

# **Mark 13 - Olivet Discourse; Destruction of the Temple; Signs of the Last Days; Abomination of Desolation; The Second Coming; Parable of the Fig Tree**

V. Ultimate sacrifice of the servant (Mark 11:1—16:20)

(2) Olivet discourse (13:1-37)

- (A) Prediction of the Temple's destruction (13:1-2)
- (B) Disciples' questions (13:3-4)
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## **Mark 13**

(2) Olivet discourse (13:1-37)

(A) Prediction of the Temple's destruction (13:1-2) (Cf. Matt 24:1-2; Luke 21:5-6)

**1** As He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples \*said to Him, "Teacher, look! What wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!"

**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!"

**1** As Jesus was leaving the Temple, one of his disciples told him, "Look, Teacher, what large stones and what beautiful buildings!"

**1** And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here !

- They had reason to be proud: Herod had it built to placate the Jews; it was 46 years in the making and was nearing completion (John 2:20)

— Jesus had previously given His opinion of it (Mark 11:15-17)

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."

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."

2 "Do you see these large buildings?" Jesus responded. "Not one stone here will be left on another that will not be torn down."

2 And Jesus answering said unto him, **Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.**

- The Jewish leadership had defiled it; Jesus had overturned it and pronounced it desolate (Matt 23:38)

— The Romans would destroy it completely in a literal fulfillment 38 years later (Cf. Matt 12:6)

(B) Disciples' questions (13:3-4) (Cf. Matt 24:3; Luke 21:7)

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

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

3 As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives facing the Temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew were asking him privately,

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately,

- Evidently, the disciples pondered Jesus' prophecy (v2) as they crossed the Kidron Valley that separated the temple complex from Mount of Olives to the east.

- This is the very place that the Shekinah glory had departed from the Temple 600 years earlier (Ezek 11:22-25), and it would also be the spot upon which the Lord would return (Zech 14:4f)

- Only these four were present; this confidential briefing is also recorded in Matt 24-25. Not the same audience as in Luke 21:5-36

4 "Tell us, **when will these things come about**, and **what will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?**"

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

4 "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign when these things will be put into effect?"

4 Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?

- The disciples asked these two questions after they sat down on the mountain and looked west into the temple courtyard
- "...when shall these things come about" - the first question dealt with the time of the temple's destruction (v2)
- "...what *will* be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?" - the second question actually had two parts (in Matthew's account):
  1. The sign of Jesus' coming
  2. The sign of the end of the present age
- Mark simplified these two questions into one ("all these things")
- The disciples viewed the destruction of the temple and the end of the present age as occurring at the same time. Jesus corrects this misunderstanding in His answer.

In Mark's Gospel, Jesus first answered the disciples' second question about the sign of the end of the present age. He did not negatively, by warning them of false signs ("the beginning of birth pangs," v5-13). Then He gave them positive information about the event that will signal great "tribulation," followed by His Second Coming (v14-27). Jesus answered their first question, about the destruction of Jerusalem, with a parable (v28-32). The central part of the Olivet Discourse is eschatological (v14-27), along with a mix of moral exhortations. Verses 5-37 contain 19 imperative verbs in the Greek. This discourse is a good example of the practical nature of biblical prophecy.

(C) Events of tribulation (13:5-27)

(a) First half (13:5-13)

**1st Seal: False Messiahs (Cf. Matt 24:4-5; Mark 13:5-6; Luke 21:8; Rev 6:1-2)**

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

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

5 Jesus began to say to them, "**See to it** that no one deceives you.

5 And Jesus answering them began to say, **Take heed** lest any man deceive you:

- "...See to it" - *blepete*, 4x in these verses (v5,9,23,33), which indicates that *warning* is an important theme

- Up to this point, Jesus had acted as God's "Forthteller," applying the truth of God to the events before Him; with this statement, He turned to predictive prophecy

- Jesus' briefing was for some very practical and personal reasons: "Take heed" against deception is the primary emphasis

