

THE GOSPEL OF
MARK®
servant **KING**

CHAPTER 13
THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

From the very words of Jesus, we get incredible insight into the future. Mark records Jesus's last prophetic words to His disciples and to us in what is known as the *Olivet Discourse*. He does not leave us wondering about the end times. As we have seen other prophecies fulfilled, we can be confident that what Jesus has spoken about for the future will come to pass in His time. As we study this prophetic chapter, we must approach it with great humility and study within the proper context. We must take to heart His words and be prepared to stand firm in our faith; to be ready, to be praying, to be watching and anticipating His return.

MEMORY VERSE

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. Mark 13:11

Read Mark 13 prayerfully, taking in every word slowly; see Jesus as Lord. What verse comforts you? Exhorts you? Challenges you?

QUESTIONS FROM THE DISCIPLES

1. The temple was a magnificent building at that time. People were so impressed and the temple was the center of religious activity for the Jews. As Jesus and His disciples left the temple on their way to the Mount of Olives, how did they communicate their awe of the building (v.1)? (See Luke 21:5.)

2. What was Jesus’s response to their admiration of the Temple (v.2)? When had Jesus spoken of this time before (Luke 19:41-44)?

“Imagine how shocked they were when Jesus informed them that the building they admired so much would one day be demolished. The Jewish leaders had defiled it; Jesus would depart from it and leave it desolate (Matthew 23:38); the Romans would destroy it.” *Warren Wiersbe*

3. As Jesus sat with Peter, James, John and Andrew on the Mount of Olives, they could see the temple in all its beauty and splendor. Mark records two of the questions they asked, and Matthew records the third; what did they ask Jesus (vv.3-4)? Answer below. (Also see Matt. 24:3-4 Luke 21:7.)

1)

2)

3)

DID YOU KNOW?

The massive stones and buildings of the temple complex were truly impressive. Herod’s temple had been under construction for almost 50 years, and the Jewish historian Josephus said some of the stones were 60 feet long. Archaeologists have found stones 42 feet long, 11 feet high and 14 feet deep, weighing over a million pounds.

DIG DEEPER

Do you find it interesting they didn’t ask “why” or “how” questions? In the Old Testament, the tabernacle and then the temple contained the Ark of the Covenant, which was the place that held the symbolic presence of God; the place of sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. What are the key words from the Scriptures below?

- Psalm 46:4
- Exodus 29:43
- Leviticus 26:11-12

4. What do these New Testament verses tell us about the temple of God and Jesus’s sacrifice for sin?
- a. Acts 17:24

b. Hebrews 9:11-15

c. Hebrews 9:24-28

d. Hebrews 10:5-7

e. Hebrews 10:12

f. Revelation 21:3

PERSONAL

Have you accepted Christ's sacrifice for sin? Does He dwell in you? How does 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 impact you?

The disciples thought the destruction of the temple would mean the end of the world; they could not imagine a world without the temple. "In the Olivet Discourse, like so many other prophecies in the Bible, there is a near fulfillment of what is spoken, and there would also be a future fulfillment of what was spoken." *Pastor John Randall*

It is the conviction of many students of prophesy that believers in this present age of the church will be raptured by Christ and taken to heaven *before the tribulation begins* (1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11; Revelation 3:10-11). At the close of the tribulation they will return to earth with Christ and reign with Him (Revelation 19:11-20:6). *Warren Wiersbe*

SIGNS OF THE TIMES AND END OF THE AGE

5. Jesus answered their question with a stern warning to take heed: What did He warn? How would this be made possible (vv.5-6)? (See Matt. 24:4-5; Luke 21:8.) Today, we experience an increase of deception in our lives. Read 1 John 2:18-26; Ephesians 5:6-7; and 2 Timothy 4:3-5. Then, share what you have experienced of this type deception.

6. What rumors did Jesus warn us to be aware of? What assurance did He give (v.7)?

7. What natural disasters will increase? What was this “just the beginning of” (v.7-8)? (See Matt. 24:6-8; Luke 21:9-10.)

8. “The word translated *sorrows* means *birth pangs*, suggesting the world at that time will be like a woman in travail” (Warren Wiersbe). Did Jesus warn the disciples and all believers of future opposition and persecution?
 - a. What would be the purpose of this opposition (vv.9-10)? (See Luke 21:13.)

 - b. Matthew goes into much greater detail of the type of opposition that Jesus spoke about. What additional information does he record? (See Matthew 24:9-14.)

PERSONAL

How do you use this type of opposition and persecution as an opportunity to speak up for Jesus?
How are you bold for the Gospel even if it costs you?

9. Jesus offers encouragement at this point; what does He tell His followers not to worry about? Who is the One who will speak for us (v.11)? (Compare with Luke 21:12-15.)

