to open a copy of the scriptures and meet me in Mark 13:1-13.

Mark 13:1 As He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples *said to Him, "Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!"

Mark 13:2 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."

Mark 13:3 As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew were questioning Him privately,

Mark 13:4 "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?"

Mark 13:5 And Jesus began to say to them, "See to it that no one misleads you.

Mark 13:6 Many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He!' and will mislead many.

Mark 13:7 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.

Mark 13:8 For nation will rise up 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.

Mark 13:9 "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.

Mark 13:10 The gospel must first be preached to all the nations.

Mark 13:11 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.

Mark 13:12 Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death.

Mark 13:13 You will be hated by all because of My name, but the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.

- As the afternoon is approaching, Jesus and His disciples are making their way out of the temple.
 - They're moving from the court of women to the court of Gentiles, towards the east gate to their stay.
 - And one could imagine this day has been extremely exhausting for Jesus.
 - He has dealt with 4 instances of questioning and inspecting from the religious leaders.
 - And to no avail, the religious leaders remain in their hardened hearts and do not come to the realization of who Jesus is – their promised Messiah.
 - As they proceed through the east gate of the temple area, they will take a path across the Kidron valley to the Mount of Olives.
 - And as they reach the Mount of Olives, it seems to be that one of the disciples (the scriptures do not mention who), is admiring the beauty of the construction of the temple.
 - Herod's temple was noted as one of the most architectural wonders of the ancient world.
 - It was built by the Herodian dynasty to win the favor of the Jewish people as well as being written down in history.
 - With this type of building, it was the longest building project Herod ever undertook and in fact was not accomplished in his lifetime.
 - The temple was not fully complete until around AD 64.
 - Josephus documents in his writing "Wars of the Jews 5.222" that the temple was built of large white stones and accented with gold.
 - So, it becomes clear why the disciples were so amazed by this building – it was the centerpiece, if you will, of Jewish society.
 - The temple became "the sacred item in Grandma's house" that was locked away in the glass cabinet for eyes only.
 - So, without saying, the culture of the day, including the disciples, see the temple as Israel's very glory.
 - And while the disciples speak well of the beauty of the temple, Jesus responds rather abruptly to their admiration.
 - Rather than engaging in conversation of the beauty of the temple, Jesus speaks to the coming destruction of this temple in verse 2.
 - It's like being told of a well-known building of the times, one in which you deeply admire (National admiration), will be torn down to rubble.
 - It would leave one with many questions!
 - And in like manner, knowing that Jesus was who He claimed to be, they believed Him which sparked the percolation of questions.
 - Especially, regarding such a monumental building.
 - However, rather than asking the questions immediately, they ponder and wait to ask the question that is eating them up inside.
 - The question becomes: Why? Why would they wait to ask the question?

- Well, when we consider Jewish society in the 1st century and their high regard for the temple, that destruction would trigger “end-times” vibes.
 - In other words, in the mind of the Jew that sign was an ending of the “present age” and the beginning of the “New Age”.
 - For how could a building so robust that was still in the process of being built come down so mightily?
- Remember, Jewish eschatology was built from the Hebrew scriptures (there was no New Testament) and that meant the Hebrew writers had written about these end-times events regarding a “new age to come” (Messianic Age)
 - So, with such a great sign of judgement and destruction meant that the Kingdom and its King was around the corner.
 - And the scripture that was raised in their minds regarding this geo-physical calamity was Zechariah 14:1-4. Here is what it says:

Zechariah 14:1 Behold, a day is coming for the Lord when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you.

Zechariah 14:2 For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city.

Zechariah 14:3 Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle.

Zechariah 14:4 In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.