6 Many will **come in My name**, saying, '**I am He!**' and they will mislead many.

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

6 Many will come in my name and say, '**I AM**,' and they will deceive many people.

6 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

- "...come in My name" - claiming His authority
- "...I am" - a divine name; Jesus is saying that these false messiahs would claim to be "God" as well as "Messiah"
- Cf. v21-22. History is replete with examples of false christs.
- Jesus warned about false prophets (Matt 7:15-20)
- Paul also did (Acts 20:28-31), as did John (1 John 4:1-6)

*A lie runs around the world while Truth is putting on her shoes.* — Mark Twain

## **2nd Seal: Wars/Rumors of War (Cf. Matt 24:6-7; Mark 13:7-8a; Luke 21:9-10; Rev 6:3-4)**

7 When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; *those things* must take place; but *that is not yet the end*.

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*.

7 But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, stop being alarmed. These things must take place, but the end hasn't come yet,

7 And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet.

- "...not yet the end" - "wars," "rumors of war," "earthquakes," and "famines" would precede Jesus' return, but they are not signs of the end of the age

- There will be many of these before the end comes

- The messianic kingdom will appear in history similar to an infant who emerges from a very painful birthing experience (Cf. Is 66:8; Jer 22:23; Hosea 13:13; Micah 4:9-10)

- Jesus compared these four events to the beginning of these pains; they will show us that the kingdom is coming, but they do not enable observers to date its arrival

- However, these events will also mark the first half of the Tribulation; v5-8 describe conditions during the first half of the Tribulation, and v9-23 describe conditions during the second half

*In the last ~3,430 years of recorded history only 268 have seen no war.*

## **The Beginning of Sorrows - The 1st Half of the Tribulation**

## Matt 24 / Rev 6 Parallels

Prediction	Birth pangs (Matt 24)	Seal judgments (Rev 6)
<b>False Christ</b>	<b>24:5</b>	<b>6:2</b>
<b>War</b>	<b>24:6</b>	<b>6:3-4</b>
<b>Famine</b>	<b>24:7</b>	<b>6:5-6</b>
<b>Death</b>	<b>24:6-7</b>	<b>6:7-8</b>
<b>Martyrs</b>	<b>24:9-13</b>	<b>6:9-11</b>
<b>Earthquakes</b>	<b>24:7</b>	<b>6:12-17</b>
<b>Evangelism</b>	<b>24:14</b>	<b>7:1-9</b>

**3rd Seal: Famine/Earthquakes (Cf. Matt 24:7-8; Mark 13:8b; Luke 21:10-11; Rev 6:5-6)**

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 *only* the **beginning of birth pains**.

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.

8 because nation will rise up in arms against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes and famines in various places. These things are only the beginning of the birth pains."

8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows.

- "...beginning of birth pains" - *odin*, the pain of childbirth, travail, pain; intolerable anguish (Cf. Is 13:6-8; Jer 4:31; 6:24; 13:21; 22:20-23).

— This suggests that they will come suddenly, build up gradually, increasing in intensity

### 5th Seal: Persecution/Martyrdom (Cf. Matt 24:9; Mark 13:9-13; Rev 6:9-11)

**9** "But be on your guard; for they will hand you over 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.

**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.

**9** "As for yourselves, be on your guard! People will hand you over to local councils, and you will be beaten in their synagogues. You will stand before governors and kings to testify to them because of me.

**9** But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.

- These warnings also occur in other contexts of Jesus' ministry (Cf. Matt 10:17-22; Luke 12:11-12). Jesus evidently issued these warnings more than once.

- The disciples could anticipate persecution from both Jews and Gentiles, religious and secular sources

- These incidents would provide an opportunity to bear witness for Jesus

- This warning applies to all disciples in the Church age, as do all warnings in this discourse

**10 And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations.**

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

10 But first, the gospel must be proclaimed to all nations.

10 And the gospel must first be published among all nations.

- "...must" - *dei*, indicates divine necessity; God wants this to happen, and it *will* happen

- It is part of God's eschatological purpose (will) that before the end of this age, all nations shall have an opportunity to accept the gospel

- "...all the nations" - is in the emphatic position in the Greek

- "All" nations must hear the gospel before the end of the age (Cf. Matt 24:14)

- This is the responsibility of every generation of disciples (Matt 28:19)

- The generation of disciples alive during the Tribulation will accomplish this task in their generation. Rev 7:9 paints a scene of saved people from "all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues" who are standing before the throne of God in heaven, a fulfillment of this verse (Cf. Matt 24:14).

