

23S17 Mark 13:24-37 (Part 32) Olivet Discourse #3.

Hello everyone. I'm Kip and I want to thank you for joining me today @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. Today we are continuing our study of the gospel according to Mark with Mark 13:24-37 (Part 32) Olivet Discourse #3.

During our last two sessions, we worked through verse 1-23. Jesus had told the disciple the temple would be utterly destroyed, so of course the disciples ask Jesus when it would happen and how will they know. Obvious questions. Then Jesus tells them the things that are going to happen leading up to the destruction of the temple. We contrasted the accounts in Mark, Matthew and Luke. We saw that the abomination of desolation was clearly described as an army surrounding Jerusalem, just before the city and temple will be destroyed. And this is exactly what happened in AD70 when the Romans surrounded the city and let the Jews kill each other for months before the utterly destroyed the city and kill.

Let's read it again from the New American Standard version (NAS).

Let's read Mark 13:1-37 (NAS) *¹As He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, look! What wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!" ²And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another, which will not be torn down." ³As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew were questioning Him privately, ⁴"Tell us, when will these things come about, and what will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?" ⁵And Jesus began to say to them, "See to it that no one misleads you. ⁶Many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He!' and they will mislead many. ⁷When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; those things must take place; but that is not yet the end. ⁸For 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. 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. ¹⁰And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations. ¹¹And 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. ¹²And brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. ¹³And 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. 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. ¹⁵Whoever is on the housetop must not go down, nor go in to get anything out of his house. ¹⁶And whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. ¹⁷But woe to those women who are pregnant, and to those who are nursing babies in those days! ¹⁸Moreover, pray that it will not happen in winter. ¹⁹For 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. ²⁰And 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. ²¹And then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ’; or, ‘Look, there He is’; do not believe it; ²²for false christs and false prophets will arise, and will provide signs and wonders, in order to mislead, if possible, the elect. ²³But beware; I have told you everything in advance. ²⁴“But in those days, after that tribulation, THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, ²⁵AND THE STARS WILL BE FALLING from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶And then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN CLOUDS with great power and glory. ²⁷And 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. 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. ²⁹So you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that He is near, right at the door. ³⁰Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. ³²But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. ³³“Watch out, stay alert; for you do not know when the appointed time is. ³⁴It 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. ³⁵Therefore, 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— ³⁶so that he does not come suddenly and find you asleep. ³⁷What I say to you I say to all: ‘Stay alert!’”

Let's pray.

Now let's look at these verse closer, Mark 13:24-26 (NAS) *²⁴“But in those days, after that tribulation, THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, ²⁵AND THE STARS WILL BE FALLING from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶And then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN CLOUDS with great power and glory.*

Without a doubt this is one of the most argued about scripture in the Bible. Many bible this is the end of days, end of the world. Remember, the disciples don't believe Jesus is going to die, they are talking about the destruction of the temple they were just it. An alternative view of this scripture is staying with the idea we are talking about the events leading up to and the destruction of the temple in AD70. To fully develop this, you would need to read Isaiah 13/26/66, Joel 2/3, Exodus 10, Amos 5, Ezekiel 30, Obadiah 1, Zephaniah 1. Zechariah 14, Malachi 4, Acts 2, Luke 21-23, Matthew 24... You need to read all of these scriptures from both view points to build a background to understand this. Let me make the alternative case for AD70.

First, the wording here is typical apocalyptic language found through out the Bible and extraBiblical writing for the same time period like 2 Estras, Enoch etc. In this short video, I don't have time to unpack all of these, but I challenge you to do so on your own. Anyway, in most bible this is in all caps or quotes because Jesus was most likely quoting from or using a reference to Joel or another Old Testament writing. That is why most translators demark these words differently. The sun darkened is most likely from

Joel 2:10 (NIV) *Before them the earth quakes, The heavens tremble, The sun and the moon become dark, And the stars lose their brightness.* Sounds very similar doesn't it. Well this is the very prophecy that Peter says was fulfilled during his Pentecost speech in Acts 2:16-21. It is also the exact same thing that Luke reports at the death of Jesus on the cross in Matthew 27:45 (NIV) *Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour.* and Matthew 27:51 (NIV) *And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split*

Again, very similar language describing these events, Plus Peter says these events fulfilled Joel's prophecy at Pentecost. Then, the lord came in judgement in the form of the Roman army utterly destroying the temple worship, the temple and Jerusalem. Just as Jesus predicted. Now I know many of you will challenge this claim and that's okay. I am only presenting this interpretation as the most likely because it best fits what Jesus and the disciples were talking about. I could be wrong, of course.

Mark 13:27-29 (NAS) *²⁷And 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. ²⁸Now 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. ²⁹So you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that He is near, right at the door.*

Now again many of you are going to place this at the end of days, unfortunately it is impossible to test that hypothesis. So, instead test this one. According to church tradition, the Christians in Jerusalem, show the army coming. They recognized what it meant and they fled to the mountains just like Jesus told them to do. Miraculously, tradition is that no Christians died in the siege of Jerusalem and no Christians faced what the surviving Jews did. The surviving Jews were sold into slavery throughout the Roman empire. Is this possible, how Jesus sent his angels to gather his elect from the 5 winds to save them from this catastrophe. Maybe. It kind of fits pretty good.

Let's continue with Mark 13:30-31 (NAS) *³⁰Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.*

This is the verses that every dispensational, Calvinist or fan of eschatology don't like. How can Jesus say "*³⁰Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place*" The end of days hypothesis can explain these words and many have tried. But if Jesus is talking about AD70, then yes it is very likely people of that generation could still be alive 35-40 years later. It is very possible.

Let's continue with Mark 13:32-33 (NAS) *³²But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. ³³Watch out, stay alert; for you do not know when the appointed time is.*

No this is another passage everyone argues about. This is one of the verses that the people who believe in imminent return use. But again, keep this in context. There are

all kinds of interpretations of this. I've heard Galilean wedding metaphors, end of the world metaphors. But if we stay in the context of the passage, what are they talking about. Very likely it's about the destruction of the temple. If so, then why this. Let's read on first before we discuss it.

Let's continue with Mark 13:34-37 (NAS) *³⁴It 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. ³⁵Therefore, 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— ³⁶so that he does not come suddenly and find you asleep. ³⁷What I say to you I say to all: 'Stay alert!'*

Jesus obviously wants his followers to be ready. He has said it several different ways but his message is to be ready, you won't know when it's going to happen. He gave us signs, but they won't be able to predict when. But when you see the sign, run. Did God know when, of course. Did Jesus being God know, well of course. What exactly Jesus meant when He said only the Father knows. I'll be honest I don't know. I've heard a lot of opinions but none of them are worth sharing. Does not understanding this one phrase change our understanding of the full passage. Of course not. The overall message is the point, not the individual phrases or metaphors.

Let's Pray.

I want to summarize this amazing and intense chapter in Mark. Jesus says the temple will be destroyed, the disciples want to know when and signs it is coming. Jesus tells them, when you see it run. Jesus puts the time frame in perspective before that generation dies. And by the way, it could happen any time so be ready. And the temple was destroyed, and the Christian tradition says the Christian miraculously got out of the city before the Romans cut off all the escape routes.

Let me leave you with this today. Bible passages like this can be hard to understand and there are many opinions. My advice is stay looking at the overall message and don't get bogged down in the details. The disciples ask a question and Jesus answered the question. Whether you believe it was fulfilled in history or yet to come, that's up to you. But the simplest most direct answer is often the best.

Thank you for joining me for our study of the gospel of Mark. Please email me comments or feedback. And if you liked the message, please share the link with your friends. Until next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.