

Mark 13 Commentary

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John Mark

MARK: THE SERVANT JESUS

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Chart from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission
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THE LIFE OF CHRIST SHOWING COVERAGE BY MARK (SHADED AREA)

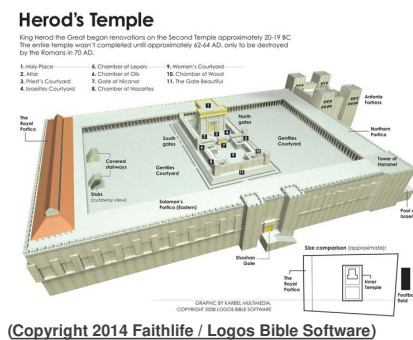
Mark 13:1 As He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!"

- **as he:** Mt 24:1-3 Lu 21:5-7
- **out:** Eze 7:20-22 8:6 10:4,19 11:22,23 Mal 3:1,2
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 24:1+ Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him.

Luke 21:5+ And while some were talking about the temple, that it was adorned with beautiful stones and votive gifts, He said,



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MARK'S VERSION OF THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

Hiebert - This chapter contains by far the longest discourse by Jesus on a single theme recorded by Mark. Its inclusion is evidence of Mark's recognition of its significance and abiding value for his readers. This Discourse appears at greatest length in Matthew (24:1–25:46), while Luke's account (21:5–36) contains some independent material. Delivered on the Mount of Olives (v. 3), it is commonly known as the Olivet discourse. It is a prophetic unveiling of the future for His disciples, yet its specific aim is to warn, exhort, and encourage them to faith and obedience. The occasion was His announcement of the coming destruction of the temple (vv. 1–2) and the consequent question by four disciples (vv. 3–4). The discourse (vv. 5–37) was His reply to their question.

As He was going out of the temple- "All the discourses since Mt 21:23 (CORRESPONDS TO Mark 11:27+) have been in the Temple courts." (A T Robertson) This final departure of Jesus from the Temple marked the end of His public ministry! Mark's phrase **He was going out** (present tense) pictures Him in the act of leaving. The statement about Jesus' leaving the Temple is not found in Luke's version.

Hiebert - His entry into the temple that Tuesday morning was mentioned in Mk 11:27; now He was leaving it for the last time. Temple again has reference to the entire temple enclosure. Went out pictures Him in the act of leaving, apparently leaving by the eastern gate on the way to Bethany.

In short, Jesus' last words to the Jewish religious leaders were in the Court of the Gentiles where he warned they would "receive greater condemnation." (Mark 12:40+) That was His last warning to them. He had warned the Jewish leaders of their fate and now would predict the destruction of the Temple and in so doing to foretell the fate of the Jewish religious which would be followed by the Church age.

Temple (2413) (**hieros**) denotes the entire Temple complex, not simply the sanctuary, as shown by the phrase in Mt 24:1 where "His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him". In Jesus' day the term for the sanctuary proper was naos. Recall that almost 50 years had already been spent in rebuilding "Herod's" Temple (cf at beginning of His ministry - John 2:20+).

The Temple (See [Herod's Temple](#)) - Construction of the Temple had begun nearly 50 years earlier under

the direction of Herod the Great and would still be ongoing 40 years later when it was utterly destroyed! (cf Eccl 1:2-3!) The summit of Mount Zion had been dug away to leave a plateau of 1,000 feet square. At the far end of it was the Temple itself (naos). It was built of white marble plated with gold, and it shone in the sun so that a man could scarcely bear to look at it. Between the [Lower City](#) and the [Temple Mount](#) lay the [Tyropoeon Valley](#), and across this valley stretched a colossal bridge. Its arches had a span of 41 1/2 feet, and its spring stones were 24 feet long by 6 inches thick. The Temple area was surrounded by great porches, [Solomon's Porticos](#) and the Royal Porch (Acts 3:11-12). These porches were upheld by pillars, cut out of solid blocks of marble in one piece. They were 37 1/2 feet high, and of such a thickness that three men linked together could scarcely put their arms round them. At the corners of the Temple angle stones have been found which measure from 20 to 40 feet in length, and which weigh more than 100 tons. How they were ever cut and placed in position is one of the mysteries of ancient engineering. Little wonder that these Galilean fishermen looked and directed Jesus' attention to them. Others are like Herod who focused on the trappings of "religion" at the expense of a relationship with the Righteous One!

Hiebert - According to Josephus, part of it was built of strong, white stones each measuring twenty-five cubits long, eight high, and about twelve in breadth (37 1/2' — 12' — 18'). Some of these massive stones weighed more than one hundred tons. The plural **buildings** denotes the Temple proper as well as the various courts with their chambers and magnificent colonnades, all of which rested on the platform which Herod the Great had constructed for the enlarged Temple area. Luke mentioned also the costly votive offerings with which the temple was decorated (Luke 21:5). The Herodian Temple was recognized as one of the architectural wonders of the Roman world. ([Ibid](#))

THOUGHT - The phrase **Jesus was going out of the Temple courts'** (almost certainly through Eastern Gate just as did the Shekinah glory in Ezek 10:19+) is fascinating, for here was the very one about Whom John had declared they "beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." (Jn 1:14+) Solomon's Temple has been the resting place of the Shekinah Glory of God but just prior to the destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, the Glory of the LORD departed the Holy of Holies and progressively, step by step left the Temple Complex (See this departure in prophecy of Ezekiel -- Ezek 9:3+, Ezek 10:4+ = from Holy of Holies to the threshold of the Temple; Ezek 10:18, 19+ = then to the East gate of the outer court; Ezek 11:22, 23+ = finally to the Mt of Olives where Jesus was sitting in Mark 13:3). Clearly there is a parallel between the departure of the glory from the first temple in Ezekiel and the departure of Jesus from the second temple in this passage (and the parallel passages in Matthew and Luke)! Jesus, the glorious One, was rejected, just as was Jehovah in Ezekiel's day, and was leaving the Temple for the last time prior to His presentation as the Lamb of God. **Tony Garland** agrees that there is a "parallel with Jesus, the Glory of the Lord, departing the Temple to the Mount of Olives and the Shekinah glory which departed in the same manner in Ezekiel's day. In both cases, some time thereafter the Temple was destroyed." However the glory of will one day return (AGAIN), because the Glorious One will return! Indeed, Ezekiel prophesies that "the (Shekinah) glory of Jehovah would one day come into the Millennial Temple "by the way of the gate facing toward the East." (Ezekiel 43:4-see [Golden Gate](#); [See related note on "The Gate to Prophecy"](#))

Related Resource

- The Stepwise Departure of The Glory of the LORD from Solomon's Temple

One of His disciples said to Him - This **one** disciple is not identified but was clearly the spokesman for the group as Mt 24:1 say as Jesus "was going away...His **disciples** came up to point out the Temple buildings to Him." We'll have to wait until Heaven, but you have to believe it was Peter.

"Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings! - Luke 21:5+ adds that "while some were talking about the temple, that it was adorned with beautiful stones and votive gifts." Out of this discussion **one** approached Jesus with this statement. What was the motive? We cannot be definitive but in Mt 23:38 Jesus had just warned the Jewish religious leaders that "your house (aka the Temple) is being left to you desolate!" Note the interjection **behold** which is a command for Jesus to take a look at the magnificent structure!

THOUGHT - Aren't we all like the disciples, awe struck by the beauty of man made edifices, but sadly often minimizing the super-human [Beautiful One](#) Himself!

NET NOTE - The Jerusalem temple was widely admired around the world. See **Josephus' [Antiquities 15 Chapter 11](#)**; **Josephus' [Jewish Wars 5 Chapter 5 = "A Description of the Temple"](#)** and **Tacitus, [History 5.8](#)**, (Tacitus was writing after the destruction of the Temple) who called it "immensely opulent." Josephus compared it to a beautiful snow capped mountain.

Related resources:

- Jewish Christian Alfred Edersheim's [Temple--Its Ministry and Services](#)

Mark 13:2 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."

Wuest - And Jesus said to him, Do you see these great buildings? There shall positively not be left a stone upon a stone which is not torn down.

- **there:** 1Ki 9:7,8 2Ch 7:20,21 Jer 26:18 Mic 3:12 Mt 24:2 Lu 19:41-44 Lu 21:6 Ac 6:14 Rev 11:2
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 24:2+ And He said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Truly (Amen) I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down."

Luke 21:6+ "As for these things which you are looking at, the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another which will not be torn down."



Rocks left after Temple Destroyed in 70 AD

The picture above represents stones from the [Western Wall](#) which testify to the veracity of Jesus' prophecy (cf "the stones cry out") fulfilled by Roman soldiers in 70 AD. Robertson adds that "Some of these stones at the southeastern and southwestern angles survive today and measure from twenty to forty feet long and weigh a hundred tons. Jesus had, of course, often observed them."

And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings?" - Matthew 24:2+ adds "**Truly (Amen) I say to you**" which is used 61 times, all in the Gospels, to attest to the authority, authenticity and importance of the words that follow. After 3 years of walking with Jesus, one can only imagine that upon hearing this familiar introductory phrase the ears of the disciples really "perked up!" Jesus acknowledged that in earthly terms these were **great buildings**.doing so in the form of a question which would have fixed the questioning disciple's attention of the great buildings and make His next statement even more astonishing!

Wuest - Our Lord by this question fixes their attention upon an object concerning which a startling statement is to be made. He also acknowledges the fact of the greatness and magnificence of the Temple. But He also contrasts all that with its utter destruction.

Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down- Jesus begins His prophecy regarding the magnificent Temple complex. He is predicting the destruction of the Temple by the Roman General Titus in 70 AD. Jesus did not set a date but gave a definitive decree of destruction which was fulfilled perfectly. The words **not** are actually two double negatives (ou me) indicating the absolute certain that the Temple would be ruined. In fairness, it should be noted that some writers consider Jesus' statement a hyperbolic statement (figure of speech) because the Western Wall stones remained intact. But if one focuses on the Temple and the buildings and walls of that complex, there was not left one stone upon another. The destruction was so complete that today it is difficult to be certain of the actual site of the original Temple.

Torn down (abolished)([2647](#))(**kataluo** from **kata** = down, prefix intensifying verb **luo** = loosen, dissolve, demolish, untie, undo) means literally to loosen down (unloose) and then to utterly destroy or to overthrow completely. To throw down. Kataluo "means literally "to loose down." It speaks of a gradual demolition of the Temple, such as took place when the Romans captured Jerusalem A.D. 70, and destroyed the Temple. Our Lord's prediction was fulfilled in exact detail. Only the foundation stones remain of all that magnificence. A

double negative appears twice in our Lord's answer, making an emphatic negation."

Hiebert on stone - According to Josephus, part of it was built of strong, white stones each measuring twenty-five cubits long, eight high, and about twelve in breadth (37 1/2' x 12' x 18'). Some of these massive stones weighed more than one hundred tons....Up to this point during this day, Jesus had acted as God's "**forth-teller,**" applying the truth of God to the scene before Him; with this statement He turned to predictive prophecy, declaring the near future.

THOUGHT - As **J Vernon McGee** says Herod's Temple and "Its magnificence would soon be gone. It would soon lie in rubble, not one stone left upon another. And, friend, that is the way you and I should see the wealth of this world. It won't be here long; it will soon pass away."

John Phillips points out that the Romans never intended to destroy the Temple in 70 A D - The Roman conqueror Titus, during the siege of Jerusalem, ordered that the temple was to be spared. His edict ran counter to the word of Christ who had decreed its utter ruin. The word of Christ prevailed. As the terrible battle raged toward its end, the temple somehow caught fire. Its vast treasure of gold melted in the flames. Some of the gold found its way into the crevices between the massive stones. The Roman soldiers, hungry for spoil, tore the stones apart. (Explore the Gospel of Luke)

MacArthur says that Jesus' "words would be fulfilled literally in A.D. 70, when the Romans, the human means of divine wrath, erected scaffolds around the walls of the temple and its buildings, filled them with wood and other flammable material, and set them on fire. The intense heat from the fires caused the stones to crumble. After it was further dismantled and sifted to find all the **melted gold**, the rubble was thrown down into the Kidron Valley. Only the huge foundation stones remained largely intact. Those stones, however, were not part of the Temple itself, but supports for the retaining wall."

THOUGHT - It is worth noting that even esteemed preachers like **C H Spurgeon** (not a dispensationalist) recognized the destruction of the Temple in 70 A D did not fulfill Jesus' prophecies in the Olivet Discourse, writing that "**We must regard** the siege of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple **as being a kind of rehearsal of what is yet to be.**" (Amen to that word from the Prince of Preachers!) (Bold font added) (See [The Millennial Position of Spurgeon by Dennis Swanson](#) Swanson concludes "Spurgeon was most certainly premillennial, but not dispensational.")

Matthew Poole (1624–1679) a respected English Nonconformist expositor (not a dispensationalist) wrote that "Most divines think that God in the destruction of Jerusalem **intended to give a specimen of the general conflagration, and ruin of the world at the last day**; so as the signs of the same kind with those seen before Jerusalem was destroyed, **shall be seen before the great and terrible day of our Lord's coming to judge the world.**" (And again "*Amen*" to the interpretation which results when one simply and literally reads the text!)

Mark 13:3 As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew were questioning Him privately,

- **as:** Mt 24:3
- **Peter:** Mk 1:16-19 5:37 9:2 10:35 14:33 Joh 1:40,41
- **privately:** Mk 4:34 Mt 13:10,36
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 24:3+ As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

Luke 21:7+ They questioned Him, saying, "Teacher, when therefore will these things happen? And what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?"

LINES OF VISION FROM MOUNT OF OLIVES

QUESTIONS FROM FOUR DISCIPLES

As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple- Recall as He came out of the Temple, He would have

descended down the slope into the Kidron Valley and then up again to the Mount of Olives where one has a panoramic view of the Temple and the entire city of Jerusalem (see schematic diagram above) **Sitting** is the posture of a teacher, cf other references to Jesus seated - Mt 5:1; 13:1; 15:29; 19:28; 22:44; 23:2; 25:31) The Mount of Olives is about 150 feet higher and due west of Temple Mount (**opposite**), separated by the Kidron Valley, giving one a panoramic view of the entire Temple Mount and the holy city (See picture). Notice that Matthew 24:3+ adds "the disciples **came** to Him privately." which suggest Jesus had walked on ahead of them and taken a seat on the Mount of Olives.

Peter and James and John and Andrew were questioning Him privately - Only Mark names the four disciples. This same group (minus Andrew) was with Jesus on other mountain when he was transfigured! These were the first four disciples Jesus had called at the outset of His ministry, and this is the only place where Andrew is named with the other three who formed the inner circle.. The Olivet Discourse was not a public teaching, but was given only for the ears of believers. Then the four disciples asked three questions. Questioning is in the [imperfect tense](#) indicating one question than another (see Mark 13:4 two or possibly three main questions - Mt 24:2)

Questioning (1905)([eperotao](#) from **epí** = an intensifier + **erōtáō** = to ask, inquire of, beg of) means to put a question to someone, and was even used in a legal setting meaning to interrogate.

Brief Excursus on Jewish Eschatology

Before we go any farther it is important to understand what Jesus' disciples believed about the coming of the Messiah. The following summary is taken from John MacArthur's sermon ([see this sermon for expansion of each of the following points](#)) and much of his information is derived from the work of [Emil Schurer](#) (See Schurer's discussion of **The Messianic Hope** - Caveat - Note that I do not agree with all of Schurer's conclusions - e.g., he dates the writing of Daniel circa 164 BC four centuries later than it was actually penned by the prophet Daniel!). **What this synopsis does is help us understand that the disciples were not looking for a "Second Coming" as we speak of it today. They were firmly convinced that Jesus was the long expected Jewish Messiah and that in their lifetime He would defeat Israel's enemies and set up His glorious kingdom of God in which Israel would once again be the most prominent nation in the world.** Even after His death, burial and resurrection, the disciples still did not understand that Jesus had to leave and that there would be a long interval (at least 2000 years now) before He would return and accomplish the objectives outlined below. How do we know the disciples were still confused about the "timing"? Even after Jesus had spent 40 post-resurrection days **speaking of the things concerning the Kingdom of God** (Acts 1:3+), they steadfastly continued to believe that Jesus was going to set up the Kingdom at that time. And **so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?"** (Acts 1:6+). Notice what Jesus did **NOT SAY** - "Boys, you've got it all wrong. The promises to Israel have been given to the Church. [Israel has been replaced by the Church and God is finished with the literal nation of Israel!](#)"

Here is the summary of what the disciples and most Jews of Jesus' day believed about the coming of the Messiah...

- (i) Before the Messiah came there would be a time of terrible tribulation.
- (ii) Into this chaos there would come Elijah as the forerunner and herald of the Messiah.
- (iii) Then there would enter the Messiah.
- (iv) The nations would ally themselves and gather themselves together against the champion of God.
- (v) The result would be the total destruction of these hostile powers.
- (vi) There would follow the renovation of Jerusalem.
- (vii) The Jews who were dispersed all over the world would be gathered into the city of the new Jerusalem.
- (viii) Palestine would be the centre of the world and the rest of the world subject to it. All the nations would be subdued.

Mark 13:4 "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?"