- Postmillennialists teach that this verse is a promise: that if disciples will preach the gospel to all nations of a particular generation, God will then inaugurate the kingdom.

However, man cannot bring in the kingdom by the universal preaching of the gospel...God will bring it in at His appointed time.

11 And when they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you at that time; for you are not the ones speaking, but *it is* the Holy Spirit.

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.

11 When they take you away and hand you over for trial, don't worry ahead of time about what you will say. Instead, say whatever is given to you at that time, because it won't be you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.

11 But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.

- Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit will provide special help to disciples who want to bear a good testimony when they are arrested and tried for their faith (v9)

— Hardly an excuse to be poorly prepared, however! Jesus did not forbid careful thought, just anxious care

— This promise should give disciples in this situation freedom from unnecessary anxiety; however, Jesus did not promise release from suffering

— One of the times this prophecy/promise was fulfilled is in Acts 6:10 when Stephen was wrongfully accused, and his accusers were "unable to cope with his wisdom and the Spirit by whom he was speaking."

12 And brother will betray brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death.

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.

12 Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death.

12 Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.

- Betrayal by family members will be another trial disciples may have to bear

— Persecution will come through official channels ("councils" and "synagogues",v9), but also from blood relatives

*There is nothing that excites such love as the gospel, when intelligently received, and there is nothing that occasions such hatred as this same gospel, when passionately rejected.*

13 And you will be hated by everyone because of My name, but it is the one who has **endured to the end** who will be saved.

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

13 You will be hated continuously by everyone because of my name. But the person who endures to the end will be saved."

13 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

– "...endure to the end" – this is a general principle: faithful endurance of persecution to its end results in deliverance

— Disciples who endure their persecution faithfully, to the end of that persecution, will experience deliverance from it while they are alive.

— Disciples who endure their persecution faithfully, to the end of their lives, will experience deliverance from it by death.

— It is interesting to notice how the introduction of the name of Jesus always creates tension like no other... His name is still hated by the world and the "earth dwellers." The Christian life is not a sprint, but a marathon. It's a battlefield; not a playground.

— Faithful endurance of persecution also results in the privilege of reigning with Jesus in His kingdom (Cf. 2 Tim 2:12)

— However, our ultimate salvation does not depend on enduring persecution faithfully, but on God's faithfulness to His promises to keep us secure (2 Tim 2:13; Cf. John 10:27-28; Rom 8:31-39; et al)

— It is easier to endure suffering for our faith when we view it in the context of God's plan for the future. This perspective gives us hope.

1 John 2:19: They went out from **us**, but they were not *really* of **us**; for if they had been of **us**, they would have remained with **us**; but *they went out*, so that it would be evident that they all are not of **us**.

– "...us" – the fellowship of believers, the Church; they have *koinonia*

We are sometimes presented as a body (1 Cor 12) and sometimes as a building (Eph 2:19-22). Not all who are in the fellowship are saved; but remaining in the fellowship is one evidence Jesus makes it clear that only those who produce fruit are truly "born again." It is interesting that in the history of the false cults and anti-Christian religious systems, every

leader started out in a local church. They were "with us" but not "of us." The NT makes it clear that it is dangerous to depart from the fellowship (2 Tim 3-4; 2 Peter 2).

(b) Middle (13:14-18)

**Abomination of Desolation (Cf. Matt 24:15-20; Mark 13:14-18)**

**14 "Now when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION standing where it should not be—let the reader understand—then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.**

**14 "But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.**

**14 "So when you see the destructive desecration standing where it should not be (let the reader take note), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.**