- This type of geo-physical change would be like that of an earthquake with cataclysmic ramifications that would cause the temple to be destroyed.
 - We must remember, up to this point, the disciples did not understand what Jesus’ death was all about until He was resurrected.
 - Therefore, they understood what Jesus said regarding the destruction of the temple as the sign of the end of the present age and the ushering in of the Kingdom (The Messianic Age).
 - So, the destruction of Jerusalem by Rome in AD 70 was not in their purview.
 - Their lack of understanding what Jesus was showing them and teaching them would be clarified, once the Holy Spirit came.
 - So, their pause in questioning is addressing their confusion which will ultimately prompt Jesus’ explanation.
 - So it happened that after reaching the height of the Mount of Olives and looking back towards the temple, Mark tells us that Peter, James, John, and Andrew questioned Jesus in private regarding His statement of the temple.
 - This is a huge detail because neither Matthew or Luke provide us with which disciple or disciple(s) asked the questions.
 - The questions these men asked Jesus will serve as a flow of thought for the whole

of Chapter 13.

- Here are the questions that are asked according to Mark's Gospel.
 - 1. When will "these things" be? (Regarding the destruction of the Temple)
 - 2. What will be "the sign" when all "these things" are going to be fulfilled? (Regarding the second coming and the end of the age)
- So, what we find here is that Mark's gospel provides us with an abbreviated version of the questions along with Luke.
 - Whereas Matthew's Gospel provides us with three questions which can really be boiled down to two questions in the Greek.
 - This varied detail lets us know, once again, that authorship and audience is key to understanding why some questions are asked and others are not.
 - And remember that Mark's gospel is short and sweet. He wants to provide the big picture.
- So, where Matthew's questions deal with:
 - 1. When will these things happen? (Regarding the Temple)
 - 2. Sign of the 2nd Coming (The King)
 - 3. Signs of the end of the age (The Kingdom)
 - Luke's gospel will give "the sign" that will take place regarding the destruction of the temple and the end of the age.
- So, as we enter this end-times discussion, we need to understand terms and one of those terms that shows up in the Olivet Discourse is the word "age".
 - The Jews had been taught about God's plan for them and the world and how the plan dealt with a "present age" and an "age to come".
 - The term "age to come" has always been synonymous with the Messianic Age or the Messianic Kingdom.
 - Whereas the "Present age" is dealing with what the book of Daniel tells us is regarding being under Gentile rule, and that started in 605 BC to date.
 - This "age to come" is what every believer in Christ awaits for regarding Christ's physical return to earth regarding the Millennium Kingdom under the control of the Jewish Messiah. (Jewish Rule)
 - So, with this in mind, we will see how Jesus' response to their questions will provide them clarity regarding their misunderstanding.
 - Most importantly, how the destruction of the temple will serve as a picture of the eschaton.
 - However, Jesus is not going to answer their questions in the order in which they ask, rather He will answer in the order that He chooses.
 - Why? Because it is God that is unfolding the very history of the world before their eyes.
 - Clearly, He can do what He so chooses.
 - So, Jesus begins by answering their questions in verse 5, by answering a question not posed and that question was: "What are NOT the signs of the end?"

- And this question would be important so that the disciples would not jump to conclusions, looking at every sign as if that is the indication that the end is near.
- Now keep in mind the context of the conversation and the disciples' questions:
 - They are not only asking about the destruction of the temple itself and the signs for when this will happen, but also, they are asking about the coming of the end of this present age and the age to come. (Matters regarding "The Messianic Age").
- Secondly, the context of the conversation is dealing specifically with the Jewish people (Israel).
 - Nowhere in this discourse do we see the church mentioned: Why?
 - Because the church was not in effect yet and the Holy Spirit had not come to indwell the Jewish believers. (There has been no death and resurrection)
 - We will see matters regarding the Church/Church Age later in the upper room discourse.
 - So, as we move through these end-time questions remember that Israel is in mind.
- Let's re-examine the three questions that are now at play according to Mark's gospel and see how Jesus will answer them accordingly: it's quite brilliant:
 - 1. What are NOT the signs that the end of the age is near? Present
 - 2. What will be "the sign" when all "these things" are going to be fulfilled? (Part 1- End of the Present Age - beginning) – Future
 - 3. When will "these things" be? (Regarding the destruction of the Temple) – Present [Luke's gospel ONLY provides answer]
 - 4. What will be "the sign" when all "these things" are going to be fulfilled? (Part 2 - End of the Present Age - middle) - Future
 - 5. What will be "the sign" when all "these things" are going to be fulfilled? (Part 3 - 2nd Coming of Christ - end) - Future
 - Now, what you see is that questions 2, 4, and 5 are the same questions speaking to future events surrounding this immediate event and the implications of it regarding a future time of Great Judgement. (Slide 14)
 - Let's begin with question 1 which we will see in verses 6-7.