- Da 12:6,8 Mt 24:3 Lu 21:7 Joh 21:21,22 Ac 1:6,7
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 24:2+ As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

Luke 21:7+ They questioned Him, saying, "Teacher, when therefore will these things happen? And what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?"

Tell ([aorist imperative](#)) **us, when will these things be** - What things? Jesus has clearly just described the future destruction of the Temple which would be these things. Their question is now about the timing of this event.

Constable - Matthew's account shows that their second question had two parts. They asked what the sign of Jesus' coming and of the end of the present age would be. Mark combined these two parts into one simple question about the sign of "all these things" being fulfilled. The disciples viewed the destruction of the temple and the end of the present age as occurring together. In His answer Jesus taught them that these events would not happen at the same time. Again a question from the disciples led to a teaching session (cf. 4:10–32; 7:17–23; 9:11–13, 28–29; 10:10–12).

And - This links the second question with the first.

what will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled- Matthew has "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" If we compare the accounts in Matthew and Mark, the sign in Mark refers to the sign of Jesus' coming (this presumes they now understood to some degree that He must leave) and the phrase **going to be fulfilled** would seem to equate with Matthew's "the end of the age."

Hiebert has an interesting analysis of **what will be the sign when all these things** - **These things** again relates to the Temple, but the question (of the disciples) assumes that the destruction will be part of the complex events culminating in the consummation of the age and the inauguration of the messianic kingdom. His prophecy of the destruction of the temple naturally led them to think of Zechariah 14+ and its eschatological portrayal. This implication is more clearly indicated in Matthew's formulation of the question. **"When shall these things be, and what is the sign of thy coming and [the] completion of the age?"** (Darby). **Completion of the age** (*sunteleia*) is the noun form of the verb in Mark, rendered **"shall be fulfilled,"** ([sunteleo](#)) denoting that the things mentioned will be brought to their close, or final fulfillment. **All** (*panta*) (**Ed**: This refers to the parallel passage in Mk 13:4) stands emphatically at the end of the sentence to stress **the total consummation of these crisis events** ("*to semeion hotan mello tauta sunteleisthai panta*"). They were eager to know what **sign** or visible portent would enable them to recognize the inauguration of these cataclysmic events. Clearly, they did not foresee the long interval between the two events (**Ed**: Some would say "three" events) . The **local event** (**Ed**: destruction of the Temple) became blended into the **eschatological** (**Ed**: His parousia and end of the age). This use of the **local event** in the foreground as the type of **eschatological event** is seen in the Old Testament in Joel's presentation of the Day of the Lord (**Ed**: E.g., Joel 1:4 describing the local locust plague and the Day of the LORD in Joel 1:15). This prophetic use of the local crisis as a type of the end time teaches us that each age has its own judgment pointing to the certainty of the final judgment. ([Ibid](#)) (Bolding added for emphasis)

Indeed, if the disciples knew their OT prophecies, Jesus' prophecy regarding the Temple and His subsequent establishment of the Messianic Kingdom would have naturally led them to think of Zechariah 14:1-21, for Zechariah 14:2 describes a battle against Jerusalem, Zechariah 14:3,5 describes Messiah's victorious return (cp **parousia** - arrival and presence) and Zechariah 14:8-21 describes the conditions of the subsequent Messianic Kingdom.

John MacArthur's sermon on [The Signs of Christ's Coming, Part 1](#) gives a summary of first century Jewish eschatological expectations which helps us "get inside the disciples' heads" and better understand why they were asking Jesus what they asked. In other words, one might think that the mention of the Temple's destruction would generate a question related only to that topic. However they also asked about the **coming of Messiah** and the **consummation of the age**. It is clear that in their minds all three were related, but as alluded to above, they had no concept of the **gap of time** that would separate the Temple's destruction from the coming and consummation (OF THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM). See discussion of Time Gaps in Interpretation of Prophecy.

Mark 13:5 And Jesus began to say to them, **'See to it that no one misleads you.**

Wuest - And Jesus began to be saying to them, Keep ever watching lest someone lead you astray.

- **See to it** : Jer 29:8 Mt 24:4,5 Lu 21:8 1Co 15:33 Eph 5:6 Col 2:8 2Th 2:3 1Jn 4:1 Rev 20:7,8
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 24:4-5+ And Jesus answered and said to them, '**See to it** that no one misleads you. 5 "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many.

Luke 21:8+ And He said, "**See to it** that you are not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not go after them.

JESUS BEGINS HIS PROPHETIC ANSWER

This passage marks the beginning of Jesus' formal Olivet Discourse,

And Jesus began to say to them - "**Began to say** implies that an extended discourse will follow." (Hiebert) Notice that in His initial reply, Jesus does not specifically address the disciples' questions, but instead commands them not to be misled, explaining that there will be **many** who will claim to be the Messiah and they will mislead **many** (not a few but many)!

"**See to it that no one misleads you** - Matthew and Luke also begin with this warning. Notice that Jesus does not give us a *suggestion* but uses the [present imperative](#) which means we are to make this our habitual practice, something possible only as we yield to the filling and empowering of the Spirit of Jesus. The **Amplified Version** reads "Be careful that no one misleads you [deceiving you and leading you into error]." This is the first of 12 commands in Mark 14 and all are in the [present imperative](#).

Sine all three synoptic Gospels begin with the warning to not be misled (Mt 24:4, Mk 13:5, Luke 21:8+) clearly Jesus' top priority is to avoid deception. But by what would they be misled? Luke's version has Lk 21:8+ "**See to it** that you be not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, '**The time is at hand; do not go after them**.'" So they are not only claiming they are Messiah but also claiming they know **the time is at hand**. A desire to know or predict the future is an inherent curiosity of most people and presumably it is to this innate human curiosity that these false Messiah's make their appeal.

Hiebert makes a great point - Jesus began with wise warnings to His disciples (vv. 5–13), portrayed the end-time crisis culminating in the second advent (vv. 14–27), and concluded with further instructions and warnings to the disciples (vv. 28–37). While its central portion is distinctly eschatological, the discourse begins and ends with moral exhortations (**ED**: NOT TO MENTION 12 COMMANDS THROUGHOUT THIS SECTION), thus underlining the practical nature of biblical prophecy. Before dealing with the eschatological future, Jesus reminded His disciples that their first duty was to be alert to the dangers that would confront them. Two types of danger are pointed out. In connection with the eschatological interests, they must not be deceived by pretenders and catastrophic occurrences (Mk 13:5–8); neither must they allow persecutions to destroy their personal allegiance to Him (Mk 13:9–13).

See to it (look, beware, take care, take heed) (991)(**blepo**) basically means to have sight, to see, to look at, then to observe, to discern, to perceive with the eye, and frequently implies special contemplation (e.g., often in the sense of "keep your eyes open," or "beware".) Vine adds that **blepo** expresses "a more intentional, earnest contemplation. In Lk 6:41 = of beholding the mote in a brother's eye; Lk 24:12 = of beholding the linen clothes in the empty tomb. Acts 1:9 = of the gaze of the disciples when the Lord ascended."

THOUGHT- Blepo is a key verb in Mark 13 - Mk. 13:2; Mk. 13:5; Mk. 13:9; Mk. 13:23; Mk. 13:33. Clearly one key message from Jesus regarding these end time events is the disciple's need to **LOOK OUT!** Remember the best way to discern false words is to know the word of Truth. In the past FBI agents were trained to recognize counterfeit 20 dollar bills by studying real 20 dollar bills.

Mark 13:6 "Many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He!' and will mislead many.

Wuest - Many will come in the strength of my name, saying, I, in contradistinction to others, am he, and will lead many astray.

- **many**: Mk 13:22 Jer 14:14 23:21-25 Joh 5:43 1Jn 4:1
- **and will**: Mk 13:22 Mt 24:5,11,23,24 Ac 5:36-39
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

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come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many.

Luke 21:8+ And He said, "**See to it** that you are not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not go after them.

MANY GREAT PRETENDERS

Many will come in My name - Literally "upon My name," the point being that they base the authenticity of their claims on the authority of the Name of Christ. In context they are not just false teachers but actually false Messiahs.

Saying, 'I am He' and will mislead (deceive) many - "I am" is a divine name (cf. Ex 3:14; Mk. 13:6; Lk. 21:8; Jn. 8:18; Jn. 8:24; Jn. 8:28; Jn. 13:19; Jn. 18:5; Jn. 18:6; Jn. 18:8; Rev. 2:23). Matthew 24:5 adds they specifically say "**I am the Christ**" or "I am the Messiah." (**See study of "I Am" = eimi**) The fact that there will be false Christ coming who **will mislead many** is the very reason the disciples (and us) need to continually heed the command in Mk 13:5. As discussed above Luke adds these deceivers will claim that they know that "the time is near." They claim to be able to predict the future. We all have an inherent desire to know about the future, especially end times prophecy. Jesus is warning that there would be individuals who would seek to take advantage of this propensity for prophecy and would deceive them and in so doing would turn them aside from the simple teaching of the Gospel.

Hiebert writes that "The first person after the time of Jesus Christ definitely known to have claimed to be the Messiah was Barcochba, the leader of the last great Jewish revolt in A.D. 132. There have been various other claimants since. Feinberg says, "Up to our day [1953] there is a record of some 64 false Messiahs who have tried to lead Israel astray." The number of the pretenders is not yet complete....**mislead many** - catching people in the snare of their enthusiasm, such pretenders always gain a following, of sorts. Their success makes them dangerous.

Related Resource:

- [List of False Messiahs in Wikipedia](#)

So the question arises as to how these individuals will be able to lead others astray. They come in Jesus' Name, ostensibly adhering to all Jesus teaches, but they are lying. And some even claim "**I am He**" clearly claiming that they are the Messiah. Claims such as these give them a sense of authority and authenticity to whatever they say. The antidote is Acts 17:11+ "Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so (THEY ARE CHECKING THE APOSTLE PAUL WHO CAME IN THE NAME OF THE LORD)."

How do they mislead. Luke's parallel helps us for he records they claim "**The time is at hand.**" (Lk 21:8) Does this refer to the **time** of the Temple destruction or the **time** of the end? It is hard to say for sure. The point is that they **mislead** others with their claims of knowledge of future events.

Wuest adds - The phrase "**in my name**" is literally, "upon the basis of my name," thus, "basing their claims on the use of my name." The name "Christ," namely, "Messiah," was a title with which to conjure, for Israel was looking for its Messiah. Swete says: "Such impostors came upon the basis of the name, holding out a false Messianic hope, claiming powers which belonged to the true Christ, even if they did not assume the title." The word "name" is used here to designate all that the Messiah is in His Person and His work. These impostors claimed to possess all that.

THOUGHT - As an aside, there is a tendency in the younger evangelical church to shy away from serious teaching on Bible prophecy ("too divisive," "too confusing," "no one can know who has the correct interpretation," and the list goes on). Beloved, (IN MY OPINION) this is a deadly deficiency in the modern church. Why would I say that? Think about it. If conservative, orthodox leaders fail to teach on this subject, the "sheep" are wide open to the plethora of prophetic speculations promulgated on the internet, airways and books. God gave us the Bible to **reveal**, not to **conceal** and **confuse**. God gave us prophecy to **stabilize our faith** not to **satisfy our curiosity**. Bible prophecy is **not easy to discern**, but it is **not impossible to know**. That said, [see discussion of Bible Prophecy](#) which includes a section on why it should be studied.

Mislead (deceive) (4105)(**planao** from **plane** which describes "a wandering" and gives us our English word *planet*) means to cause one to wander (cf first use in NT of "straying" sheep = Mt 18:12-13) or to go astray from a specific way. To cause someone to hold a wrong view and thus be mistaken. To delude or cause one to wander from the Truth of God's Word. In Mt 22:29 Jesus used **planao** to refute the false belief of His detractors declaring "You are **mistaken** (NIV = in error; NET = deceived; ESV = wrong), not understanding the Scriptures, or the power of God."

FALSE MESSIAHS - Simon bar Kokhba ([Hebrew](#): שמעון בר כוכבא; died 135 CE), born **Simon ben Kosevah**, was the leader of what is known as the [Bar Kokhba revolt](#) against the [Roman Empire](#) in 132 CE, establishing an independent Jewish state which he ruled for three years as [Nasi](#) ("Prince"). His state was conquered by the Romans in 135 following a two and half-year war.^[a]The Jewish sage [Rabbi Akiva](#) indulged the possibility that Simon could be the [Jewish messiah](#), and gave him the surname "Bar Kokhba" meaning "Son of the Star" in [Aramaic](#), from the [Star Prophecy](#) verse from [Numbers 24:17](#): "There shall come a star out of [Jacob](#)".The name [Bar Kokhba](#) does not appear in the [Talmud](#) but in ecclesiastical sources. [Rabbinical writers](#) subsequent to Rabbi Akiva did not share Rabbi Akiva's estimation of ben Kosiva. Akiva's disciple, Yose ben Halaphta, in the [Seder 'Olam](#) (chapter 30) called him "bar Koziba" (בר כוזיבא), meaning, "son of the lie".

Some are names we recognize from the news include (1) [Sun Myung Moon](#): considered within the Unification Church as the Messiah and the second coming of Christ. (2) [Jim Jones](#): claimed to be the reincarnation of Jesus, Buddha, Vladimir Lenin, and Father Divine prior to leading a mass suicide of his followers. (3) [Marshall Applewhite](#): claimed to be Jesus and the Son of God prior to leading his Heaven's Gate cult mass suicide to rendezvous with a space ship hiding behind the comet Hale-Bopp. (4) [David Koresh](#): leader of the Branch Davidian religious sect in Waco, Texas. Claimed to be "the Son of God, the Lamb."

Below are links to a list of people who have been said to be [a messiah](#), either by themselves or by their followers. The list is divided into categories, which are sorted according to date of birth (where known).

1. [Jewish messiah claimants](#) (See [another more in depth article](#))
2. [Christian messiah claimants](#)
3. [Muslim messiah claimants](#)
4. [Other or combination messiah claimants](#)

Related Resources:

- [What does it mean that there will be false christs in the end times?](#)
- [Who is Jose Luis de Jesus Miranda? Is Jose Luis de Jesus Miranda the antichrist? \(See Video\)](#)
- [The Christ of the New Age Movement by Ron Rhodes](#)

False Predictions - Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age? — Matthew 24:3 - News that a solar eclipse would take place on July 22, 2009, brought an alarming prediction. It was predicted that the eclipse would sufficiently affect gravitational pull, causing tectonic plates to "pop a seam," resulting in a sizable earthquake and a subsequent devastating tsunami in Japan. The US Geological Survey responded that no scientists "have ever predicted a major earthquake. They do not know how, and they do not expect to know how, anytime in the foreseeable future."

There have also been many false predictions about the date of Christ's second coming—despite our Lord's emphatic words: "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only" (Mt. 24:36). Christ told His followers that instead of trying to predict the date of His return, they should "watch" (Mt 24:42) and "be ready" (Mt 24:44).

Peter warned, "The day of the Lord will come like a thief." Then he added: "What kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives" (2 Peter 3:10-11NIV).

Striving to live for God—that's what Jesus wants us to focus our energy on while we wait for that "blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13+). ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When someone says, "I can discern
Exactly when Christ will return,"
Don't be deceived or led astray—
The Lord said we can't know the day. —Sper

Look for Christ's return, and you'll live for Christ's glory.

Mark 13:7 "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.

- **when:** Ps 27:3 46:1-3 112:7 Pr 3:25 Isa 8:12 Jer 4:19-21 51:46 Mt 24:6,7 Lu 21:9-11 Joh 14:1,27

- **must:** 2Sa 14:14 Mt 18:7 Ac 17:3
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 24:6; 7+ "You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end.

Luke 21:9-11+ "When you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end does not follow immediately."

SECOND FALSE SIGN THE END IS AT HAND

When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be frightened; those things must take place - Hiebert points out that here "the danger is not the cunning of others but their own misinterpretation of the turbulent affairs of history." All of these things have occurred for the last 2000 years and many have speculated this event or that event marked the end, but the end has not come. It is interesting that Jesus says they must take place ([dei](#) in present tense - must continually) speaks of their inevitability. **Do not be frightened** (throeo) a command, [present imperative with a negative](#) meaning don't let fear begin or stop fearing if you already are afraid. Why? Those things are expected and should not surprise disciples.

Hiebert - Amid the commotions of wars and tensions, they must arrest the natural feeling of alarm and inner agitation. They must not allow political and social upheavals to upset them emotionally so that they are unfit to carry on their proper work.

Wuest points out that "The disciples were already troubled about the political unrest in Palestine. Our Lord says, "Stop being troubled." It is necessary (**must take place**) in the nature of the case (dei (δει)) for such things to be". The total depravity of the human race is the root of all war, and that is the nature of the case that makes war inevitable. As to the political unrest of that time, Vincent notes that there were threats of war against the Jews by three Roman emperors, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero. There were serious disturbances at Alexandria A.D. 38, in which the Jews were the special objects of persecution, and at Seleucia, in which more than fifty thousand Jews were killed, and at Jamnia near Joppa. Vincent also states that between this prophecy of Jesus (A.D. 30 or 29) and the destruction of Jerusalem A.D. 70, there was an earthquake in Crete (A.D. 46 or 47), at Rome (A.D. 51), at Apamia in Phrygia (A.D. 60), at Campania (A.D. 63). He also notes four famines during the reign of Claudius. One of these was in Judaea in A.D. 44 and is spoken of in Acts 11:28.

