

Mark 13

Lesson for Sunday, August 27, 2023

SUMMARY: Jesus teaches about the events of the end times.

1. The Two Prophecies of Jesus (vs. 1-27)
 - a. In regard to the Temple (vs. 1-2)
 - b. In regard to the Tribulation (vs. 3-27)
2. The Two Parables of Jesus (vs. 28-37)
 - a. Parable of the Fig Tree (vs. 28-31)
 - b. Parable of the Alert Servants (vs. 32-37)

INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ People always seem to be interested in the End Times. Except for those who aren't!
 - Bible-believing Christians typically have a raised interest in the future.
 - Non-believers seem to operate on the idea that things will always continue as they always have.
- ⇒ Interestingly, the Bible seems to address both camps.
 - Today's chapter is ignited by the disciples asking about "the signs" (vs. 3-4).
 - And the Bible also teaches that some of these events will happen when "ye think not" (Matthew 24:44).
- ⇒ In this chapter, we will see the signs that we should be watching for, but we will also listen to the admonition of our Savior, "Watch!"

BIBLE STUDY:

1. The Inquiry (vs. 1-5)
 - a. The disciples were admiring the buildings of the Temple (vs. 1).
 - b. Seemingly out of nowhere, Jesus turns their attention away from their present beauty and to their future destruction (vs. 2).
 - c. This spurred the disciples to ask two questions (vs. 3-4):
 - i. When will this destruction take place?
 - ii. What will be the sign of the destruction?
 - d. Jesus takes the rest of this chapter to answer their questions, but He begins with a warning: Don't be deceived! Jesus begins His teaching with this warning and He will end with the warning.
 - e. NOTE: You may want to reference the class to look to Matthew 24-25 & Luke 21 which also covers this time that is referred to as the Olivet Discourse for further study.
2. The Signs (vs. 6-13)
 - a. Teacher note: You do not have time to cover these signs in great detail! Keep it simple! At the same time, you can fill out this outline with an example of each sign.
 - b. Sign 1: Spiritual deception and false messiahs (vs. 6)
 - c. Sign 2: Wars and rumors of war, international disturbances (vs. 7-8a)
 - d. Sign 3: Natural disasters (vs. 8b)
 - e. Sign 4: Persecution by civil and religious authorities (vs. 9)
 - f. Sign 5: Worldwide publishing of the Gospel (vs. 10)
 - g. Sign 6: A supernatural witness (vs. 11)
 - h. Sign 7: Divided families (vs. 12-13)
3. The Greater Sign (vs. 14-23)
 - a. In verse 14 Jesus references "the abomination of desolation" as described in Daniel 9:27. It is a reference to the desecration of the temple by the enemies of God. It has happened often in Jewish history:
 - i. 597 BC when Nebuchadnezzar looted the temple (2 Chronicles 26)

- ii. 169 BC when Antiochenes Epiphanes sacrificed a pig to Zeus on the temple altar.
 - iii. 70 AD when Titus placed an idol on the site of the burned-out temple after its destruction.
 - b. We take the view which sees the abomination of desolation prophecy as still future.
 - i. Jesus was referring to the Antichrist who, in the end times, will establish a covenant with Israel for seven years and then break it by doing something similar to what Antiochus Epiphanies did in the temple.
 - ii. The sacrilegious object Jesus called “the abomination of desolation” could be the “image of the beast” that the Antichrist’s right-hand man, the false prophet, will order to be set up and worshiped (Revelation 13:14).
 - c. Jesus warns in these verses that this time will be so terrible that...
 - i. It is to be fled from immediately (vs. 14b-18).
 - ii. It will cause horrifying, unparalleled affliction (vs. 19).
 - iii. God will have to intervene and shorten the days of affliction (vs. 20).
 - iv. It will cause a frantic search for false messiahs or deliverers (vs. 21-22).
- 4. The Introduction of the Son (vs. 24-27)
 - a. After a dark 23 verses, Jesus because to give His followers hope (vs. 24a).
 - b. First, there will be astronomical happenings (vs. 24b-25).
 - c. Second, the Son of Man will return in the clouds (vs. 26).
 - d. Third, there will be the gathering of God’s people to Himself (vs. 27).
 - e. In verses 28-32 Jesus begins to drive His sermon home to the hearts of His disciples:
 - i. Vs. 28-29: These signs are discernable.
 - ii. Vs. 30: These signs will happen rapidly – in one generation.
 - iii. Vs. 31: These signs are sure.
 - iv. Vs. 32: While we are to be looking for the signs, the exact time is unknown.
- 5. The Admonition of Our Savior (vs. 33-37) **THIS IS THE HEART OF THE LESSON!**
 - a. What are the followers of Jesus supposed to do with all this information? In one word: Watch.
 - b. The Christian needs to be on guard and to be alert (vs. 33).
 - i. Why? Because the time is unknown (vs. 33)!
 - ii. Why? Because believers must be focused on our assigned work & responsibilities (vs. 34).
 - iii. Why? Because Christ is returning unexpectedly (vs. 35).
 - iv. Why? Because the Christian does not want to be caught sleeping on the job (vs. 36)!
 - c. To do: Watch (vs. 37) (and work)!

DISCUSS:

- ⇒ What is the work we should be focused on?
- ⇒ How do we live with the (literal) end in mind?
- ⇒ How does this chapter encourage us more toward Godly living?
- ⇒ Prophecy helps us stick to our priorities!