Mark 13:5 And Jesus began to say to them, "See to it that no one misleads you.

Mark 13:6 Many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He!' and will mislead many.

Mark 13:7 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.

- In verse 5 and 6, Jesus begins with answering the question they need to know first: What is NOT a sign?
 - And He begins with a warning to the disciples telling them they should not be misled regarding false messiahs claiming He has returned.
 - The phrase "See to it" in Greek is the word *blepo*.

- It means to “take heed” or “be on guard”, not easily fooled.
- What an encouraging warning this should have been for the Apostles.
- Understand, these men would eventually be the very foundation of the church alongside the Chief Cornerstone, Jesus Christ, Himself.
 - So, if anyone were to know Jesus, His Character, nature, and teachings, it would be these men.
- This is why our New Testament canon is so important because anyone who claims to be Christ can easily be debunked!
 - Why? Because the Apostles, through the Holy Spirit, have made known all we need to know about Jesus and His coming back.
 - Here we also see the significance of studying biblical prophecy – it allows us to be informed and not fooled.
- At the same time, this is a warning for the Apostles to guard the truth.
 - With their present failure on grasping all that Jesus is teaching, they will need to be reminded of what they know.
 - Therefore, the coming of the Holy Spirit will be paramount to their coming ministry in the Church Age.
- This warning was also necessary because the increase of false messiahs, after Jesus’ ascension, grew in number.
 - The reality was, in Jewish History, Jesus was the first one that had unmasked such a large following that claimed Him as Messiah.
 - So, it would not be a surprise that there would be others that the enemy would use to attempt to claim being messiah to mislead many.
- Jesus continues his warning by saying: “When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be frightened, those things must take place.”
 - The reality is that in this present age, war is a constant thing along with rumors and murmurs of war throughout the lands.
 - The cause of these wars is the result of human rebellion and sin.
 - So, when you hear about rumblings in the Middle east or with other major world leaders and their countries, Jesus says: Do not get up in arms!
- Why? Because notice the line that Jesus states in verse 7b: “those things MUST take place”
 - Friends, the reality is, the world stage has to be set up for the judgement that is to come, globally.
 - If these wars and uprisings did not take place, we would not see the world players being divinely setup by God to bring about a final act for His eschatological drama in the end.
- To put it plainly, if God is Sovereign, that means He is in control of History.
 - This is God’s history unfolding before our very eyes, so we ought not to become weary or frantic, but seek to know what He has said about it.
- Finally at the later end of verse 7b, Jesus says, “but this is not yet the end”.
 - This means there has to be intense growth of suffering, war, famine, etc before

the dawning of a new age, The Messianic Age.

- That before new life can come in there must first be great sorrow and this is the drama that Jesus says is being set up.
 - But do not think that “these things” are indicating the end has arrived. It’s just getting started.
 - It is as if there is an extended time period of groaning before the pressure is increased.
- What becomes so beautiful in all of this is how Mark brings this all together beautifully in the Greek.
- At first glance, you would think that verses 7 and 8 are unrelated, however the fact that the word “For” is at the start of verse 8, means that verse 7 are not signs of the end, but verse 8 ARE signs.
 - Let’s look at verse 8:

Mark 13:8 For nation will rise up 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.