Hiebert on must take place - These national convulsions have not been preordained by divine decree but arise as the inevitable consequences of human depravity. They are the natural results of human nature separated from God and ruled by selfinterest. They are divinely permitted as part of God's eschatological program for this world, which includes judgment as well as salvation.

Wuest - Our Lord exhorts the disciples not to permit political troubles and national upheavals to distract them from their work of evangelization. There are two kingdoms on this earth moving along side by side, the world system of evil headed up by Satan and in which the nations are constantly at sword's points, and the kingdom of God. No matter what happens in the former kingdom, the people of God must carry on toward the God-ordained and predicted consummation.

Frightened (disturbed) (2360)([throeo](#) from **thromai** = the cry or wail; **Thayer** says throeo is derived from **thros** = clamor, tumult) means to cry aloud or scream and in the passive sense means to be inwardly aroused, to be disturbed, to be frightened, to be startled. **Throeo** speaks of the alarm occasioned by a sudden cry or of mental uneasiness in general. **Throeo** is used only 3x (Mt 24:6; Mk 13:7; 2Th 2:2) all three uses in the context of eschatological events.

but that is not yet the end - End is [telos](#) which means fulfillment, "a point of time marking the end of a duration" (BDAG). "These stirring events do not constitute the immediate sign of the consummation of the age. They demonstrate the rotten moral condition of the world, which will certainly lead to judgment, but not yet, implying that more suffering is first in store. The end is the eschatological goal of history, the final establishment of God's kingdom on earth." (Hiebert)

End (5056)([telos](#)) means an end, a completion, a [consummation](#). The word [termination](#) is close but misses the **essence** of the meaning, because a process can be terminated without reaching completion or consummation, which is the essence of the meaning of **telos**. This term **does not** refer to annihilation (although indeed this present earth and heavens will be burned with intense heat - see discussion 2 Pe 3:12+) but is used in Scripture to refer to **the end of the age**. Jesus Himself used the term in this way (e.g., Matthew 24:6; Mark 13:7; Luke 21:9+). **Telos** is used again in Mark 13:13+.

J Vernon McGee - Wars and rumors of wars are not the sign that we are at the end of the age, by any means. The Lord is bridging the gap from where the disciples are to the end of the age. It is easy to think of major wars as indicative of the fact that we are at the end of the age. They are not! There have been many major wars in the past few thousand years and only about two hundred years of peace. When I was a little boy at the end of World War I, I remember hearing my dad and others talking about the books being printed declaring it was the end of the world. World War I caused this type of thinking. But after the war, we had a worldwide depression, World War II, and the atom bomb. By this time, I was a pastor in Pasadena, and I told my congregation that a wheelbarrow load of books would come out saying that we were at the end of the world because of World War II. You know something? I was wrong! Two wheelbarrow loads of books were printed, and they were sensational. We have come a long way from World War II, and the end of the age still has not come. We should listen to the Lord and stop listening to false teachers. We will hear about wars and rumors of wars, but we should not be troubled because all these things will come to pass, and still it will not be the end of the age. Friend, we should also keep in mind that man will never solve the problem of war. The League of Nations could not solve this problem, and the United Nations will not be able to solve it either. There will be no peace until the Prince of Peace comes. (Ibid)

Mark 13:8 "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."

- **nation:** 2Ch 15:6 Isa 19:2 Jer 25:32 Hag 2:22 Zec 14:13 Rev 6:4
- **famines:** Ac 11:28
- **these:** Mt 24:8
- **birth pangs:** Ps 48:6 Isa 37:3 Jer 4:31 6:24 13:21 22:23 49:24 50:43 Mic 4:9,10 1Th 5:3
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 24:7+ "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.

Luke 21:10-11+ " Then He continued by saying to them, "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, 11 and there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven.

Great Earthquakes (1900-2017)
Click to Enlarge

BIRTH PANGS A WHOLE LOTTA SHAKING GOING ON

For (gar) - Term of explanation. Explains the previous mention of **wars and rumors of wars**.

Nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom - Any book on world history will authenticate the accuracy of this prophecy!

Hiebert on will rise - renders an emphatic future passive, "will be roused," and points to the human perversions provoking these tumults. It is a picture of vast conflicts stirred up by racial and political forces.

there will be earthquakes in various places - This has also been fulfilled. In contrast to wars, these are caused by the Sovereign power of God, even though we usually call them "natural" disasters. In a sense they are more akin to "supernatural disasters!" As an aside about 15 years ago I studied the incidence of earthquakes and found a definite concentration of high magnitude earthquakes in the "10/40" Window (the most resistant to the Gospel). Use your imagination as to why God might allow this prevalence in pagan lands.

Earthquakes (4578)(**seismos** from = to shake) means an agitation or shaking as a series of violent movements, usually of the earth, but once of a storm or tempest at sea (Mt 8:24). One can picture the height of the huge waves in this supernatural seismos! No wonder the disciples thought they were perishing (Mt

8:25)!

Mounce - Earthquakes are known throughout the Mediterranean region and particularly in eastern Palestine. Geologically, this is because of the movements of the African and Arabian tectonic plates against the Eurasian plates. Earthquakes in the Bible are often seen as divine acts with theological significance. A violent seismos shakes the foundation of the prison holding Paul and Silas; the doors fly open, enabling all the prisoners to escape (though no one does; Acts 16:26). A **seismos** also occurs in connection with significant events such as the death of Jesus (Mt 27:54) and his resurrection (Mt 28:2). In Revelation, an earthquake announces the opening of sixth seal by Jesus (Rev 6:12) and the opening of God's heavenly sanctuary (Rev 11:19). Earthquakes are among the cataclysmic events that will occur in the days of judgment accompanying the last days (Mt 24:7; Mk 13:8; Lk 21:11; Rev 8:5; 11:13; 16:18).

Related Resources:

- [Up to date information on latest earthquakes](#) - As I wrote this note 4/6/18 at 4:23 AM read report of 5.9 quake off coast of El Salvador (Apr 2, 6:23 PM)!
- [Earthquake map](#) - latest worldwide (hold pointer over map and rotate mouse scroll wheel)
- [Earthquakes, great - Wikipedia](#)

there will also be famines - There are even famines in 2020, so this tragedy has always been with us.

Famines (3042) (**limos** from **leipo** = to fall short, be destitute or be in need) can refer to a literal hunger or famine, and in a metaphoric sense one's mind might be said to be "hungry, starved." **Famines** will be part of the end times scenario according to Jesus (Mt 24:7±, Mk 13:8, Lk 21:11). In the last NT use of limos, John describes the destruction of Babylon, writing "For this reason (see Rev 18:7) in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and **famine**, and she will be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who judges her is strong." (Rev 18:8±)

NOT SIGNS OF THE END BUT BEGINNING OF SORROWS

These things - To what does **these things** refer? Many coming in the Name of Jesus and misleading many, wars, rumors of wars, nations and kingdoms rising against one another, famines and earthquakes. All of these things are really "non-signs" because they are very general and have occurred throughout the centuries since Jesus uttered these words. Some suggest that as we see these things increase in number and intensity (e.g., earthquakes), this increased frequency suggests we are getting closer to the "end" of the end times. However, it seems that this is one of the things Jesus actually warns us about so that we are not misled.

Weber - War, famine, and earthquakes fall into a category of events that, while not necessarily unrelated to the end, are only tiny ripples in the pool of history. They are far removed from the central event of God's final judgment. (Holman New Testament Commentary)

Are merely the beginning of birth pangs - Birth pangs describes the pain a woman feels before delivery of her baby. From a comparison of the three synoptic Gospels, while the similarities are undeniable (Mt 24:4-7, Mark 13:5-8, Luke 21:8-11), there is a difference in that both Matthew 24:8 and Mark 13:8c picture the catastrophic events described by Jesus as **merely the beginning of birth pangs**, a phrase not found in Luke 21. What Jesus is suggesting is that **these things** (described in Mt 24:4-7, Mark 13:5-8 and by extension Lk 21:8-11) will intensify as the world gets closer to the "delivery date," **the end** of the age, the coming of Messiah, the "birth" of His Messianic Kingdom. When **birth pangs** begin, birth generally soon follows. Having delivered a number of babies, it has been my experience that as one gets closer to the actual delivery of the baby, the **birth pangs** increase in quality and quantity. It would appear that Jesus' figure of speech strongly implies that **birth pangs** (false messiahs, wars, earthquakes, famines, plagues, etc) will increase in number and intensity as **the end** draws near. Indeed, the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ (specifically Revelation 6:1-19:21) describes an intensification of all of **these things** (from seal judgments to the far worse bowl judgments at the end) which Jesus had alluded to and which have been occurring for the past 2000 years.

ESV Study Bible - **Birth pains** indicates that there will be a time of suffering prior to the **messianic age** (cf. Ro. 8:22-23). OT prophets use the metaphor to depict terrible suffering in general (cf. Isa. 13:8+; Isa 21:3; 42:14; Jer. 30:5-7+; Hos. 13:13) as well as suffering that Israel will endure prior to her deliverance (cf. Isa. 26:17-19; 66:7-11; Jer. 22:23; Mic. 4:9-10+). (**Comment:** Note allusion to the "Messianic Age" -- this is the age which will follow the church age and which is commonly referred to as the Millennium).

Birth pangs speak of hope for the pain will pass and give way to a "new birth" and in this case it will be a "new age," the Messianic

Age which will follow the end of the age. The figure of **birth pains** was commonly used by ancient Jewish writers, especially in regard to the end times. The great modern Jewish scholar Alfred Edersheim wrote, "Jewish writings speak very frequently of the labor pains of Messiah."

David Turner on **birth pangs** - The use of the pains of a woman in labor as a metaphor for eschatological troubles and/or the woe of God's judgment is found elsewhere in Jewish literature and the NT (Isa 13:8+ Isa 26:17; 66:7-8; Jer 4:31; 6:24; 22:23; Jer 30:5-7+; Jer 48:41; Hos 13:13; Mic 4:9-13+; Mark 13:8; 1 Thes 5:3+; Rev 12:2+; cf. John 16:20-22; Gal 4:19; (Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, Vol 11: Matthew and Mark)

John MacArthur explains that **birth pangs** is "a very vivid analogy used often in the Scriptures, often by the Jewish writers and so was familiar to Jewish people. Birth pangs are an increasing sequence of contractions that finally become fiercely intense and result in the big event, birth. It is an apt analogy for understanding human history. The contractions or the pains, start out light and they increase and they increase and they increase till they reach a point of [excruciation](#) before the big event. So, Jesus is saying these are just the birth pangs. These are just the very early birth pains and they've been going on for 2,000 years and have been escalating. And if you want to see what they're going to look like at the very end just before the event then you read Revelation 6-19." ([The World in Conflict and Distress](#))

And so it should not surprise that in the time just before Christ returns in Revelation 19:11-16, the "birth pangs" of each of these things will have intensified to such a degree that will be almost unimaginable. Below are just a few of the examples of the "birth pangs" that will occur at the end of this age...

- **False Christs** - The final greatest human deceiver, the Antichrist - Rev 13:5+ = given authority over the earth for 42 months
- **Wars**- Armies gathering for war at Armageddon - Rev 16:12-14, 16+
- **Famine** - Rider on the ashen horse given to kill 1/4 of the earth with sword and famine - Rev 6:8+
- **Plagues** - 1/3 of mankind was killed by three plagues - Rev 9:18+ (cf Rev 15:1+, Rev 16:21+ = 100 lb hailstones)
- **Earthquakes** - A great earthquake unlike any in the history of the world - Rev 16:18+

Weber on 3 implications of **birth pangs** - **First**, "beginning" implies that patterns of war, famine, and earthquakes do have some connection with the end. But they do not necessarily indicate that the end is near. Adding to this concept is the idea of "birth pains," which begin some time before an actual birth. **Second**, birth is one of the most painful experiences in a woman's life. Jesus, choice of word picture indicates that, when the end does come, it will be very painful for all of humanity. These sorrows are continually experienced in history. But as is true with the birth process, the pains will increase in frequency and intensity until Jesus returns in his power and glory. **Third**, birth is one of the most joyously fulfilling experiences of a woman's life, bringing about the emergence of something precious, beautiful, and highly valued. Jesus' word picture looked beyond the tribulation of God's judgment to the emergence of the fully realized kingdom with Christ in his glory. (Holman New Testament Commentary)

R T France - In later rabbinic literature the phrase "the labor pain (always singular) of the Messiah" comes to be used almost as a technical term for the period of suffering preceding the Messiah's coming. (NICNT - Matthew)

Craig Blomberg on **birth pangs** - just as a woman may experience false labor and just as genuine contractions still leave her uncertain about the exact time of delivery, so too the events of Mt 24:4-8 do not enable us to predict the time of Christ's coming. Birth pangs were in fact a common Jewish metaphor to refer to an indeterminate period of distress leading up to the end of this age (e.g., 1 Enoch 62:4; 2 Esdr 4:42; Tg. Ps 18:14). (Matthew, Broadman & Holman Publishers, The New American Commentary)

PARALLELS BETWEEN MATTHEW 24, MARK 13, LUKE 21 AND REVELATION 6

There are parallels between the events Jesus describes in Matthew 24 and Revelation 6:1-14-[note](#). If one accepts that the phrase **birth pangs** refers to an increase in intensity and number of the general signs Jesus described in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21, it is reasonable to see these things escalating in the time of the Revelation which covers the last of the last days (which many equate with the "Tribulation," specifically the events in Revelation 6:1-19:21-[note](#))

1. **False Messiahs** (Mt. 24:5, 11; Mark 13:6; Luke 21:8; Rev. 6:2).
2. **Wars** (Mt. 24:6-7; Mark 13:7; Luke 21:9; Rev. 6:4).
3. **Famines** (Mt. 24:7; Mark 13:8; Luke 21:10; Rev. 6:5-6,8).
4. **Pestilences** (Luke 21:11; Rev. 6:8).

5. **Persecution** (Mt. 24:9; Mark 13:9-13; Luke 21:12-17; Rev. 6:9-11).

6. **Earthquakes** (Mt. 24:7; Mark 13:8; Luke 21:11; Rev. 6:12).

7. **Cosmic Phenomena** (Mt. 24:29; Mark 13:24-25; Luke 21:11; Rev. 6:12-14).

Mark 13:9 "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.

Wuest - But as for you, be constantly paying heed to yourselves. They will deliver you up to councils and in synagogues you will be beaten, and before rulers and kings you will be placed for my sake, as a testimony to them.

- **be on your guard:** Mk 13:5 Mt 10:17,18 23:34-37 24:9,10 Lu 21:16-18 Joh 15:20 16:2 Ac 4:1-21 5:17-40 6:11-15 7:54-60 8:1-3 9:1,2,13,14,16 Ac 12:1-3 16:20-24 21:11,31-40 22:19,20 23:1,2 24:1-9 Acts 25:1-26:32 1Co 4:9-13 2Co 11:23-27 Php 1:29 2Th 1:5 Rev 1:9 2:10,13 6:9-11
- **courts** Mt 5:22.
- **a:** Mk 1:44 6:11 Mt 10:18 Lu 9:5
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 24:9+ "Then they will deliver (paradidomi) you to tribulation ([thlipsis](#)), and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name.

Luke 21:12+ "But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering (paradidomi) you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name's sake.

The Torches of Nero
See Christians in Upper Right

PERSONAL DANGER AMID PERSECUTION

But be on your guard - "You must watch out for yourselves." (NET) Yourself is not translated in NAS but is in the Greek and gives emphasis to personal watchfulness. Wuest adds "But, as for you, do not think only of what is coming on the Jewish nation and on the world, but also on yourselves." The previous warnings applied to the world but these apply personally to the disciples of Jesus.

This is Jesus' second command in this prophetic section. First see that you are not misled and here be on your guard. The former command was because of false Christs.

Hiebert - The exhortation does not urge them to seek their own safety but rather warns them to be alert against thoughtless or unworthy actions amid persecution. In Matthew 10:17-22, much of this warning is given in another context. Such warnings were an integral part of His training of the twelve.

Be on your guard (look, beware, take care, take heed) ([991](#)) see note on [blepo](#)

for - Term of explanation. Jesus explains why disciples must remain on guard, giving three specific reasons. Hiebert says He is "justifying the warning."

They will deliver you to the courts - They will give them over to the "councils" (NET, NLT, ESV, NIV). Hiebert says "The councils, or "sanhedrins," were local, Jewish disciplinary courts attached to the synagogues." Wuest adds that "These local councils of the Jews were modelled after the one at Jerusalem. They were the local courts of discipline. The sentences were carried out in the synagogues."

NET Note on courts (councils) - Councils in this context refers to local judicial bodies attached to the Jewish synagogue. This group would be responsible for meting out justice and discipline within the Jewish community.