**14 But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains:**

- "Now" - identifies the contrast between the false and true signs
- The true sign is the appearance of the "Abomination of Desolation" (Cf. Dan 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; Matt 24:15)
- "...ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION" - something abominable that desecrates, associated with idolatry, that would defile the temple, resulting in its desertion by the godly
- This very Jewish technical term is the key to end-time prophecy (Dan 9:24-27; See notes on Matt 24:15)
- "...spoken of by Daniel the prophet" [KJV] - Jesus is authenticating the authorship and reliability of Daniel
- "...standing where it should not be" - the abomination would be standing where it did not belong: in the temple
- Mark described Jesus saying that the "abomination" (*bdelygma*, a neuter noun) would stand (*estekota*, a masculine participle) as a *person*—who set himself up as God—in the temple
- A masculine participle modifying a neuter noun suggests that the abomination is a *man*
- "...let the reader understand" - to whom is this responsibility assigned? How will you acquit yourself in this regard?
- "...then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains" - the focus is to those in Judea: Like all history, it is Jerusalem-centric

When the Zealots occupied the temple in 67-68 AD and installed a usurper, Phanni, as high priest, Jewish Christians fled from Jerusalem to Pella, a Transjordan mountain town

[Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, 4:3:7-10; 4:6:3; Eusebius, 3:5:3]. This flight prefigured

the one that will take place in the future (the Tribulation). Preterists believe that this passage (and the corollary passages in Matt 24:15f; Rev 12:6) refer to this specific event (the flight to Pella). Most scholars, however, believe that this flight is yet future.

### **The "Abomination of Desolation"**

"Abomination" is a term for idolatry (Deut 29:17; 2 Kings 16:3). "The Abomination of Desolation" is the ultimate insult: placing an idol on the holiest spot on the planet: in Jerusalem, in the Temple, in fact, in the Holy of Holies!

This was an allusion to an historical event in anticipation of an event more climactic that Jesus described as yet future (Dan 9:27; 12:11; Cf. 2 Thess 2:3-12).

This had occurred two centuries earlier (167 BC) when Antiochus IV ("Epiphanes") forbid circumcision (1 Maccabees 1:60), outlawed the reading of the Torah as a capital crime, slaughtered a sow on the sacred altar, and erected a statue to Zeus in the Holy of Holies—all of which precipitated the Maccabean revolt which ultimately threw off the yoke of the Seleucid empire, predicted in Dan 11:31.

Mark's parenthesis enlists each of us to understand the amazing prophecy of Daniel 9! In fact, Jesus held the people accountable to have understood it! (Luke 19:44). [It is interesting that this never happened (again) in history (...so far!): in 40 AD the Emperor Caligula ordered his image to be erected in the Holy of Holies, but died before it could be carried out.]

15 Whoever is on the housetop must not go down, nor go in to get anything out of his house.

15 The one who is on the housetop must not go down, or go in to get anything out of his house;

15 The one who's on his housetop must not come down and go into his house to take anything out of it,

15 And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take any thing out of his house:

- This is the middle of the "70th Week"

- The point of these instructions is that the appearance of the Abomination of Desolation will require immediate flight from Jerusalem. The situation will be urgent.

16 And whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak.

16 and the one who is in the field must not turn back to get his coat.

16 and the one who's in the field must not turn back to get his coat.

16 And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment.

17 But woe to those women who are pregnant, and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

17 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

17 "How terrible it will be for women who are pregnant or who are nursing babies in those days!

17 But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

18 Moreover, pray that it will **not happen in winter**.

18 But pray that it may not happen in the winter.

18 Pray that it may not be in winter,

18 And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.

- "...not happen in the winter" - Judea is often impassable in the winter

— This is one reason that Jesus was probably not born in December: no Roman administrator would require everyone to travel to their home town during the winter

- Matthew includes "pray that your flight be not on a sabbath day"; Mark does not mention this as he is addressing Gentiles

(c) Second half (13:19-20)

19 For those days will be such a *time of tribulation* as **has not occurred since the beginning of the creation** which God created until now, and never will *again*.

19 For those days will be a *time of tribulation* such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never will.

19 because those days will be a time of suffering, a kind that has not happened from the beginning of God's creation until now, and certainly will never happen again.

