



Mark 13:3-13 - Signs of the Close of the Age. Which Age? ☺

February 3, 2013

Text: Mark 13:3-13

Synoptic Reading:

- *Mat 24:3-14 ESV* As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?" (4) And Jesus answered them, "See that no one leads you astray. (5) For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray. (6) And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. (7) For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. (8) All these are but the beginning of the birth pains. (9) "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. (10) And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. (11) And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. (12) And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. (13) But the one who endures to the end will be saved. (14) And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

One more QUICK review: A Balanced Hermeneutic and Interpretive Help for Prophetic Passages:

Hermeneutical rules:

1. **Rule 1: A text cannot mean what it never could have meant to its author or his or her readers.**
 - a. This rule anchors us into the author's and hearer's _____, and gives us a "foundation" from which to interpret and apply the passage we are reading.
2. **Rule 2: Whenever we share the same context with the original hearers, God's Word to _____ is the same as His Word to _____.**
3. **Rule 3: The clear must interpret the _____.**

Judgment/Prophetic Scriptures and their Interpretation,...some Help

1. The issue of _____ that the prophet meant is critical.
2. There are three "times" or seasons normally one can observe:
 - a. The _____-future, which describes events that are relatively imminent, perhaps within a generation from the hearers.
 - b. The _____-future, which describes events that are a "long" way off.
 - c. The _____-future, which describes events that are final consummation in nature, i.e. the return of Christ and final judgment.
3. Last week in Mark 13:1-2, it was clear our Lord prophesied that the temple would be destroyed in the "fore-future."
 - a. The Temple in Jerusalem, the place that gave Israel its theological and sociological identity, was destroyed by Rome in 70AD.
4. This was judgment for the rejection of Christ. If God judged His people for rejecting His written Word, then surely judgment would come for rejecting the Living Word...one greater than the Temple!
 - a. *Mat 12:6 ESV* I tell you, something greater than the temple is here.

Some thoughts of Biblical Typology and Far/Final Fulfillments

1. One of the things a Bible student eventually learns is the principle of _____.
2. A "type" is a person, event, or institution in the Old Testament that prefigures a greater reality in the New Testament.

3. For example, the OT Temple typified or was a type of Christ. It was also a type of heavenly temple. This is made clear in Hebrews 9:23-24.
4. The New Testament writers used typology all the time:
 - a. Old Testament seen as a type for the New (Heb 8:13)
 - b. Adam a type of Christ (Rom 5:14)
 - c. Old Testament regulations a “shadow” or type of freedom in Christ (Heb 10:1)
5. This is important as we look at the Olivet discourse.
 - a. It is quite possible that the historic fulfillments we see in the Text “typify” judgments and tribulations in different ages or in the age to come.
 - b. I say this to balance our first task of anchoring in the context. It can be a mistake in my opinion to think the imagery a “fore-future” fulfillment is utterly exhausted then; it may in fact typify tribulation moments in another time.

Walking through Mark 13:3-13

Verses 3-4

1. The first questions I asked are, “What things? What things are about to be accomplished?”
2. Again, think of Rule 1: *A text cannot mean what it never could have meant to its author or his or her readers.*
3. Jesus is having a real world conversation in a historical place. This isn’t allegory or poetry. These verses are a simple to understand _____, explaining the who’s and the where’s.
4. So what is the answer to the question....?
 - a. The answer is in the context: verses 1 and 2. Peter is asking in affect: “When will the temple be destroyed?”
 - b. However, based on verse 7, Jesus is also letting Peter know that the Temple’s destruction will NOT herald the end of world; simply the end of the age of _____ sacrifice, since again, “Something greater than the Temple is here.” (Matt 12:6)
 - c. Our King is, “... *a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, (5) you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*” (1Pe 2:4-5 ESV) Hallelujah!
☺

Verses 5-6

1. According to Christ, many false Christs would appear before the Temple was destroyed.
2. Who was He talking to? “See that no one leads _____ astray.” ☺
3. Acts and the Epistles document such blasphemous activities...
 - a. It got so bad, John wrote this: “*Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. (19) They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.*” (1 Jn 2:18-19 ESV)
 - b. *1Jn 4:1-3 ESV Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. (2) By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, (3) and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.*
4. Historically, there is good reason to believe just such things occurred as well:
 - a. With regard to Simon the Sorcerer in Acts 8:9-11, the historian Eusebius wrote:

- b. "After the Lord was taken up into heaven the demons put forth a number of men who claimed to be gods. These not only escape being persecuted by you, but were actually the objects of worship - for example Simon, a Samaritan from the village called Gittho, who in Claudius Caesar's time, thanks to the art of the demons who possessed him, worked wonders of magic, and in your imperial city of Rome was regarded as a god, and like a god was honored by you with a statue in the River Tiber between the two bridges. It bears this inscription in Latin, SIMONI DEO SANCTO. Almost all Samaritans, and a few from other nations too, acknowledged him as their principle god, and worship him." (p. 86)
- c. Here is the account in Acts: *"Act 8:9-11 ESV But there was a man named Simon, who had previously practiced magic in the city and amazed the people of Samaria, saying that he himself was somebody great. (10) They all paid attention to him, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the power of God that is called Great." (11) And they paid attention to him because for a long time he had amazed them with his magic."*
- d. Here is another one: *Act 5:36 ESV - For before these days Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing.*
- e. With respect to Theudas, Eusebius wrote, *"When Fadus was procurator of Judea, an imposter called Theudas persuaded a vast crowd to take their belongings and follow him to the River Jordan; for he claimed to be a prophet, and promised to divide the river by his command and provide them with an easy crossing. A great many people were deceived by this talk. Fadus however did not allow them to enjoy their folly, but sent a troop of calvary against them. These attacked them without warning, killed many, and took many alive, capturing Theudas himself, whose head they cut off and conveyed to Jerusalem."*

Verses 7-8

5. Wars? Earthquakes? Famine?
 - a. In the late-60s AD, Rome was on the verge of civil war, with four Caesars on the throne in under two years, each preceding one being murdered: Nero, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius...until finally Vespasian.
 - b. Also, as we discussed last week war between the Jews and Rome broke out.
 - c. From history, there were earthquakes in Crete in 46AD, Rome in 51AD, Apamaia in 53AD, Laodicea in 60AD, in Campania 62AD. Feel free to Google! ☺
 - d. Bible? *Mat 27:51 ESV And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. And also Act 16:26 ESV and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened.*
 - e. Famine? Yep: *Act 11:28 ESV And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius).*

Verse 9

1. Well, this one is easy right? Not only does the biblical record show the persecution of the disciples before councils, etc. (Acts chapters 4-8, 12, 14, 16, 21-28!) we generally know what happened historically:
 - Philip: Crucified, Phrygia, A.D. 54
 - Matthew: Beheaded, Ethiopia, A.D. 60
 - Barnabas: Burned to death, Cyprus, A.D. 64
 - Mark: Dragged to death, Cyprus, A.D. 64
 - James (the Less): Clubbed to death, Jerusalem, A.D. 66

- Paul: Beheaded, Rome, A.D. 66
- Peter: Crucified, Rome, A.D. 69
- Andrew: Crucified, Achaia, A.D. 70
- Thomas: Speared to death, Calamina, A.D. 70
- Luke: Hanged, Athens, A.D. 93

Verse 10

1. *“Mat 24:14 ESV And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”*
2. Was the gospel proclaimed to all the nations (or “throughout the world”) prior to the Temple’s destruction?
3. Scripture itself tells us it was. In Colossians alone (written in 62 AD), we read:
 - *Col 1:5-6 ESV ...Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, (6) which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and growing--as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth,*
 - *Col 1:23 ESV if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.*
 - In Romans we read, *“First I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world.” Rom 1:8 ESV*
 - And of course, each nation had a representative in Jerusalem for Peter’s powerful Gospel presentation in Acts 2: *Act 2:5 ESV – “Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven.”*

Verse 11

1. This certainly happened to the apostles, who preached boldly in the face of persecution and death.
2. But let me say this verse has application to every _____ (as do the types and illustrations above in some ways).
3. Each believer will experience persecution as they strive to live godly lives (2 Tim 3:12); the Holy Spirit is our guide during those times! He can and does “bring to our remembrance” (Jn 14:26) the Words of our Lord!

Verses 12-13

1. It’s not a stretch to believe that with the tumultuous events in the world, Christ would _____ families. In fact, He said He would:
 - a. *Mat 10:35-36 ESV For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. (36) And a person's enemies will be those of his own household.*
2. And certainly, we know the disciples were hated: hated, hunted, and harassed...by Romans and Jews alike. This was also true of Christians in general. Remember what Nero did to them? After blaming the Christians for the great fire of Rome in 64AD, the Roman historian Tacitus records what happened...
 - a. But all human efforts, all the lavish gifts of the emperor, and the propitiations of the gods, did not banish the sinister belief that the conflagration was the result of an order (by Nero). Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called 'Chrestians' by the populace.

- b. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilate, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their center and become popular.
- c. Accordingly, an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, as of hatred against mankind. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired.

 Again, even though we've anchored our look at the Text today in the context, we aren't saying all the imagery was totally exhausted prior to 70AD. HOWEVER, staying true to our interpretive convictions does in fact keep us from "guessing" and reading newspaper events into Scripture.

The Bottom Line:

Jesus is Prophet, Priest, and King. You can trust His words _____.

- Regardless of whether you are "pre-trib" or a "partial-preterist" LOL, Jesus' words are true!
- *John 1:1-5 ESV In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (2) He was in the beginning with God. (3) All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. (4) In him was life, and the life was the light of men. (5) The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*
- *1Jn 1:1-3 ESV That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life-- (2) the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us-- (3) that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.*