Will deliver (hand over) (3860)(**paradidomi** from **para** = alongside, beside, to the side of, over to + **didomi** = to give) means to give or hand over into the hands of another, especially to give them over into the power of another. Matthew has 31 of the 119 NT uses of **paradidomi**, the first use describing John the Baptist being taken into custody (Mt 4:12). Matthew identifies "Judas Iscariot, the one who **betrayed** Him." (Mt 10:4, cf Mt 26:15, 16, 21, 23, 24, 25, 45, 48, 27:2, 4) Jesus had warned His disciples "beware of men, for they **will hand you over** to the courts and scourge you in their synagogues" (Mt 10:17) and "Brother will **betray** brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death." (Mt 10:21)

Court (council, supreme court) (the Sanhedrin)(4892)(**sunedrion** from **sun/syn** = together + **hedra** = a seat or **hedraios** = sedentary, as one seated in a chair) means ones seated together. This noun generally describes an assembly or council. In classical Greek **sunhedrion** initially referred to the place of meeting; and later described the assembly itself or the "council." In secular language **sunedrion** was used of a variety of official groups and councils including legislative bodies. In the intertestamental period prior to the birth of Christ **sunedrion** became a technical term for the "supreme court" or "high court" of the Jews who adopted the Greek into their own language (Hebrew/ Aramaic), calling the council the Sanhedrin. In the NT uses the **council** or **Sanhedrin** consisted of 71 members (70 members plus the highest official, the high priest) from the chief priests, former high priests, and the chief priests or heads of the twenty-four courses or divisions, elders, and scribes or lawyers. Apparently the council itself determined who could belong. There were also local councils throughout the [Jewish Diaspora](#) with 23 members, which were also called **sunedrion**.

The **Sanhedrin** tried the most serious offenses and pronounced the severest penalties, including death by stoning (see Acts 6:12-7:60) The Sanhedrin was formed in imitation of the seventy elders appointed by Moses (Nu 11:16ff.) The members were selected from the chief priests, former high priests, and the chief priests or heads of the twenty-four courses or divisions, elders, and scribes or lawyers. The Jewish genealogical records were kept by the Sanhedrin but they ceased to exist after the destruction of the Temple by the Romans in 70 A D.

And you will be flogged in the synagogues - We see this come to fruition in the book of Acts. Do you not see the irony here? The house of worship turned into a house of whipping! This is what happens when people reject the truth.

Hiebert - To be haled before these courts was considered a disgrace, and the beatings administered were severe, although limited to thirty-nine stripes (cf. 2 Cor. 11:24).

Flogged (beated, receive lashes, strike) (1194)(**dero**) literally meant to remove the skin (flay = strip off skin) and in the NT is used to depict the action of whipping, beating, thrashing or scourging in a manner calculated to take off the skin (Mt. 21:35; Mk 12:3, 5; Lk 20:10, 11; Ac 16:37; 22:19). **Dero** is used with its literal meaning once in the Septuagint (2Chr 29:34).

Luke documents recounts Paul's confessions in Acts regarding his malicious treatment of the saints...

Acts 9:2+ and asked for letters from him to the **synagogues** at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

Acts 22:4+ "I persecuted (**dioko**) this Way to the death, binding and putting both men and women into **prisons**,

Acts 22:19+ "And I said, 'Lord, they themselves understand that in one **synagogue** after another I used to imprison and beat those who believed in You.

Acts 26:10+ "And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in **prisons**, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them.

Acts 26:11+ "And as I punished them often in all the **synagogues**, I tried to force them to blaspheme; and being furiously enraged at them, I kept pursuing them even to foreign cities.

Synagogues (4864)(**sunagoge** from **sunago** = lead together, assemble or bring together) refers to a group of people "going with one another" (**sunago**) literally describes a bringing together or congregating in one place. Eventually, **sunagoge** came to mean the place where they congregated together. Uses in Mark - Mk. 1:21; Mk. 1:23; Mk. 1:29; Mk. 1:39; Mk. 3:1; Mk. 6:2; Mk. 12:39; Mk. 13:9

NET Note - These statements look at persecution both from a Jewish context as the mention of councils and synagogues suggests, and from a Gentile one as the reference to governors and kings suggests. Some fulfillment of Jewish persecution can be seen in Acts.

And you will stand before governors and kings - This means the persecution would not just be Jewish but would also be Gentile because the Gentiles were the **governors and kings**. The disciples were first persecuted by the Jews and as the Gospel spread throughout the Roman Empire, the Gentiles began to persecute the believers. See Acts 12:1-4+ ("Herod the king laid hands on some who belonged to the church"); Acts 16:19-26+ (= Paul and Silas "dragged...before the authorities and...the chief magistrates"); Acts 25:12+ (= "Then when Festus had conferred with his council, he answered, "You have appealed to Caesar, to Caesar you shall go.") Paul before King Agrippa (Acts 25:13, 22-27+, Acts 26:1-30+).

This should not have been surprising for Jesus had taught His disciples "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, **they will also persecute you**; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also." (Jn 15:20) So even as Jesus was led away to Caiaphas (Mt 26:57), so too His disciples would be brought before the authorities.

for My sake - Here is the qualifying factor. It is for the sake of Jesus, for His Name, for His glory, for His honor. Jesus is saying they will persecute you because they hate the Name of Jesus (cf Matthew 24:9+ Luke 21:12+). They hate all that Jesus' Name stands for.

THOUGHT - Have you ever been in a conversation with an unbeliever and you mentioned the Name "Jesus" (not as a curse word as the world besmirches His great Name - Acts 4:12+)? What happens? The reaction varies, but the truth usually is that they hate His Name! They hate His Gospel message and so it is not surprising they would hate the messenger.

These men are followers of Jesus as are all subsequent believers and are to loyal to Him that we might give an aroma of Jesus as Paul said

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. For **we are a fragrance of Christ to God** among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; 16 to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things? (2 Cor 2:14-16)

My Name's Sake - Because of their loyalty to Him (Would this test your loyalty to Jesus?) Below are some other notable examples of this great phrase in the New Testament - it costs to bear this great Name! Have you experienced that? Have you been rejected or scorned or made fun of because you are His follower? If not, perhaps you are not really His follower (cf Php 1:29+, 2 Ti 3:12+, 2 Cor 13:5+).

Matthew 19:29 "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life.

John 15:21 "But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me.

Acts 9:16+ for I will show him (Saul of Taurus) how much he must suffer **for My name's sake**."

Revelation 2:3-[note](#) and you (Church at Ephesus) have perseverance and have endured **for My name's sake**, and have not grown weary.

As a testimony to them - As a witness or a martyr! This is exactly what Paul did before King Agrippa giving his **testimony** ." (Acts 26:12-26, 27-30+) Luke 21:13+ says "It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony." (and for many would be their opportunity to be a martyr!)

MacArthur- No New Testament figure illustrates that reality more dramatically than the apostle Paul, who was imprisoned by the Romans on multiple occasions (cf. Acts 16:23–24; 22:24–29; 23:10, 18, 35; 24:27; 28:16–31; 2 Tim. 1:8; cf. 2 Cor. 11:25; 1 Thess. 2:2) and repeatedly put on trial before Gentile rulers (Acts 16:19–22; 18:12–16; 21:31–33; 22:24–29; 24:1–22; 25:1–12, 21; 26:1–32; 2 Tim. 4:16–17).

Swete says a **testimony to them** refers "to the appearance of Christians before magistrates on a charge of loyalty to the Name of Christ, and that this in itself would be a proclamation of the Name to those who might otherwise from their social position have failed to hear the gospel. Paul faced Nero or at least his representative in the court at Rome, and proclaimed the gospel to the assembled audience. But the language goes beyond this, to the Jewish remnant in the Great Tribulation. The setting is Jewish (ED: compare Jeremiah 30:7+)."

Hiebert - Being brought into court because of their relationship to Christ will give them an opportunity to bear witness concerning Him. Their case will compel these high potentates to investigate the claims of the gospel. If their courageous testimony is rejected by these officials, it will be a testimony against them in the final judgment day.

Testimony (3142)([marturion/martyrion](#) source of English "[martyr](#)") means evidence, proof. The content of what a witness tells. Marturion is the declaration of facts which confirms or makes something known. Marturion is an objective act, circumstance or statement that provides evidence or certifies the truthfulness of something. The content of what is witnessed or said. (See also [marturia/martyria](#)) The verb [martureo](#) describes the act of giving the evidence, whereas **maturation** refers to the content of the statement or to a piece of evidence. **Testimony** (marturion) means just that—a testimony or witness. A person can only testify to what he himself has seen or heard or experienced. A witness in a courtroom is to report only what he knows objectively, factually, and personally. He is not to speculate, guess, or deduce. In later centuries (after the first century AD) **marturion** came to be used as a description of [martyrdom](#). Edward Myers says "The word originally referred to one who was a legal witness but came to refer to one whose testimony for Jesus ends in death." (Eerdman's Dictionary of the Bible).

THOUGHT - Testimony is a solemn attestation as to the truth of a matter, a declaration of truth or fact. **Testimony** is proof or demonstration of some fact, evidence, piece of evidence. The Gospel itself is a testimony (Mt 24:14) which begs the question are you (as the Spirit enables) faithfully giving a testimony to the truth of Jesus? Opposition can lead to an opportunity to give a testimony of Jesus (Lk 21:12, 13).

Tertullian wrote that "The oftener we are mown down by you, the more in number we grow; the blood of Christians is seed" (Apology, chap. 50).

MacArthur - The persecution of the church always brings gospel opportunity. Persecution of the church always purifies the church. The persecution of the church always makes the church strong, it makes the church bold....Persecution of Christians has allowed Christians to give, strong, bold, confident, faithful testimony to the glory of the gospel. You read Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*. And you hear these incredibly stirring, beautiful testimonies of those who were brought to the edge of the flames, about to be burned to death, or to the edge of the sword, or the guillotine for their love for Christ and how powerful their testimony is now resounding.

Related Resource:

- Excellent Discussion on Persecution of Christians by the Gentiles - John MacArthur

Mark 13:10 "The gospel must first be preached to all the nations."

Wuest And to all the nations first is it necessary in the nature of the case for the gospel to be proclaimed.

BGT Mark 13:10 κα ε ς π ντα τ θνη πρ τον δε κηρυχθ ναι τ ε αγγ λιον.

NET Mark 13:10 First the gospel must be preached to all nations.

NLT Mark 13:10 For the Good News must first be preached to all nations.

ESV Mark 13:10 And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations.

NIV Mark 13:10 And the gospel must first be preached to all nations.

GNT Mark 13:10 κα ε ς π ντα τ θνη πρ τον δε κηρυχθ ναι τ ε αγγ λιον.

KJV Mark 13:10 And the gospel must first be published among all nations.

- Mk 16:15 Mt 24:14 28:18,19 Ro 1:8 10:18 15:19 Col 1:6,23 Rev 14:6
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 24:14+ "This **Gospel of the kingdom** (GOSPEL OF HOW ONE ENTERS THE KINGDOM - John 3:3-8+) shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations ([ethnos](#)), and then ([THEN = A CRITICAL EXPRESSION OF TIME](#)) the end will come.

A GLOBAL GOSPEL A DIVINE NECESSITY!

NAS does not translate the "**and**" (kai in the Greek text) which "connects this universal preaching with what has just been said. Their being hailed before these judges will further the worldwide preaching of the good news in Christ." (Hiebert)

Here Mark describes the "end" whereas in Mark 1:1+ he described the beginning - "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

The gospel must first be preached to all the nations - **Must** (**dei**) speaks of that which is necessary, obliged, bound, compelled to occur. This is a "divine necessity" which will happen because God's wish is that none perish but all come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9+, cf 1 Ti 2:4) and it follows that He wants all to at least have the opportunity! This is the responsibility of every generation of disciples (Mt 28:19+) for this is the only hope of eternal life for **all the nations**. **Hiebert** says **First** looks back to the end mentioned in Mark 13:7. **Be preached** is in the **passive voice** and is surely an example of the "divine passive" reflecting men filled with the Spirit of God powerfully preaching the Word of God.

Cranfield writes "It is part of God's eschatological purpose that before the End [of this age] all nations shall have an opportunity to accept the gospel."

MacArthur - Even in the tribulation period, when the church has been raptured and the Antichrist is wreaking havoc, the Lord will raise up His witnesses in the world, including 144,000 believing Jews (Rev. 7:4–8; 14:1–5), the two resurrected witnesses (Rev. 11:1–13), an angel from heaven who continually proclaims the good news of salvation (Rev. 14:6–7), as well as the regenerated believers from every nation (Rev. 7:9–10).

The final fulfillment of world wide proclamation of the Gospel occurs in Revelation 14:6. "And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people."

TONY GARLAND comments on Revelation 14:6 - The angel gospelled the gospel to those below on the earth. Not only was his message one of good news, but the very fact of his delivery of the message was a manifestation of that good news. For this angel on his lonely mission above the ravaged earth below stands as a beacon to the grace and mercy of God. He has not left these on the earth during the final week of His wrath without recourse. In the midst of terrible devastation and turmoil, He has not left those who have not yet heard subject to the well-intentioned, but often ineffective, witness of men. He provides a supernatural messenger who will finally fulfill the gospel mandate to all the earth (Mk 13:10, Mt 24:14). "There is no record that it is believed or heeded. It may not be (ED: I DISAGREE - HERE'S WHY - Rev 7:9+ DESCRIBES A GREAT MULTITUDE IN HEAVEN. Rev 7:14+ SAYS "These are the ones who come out of the **great tribulation**, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." THIS STRONGLY SUPPORTS THE FACT THIS GLOBAL GOSPEL PROCLAMATION BORE AN INCREDIBLE HARVEST OF FRUIT!)...Although it is the Church's mandate to preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8) and to make disciples of all nations (Mt. 28:19), it will not be her who ultimately fulfills the words of Jesus concerning the gospel reaching the entire world prior to the end: Why? Because she will be absent from the earth at the time of the end, having been taken in the [Rapture](#).

Gospel (2098)([euaggelion](#) from **eú** = good + **aggéllo** = proclaim, tell) is literally good news or glad tidings. In the NT **euaggelion** is used only of God's message of salvation in three senses (1) act of proclamation (preaching the gospel) (1Cor 4:15), (2) the work of evangelization (spread of the gospel) (Phil 4:3), (3) the content of the message as an offer of salvation (good news) (Ro 1:16) (Adapted from Friberg - Analytical Lexicon). In secular Greek it originally referred to a reward for good news and later became the good news itself. The word **euaggelion** was commonly used in the first century as our words "good news" today. The idea then and now is something like this - "Have you any **good news** (euaggelion) for me today?" This was a common question in the ancient world. In ancient secular Greek **euaggelion** described **good news** of any kind and prior to the writing of the New Testament, had no definite religious connotation in the ancient world until it was taken over by the "Cult of Caesar" which was the state religion and in which the emperor was worshipped as a god (see more discussion of this use below).

Preached (proclaimed) (2784)([kerusso](#) from **kerux/keryx** = a herald - one who acts as the medium of the authority of one who proclamation he makes; **kerugma** = the thing preached or the message) means to proclaim (publicly) or to herald or act as a public crier - the town official who would make a proclamation in a public gathering. **Kerusso** was used of the official whose duty it was to proclaim loudly and extensively the

coming of an earthly king, even as **our gospel** is to clearly announce the coming of the King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 19:16+). The Imperial Herald would enter a town in behalf of the Emperor, and make a public proclamation of the message which his Sovereign ordered him to give, doing so with such formality, gravity, and authority as to emphasize that the message must be heeded! (Think about this in regard to the Gospel of God instead of the decree of a man! cf 1Th 2:13+). He gave the people exactly what the Emperor bade him give, nothing more, nothing less. He did not dare add to the message or take away from it. **Uses of kerusso in Mark** - Mk. 1:4; Mk. 1:7; Mk. 1:14; Mk. 1:38; Mk. 1:39; Mk. 1:45; Mk. 3:14; Mk. 5:20; Mk. 6:12; Mk. 7:36; Mk. 13:10; Mk. 14:9; Mk. 16:15; Mk. 16:20;

Mark 13:11 "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.

Wuest And whenever they may be leading you, delivering you up, do not continue to be anxious as to what you will say, but whatever will be given you in that hour, this be speaking. For as for you, you are not the ones who are speaking, but the Holy Spirit.

BGT Mark 13:11 κατανύωσιν μς παραδιδντες, μ προμεριμντε τ λαλσητε, λλ ν δοθ μ ν κεν τ ρ το το λαλετε· ο γ ρ στε μες ο λαλο ντες λλ τ πνεμα τ γιον.

NET Mark 13:11 When they arrest you and hand you over for trial, do not worry about what to speak. But say whatever is given you at that time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.

NLT Mark 13:11 But when you are arrested and stand trial, don't worry in advance about what to say. Just say what God tells you at that time, for it is not you who will be speaking, but the Holy Spirit.

ESV Mark 13:11 And when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.

NIV Mark 13:11 Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.

- **and hand you over:** Mk 13:9 Mt 10:17,21 Ac 3:13
- **do not worry:** Ex 4:10-12 Jer 1:6-9 Da 3:16-18 Mt 10:19,20 Lu 12:11,12 Lu 21:14,15 Ac 2:4 4:8-22,31 6:10,15 7:55
- **what you are to say:** Isa 50:4 Joh 3:27 Eph 6:19,20 Jas 1:5
- **but:** 2Sa 23:2 1Co 2:13 Eph 3:5 1Pe 1:12
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 10:19-20+ "But when they hand you over, **do not worry** about how or what you are to say; for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say. 20 "For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

Luke 12:11-12+ "When they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, **do not worry** about how or what you are to speak in your defense, or what you are to say; 12 for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say."