19 For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.

- This verse clarifies that the time of the appearance of the abomination will be during the Tribulation

- "...tribulation" - referring to the Great Tribulation

— This time of intense persecution was prophesied by Daniel (Dan 7:25; 12:1-7); Zechariah (Zech 13:7-14:3); and John (Rev 12-13)

- "...has not occurred since the beginning of the creation" - this is clearly not a reference to the Fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD!

— Jesus is looking beyond the destruction of Jerusalem to a much greater Tribulation

— This refers to the period that the OT calls "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer 30:7) a time of wrath (Zech 1:15-18) and indignation (Is 26:20-21)

## Comparison Between Daniel and Mark 13

Events Predicted	Daniel	Mark	Time of Fulfillment
Temple destroyed	9:26	13:2	70 AD
Rumors of war	9:26; 11:44	13:7	before the Tribulation
Abomination of desolation	9:27; 12:11	13:14	midpoint of the Tribulation
A time of "tribulation"	12:1	13:19	during the Tribulation
Son of Man on the clouds	7:13	13:26	after the Tribulation

20 And if the Lord had not **shortened** those days, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the **elect**, whom He chose, He shortened the days.

20 Unless the Lord had shortened those days, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom He chose, He shortened the days.

20 If the Lord had not shortened those days, no one would be saved. But for the sake of the elect whom he has chosen, he has shortened those days.

20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.

- "...shortened" - God will not shorten the Tribulation to a period of less than 7 years

— He has already chosen to shorten it to a period of just 7 years. If He did not limit the Tribulation to this relatively brief duration, no one would survive.

— It appears that because of His love for believers, God shortened the period of time of judgment on the world to only 7 years

- "...elect" - refers to the believing remnant in Israel and the Gentile believers surviving the Tribulation (Rev 14)

#### (d) Second advent (13:21-27)

21 And then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ'; or, 'Look, there *He is*'; do not believe *it*;

21 And then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ'; or, 'Behold, *He is* there'; do not believe *him*;

21 "At that time, if anyone says to you, 'Look! Here is the Messiah!', or, 'Look! There he is!' don't believe it,

21 And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; believe him not:

- Jesus repeated His warning about people who will claim to be the Messiah (Cf. v5-6)

22 for false christs and false prophets will arise, and will **provide signs and wonders**, in order to mislead, if **possible**, the elect.

22 for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order to lead astray, if possible, the elect.

22 because false messiahs and false prophets will appear and produce signs and omens to deceive, if possible, the elect.

22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.

- "...provide signs and wonders" - these imitators will actually do miracles! (Cf. Matt 24:24; see note: **Miracles, Wonders, Works, Signs** on Matt 11:21)

- "...if possible" - is not intended to imply that the elect will inevitably continue to believe in Jesus and follow Him faithfully

— If that were so, Jesus' repeated warnings would be meaningless

— It means that the false messiahs will perform miracles with the intent of leading the elect into error if they (the false messiahs) can (Cf. 2 Tim 3:1-15)

— Because of this possibility, Jesus' disciples need to be discerning

23 But beware; I have told you everything in advance.

23 But take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance.

23 So be on your guard! I've told you everything before it happens."

23 But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.

#### **The Second Coming (Cf. Matt 24:29-31; Luke 21:25-28)**

24 "But in those days, **after that tribulation**, **THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT**,

24 "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light,

24 "But after the suffering of those days, 'The sun will be darkened, the moon will not give its light,

24 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,

- "...after that tribulation" - in contrast with the false messiahs, the True Messiah will appear after the predicted Tribulation period

- "...SUN WILL BE DARKENED" - there are five blackouts described in Scripture during the last days of the Church Age and Tribulation. One occurs before the Tribulation; the other four occur during the Tribulation and Interval, before the Millennium.

1. Joel 2:31; Acts 2:20 - Before the Tribulation

2. Rev 6:12 - After opening the 6th seal

3. Joel 2:10; Rev 9:2 - Smoke from the opening of the bottomless pit

4. Matt 24:29; Mark 13:24; Luke 21:25 - At the Second Coming

5. Joel 3:15 - During the Judgment of the Nations (Sheep & Goat Judgment)

— The OT prophets also predicted these things (Is 13:10; 24:23; 34:4; Ezek 32:7-8; Joel 2:10,30-31; 3:15; Amos 8:9)

25 AND THE STARS WILL BE FALLING from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken.

25 and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken.