10. Jesus teaches about the Holy Spirit (John 14:25-26; 16:13-15). What help do you receive from these verses? How are *you* taking in God's Word for the Holy Spirit to bring to remembrance all the things Jesus spoke of?

11. How does Jesus address rejection from family members (vv.12-13)? (Also see Matt. 24:13; Luke 21:16-19)
 - a. What does Jesus say is the reason (John 7:7)?

 - b. What is the promise from Jesus for endurance?

PERSONAL

How have you experienced opposition or rejection from family members? How does Luke 21:16-19 comfort and encourage you to persevere?

THE GREAT TRIBULATION

12. What is Jesus's exhortation when the "abomination of desolation" Daniel spoke of is seen (vv.14-18)?
 - a. To those in Judea (v.14)

 - b. To those on the housetop (v.15)

- c. To those in the field (v.16)
- d. To those who are pregnant and who are nursing babies (V.17)

13. Notice Mark's parenthesis in verse 14; what does it say?

- a. Who are the hearers?
- b. Who would be the readers of this exhortation?
- c. When would this exhortation have special meaning?

“The phrase “abomination of desolation” comes from the book of Daniel and refers to the idolatrous pollution of the Jewish temple by the Gentiles. The Jewish temple was defiled in 167 BC by the Syrian king Antiochus IV (also called Epiphanes,” meaning illustrious) when he poured swine’s blood on the altar. This event was predicted on Daniel 11:31. The temple was also defiled by the Roman’s in AD 70 when they captured and destroyed the city of Jerusalem. However, these events were but anticipations of the final “abomination of desolation” prophesied by Daniel 9:27 and 12:11.”

Warren Wiersbe

DIG DEEPER

The tribulation period Jesus warns us about is a seven-year period of intense suffering prophesied in Daniel 9:24-27. What do you learn from Daniel’s prophesy regarding these seven years? How does this seven-year period begin?

14. How does Jesus describe this time? What does the Lord do for the elects’ sake, for those He chose (vv.19-10)? (Also see Matt. 24:21-22; Luke 21:24.)

PERSONAL

God in His mercy offers us a way out of this horrific judgment. Have you chosen to give your heart to Jesus? Have you repented of your sins? Jesus is not willing any should perish but that all come to Him for salvation and so escape this judgment. What would stop you after reading this chapter? (John 3:16).

15. Jesus warns that satanic deception will continue throughout the tribulation. Who did He specifically say would lead people astray? What would they do to lead even the elect away from the truth (vv.21-22)? (Also see Matt. 24:24-26.)

“In the book of Revelation, the last half of the tribulation is called “the wrath of God” (Revelation 14:10, 19; 15:1,7;16:1,19; 19:15). During this time God will judge the world and prepare Israel for the coming of her Messiah. It will be a time of intensive judgement such as the world has never seen or will ever see again. In it, God will be working out His purposes and setting the stage for the coming Conqueror (Revelation 19:11).” *Warren Wiersbe*

THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN

How does Mark and Luke describe the devastation in the heavens (vv.24-25)? (Also see Matt. 24:29; Luke 21:25; Revelation 6:12-14.)

16. Luke also describes what men on earth will be experiencing. What three descriptions does he give (Luke 21:26)?

17. What will occur at the end of the tribulation (vv.26-27)?

- a. How will He be seen and how will He come?
- b. Who will be with Him and what will they do?

c. How does Matthew describe the reaction of the tribes of the earth (Matt. 24:30)?

18. How does John describe the Son of Man coming in Revelation 19:11?

19. What encouragement do you get from Luke 21:28 when we see these things begin to happen? Paul also gives us encouragement in Romans 8:28.

THE PARABLE OF THE FIG TREE

20. What is the lesson Jesus wants us to learn from the fig tree (vv.28-29)? How do you see our world getting nearer and nearer to the return of Jesus? How are you preparing yourself for His imminent return?

DIG DEEPER

Study the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25:1-13. How did this speak to you about the importance of being ready for the return of Jesus Christ? What are you doing as you wait for Jesus to return?

21. How does Jesus stress the importance of His word (v.31)? (Also see Isaiah 40:8.)

PERSONAL

How much of a value do you put on reading and meditating on God's Words? Do you have a daily time of devotion and meditating and taking in the Word of Jesus?

EXHORTATION TO WATCH

22. What is the exhortation Jesus gives in vv.32-34; Why?

23. How does Jesus illustrate how we are to watch for His return? How many times do you count the word “watch” in verses 32-37? How are you watching and waiting for Jesus?

DWELL ON THIS

Three times in Mark 13 Jesus warns us to “take heed.”

- Take heed we are not deceived (vv.5,23)
- Take heed we do not become discouraged and quit (v.9)
- Take heed, watch and pray (v.33)

“I say to all: Watch!” (Mark 13:37).