Luke 21:14-15+ "So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves; 15 for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute.

JESUS ADDRESSES FEAR OF PUNISHMENT FOR PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL

When they arrest you and hand you over - Not IF but WHEN, indicating it could occur at any time. This is a prophetic promise. **Arrest** is literally leading them (one pictures them bound) so that they can be given over into the power of the authorities.

Hand over (hand over) ([3860](#)) see notes on [paradidomi](#)

Do not worry beforehand about what you are to say - **Do not worry** is [present imperative with a negative](#) meaning stop worrying or do not begin worrying. The verb [promerimnao](#) is used only here in Scripture and means to concern oneself or be anxious

beforehand (before it happens). This is Jesus' third command in Jesus' description of the future events before the end.

But - Term of contrast. Handed over but not silenced, for the Spirit will speak through them! This (or He, the Spirit) is a good "antidote" for anxiety.

Luke 21:14+ adds "So make up your minds ([kardia](#)) not to prepare beforehand (promeleto) to defend ([apologeomai](#)) yourselves." The KJV has "settle it in your hearts" which is an excellent literal translation. The heart is the "control center" so it all begins there. That's what Solomon said "Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life." (Pr 4:23+) One is reminded of young Daniel's response when confronted with commands to compromise "But Daniel made up his mind ("purposed in his heart" KJV) that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought permission from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself. (Daniel 1:8+)

Say whatever is given you in that hour; for (term of explanation) **it is not you who speak, but it is the Holy Spirit- Whatever** pictures the Spirit sending thoughts (and words) into our minds which we then speak forth. **Given** is the divine passive, in this case a gracious gift of God! Jesus is telling the disciples not to trust in their strength or ability but to yield to the Spirit Who will supernaturally enable them to speak.

Hiebert - History bears ample witness to the fact that Christians on trial for their faith have been amazed themselves at the aptness of the answers that flashed into their minds at the opportune moment.

A T Robertson quips this verse is no excuse here for the lazy preacher who makes no preparation for the preaching of his sermon, out of a mistaken reliance upon the Holy Spirit.

Hiebert - They must not attempt to mix it with their own ideas as being more appropriate. In that hour indicates that the promise is for particular emergencies, when unexpectedly haled into court to defend their faith. It does not refer to those who have the duty to teach or preach at set times and places. In Luke, Jesus presents Himself as the giver of the inspiration (Lk 21:15). History bears ample witness to the fact that Christians on trial for their faith have been amazed themselves at the aptness of the answers that flashed into their minds at the opportune moment.

Mark 13:12 "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death.

Wuest And a brother will deliver a brother to death, and a father, a child, and children will rise up against parents, and will cause them to be put to death.

BGT Mark 13:12 κα παραδ σει δελφ ς δελφ ν ε ς θ νατον κα πατ ρ τ κνον, κα παναστ σονται τ κνα π γονε ς κα θανατ σουσιν α το ς·

NET Mark 13:12 Brother will hand over brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rise against parents and have them put to death.

NLT Mark 13:12 "A brother will betray his brother to death, a father will betray his own child, and children will rebel against their parents and cause them to be killed.

ESV Mark 13:12 And brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death.

NIV Mark 13:12 "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death.

- Eze 38:21 Mic 7:4-6 Mt 10:21 Mt 24:10 Lu 12:51-53 21:16
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 24:10+ "At that time **many** will fall away (skandalizo) and will betray one another and hate one another.

Luke 21:16+ "But you will be betrayed even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death,

COMPARE - Luke 12:51-53+ "Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division; 52 for from now on five members in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three. 53 "They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

THE COST OF FOLLOWING JESUS

These are startling words to the disciples (then and now) but it is necessary for us to hear and understand the cost of following Jesus and proclaiming His Gospel. Forewarned is forearmed (in the sense that we will not be shocked or surprised when we are attacked for the Name of Jesus.).

Grassmick - Opposition will come through official channels (vv. 9, 11) and also through close personal relationships.

Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child - The Gospel and loyalty to Jesus is the ultimate "line in the sand!" There is no middle ground with Jesus. If you are not for Him, you are against Him and His disciples. So His disciples should not be shocked that even the closest human ties are in effect "broken" by one's response to Jesus. Jesus had warned the disciples earlier about this harsh reality declaring "for from now on five members in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law." (Lu 12:52-53+) This truth makes Jesus words "deny yourself and take up your cross and follow Me" take on a new meaning. This is another example of counting the cost of following Jesus.

Betray (hand over) ([3860](#)) see notes on [paradidomi](#)

And children will rise up against parents and have them put to death - The closest human ties will be tested before the end comes. If Jesus had not made these statements about murder by family members, one would never have imagined such horrible fates!

Hiebert - It will even be that children shall rise up in rebellion against their parents, report them to the authorities as Christians, thus causing them to be put to death. The plural verb rise up marks the numerous instances of this unnatural conduct.

Wuest has an interesting comment that "Treachery from friends and relatives is now predicted by our Lord in the Jewish community. While this may have had some partial fulfillment among the first-century Jewish Christians, yet it awaits a more intensified fulfillment in the Great Tribulation period when the Church will be in the Glory and the Jews (**ED**: BUT ALSO GENTILES) will be forced to choose between the coming Jesus Christ and the then present Antichrist." (**ED**: cf mark of the beast - Rev 13:16-18+)

Put...to death ([2289](#))([thanatoo](#) from **thanatos** = death) means **literally** to kill, to cause to be put to death, to mortify, to give up to death, to condemn to death or to deliver over to death. This verb describes what the Jews sought to do to Jesus and eventually accomplished (Mt 26:59, Mt 27:1, Mk 13:12) and those opposed to Jesus will seek to do the same to His followers!

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

Wuest And you will be those who are being hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end, this one will be saved.

NET Mark 13:13 You will be hated by everyone because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

NLT Mark 13:13 And everyone will hate you because you are my followers. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

ESV Mark 13:13 And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

NIV Mark 13:13 All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.

GNT Mark 13:13 κα̅ σεσθε̅ μισο̅ μνοι̅ π̅ π̅ ντων̅ δι̅ τ̅ νομ̅ μου̅. ὁ̅ πο̅ με̅ νας̅ ε̅ ς̅ τ̅ λος̅ ο̅ τος̅ σω̅ θ̅ σεται̅.

KJV Mark 13:13 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.

YLT Mark 13:13 and ye shall be hated by all because of my name, but he who hath endured to the end -- he shall be saved.

- **you:** Mt 5:11,12 24:9 Lu 6:22 21:17 Joh 15:18,19 17:14 1Jn 3:13
- **but:** Da 12:12 Mt 10:22 Mt 24:13 Ro 2:7 Ga 6:9 Heb 3:14 10:39 Jas 1:12 Rev 2:10 3:10
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 24:13+ "But the one who **endures** ([hupomeno](#)) to the end, he will be saved.

Luke 21:17+ and you will be hated by all because of My name. 18 "Yet not a hair of your head will perish. 19 "By your endurance ([hupomone](#)) you will gain your lives.

A PROMISE TO THE PERSECUTED

You will be hated by all because of My Name - Jesus has just said you will be killed and now says you will be hated (tantamount to murder! - Mt 5:21+) **All** is not used in the absolute sense (**all** with no exceptions) but refers to the general reaction of unbelievers of all classes toward believers. This is one of those promises you probably won't find in a collection of "God's Promises!" Luke 21:18+ adds "Yet not a hair of your head will perish." We need to make sure they hate us because of Jesus and not because of our bad behavior. **Because of** (term of explanation) gives the reason for their intense hatred. It is because they hate God (Ro 1:30+), they hate Jesus and since you love Jesus, they hate you! It is because you love His Name that they hate you!

Your allegiance to the Lamb may cost you your life, but the temporal price is eternally priceless....

Play "[I Pledge Allegiance to the Lamb!](#)"

Then live it out in the power of the Spirit for the glory of the Lamb of God!

Hiebert on **will be hated** - The [periphrastic](#) form of the future **shall be hated** marks the hatred as a continuing process going on and on....It will be His name, the revelation of the Person and all that He stands for, that will arouse the enmity. They will be hated, not for the errors or personal faults, but because they are Christians (1 Pet. 4:16+, Phil. 1:29+; Col. 1:24+).

When we stand with Christ, everything that opposes Him will oppose us!

This recalls Jesus' words that speak of no neutrality in this spiritual war between darkness and light...

"For he who is not against us is for us. (Mark 9:40)

Compare "'He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters. " (Mt 12:30, Lk 11:23)

When we experience this hatred because of His Name (**AND WE WILL /IF WE ARE TRUE FOLLOWERS! SEE PROMISE IN 2 Ti 3:12+**. COROLLARY - IF YOU NEVER HAVE THIS EXPERIENCE YOU NEED TO SOBERLY PONDER 2 Cor 13:5+), we need to recall Jesus' encouraging words...

"Blessed ([makarios](#) = fully satisfied independent of the circumstances) are you when men **hate** you, and ostracize you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil, **for the sake of the Son of Man** (Lk. 6:22+)

MacArthur "Some believers live lives of almost constant conflict with the world, while others seem to escape it entirely. Some Christians are not persecuted simply because their testimony is so weak it goes unnoticed by the world. When biblical doctrine and standards are compromised to accommodate fallen human nature, society has little argument with that kind of Christianity and will give little opposition to Christians. But to confront the world as Paul did with the declaration that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (Ro 1:18) is to guarantee society's wrath against the gospel and those who preach it....false religion reacts against believers because it is generated by Satan. Government reacts against believers because it is under the control of the prince of the power of the air, the ruler of this world. Ungodly families and society react against believers because they cannot tolerate righteous people in their midst. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Matthew)

If you name the Name of Jesus, you are not in a special club which relatively "few who find it" (Mt 7:13-14note), and which those who do not enter love to hate, because they hate the Name of Jesus.

John 15:18-21 "If the world **hates** you, you know that it has **hated** Me before it **hated** you. 19 "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world **hates** you. 20 "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. 21 "But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me

John 17:14 "I have given them Your word; and the world has **hated** them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

Will be hated (Mark's only use of *miseo*) (3404) (*miseo* from *misos* = hatred) means to dislike strongly, to have a strong aversion to or to detest, all of these representing expressions of hostility of one person (or group) toward another (Mt 5:43, Lk 6:27, et al). Specifically the hatred can be directed toward God (Lk 1:71). The majority of the NT uses of *miseo* convey the literal meaning of animosity towards God, people or particular attitudes.

Lenski on because of My Name - This signifies more than merely the personal names "Jesus," "Christ," etc.; it includes all by which He is known. Hence in phrases such as this "Name" is equivalent to "revelation." Men will in dislike and opposition turn against everything that reveals Christ and makes Him known. The implication in "Name" is that the apostles and those who succeed them will always proclaim this "Name" or revelation and will thus arouse the hatred. In the Acts the persecutors avoid even pronouncing the Name Jesus wherever possible. (ED: IN OUR CULTURE THE NAME "JESUS" OR "CHRIST" IS **SULLIED** FREQUENTLY BY UNBELIEVERS IN CONVERSATION, ON TV AND IN MOVIES WHERE IT IS USED AS A CURSE WORD!)

John MacArthur explains **because of My Name** - "The risen, glorified Lord whom His enemies hate is beyond their reach. Driven by their animosity toward Him, they lash out instead at His followers. Even those closest to believers will turn against them." (Luke Commentary)

The friendship of Jesus means the enmity of the world.

- R C H Lenski

but the one who endures to the end - Who can endure to the end of the age? Only someone supernaturally enabled to endure. Endures is surprisingly not in the present tense (continuously endures) but in the aorist tense so it is better translated "he who has endured," picturing the endurance as so certain to be completed that it is spoken of by Jesus using the "past tense!"

Hiebert says "endure stresses their need to maintain steadfastly and bravely their faith and loyalty to Him." While I agree, I don't think this is possible naturally, but only supernaturally!

C. E. Graham Swift ""Endurance is one of the keynotes of Christian life and witness in this age." (The New Bible Commentary)

Endures (perseveres) (5278) (*hupomeno* from *hupó* = under, as in under the rule of someone + *méno* = to abide or remain - see noun *hupomone*) means literally to remain under but not simply with passive resignation, but with an active vibrant hope. The idea of **enduring** is not just to "grin and bear it" but to remain under trials in a such a way that we glorify God as we learn the lessons the trials are meant to teach us, instead of seeking ways to get out from under (cf the prefix preposition "hupo" = under) the trials and be relieved of the pressure. As Wayne Detzer rightly reminds us "True Christian **perseverance** is not tied to tenacity. It is rather the work of God the Holy Spirit in a believer's life. The starch in a saint's spine is shown by Scripture to be nothing less than the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit."

Paul writes " If we **endure** (*hupomeno*), we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us (cf Mk 8:38+) " (2 Ti 2:12+)

Jesus earlier declared "You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has **endured** (*hupomeno*) **to the end** who will be saved." (Mt 10:22+)

End (5056) see note on **telos**

He will be saved - Luke 21:19+ says it this way - "By your **endurance** (*hupomone*) **you will gain your lives**." He is speaking not of "gaining" our physical lives but our spiritual lives, our lives eternally lived with God. **NOTE:** Jesus not teaching that that one can merit or earn or deserve their salvation. It is all of grace, from the beginning to the end! One's endurance will not save them, but does demonstrate that they are genuinely saved. And they receive the necessary supernatural power from the indwelling Spirit to enable them to endure to the end (of their life or the end of this present evil age [Gal 1:4+], whichever comes first!)

Grassmick says "This "**saved**" one will experience God's salvation in its final form—**glorification** (contrast usage in Mark 13:20; cf. Heb. 9:27–28). Perseverance is a result and outward sign, not the basis, of spiritual genuineness (cf. Ro. 8:29–30; 1 John 2:19). A

person genuinely saved by grace through faith (cf. Eph. 2:8–10) endures to the end and will experience the consummation of his salvation. These words of warning were pertinent to Mark's Roman readers who were threatened by persecution for their allegiance to Jesus. Such suffering could be more readily endured when viewed in the context of God's plan for worldwide evangelism and vindication." (BKC)

Will be saved (heal, make well or whole) (4982)(sozo) has the basic meaning of rescuing one from great peril. Additional nuances include to protect, keep alive, preserve life, deliver, heal, be made whole. **Sozo** is sometimes used of physical deliverance from danger of perishing (see Mt 8:25; Mt 14:30; Lk 23:35; Acts 27:20, 27:31), physical healing from sickness (Mt 9:21, 22; Mk 5:23, Acts 4:9), and deliverance from demonic possession (Lk 8:36). More often **sozo** refers to **salvation** in a spiritual sense to rescue or preserve from eternal death, from judgment, sin, bring salvation, bring to salvation (active sense = Mt 18:11; Lk 7:50; Jn 12:47; Ro 11:14; 1 Cor 1:21; 7:16; Titus 3:5; Hb 7:25; Jas 4:12; 5:20; 1 Pet 3:21 or passive sense = be rescued or saved, attain salvation = Mt 24:13; Mk 10:26; Lk 13:23; 18:26; Jn 3:17; Jn 5:34; Acts 11:14; 15:1, 11; Ro 8:24; 11:26; 1 Cor. 3:15; 5:5; Eph 2:5, 8; 1 Ti 2:4). Jesus' very Name speaks of His primary purpose to save men from their sin - "She (Mary) will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will **save** (sozo) His people from their sins." (Mt 1:21+) In Mt 1:21 **sozo** is equated with deliverance from sins (guilt and power of) with Jesus' Name being a transliteration of Joshua meaning "Jehovah is salvation". Uses of sozo in Mark - Mk. 3:4; Mk. 5:23; Mk. 5:28; Mk. 5:34; Mk. 6:56; Mk. 8:35; Mk. 10:26; Mk. 10:52; Mk. 13:13; Mk. 13:20; Mk. 15:30; Mk. 15:31; Mk. 16:16; (See also the [Three Tenses of Salvation](#)).

Jesus words here recall His earlier words

"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but **whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.** (Mark 8:35+)

Mark 13:14 "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.

- **the abomination:** Da 8:13 9:27 12:11 Mt 24:15-28 Lu 21:20-22
- **where:** La 1:10 Eze 44:9
- **let:** Mt 13:51 Ac 8:30,31 1Co 14:7,8,20 Rev 1:3 13:18
- **then:** Lu 21:21-24
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passage:

Matthew 24:15+ "Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), 16 then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.

THE END TIME CRISIS!

Crisis is a crucial or decisive point or situation, especially a difficult or unstable situation involving an impending change. It is that point in a story or drama when a conflict reaches its highest tension calling for a response. It is the turning point, in this case, the turning point in the history of the world in this present age. So now let's carefully observe the text and **context** seeking to glean the plain sense of the text while assiduously avoiding looking for hidden meanings (allegorical, mystical, idealistic, spiritualized). As you read the text, keep the following simple axiom in mind:

If the plain sense makes good sense in context,
seek to make no other sense or it may be nonsense!