25 the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of heaven will be shaken loose.'

25 And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

- This did not happen in 70 AD. The climax of the Olivet Discourse is the Second Coming of the Messiah. It is also the climax of the Book of Revelation, which is an expanded revelation of the Olivet Discourse.

26 And then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN CLOUDS with **great power and glory**.

26 Then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.

26 Then people will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory.

26 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.

- This is a reference to the Second Coming, not the Rapture

— The Rapture terminates the Church Age, a period of time within the inter-advent age

— The Olivet Discourse deals with the larger period, the inter-advent age, and does not refer to the Church, even though the Church has/will exist(ed) through most of the inter-advent age.

- Jesus described His return by referring to OT prophecies of it (Dan 7:13; Deut 30:4; Zech 2:6)

- "...great power and glory" - no longer the Suffering Servant, He will come back as the glorified Son of Man

27 And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together **His elect** from the four winds, from the end of the earth to the **end of heaven**.

27 And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven.

27 He'll send out his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven."

27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

- "...His elect" - gathered (Deut 30:3-6; Is 11:12; Jer 31:7-9; Cf. Rom 11)

- Deut 30:4 emphasizes that the restoration will come from two locations: earth and heaven
- From the earth = the believing remnant gathered from the four corners of the earth
- From heaven = resurrected OT saints
- The Messiah will then be recognized (Zech 12:9—13:1; 14:4-11)
- "...end of heaven" - Mark adds this additional detail to Jesus words from Matt 24:31; with the background from Deut 30:3-4, Jesus added that the regathering will be from the uttermost part of the earth, referring to living Israel, and the uttermost part of Heaven, referring to resurrected Israel.
- Unbelievers will not be resurrected until the end of the Messianic Kingdom (Rev 20:7-15)

(D) Applications (13:28-37)

- (a) Illustration of the fig tree exhorting watchfulness (13:28-32) (Cf. Matt 24:32-35; Luke 21:29-33)

**28** "Now learn the parable from the fig tree: as soon as its branch has become tender and sprouts its leaves, you know that summer is near.

**28** "Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near.

**28** "Now learn a lesson from the fig tree. When its branches become tender and it produces leaves, you know that summer is near.

**28** Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near:

- Jesus had previously used a fig tree to illustrate the generation of Israelites who failed to believe in Him at His first advent (11:14)
- Here, He used it to illustrate the fact that perceptive people can anticipate coming events by the signs that precede those events
- Persecution (v9-13), culminating in the Tribulation (v14-25), pointed to the inauguration of the kingdom (v26-27; Cf. Luke 21:31)

**29** So you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that He is near, *right* at the door.

**29** Even so, you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that He is near, *right* at the door.

**29** In the same way, when you see these things taking place, you will know that the Son of Man is near, right at the door.

**29** So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.

30 Truly I say to you, **this generation** will not pass away until **all these things** take place.

30 Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

30 I tell all of you with certainty, this generation will not disappear until all these things take place.

30 Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.

- "...this generation" - *houtos genea*, this is speaking of a specific generation; in context, it is the generation who sees the abomination of desolation (Cf. v15-16,20) at the midpoint of the Tribulation

— The biggest mistake people make here is that they apply "this generation" at the wrong starting point (*terminus a quo*). The reason everyone starts at the wrong starting point is because they don't understand the context of Matthew's Gospel or the Olivet Discourse, and think it applies to the church when it really applies to unbelieving Israel.

— "...all these things" - refers to the events Jesus described from v5-29

— Thus, "this generation" cannot refer to the generation hearing Jesus' words here because the governing referent is "all these things," which refers to the events He described in v5-29

— Since Christ is giving a prophetic discourse on future events, one must determine the nature of "all these things" in v5-29 to know what generation He is referencing

— Since "all these things" did not take place in the 1st century, the generation Christ speaks of must be future. Essentially, the generation who will see the beginning of the end will see the end of the end.