- It’s in verse 8 that Jesus moves into the discussion of what will be the demarcation of the “signs of the end of the age” and it will be characterized by birth pangs.
 - Let’s keep in mind our context here.
 - To a Jew in that day, they recognized two ages: the Present age (Age of the Gentiles) and the Messianic Age, which is the age to come.
 - Then Jesus makes it clear that “wars and rumors of wars” are not an indication of the sign that the end is near, but simply that these things are setting up the global stage.
 - It’s as if Jesus compares verse 7’s events to that of Braxton Hicks Contractions. (Slide 16)
 - Braxton Hicks contractions are known as prodromal or false labor pains that are mostly felt during the second to third trimester.
 - These contractions are the body’s way of preparing for true labor, but do not indicate that labor has begun.
 - So, if “wars and rumor of wars” are early indicators of new life coming, then what Jesus describes in verse 8 regarding birth pangs is the real deal.
 - This means that this particular period that Jesus is speaking about is going to be a more aggressive and severe case of events and doesn’t compare to what was previously experienced.
 - In other words, if you think that World War 1 and World War 2 were bad (and they were bad), you haven’t seen anything yet.
 - So with this comparison in mind, Jesus now gets to the details of the sign itself, beyond its frequency.
 - Verse 8 begins with “Nation rising against nation and Kingdom against Kingdom”
 - Now this sounds a lot like war as verse 7, but as we explained, the sign of

these events (in verse 8) are much more intense.

- So how are these two verses different?
- Well, this is where the phrase “Nation against nation and kingdom against kingdom” comes into play and we find this within the historical context of that day.
 - In the 1st century, to describe a certain type of war that was never seen before on earth, rabbis would use the phrase “Nation against nation and kingdom against kingdom”.
 - The term was a rabbinic idiom for a “World War” involving all nations and kingdoms on earth in a common conflict.
- As a matter of fact, in the Midrash Rabbah, the following statement is mentioned: “When you see the Powers fighting each other, look for the coming of the King Messiah.”
 - However, during this period in history, the wars will be more intense.
- The next sign of the end of the age is earthquakes and famines.
 - Doing a quick google search and study on trusted websites through means of advanced technologies, you can quickly find quantitative data that speaks to these increases over time.
- However, in this particular period that Jesus is talking about it is going to be much more catastrophic and intense.
 - The question becomes: What point in this present age (The Age of the Gentiles) is Jesus speaking about?
 - To answer that question, we need look no further than Daniel 9 regarding Daniel’s 70 weeks.
- Friends, it becomes clear that Jesus is speaking to the Tribulation period.
 - Let’s look at our outline by which Jesus is answering the questions and I want you to see how He moves from present to future, present to future.
 - 1. What are NOT the signs that the end of the age is near? Present
 - 2. What will be “the sign” when all “these things” are going to be fulfilled? (Part 1 - End of the Present Age - beginning) - Future
 - 3. When will “these things” be? (Regarding the destruction of the Temple) - Present
 - 4. What will be “the sign” when all “these things” are going to be fulfilled? (Part 2 - End of the Present Age - middle) Future
 - 5. What will be “the sign” when all “these things” are going to be fulfilled? (Part 2 - 2nd Coming of Christ) Future
- The chart that I want to show you is how the Olivet Discourse (specifically Matthew 24) aligns perfectly with that of the seal judgements in Revelation 6.
- So, if our understanding is correct, what we are going to see Mark unfold in the entirety of Chapter 13 are aspects of each section of the Tribulation:
 - 1. The first 3.5 years
 - 2. The midpoint of the tribulation

- 3. The last 3.5 years (The Great Tribulation)
- What we know from the 1st half of the tribulation is it will consist of: War, Famine, earthquakes, woe judgements, 144,000 being sealed and many saved, temple sacrifices opened and 2 Witnesses Minister.
 - And as you can see from the discussion of War, Famine, and Earthquake, Mark's account addresses this great severity in detail.
 - And for a deeper study on these matters, please check out our Revelation Study taught by the Founder of VBVM, Stephen Armstrong.
- As we look around our world today, we can see some of these events ramping up in intensity year by year.
 - And as bible students, we should be encouraged for two reasons:
 - 1. The Lord has provided us the wisdom and revelation necessary to know how to navigate and stand firm in our faith in this chaotic world.
 - 2. With the intensity of these signs mean that the rapturing of the church may be just around the corner.
- Lastly, knowing these revelational truths give us the ability as believers, to share the gospel with those who are unaware.
 - The reality is judgement is near and the question that the non-believer has to answer is, where will I spend eternity?
- With 40% of the bible containing prophecy, it behooves us to learn and study the word so that we may live with our eyes set on eternal things.
 - Let's Pray.