Note that this rule should also be applied when one reads text that is clearly figurative language, as when Jesus says "I am the door." ([Jn 10:9](#)). Clearly He is not a literal door, and yet the figure conveys a literal meaning. In other words when a text must be read **figuratively**, it is important to remember that the Spirit still intends for the figure of speech to signify a literal meaning. Figurative language does not give the reader "[carte blanche](#)" to let the imagination "run wild" in an attempt to make the text conform to one's preconceived notions of what the text means.

I agree with **Dr John Walvoord** who wrote "This portion of the Olivet discourse is crucial to understanding what Christ reveals about the end of the age. The tendency to explain away this section or ignore it constitutes the major difficulty in the interpretation of the Olivet discourse. In the background is the tendency of liberals to discount prophecy and the practice of some conservatives of not interpreting prophecy **literally**. If this prediction means what it says, it is referring to a specific time of great trouble which immediately precedes the second coming of Christ. As such, the prediction of the great tribulation is "the sign" of the second coming, and those who see the sign will be living in the generation which will see the second coming itself." ([The Signs of the End of the Age](#))

To amplify Dr Walvoord's comments, to misinterpret Jesus' specific sign Jesus' Olivet Discourse (either Matthew or Mark) is analogous to driving to some desirable destination but to fail to correctly interpret one very crucial, strategically placed sign (how many of us haven't done that!) with the result being that one ends up lost and/or at the wrong destination! Just as it is best to read road signs "**literally**," so too it is best to read Jesus' sign in Mark 13:14 literally (and in context) lest one ends up "dazed and confused"!

Mark 13:14-27 is divided into Jesus' guidance in light of the great tribulation (Mk 13:14-23) and the glorious return of the Son of Man (Mk 13:24-27).

Hiebert prefaces his comments on this next section - I do not believe that the rapture of the church appears in the Olivet Discourse as recorded in Mark's Gospel. The thorny question of the relation of the rapture of the church to the Great Tribulation is therefore not discussed. I believe that the rapture will be before the Great Tribulation pictured by Jesus in this discourse.

Recall that in Mark 13:4+ the disciples had ask "**what will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?** Jesus now gives them a sign which can be seen and cannot be missed by anyone (except those who interpret the text allegorically or spiritually!). Remember that the disciples still strongly believe that Jesus is the Messiah and is about to establish His Messianic Kingdom on earth (cf their question even after His resurrection in Acts 1:6+ "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?")

D. Edmond Hiebert adds that "Jesus describes the end-time crisis, the **sign** that the disciples had asked for (Mt 24:3). They were ardently hoping that their Master would speedily establish His earthly kingdom (**Ed**: see their question in Acts 1:6+, cf "they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately" Lk 19:11+). Their views of the future were still essentially Jewish (**ED**: See [Brief Excursus on Jewish Eschatology](#)), and they conceived of the anticipated Messianic Kingdom in relation to the people of Israel. As yet, they had no clear concept of the coming church. If Jesus had spoken to them of the rapture in the future, He would only have added confusion to the limited understanding they had of what He had already said." (**Ed**: As an aside, most commentators agree that there is no mention of the Rapture in Matthew 24-25.) ([The Gospel of Mark- An Expository Commentary](#))

NET Note - The reference to the abomination of desolation is an allusion to Dan 9:27. Though some have seen the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy in the actions of Antiochus IV (or a representative of his) in 167 B.C., the words of Jesus seem to indicate that Antiochus was not the final fulfillment, but that there was (from Jesus' perspective) still another fulfillment yet to come. Some argue that this was realized in A.D. 70, while others (THIS WEBSITE) claim that it refers specifically to Antichrist and will not be fully realized until the period of the great tribulation at the end of the age (cf. Mark 13:19, 24; Matt 24:21; Rev 3:10).

But when - This is a crucial time phrase. **But** contrasts with the preceding "pangs." Jesus does not say IF but WHEN, so this event will occur. It will follow the **birth pangs**, but no specific time lag is given as to how long the birth pangs last and this specific event occurs.

You see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION standing where it should not be (let the reader understand)- The implication of this the reader use their mind, direct their attention to this fact (the abomination), think carefully about it and come to comprehend its meaning and significance.

Abomination (946)(**bdelugma**) is derived from the verb **bdelusso** which means to emit a foul odor or to turn away on account of a stench. Figuratively **bdelusso** speaks of that which causes loathing or disgust. An "abomination" is something detestable or loathsome and in Mt 24:15 the genitive of **desolation** describes the effect produced, causing something to be deserted and left desolate.

In short, **bdelugma** describes something detestable, especially that which is detestable to God and thus that which He rejects (such as pagan gods or things associated with idolatry). As discussed below, the **abomination** that Jesus describes appears to refer to an idol (an image to be worshipped) which is set up in the Temple (cp Rev 13:14-15-note). In the Old Testament, the term abomination denoted idolatry or sacrilege (Dt. 29:16-17; 1Kings 11:6-7; 2Kings 16:3; 23:13; Ezek 8:9-17). In 1Maccabees 1:54NRSV "an abomination of desolation" is used to describe the altar of Zeus.

Desolation (2050)(**eremosis** from **eremoo** = to desolate, lay waste) means a state of being made uninhabitable = devastation, destruction, depopulation. Luke 21:20 refers to the city of Jerusalem. Matthew 24:15 refers to the holy place (the Temple). Mark 13:14 clearly parallels Mt 24:15 but instead of "standing in the holy place" Mark has "standing where it should not be."

Lk 21:20+ "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her (Jerusalem's) desolation is at hand."

Reader (314)(**anaginosko** from **anāi** = emphatic, again + **ginosko** = know by experience) literally means to know again or to recognize again. It came to mean to distinguish between, to know accurately and then to read.

Let...understand (3539)(**noeo** from **nous** = mind, the seat of moral reflection) has the basic meaning of directing one's mind to something which clearly calls for more than just a glance! Jesus uses the **present imperative** which is a command for the **reader** to keep pondering this prophecy (weighing it in one's mind, thinking quietly, soberly and deeply). Jesus is calling on the reader to carefully think and reflect upon the prophecy in order to grasp His meaning. Notice Jesus did not advise the reading of many commentaries, many of which do not interpret His words literally! He uses the **active voice** which calls for the reader to carry out serious personal reflection with the implication that one is not simply to read what other men have written. Unless the **reader** himself or herself carries out their own **inductive study** on these important declarations by Jesus, how can they "comment on the commentaries?" (including the one you are currently reading!) In other words, how can one be confident that what the commentaries have written is an accurate **interpretation**? As an aside, in order to obey Jesus' command, the only way possible is by continual reliance on the Holy Spirit's filling and empowering (Eph 5:18-note, 1Jn 2:27-note)!

Hiebert - Standing is a masculine participle, although the noun abomination is neuter. The fact that Mark deliberately, though ungrammatically, used the masculine points to the fact that he regarded the abomination as personal ("he" rather than "it"). It seems clear that Mark was thinking of the personal Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:3–10; Rev. 13:1–10, 14–15). In time, the scene relates to the prophecy of Daniel's seventieth week (Dan. 9:24–27), when the price that shall come "shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease" (v. 27). This interpretation of the words of Jesus presupposes the end-time reestablishment of the Jewish temple and worship.

Then - (see [then](#)); This is an expression of time and marks sequence of events - when you **see** then **flee**.

Those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains- Jews living in Jerusalem (in Judea) and surrounding areas.

MacArthur- The only safe reaction to the abomination of desolation is to escape from Jerusalem with urgency, because the impending massacre will be so severe. As those closest to the temple, the people living in Jerusalem and Judea at that time will find themselves in the greatest danger from the Antichrist. Though he will assert his deadly dominance over the entire world, his wrath will be aimed especially at the Jewish people, along with believers everywhere. (MNTC-Mk)

Flee (escape) (5343)(**pheugo**) means to flee away in the sense of to take to flight in order to seek safety. To flee in the sense of to escape something, being made safe from danger by eluding or avoiding it (He 11:34⁺, Mt 3:7, Acts 27:30). To flee in the sense of to avoid, shun (Webster = to avoid deliberately and especially habitually), have nothing to do with (1Co 6:18). To vanish or disappear (Re 16:20⁺, Re 20:11⁺). **Webster** defines **flee** as to run away often from danger or evil or to hurry toward a place of security. **Pheugo** is the root of our English word "**fugitive**" defined as one who escapes from something or someone. Uses in Mark - Mk. 5:14; Mk. 13:14; Mk. 14:50; Mk. 14:52; Mk. 16:8;

THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

Here is my "literalistic" interpretation of the timing of this crucial sign:

This summary is based primarily on simple observation of the Scripture, reading the text for the plain sense (literally), not looking for hidden meanings and comparing the text with related or parallel Scriptures to help understand Jesus' intended meaning. This summary is not based on a specific system of interpretation. Even though some might say the summary sounds like a dispensational interpretation, I am not a dispensationalist. That said, without further qualification, here is the summary (**Note**: the "+" identifies a link to notes related to the passage):

Jesus now responds to the disciples' initial request for a sign (Mk 13:4⁺) by giving them a very unique sign

which will mark the beginning **when all these things are going to be fulfilled**. And so Jesus describes a specific sign, one which has not occurred in the past (but which had been foreshadowed-see Da 8:13, Da 11:31), and which will literally be fulfilled in the future. Recall that a sign is something that one can see which points to something else. In Mark 13:14 Jesus says "**when you see**" indicating that this is a **visible sign**. He explains that the sign is the **abomination of desolation** standing in the **holy place**. (from parallel in Mt 24:15 - McGee well notes "that the **Holy Place** was given only to the nation Israel. It was a special place in the Temple on earth. The church has no Holy Place.") He also explains that study of the book of Daniel will help the reader understand the sign. The Temple was destroyed in 70AD, but Jesus says the sign is of some one or some thing standing in the Temple (holy place). Of course the problem with Jesus' prophecy is that there is currently no Temple. It follows that the Jewish Temple must be rebuilt in Jerusalem (see note). If God can cause the nation of Israel to be reborn in May, 1948 against all odds, then a rebuilt Temple will not be too difficult for Him (Jer 32:17+, Jer 32:27+). Does this take faith to accept? Of course it does, but the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen (a rebuilt Temple, Heb 11:1+) are based not on an active imagination but on our faithful God (Lam 3:23) and His faith producing Word (Ro 10:17+, cf John's description of the temple in Rev 11:2+, compare Paul's mention of Antichrist taking his seat in the Temple in 2Th 2:3+, 2Th 2:4+, see note on Tribulation Temple). Daniel 9:27+ describes a prince who is to come (Da 9:26+) who will make a 7 year covenant ("one week" - see Daniel's Seventieth Week) with the "many," the "many" clearly being the Jews in context ("your [Daniel a Jewish man's] people" Da 9:24+). This "prince" is the Antichrist (name used only in 1 Jn 2:18+) who Daniel identifies as the "Little Horn" and who rises to power out of a 10 nation confederacy (Daniel 7:8+, cp Da 2:44-45+ where "the days of those kings" = "10 toe stage" [Da 2:42+] = 10 horns = 10 kings - cp Da 7:24+). The first 3.5 years, his devilish character is not obvious (see [note](#) on Rev 6:2), but in the middle of the 7 year "peace" covenant, he breaks the covenant with Israel and puts a stop to sacrifices and offerings in the rebuilt Temple (Da 9:27+) fulfilling Jesus' prophecy in Mt 24:15. Daniel says he also (as the "Little Horn") will overpower 3 of the original 10 members of the confederacy (Da 7:8+, Da 7:20+). Paul adds that the Antichrist (aka "man of lawlessness...son of perdition") will go into the "holy place," the rebuilt Temple, and take "his seat in the Temple of God, displaying himself as being God." (2Th 2:3+, 2Th 2:4+, cp Da 11:36+) In so doing he will commit the **abomination** that makes the Temple **desolate**. Note that this sign is *not* the Roman army surrounding Jerusalem in the past (70AD - cp Lk 21:20+), but a real person who will commit a real act of defilement (abomination) of the Jewish Temple in the future. At this same time, in the midpoint of the 7 year covenant, the Antichrist (aka "[The Beast](#)") is empowered by the dragon (the devil) for 42 months or the last 3.5 years of the 7 year period (Rev 13:4-5+) However, since it is unlikely the Antichrist will personally remain standing in the holy place, it is more likely that it is his image which the false prophet creates and commands the world to worship, which will remain standing in the holy place (cp Rev 13:14-15+, Rev 14:9, 11+, Rev 16:2+, Rev 19:20+, contrast Rev 20:4+)

During this last 3.5 years, the Antichrist will begin to pursue and persecute the Jews, which is the impetus for Jesus taking five verses to command and convince the Jews to flee when they see the sign of the **abomination of desolation**! During his last 3.5 years of the Seventieth Week, the Antichrist "will speak out against the Most High (beginning in Mt 24:15, 2Th 2:4+, blaspheming God - Rev 13:6+, cp his great, boasts - Da 7:8+, Da 7:11+, Da 7:20+) and wear down the saints of the Highest One, with the intent to make alterations in times and in law (cp Da 9:27+ "stop to sacrifice and grain offering"); and they (the Jews) will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time." (Da 7:25+ = Da 7:21+ = the Little Horn who "was waging war with the [Jewish] saints and overpowering them") In other words, after the Antichrist breaks his covenant with the Jews, they will be given into his hand for "time, times and half a time" (3.5 years, John says 1260 days in Rev 12:6+, which he repeats this in Rev 12:14+ with the parallel time phrase "time, times, and half a time" = 42 months). John records "it was given to him (the Antichrist) to make war with the saints (the Jews first, but then to all who refuse to worship his image - Rev 13:15+) and to overcome them; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him." (Rev 13:7+) For how long? Three and one-half years **beginning with the unmistakably clear sign** in Mk 13:4+ which inaugurates the time Jesus calls the "Great Tribulation" (Mt 24:21+ = Mk 13:19+ = the "time of Jacob's distress" = Jer 30:7+) a time "such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall," a time which Daniel describes as "a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time" (Da 12:1+) but a time which "shall be cut short" (Mt 24:22) after "a time, times, and half a time" (Da 12:7+), during which "many (Jews) will be purged, purified and refined." (Da 12:10+, cf Zech 13:8, 9+, Zech 12:10+, Ro 11:26-27+) God will allow the Antichrist 1260 days (42 months) to do his worst, but not one day longer, because the true Christ will return and bring that Lawless One "to an end by the appearance of His coming"

(2Th 2:7-8, 9-10). Then the true Christ will fulfill many OT prophecies (Amos 9:11,12, Jer 30:9+, Jer 31:28+, Jer 32:42, 43+, Jer 33:14, 15, 16+, Ezek 37:22, 23, 24, 25+, Zech 14:11, 16, 17+), and set up His 1000 year Kingdom on earth (cp Acts 1:6+, Acts 15:13-14, 15-18+, Lk 19:11+ Rev 20:4-5+), demonstrating 1000 years of God's *best* after 3.5 years of Satan's *worst*! Indeed, "Then the sovereignty, the dominion, and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him." (Da 7:27+)

Mark 13:15 "the one who is on the housetop must not go down, or go in to get anything out of his house;

- Ge 19:15-17,22,26 Job 2:4 Pr 6:4,5 22:3 Mt 24:16-18 Lu 17:31-33 Ac 27:18,19,38 Php 3:7,8 Heb 11:7
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passage:

Matthew 24:17 "Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house.

he one who is on the housetop must not go down, or go in to get anything out of his house This speaks of the urgency of the necessity to flee Judea. No turning back. No going back for family photos. Just leave.

Mark 13:16 and the one who is in the field must not turn back to get his coat.

- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passage:

Matthew 24:18 "Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak.

and the one who is in the field must not turn back to get his coat- A coat was a valuable possession in Jesus' day and one of the most basic necessities. Don't try to save your possessions. Instead save your body and even more importantly, your soul.

Mark 13:17 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

- De 28:56,57 La 2:19,20 4:3,4,10 Ho 9:14 13:16 Mt 24:19-21 Lu 21:23 Lu 23:29
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passage:

Matthew 24:19+ "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days- Why? Because it will clearly be more difficult for them to flee.

Mark 13:18 "But pray that it may not happen in the winter.

- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passage:

Matthew 24:20 "But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath.

But pray that it may not happen in the winter- Why this prayer? Travel is potentially more difficult in the winter. It may make it more difficult to flee to the mountains. **Pray** is [proseuchomai](#) in the [present imperative](#) - keep on praying.

Mark 13:19 "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.

- **those:** De 28:59 29:22-28 Isa 65:12-15 La 1:12 2:13 4:6 Da 9:12,26 Da 12:1 Joe 2:2 Mt 24:21 Lu 21:22-24
- **since:** De 4:32
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 24:21+ "For then there will be a **great tribulation**, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.

A CRITICAL EXPLANATION

For is a **term of explanation** and in this context is explaining why He is calling for such urgency to flee Judea.

Those days - When are **those days**? Clearly in context this refers to the **days** described above and in turn having their beginning with the appearance of the **abomination of desolation**. Jesus now explains why He has emphasized the urgency and importance of fleeing Judea.