— Compare Matt 23:36, where Jesus contrasts the *judgment* of Israel, to 24:34 when He prophesies the *deliverance* of Israel; see detailed notes on Matt 24:34

31 **Heaven and earth** will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

31 Heaven and earth will disappear, but my words will never disappear."

31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

- "Heaven and earth" - all of creation

— The universe as we know it will end someday, but Jesus' words will remain

— He was referring specifically to His predictions in this discourse, but at the same time, His statement was general and includes all of His words

— This statement is messianic, implying He was God (Cf. Ps 102:25-27; Is 40:6-8; 51:6)

32 But about **that day** or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, **nor the Son**, but the Father *alone*.

32 But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father *alone*.

32 "No one knows when that day or hour will come—not the angels in heaven, not the Son, but only the Father.

**32** But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

– "...that day" - the day of the Second Coming

— He was distinguishing between knowing that an event was approaching (v28-29) from knowing the exact date of its arrival

– "...nor the Son" - God the Father alone knows the day and time of the Son's return (Cf. Acts 1:7)

— Jesus ignorance of this information was a result of His incarnation (Phil 2:6-8). He didn't know the time of His return at that time, but He knows now.

(b) Illustration of the slave exhorting faithfulness (13:33-37) (Cf. Luke 21:34-36)

**33** "Watch out, stay alert; for you do not know when the appointed time is.

**33** "Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time will come.

**33** Be careful! Watch out! Because you don't know when the time will come.

**33** Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

– "Watch out" - *blepete*, 4th time in this discourse (v5,9,23,33)

– "...stay alert" - *agrypneō*, to stay awake, to be in constant readiness, to be on the alert; an admonition related to the Second Coming (Cf. v34-35,37; Matt 24:42-43; 25:13; Luke 21:36)

— The context demands that the admonition to "watch" relates immediately to events occurring in the Tribulation. Thus, these Tribulation events are leading up to the Second Coming of Christ, not the Rapture.

— Watchfulness is necessary because we do not know the exact time of Jesus' return

— The Church is instructed to "wait" not "watch" since there are no prophetic events to be fulfilled prior to the Rapture. See [Doctrine of Imminence](#) for additional information.

**34** *It is like a man away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, assigning to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay alert.*

**34** *It is like a man away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, assigning to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert.*

**34** *It's like a man who went on a trip. As he left home, he put his servants in charge, each with his own work, and he ordered the doorkeeper to be alert.*

**34** *For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.*

- Jesus told another parable about a porter (doorkeeper); only recorded in Mark
- It is similar to the parable of the talents (Matt 25:14-30) and the parable of the minas (Luke 19:12-27), though much shorter
- The porter was responsible to guard the entrance to his master's house; he was entrusted with his master's goods. He did not know when the master would return.
- When the master returned, the porter would have to be ready to admit him to a well-managed house
- The analogy to the ancient Jewish wedding is evident in a number of passages (Eph 5:23-33)
- After the *Ketubah*, the engagement, but before the *huppah*, the formal ceremony, the groom departed to prepare her new home, usually an addition to his father's house.

35 Therefore, stay alert—for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the **evening**, at **midnight**, or when the **rooster crows**, or in the **morning**—

35 Therefore, be on the alert—for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning

—

35 So keep on watching, because you don't know when the master of the house is coming—whether in the evening, at three o'clock in the morning, or at dawn.

35 Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning:

- "...evening...midnight...rooster crows...morning" - the four Roman watches of the night

- Although the day of the Second Coming will be known once the Tribulation begins, the time of the day is unknown

- The bride was kept in a state of expectancy pending his return—often at night, as a surprise

— The *huppah*, the wedding ceremony, was followed by a seven day celebration

36 so that he does not come suddenly and find you asleep.

36 in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep.

36 Otherwise, he may come suddenly and find you asleep.

36 Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.

- The opposite of watchfulness is insensibility, lethargy, and inactivity—pictured here as sleep (Cf. Rom 13:11; 1 Thess 5:1-11)

37 What I say to you I say to all: 'Stay alert!'"

37 What I say to you I say to all, 'Be on the alert!'"

37 I'm telling you what I'm telling everyone: Be alert!"

37 And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

- Jesus concludes the discourse as He began it...with a call to watchfulness