Will be a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation (ktisis) which God created until now, and never will - Note the time phrase in this description. **Time of tribulation** means a time of difficulty. **Since the beginning...until now and never will** indicates clearly this is a one time event. It is unique. It will never occur again. To say that the worst event since creation was the destruction of the Temple and killing of Jews by the Romans in 70 AD is patently absurd! To ascribe this event to 70 AD is to force a square peg in a round hole so to speak! Jesus is describing an event which is unprecedented and will not be repeated. And yet we know that Adolph Hitler brought about a far greater "tribulation" with the murder of far more Jews than in 70 AD. How can anyone argue that Jesus' clear description speaks of a yet to occur future event?

Never will is the strong double negative (ou me) indicating it absolutely will never happen again!

Grassmick - At no time in the past, present, or future has there been or will there be such a severe tribulation as this. (BKC)

Wuest - These will be tribulation days. The judgments of God which will fall upon unbelieving Israel and the Gentile nations will have no precedent in all past history, and no counterpart in all succeeding history.

Even the **ESV Study Bible** agrees with this assessment - Some suggest this means that, if God's wrath were to continue unchecked against the wickedness of humanity, no one would survive the eventual destruction. Others see in this a reference to a cutting short of either the seventieth "seven" (week) of Da 9:27 or the 42 months of Rev. 11:2. (**Ed comment:** The 42 months of Rev 11:2+ are the last 3.5 years, the time of the **great tribulation**, corresponding to the Antichrist breaking the seven year covenant with Israel in the middle of the seven years as described in of Da 9:27+) **It is evident that the reference is not to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70**, since the unprecedented destruction described in Mt 24:21 did not take place in 70.

NET Note - Suffering unlike anything that has happened. Some refer this event to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. While the events of A.D. 70 may reflect somewhat the comments Jesus makes here, the reference to the scope and **severity of this judgment strongly suggest that much more is in view**. Most likely Jesus is referring to the great end-time judgment on Jerusalem in the great tribulation.

John MacArthur - At no point in earth's history, even during the global upheaval of the flood, has there been a more catastrophic time than will occur at the very end. Obviously, as noted above, Jesus' description could not be applied to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, as some suppose. In Revelation chapters 6–16, the apostle John denotes the unparalleled horrors that will characterize the very end, as God's wrath is poured out on the whole earth....**Clearly, cataclysmic events of that magnitude and succession have never yet occurred in human history**. They await fulfillment in the final days, just prior to Christ's return and the establishment of His millennial kingdom.

Barton - The Jewish historian Josephus recorded that when the Romans sacked Jerusalem and devastated Judea, one hundred thousand Jews were taken prisoner and another 1.1 million died by slaughter and starvation. So many Jews were crucified that the hills were emptied of trees in order to build enough crosses. While Jesus' words could be taken as referring to the coming destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70, they are so emphatic and clear that they must point ultimately to the final period of tribulation at the end of the age, because, as he stated, it will never happen again. (LAC)

Tribulation (2347) (**thlipsis** from **thlibo** = to crush, press together, squash, hem in, compress, squeeze in turn

derived from **thláo** = to break) originally expressed sheer, physical pressure on a man. Thlipsis is a strong term which does not refer to minor inconveniences, but to real hardships. Medically **thlipsis** was used of the pulse (pressure). It is a pressing together as of grapes. It conveys the idea of being squeezed or placed under pressure or crushed beneath a weight. When, according to the ancient law of England, those who willfully refused to plead guilty, had heavy weights placed on their breasts, and were pressed and crushed to death, this was literally **thlipsis**. The iron cage was **stenochoria** (see below). **Thlipsis** thus refers not to mild discomfort but to great difficulty. Uses in Mark - Mk. 4:17; Mk. 13:19; Mk. 13:24;

Mark 13:20 "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."

- **Unless:** Isa 1:9 6:13 65:8,9 Zec 13:8,9 Mt 24:22 Ro 11:5-7,23,24,28-32
- **Mark 13 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passage:

Matthew 24:22+ "Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short."

DAYS OF UNPARALLELED ALL CONSUMING FURY

Fury is a violent disturbance or intense period of activity: This describes the righteous fury of the Lord God!

Unless the Lord had shortened those days, no life would have been saved- **Shortened** means to end abruptly or stop instantly! Notice the repetition of the word **days** - Mk 13:17, Mk 13:19, Mk 13:20 (twice), Mk 13:24. Jesus does not say no life in Judea but broadens this to no life in general. This would suggest that the tribulation in **those days** is not just a regional conflict but in effect with be global.

MacArthur - The judgment of God on earth, including His allowing the fury of Antichrist against the Jews and the saints, will make the great tribulation an unparalleled time of terror. In fact, it will be so unbearable that God Himself will cut it short...Rather than subjecting the earth to a prolonged period of either divine judgment or satanic tyranny, God has predetermined to put a halt to the devastation before the entire human race is destroyed. Consequently, He will limit the great tribulation to a period of three and a half years (Dan. 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 11:2; 12:14; 13:5).

Those days - What days? From the immediate context (Mk 13:17, Mk 13:19) the answer clearly is the **days** of the time of the [Great Tribulation](#), the last 3.5 years (1260 days = 42 months = time, times, half a time) preceding the end of this present age which will be brought to an end ("cut short") by the [Second Coming](#) ushering in the Messianic Age, the age of righteousness (aka, the [Millennium](#)). **Those days** will be days of three and one-half years of unprecedented oppression on Israel (as well as all believers alive at that time) as described in multiple passages in both testaments (see Da 7:21, 25 [saints in context = Jews]; Rev. 11:2, Rev 12:6, 14; Rev 13:5, Rev 13:15) Greek expert **Dr Spiros Zodhiates** writes "The contextual referent of **those days** is the [Great Tribulation](#)." ([Exegetical Commentary on Matthew- Dr. Spiros Zodhiates - 2006](#))

Hiebert says this description is "strong proof of the consuming fierceness of those days."

Would have been saved (4982) ([sozo](#)) has the basic meaning of rescuing one from great peril and that is the sense in this context. Jesus is not speaking so much of spiritual salvation as He is of physical preservation of one's life. However since He mentions **the elect**, spiritual salvation would also appear to be in view here. Note the stark contrast with the days in Mark 13:13! The crowd yelled this verb to Jesus "**save** Yourself, and come down from the cross!" In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes, were mocking Him among themselves and saying, "He **saved** others; He cannot **save** Himself." (Mk 15:30-31+)

But for the sake of the elect, whom He chose, He shortened the days- God is sovereign and determines how long this tribulation will last. He shortens it **for the sake of His elect** Who are the **elect**? They are those **whom He chose** (cf. Acts 13:48+).. They are those who the Lord redeems during "those days." The **elect** includes believers in general and thus includes Gentile believers (Rev 17:14), and the elect of the nation of Israel (Isaiah 45:4). Regarding Israel, it includes the third of the Jewish people who will be brought through the "fire" of the Great Tribulation and become believers in the Messiah and who enter into the Messianic Kingdom...

Zechariah 13:8-9+ "It will come about in all the land," Declares the LORD, "That two parts in it will be cut off and perish; But the third will be left in it. (THIS IS THE "ELECT" REMNANT) 9 "And I will bring the third part through the fire (THE FIRE OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION, THE TIME OF JACOB'S DISTRESS), Refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' And they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"

Daniel 12:1+ Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress **such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time** (SEE Mark 13:19); and at that time your people (HE IS SPEAKING TO DANIEL A JEWISH PROPHET!), everyone (ALL THE JEWS) who is found written in the book (AKA = THE ELECT, WHOM HE CHOSE), will be rescued.

Daniel 12:10+ "Many (JEWS) will be purged, purified and refined, but the wicked will act wickedly; and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand.

Zechariah 12:10+ "I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn._

Romans 11:26+ and so all Israel will be saved (THOSE WHO ARE OF THE 1/3 - THE "ELECT"); just as it is written, "THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB."

Hiebert says "God acted on behalf of **the elect**, the true believers during the great tribulation. Having chosen them for Himself (middle voice), God acted in their true interest."

He shortened the days - On one hand this description serves to emphasize the unparalleled, unprecedented "consuming ferocity" of the **Great Tribulation!** On the other hand this description emphasizes the sovereign control of Jehovah God over ALL the affairs of this world. In His great mercy, He has decreed the Great Tribulation will last only 3.5 years (1260 days) and not one day more! There is no "if" about the shortening of these days; they shall be shortened. "The time would be longer if God were not merciful, but since He is, He will shorten the period in which the Antichrist expends his fury. " (Zodhiates)

Hiebert comments that this "strong figurative statement (**Ed**: referring to the fact that **koloboo** can mean "amputated") indicates that God has forcefully acted not to permit them to be extended to the full length that human passions would have carried them." ([The Gospel of Mark- An Expositional Commentary](#))

R T France attempts to explain Jesus' statement as compatible with a 70AD fulfillment writing "The horror was in fact **'cut short'** by the Roman capture of the city after five months, bringing physical relief to those who had survived the famine in the city." (NICNT) As an aside it seems that most "preteristic" interpreters are forced to appeal to non-inspired, secular historical writings to buttress their interpretations rather than relying the fully inspired Scriptures to comment on Scripture. (**See related resource: [Compare Scripture with Scripture](#)**)

Elect (1588) (**eklektos** from verb **eklego** which in middle voice [eklegomai] means select or pick out for one's self which is derived from **ek** =out + **lego** =call) means literally the "called out ones" or "chosen out ones". The idea of **eklektos** is the ones who have been chosen for one's self, selected out of a larger number. **Wuest** comments that "This **election does not** imply the rejection of the rest (those not chosen out), but is the outcome of the love of God lavished upon those **chosen-out.**") Election is God's eternal choice of persons unto everlasting life -- not because of foreseen merit in them, but of His mere mercy in Christ - in consequence of which choice they are called, justified, and glorified. Spurgeon wrote that "There seems to be an inveterate prejudice in the human mind against this doctrine (of election) and although most other doctrines will be received by professing Christians, some with caution, others with pleasure, yet this one seems to be most frequently disregarded and discarded." Three times in Mark all in Mark 13 - Mk 13:20, 22, 27;

Who shall the Lord's elect condemn?
'Tis God that justifies their souls,
And mercy like a mighty stream
O'er all their sins divinely rolls.
Isaac Watts

Chose (1586) (**eklego** from **ek** = out, out of, out from + **légo** = select, choose) means literally to select out, single out or choose out of. The idea in **eklego** speaks of the sizable number from which the selection is made. It implies the taking of a smaller number out of a larger. For example, in secular use, Virgil's *Eclogues* (from eklego) are short, selected excerpts taken from a more larger collection of poems. **A H**

Strong explained it this way - Election and sovereignty are only sources of good. Election is not a decree to destroy, it is a decree to save. When we elect a president, we do not need to hold a second election to determine that the remaining millions shall be non-presidents. **Sinclair Ferguson** was correct when he said "Until we have come to the place where we can sing about election with a full heart we have not grasped the spirit of the New Testament teaching."

Oh, happy day, that fixed my choice
On thee, my Saviour and my God!
Well may this glowing heart rejoice,
And tell its raptures all abroad.
Philip Doddridge

Shortened ("amputated," "mutilated") (2856) (**koloboo** from from **kolobos** = maimed, cut off) means strictly speaking to cause something not to be full length and so to cut short, to curtail, to abridge, to mutilate, to amputate (Lxx - 2Sa 4:12 "cut off their hands and feet"). Figuratively as used in all 4 NT passages **koloboo** refers to a reducing in number or extent. Our English word halt, in the sense of lame, is related to it, since it refers to a person whose walking ability has been cut short or curtailed. Notice Jesus' use of the **arist tense** which here speaks of a future event as it were a past completed action (**Proleptic**). In other words, God has decreed in the *past* that the yet *future* Great Tribulation will be cut short.

Question - [Who are the elect of God?](#)

Answer: Simply put, the "elect of God" are those whom God has predestined to salvation. They are called the "elect" because that word denotes the concept of choosing. Every four years in the U.S., we "elect" a President—i.e., we choose who will serve in that office. The same goes for God and those who will be saved; God chooses those who will be saved. These are the elect of God.

As it stands, the concept of God electing those who will be saved isn't controversial. What is controversial is how and in what manner God chooses those who will be saved. Throughout church history, there have been two main views on the [doctrine of election](#) (or predestination). One view, which we will call the prescient or foreknowledge view, teaches that God, through His omniscience, knows those who will in the course of time choose of their own free will to place their faith and trust in Jesus Christ for their salvation. On the basis of this divine foreknowledge, God elects these individuals "before the foundation of the world" (Ephesians 1:4). This view is held by the majority of American evangelicals.

The second main view is the Augustinian view, which essentially teaches that God not only divinely elects those who will have faith in Jesus Christ, but also divinely elects to grant to these individuals the faith to believe in Christ. In other words, God's election unto salvation is not based on a foreknowledge of an individual's faith, but is based on the free, sovereign grace of Almighty God. God elects people to salvation, and in time these people will come to faith in Christ because God has elected them.

The difference boils down to this: who has the ultimate choice in salvation—God or man? In the first view (the prescient view), man has control; his free will is sovereign and becomes the determining factor in God's election. God can provide the way of salvation through Jesus Christ, but man must choose Christ for himself in order to make salvation real. Ultimately, this view diminishes the biblical understanding of God's sovereignty. This view puts the Creator's provision of salvation at the mercy of the creature; if God wants people in heaven, He has to hope that man will freely choose His way of salvation. In reality, the prescient view of election is no view of election at all, because God is not really choosing—He is only confirming. It is man who is the ultimate chooser.

In the Augustinian view, God has control; He is the one who, of His own sovereign will, freely chooses those whom He will save. He not only elects those whom He will save, but He actually accomplishes their salvation. Rather than simply make salvation possible, God chooses those whom He will save and then saves them. This view puts God in His proper place as Creator and Sovereign.

The Augustinian view is not without problems of its own. Critics have claimed that this view robs man of his free will. If God chooses those who will be saved, then what difference does it make for man to believe? Why preach the gospel? Furthermore, if God elects according to His sovereign will, then how can we be responsible for our actions? These are all good and fair questions that need to be answered. A good passage to answer these questions is Romans 9, the most in-depth passage dealing with God's sovereignty in election.

The context of the passage flows from Romans 8, which ends with a great climax of praise: "For I am convinced that... [nothing] in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39). This leads Paul to consider how a Jew might respond to that statement. While Jesus came to the lost children of Israel and while the early church was largely Jewish in makeup, the gospel was spreading among the Gentiles much faster than among the Jews. In fact, most Jews saw the gospel as a stumbling block (1 Corinthians 1:23) and rejected Jesus. This would lead the average Jew to wonder if God's plan of

election has failed, since most Jews reject the message of the gospel.

Throughout Romans 9, Paul systematically shows that God's sovereign election has been in force from the very beginning. He begins with a crucial statement: "For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel" (Romans 9:6). This means that not all people of ethnic Israel (that is, those descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) belong to true Israel (the elect of God). Reviewing the history of Israel, Paul shows that God chose Isaac over Ishmael and Jacob over Esau. Just in case anyone thinks that God was choosing these individuals based on the faith or good works they would do in the future, he adds, "Though they [Jacob and Esau] were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad – in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls" (Romans 9:11).

At this point, one might be tempted to accuse God of acting unjustly. Paul anticipates this accusation in v. 14, stating plainly that God is not unjust in any way. "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion" (Romans 9:15). God is sovereign over His creation. He is free to choose those whom He will choose, and He is free to pass by those whom He will pass by. The creature has no right to accuse the Creator of being unjust. The very thought that the creature can stand in judgment of the Creator is absurd to Paul, and it should be so to every Christian, as well. The balance of Romans 9 substantiates this point.

As already mentioned, there are other passages that talk to a lesser extent on the topic of God's elect (John 6:37-45 and Ephesians 1:3-14, to name a couple). The point is that God has ordained to redeem a remnant of humanity to salvation. These elect individuals were chosen before the creation of the world, and their salvation is complete in Christ. As Paul says, "For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified" (Romans 8:29-30). (Source: GotQuestions.org)

Mark 13:21 "And then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ'; or, 'Behold, He is there'; do not believe him;

BGT Mark 13:21 Κα τ τε ν τις μ ν ε π · δε δε χριστ ς, δε κε , μ πιστε ετε·

NET Mark 13:21 Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'Look, there he is!' do not believe him.

NLT Mark 13:21 "Then if anyone tells you, 'Look, here is the Messiah,' or 'There he is,' don't believe it.

ESV Mark 13:21 And then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it.

NIV Mark 13:21 At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it.

- De 13:1-3 Mt 24:5,23-25 Lu 17:23,24 21:8 Joh 5:43

Related Passage:

Matthew 24:23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There He is,' do not believe him.

EXCLAMATIONS TO BEHOLD ARE NOT TO BE BELIEVED!

And then - This links the present warning with the scene of extreme suffering just depicted.

if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ'; or, 'Behold, He is there - A plethora of false Messiahs will come on the scene in the days of the Great Tribulation and this makes sense because the global chaos will produce fear which these fakers will thrive on! .

Hiebert points out that "the repeated **Behold** underlines the excitement with which these professed revelations are made during that time of pressure and fanaticism. A host of pretenders will arise claiming to be the Christ, the expected Messiah.

Do not believe him - **Do not believe** is a [present imperative with a negative](#) = stop believing or do not begin to believe.

Mark 13:22 for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order to lead astray, if possible, the elect.

NET Mark 13:22 For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, the elect.

NLT Mark 13:22 For false messiahs and false prophets will rise up and perform signs and wonders so as to deceive, if possible, even God's chosen ones.

ESV Mark 13:22 For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect.

NIV Mark 13:22 For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and miracles to deceive the elect--if that were possible.

- if it: Mk 13:6 Mt 24:24 Joh 10:27,28 2Th 2:8-14 2Ti 2:19 1Jn 2:19,26 Rev 13:8,13,14 17:8

Related Passage:

Matthew 24:24 "For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.

BE WARY OF WONDERS!

For (gar - term of explanation) false Christs and false prophets will arise - Jesus explains that these men described in the previous passage **will arise**. Hiebert adds that "the preceding admonition was conditionally stated; now the explanatory fact is explicitly affirmed. There shall arise, as a future fact, false Christs and false prophets, pseudo-Christ and pseudoprophets. The pseudo-Christ will falsely give himself out as being the personal Messiah, a pretender to the messianic office; the pseudoprophet will falsely claim to speak as God's spokesman, having a message directly from God. The plurals indicate that they will not be isolated cases."

NET Note - "false christs"; both "Christ" (Greek) and "Messiah" (Hebrew and Aramaic) mean "one who has been anointed."

and will show signs and wonders - "Signs denotes things, whether frequent or rare, which have significance as pointing to something outside and beyond themselves; they are finger posts to a higher reality. Wonders views these signs with reference to the astonishment that they produce; they are startling, amazement-evoking portents. Whether pretended or real signs and wonders, these deceivers will not hesitate to resort to their use in order to gain their purpose. This element, not mentioned in the warning in verse 6, will greatly increase the danger. " (Hiebert)

Wuest - "**Signs**" is **semeion** "a miracle whose purpose is that of attesting the claims of the one performing the miracle to be true." "**Wonders**" is **teras** "a miracle whose purpose it is to awaken amazement in the beholder." It is the same miracle regarded from different standpoints. Our Lord warns Israel against accepting the claims of one who performs miracles solely upon the basis of the fact that he performs miracles. The character of the person and his message must also be taken into consideration."

Wiersbe - Satanic deception will continue to the very end, and false Christs and false prophets will lead people astray. In fact, they will even do miracles (Matt. 7:21-23; 2 Thes. 2:9-12; Rev. 13:13-14). So deceptive will be these miracles that even the elect will be tempted to believe their lies. Of themselves, miracles are not a proof of divine calling and approval (Deut. 13:1-5). The final test is the Word of God.

in order to (Term of purpose) **lead astray** - = The point is their signs and wonders will be amazing and make many think they are from God when they are actually from the Devil. Their purpose is to deceive people and divert them from the path of truth. **Lead astray** is **apoplanao** (**apo** = from, away from [in this case TRUTH!] + **planao** = cause to wander - only other use 1 Ti 6:10) in the **present tense** indicating this is their continual purpose.

if possible, the elect - The implication is that it will not be possible to lead **the elect** astray. The deceiving spirits will be countered in the elect by the Spirit of truth. "God's elect are always personally secured by Him, so that it is impossible to take them out of His hand or the Son's hand (John 10:28-29)" (MacArthur)

MacArthur - Due to the chaos and catastrophes that will characterize the great tribulation, religious liars and deceivers will take advantage of people's terror and desperation. Their message of satanic deceit will convince many to believe them, because they will

show signs and wonders. But

Mark 13:23 "But take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance.

BGT Mark 13:23 με ς δ βλ πετε· προε ρηκα μ ν π ντα.

NET Mark 13:23 Be careful! I have told you everything ahead of time.

NLT Mark 13:23 Watch out! I have warned you about this ahead of time!

ESV Mark 13:23 But be on guard; I have told you all things beforehand.

NIV Mark 13:23 So be on your guard; I have told you everything ahead of time.

- **take heed**: Mk 13:5,9,33 Mt 7:15 Lu 21:8,34 2Pe 3:17
- **behold**: Isa 44:7,8 Joh 14:29 16:1-4

Related Passage:

Matthew 24:25+ **Behold**, I have told you in advance. **26 "So if they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go out, or, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe them. 27 "For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be. 28 "Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.**

NOTE: Bold text only in Matthew 24

FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED

Forewarned is forearmed - Advance knowledge enables advance preparation. One can be appropriately prepared if one knows something in advance. Knowledge in advance enables one to be prepared

But take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance. - We have all the information we need to endure these horrific times! We have been told everything necessary to keep from being misled! We can stand firm on the truth of God's faithful Word! " Notice they are saying "**behold**" in Mark 13:21 but the only "**behold**" which we should heed is that given by the Lord Jesus Christ!

Take heed (look, beware, take care, take heed) (991)(see notes on **blepo**) The **present imperative** calls for this to be one's habitual practices in these difficult days (see **our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey**)

Behold (2400)(**idou**) is the second person singular aorist middle imperative of eidon which means to see, perceive, look at. In the NT **idou** is used as a demonstrative particle that draws attention to what follows. **Idou** in the **middle voice** means "you yourself look, see, perceive!" The **aorist imperative** is a command emphasizing "Do it now! Don't delay!" **Spurgeon** reminds us that "**Behold** is a word of wonder; it is intended to excite admiration. Wherever you see it hung out in Scripture, it is like an ancient sign-board, signifying that there are rich wares within, or like the hands which solid readers have observed in the margin of the older Puritanic books, drawing attention to something particularly worthy of observation." I would add, **behold** is like a divine highlighter, a divine underlining of an especially striking or important text. It says in effect "Listen up, all ye who would be wise in the ways of Jehovah!"

MacArthur - Jesus' words highlight the relationship between human responsibility and divine sovereignty. On the one hand, believers are commanded not to be deceived by false prophets but to endure to the end (Mark 13:13). After all, they have been duly warned. As Jesus said, Take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance. On the other hand, they are also assured that, because they are elect, it is impossible for them to be led astray and lose the gift of salvation (cf. John 6:37, 40; 17:11; 1 Cor. 1:8; 1 Thess. 5:23–24; Rom. 8:30–39). True believers know the voice of their Master (John 10:27–29), and they will reject all others (John 10:5). Having been called to place their trust in Him, they can be confident that He will hold them safely until the eternal glories of heaven become theirs (cf. 2 Tim. 4:18)."

Mark 13:24 "But in those days, after that tribulation, THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT,

BGT Mark 13:24 ἅλ ν κε ναις τα ς μ ραις μετ τ ν θλ ψιν κε νην λιος σκοτισθ σεται, κα σελ νη ο δ σει τ φ γγος α τ ς,

NET Mark 13:24 "But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light;

NLT Mark 13:24 "At that time, after the anguish of those days, the sun will be darkened, the moon will give no light,

ESV Mark 13:24 "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light,

NIV Mark 13:24 "But in those days, following that distress, " 'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light;

- Isa 13:10 Isa 24:20-23 Jer 4:23-25,28 Eze 32:7 Da 7:10 12:1 Joe 2:30,31 Am 5:20 Zep 1:14-18 Mt 24:29-31 Lu 21:25-27 Ac 2:19,20 2Pe 3:10,12 Rev 6:12-14 20:11

Related Passage:

Matthew 24:29+ But **immediately** ([euthesos](#)) after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

COMMENT - Robert Gundry on **immediately** - "**Immediately**" denies a temporal gap between "the affliction of those days" and the celestial disasters that will accompany the Son of Man's publicly visible coming. The two occurrences of "and then" put those disasters and that coming in the same time frame. They'll take place concurrently. The celestial disasters provide a dark backdrop against which the glory of the Son of Man's coming will shine all the brighter.

COSMIC SIGNS SIGNAL SECOND COMING

But This is a [term of contrast](#) which should always prompt the question of "What is the author contrasting?" This is a sharp contrast between the false messiahs appearances (Mk 13:22) and the true Messiah's coming.

John Phillips - The signs of the Lord's return will not be lying signs such as those produced by the beast and his wizard prophet. There will be awesome signs, shaking heaven above and earth beneath, (Exploring the Gospel of Matthew)

In Luke **Jesus** says

"There will be **signs** in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, 26 men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. (Luke 21:25-26+)

In those days, after that tribulation - After that tribulation (Matthew 24:29+ says "**immediately after**") is another crucial time phrase after the tribulation. Click here for a discussion on the importance of context in the interpretation of **those days**.

Hiebert writes "Bruce remarks that it ("**BUT...**") sets a contrast between "the false Christs who are not to be believed in" and "the coming of the true Christ." The double statement, "**in those days, after that tribulation,**" suggests a close connection with Mk 13:14-23. The implied close connection is explicitly affirmed by Matthew's "**immediately**"([euthesos](#))(Mt 24:29+). The demonstrative pronouns, **those** and **that**, view the unparalleled tribulation just described as still remote at the time of speaking." ([The Gospel of Mark- An Expository Commentary](#))

MacArthur on **those days** (in context) - The Sequence. After warning His disciples about the abomination of desolation in the temple (Mark 13:14), and the terrible holocaust that will follow it (Mark 13:15–23), Jesus explained that in those days, after the tribulation period ends, He will return. In light of the context, those days can only refer to the three and a half years of great tribulation that will follow the Antichrist's desecration of the temple in Jerusalem (Mark 13:14–19; cf. Mt. 24:21; Rev 6–19). Earth's final days will be characterized by unrestrained immorality, unparalleled devastation, and unrelenting violence (toward all believers and also toward the Jewish people) under the satanically inspired influence of the Antichrist and his forces. Only as the tribulation ends and its judgments are exhausted will the Lord return to conquer His enemies and establish His earthly reign and rule. (MNNTC-

Mark)

Tribulation (2347) see note on [thlipsis](#)

Stuart Weber - The Messiah's coming will be accompanied by supernatural manipulations of celestial bodies—or at least manipulations of their appearance, or their ability to give light. These signs in the sky will be such that all people of earth can see them and realize that the Messiah is coming. If only one of these, signs were given, it might be explained away as an eclipse or a meteor shower. But all of them together can be caused only by the hand of God. The second coming of Christ to establish his kingdom on earth will be a majestic event that will extend over many hours. The earth and its occupants will be forced to watch, amazed, as the armies of the hosts of heaven descend to the earth in the vicinity of the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4+). (Holman New Testament Commentary)

THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT - There will be cosmic events after the tribulation. Cosmic signs will herald the consummation of the age and the coming of Christ!

Wuest - "The functional disturbances in the sun, moon, and stars occur at the close of the great Tribulation period, and are literal."

McKenna remarks, "When the sign of His coming is given, it will defy scientists and pseudoscientists, astronomers and astrologers, but there will be no way to misread its purpose."

Moon is [pheggos](#) which "refers to the light of the sun reflected by the moon, which is analogous to the church's reflection of the glory of Christ. This culminating darkness will end when He who is the "bright and morning star" dispels it once and for all (Rev 22:16-[note](#))."
(Zodhiates)

Will be darkened (4654)([skotizo](#) from [skia](#) = shadow) means literally to be or become dark or to be unable to give light (Mt 24:29, Mk 13:24, Eccl 12:2).

Isaiah had prophesied of this future frightful **Day of the Lord** when God will punish the world for its intractable godlessness and wanton evil...

Behold, the **Day of the Lord** is coming, cruel, with fury and burning anger, To make the land a desolation; and He will exterminate its sinners from it. For (term of explanation - explaining how this Day will be characterized) the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light; **The sun will be dark** when it rises and **the moon will not shed its light**. Thus I will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their iniquity. I will also put an end to the arrogance of the proud and abase the haughtiness of the ruthless. I will make mortal man scarcer than pure gold and mankind than the gold of Ophir. Therefore I will make the heavens tremble, and the earth will be shaken from its place at the fury of the LORD of hosts In the day of His burning anger. (Isaiah 13:9-13+)

MacArthur has an interesting comment that "The cosmic backdrop for history's most climactic moment will be total darkness, after God extinguishes the sun, moon, and stars (cf. Zech. 14:6–7), which will later be relit during the millennial kingdom (cf. Isa. 30:26)."

Allison and Davies comment that "Having, in Mt 24:28 (ED: AND HERE IN Mk 13:25), moved the mind's eye from earth to sky, the text now directs our gaze even higher. This imaginative raising of vision leaves distress behind and prepares for envisaging the good help that comes from heaven (Mt 24:30)." (A critical and exegetical commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew)

John Walvoord - The frightening display of divine disruption of the heavens, which precedes the **Second Coming** described graphically in Revelation 6:12-14 and in many other of the judgments of God described in the book of Revelation, will be climaxed by the glorious appearing of Christ in heaven (cf. Rev 19:11-16-[note](#)). This will be a coming of the Lord to judge and subdue the earth and to bring in His earthly kingdom.

Thomas Ice - One of the original questions that the disciples ask Jesus at the beginning of this discourse was "what will be the sign of your coming?" He has been answering the question since Matthew 24:23. Having spoken of His coming in Matthew 24:27, Jesus now builds upon His previous point that He will not arrive clandestinely, but His return will be a clear, public event that will take place suddenly. Just such a glorious appearing is exactly what is described in Matthew 24:29-30. ([Matthew 24:29 The Sun, Moon, and Stars](#))

Joel 2:28-32+ "It will come about after this That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions. 29 " Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. 30 "I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, Blood, fire and columns of smoke. 31 "**The sun will be turned into darkness And the moon into blood** Before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. 32 (**HERE IS THE GREAT NEWS!!!**) "And it will come about that **whoever calls on the name of the LORD Will be delivered** For on Mount Zion and in

Jerusalem There will be those who escape, As the LORD has said, Even among the survivors whom the LORD calls.

Mark 13:25 AND THE STARS WILL BE FALLING from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken.

BGT Mark 13:25 κα ο στρες σονται κ το ο ρανο π ποντες, κα α δυν μεις α ν το ς ο ρανο ς σαλευθ σονται.

NET Mark 13:25 the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

NLT Mark 13:25 the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

ESV Mark 13:25 and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

NIV Mark 13:25 the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'

Related Passage:

Matthew 24:29 But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

"THE SKY IS FALLING"

-- CHICKEN LITTLE

AND THE STARS WILL BE FALLING from heaven - - The future tense could be rendered "shall be falling" (the periphrastic form of the future tense) and stresses the duration, star after star falling depicting a mighty disorganization in the heavenly realm! Specifically this description could refer to "[Comets](#)" (Greek words for "star" is [aster](#) - gives us English [Asteroid](#), cp [Meteorites](#)) striking the earth in that fateful, future day.

And the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken This passage is more difficult to interpret as some see powers as that which holds the heavens in place whereas others see powers as referring to angelic hosts who are powerful.

Hiebert on the powers of the heavens shall be shaken— "a further statement of vast convulsions in the heavenly world. In Acts 16:26, the verb **shaken** is used of the effect of an earthquake, so that the convulsion here might be described as an earthquake in the heavens. Some understand the **powers** to mean the impersonal physical forces of nature which control the movements of the heavenly bodies. But others suggestively hold that here, in contrast to the preceding three statements dealing with inanimate objects, the reference is to personal **powers** or hosts in the heavens. Then the most likely reference is to the mighty shaking effect that these events will have on the kingdom of Satan and his hosts. (The Gospel of Mark: An Expository Commentary)

Grassmick on the powers of the heavens - may refer to: (a) physical forces controlling the movements of the celestial bodies which will be thrown out of their normal course, or (b) spiritual forces of evil, Satan and his cohorts, who will be greatly disturbed by these events. The first view is preferred. (BKC)

MacArthur - During that time the **powers of the heavens will be shaken** by Jesus Christ, the One who "upholds all things by the word of His power" (Heb. 1:3+), Just as He created everything, He also sustains everything (Ed: cp Col 1:17+ "in Him all things hold together."), and without His full sustaining power, gravity will weaken and the orbits of the stars and planets will fluctuate. Astronomers can predict coming stellar events centuries in advance only because of the absolute consistency of the divinely ordered and uniform laws that control the operation of the stars and planets. But when the Lord withdraws the least of His power from the universe, nothing in it will function normally, and every aspect of the physical world will be disrupted beyond imagination. All the forces of energy, here called powers of the heavens, which hold everything in space constant, will be in dysfunction. The heavenly bodies will careen helter-skelter through space, and all navigation, whether stellar, solar, magnetic, or gyroscopic, will be futile because all stable reference points and uniform natural forces will have ceased to exist or else become unreliable. The earth is held together by the power of God, and when that power is diminished, the resulting chaos will be inconceivable. Speculations such as the one just cited, no matter how scientifically derived, can only remotely approximate what the actual situation will be like. But just as the withdrawal of a small part of God's sustaining power will cause such pervasive chaos and destruction, so will His supernatural control of that disintegration prevent the total destruction of the earth. His sovereign power will preserve and restore it and its people for the establishing of His **Millennial Kingdom**. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary)

NET NOTE - An allusion to Isa 13:10, 34:4 (LXX); Joel 2:10. The heavens were seen as the abode of heavenly forces, so their

shaking indicates distress in the spiritual realm. Although some take the powers as a reference to bodies in the heavens (like stars and planets, "the heavenly bodies," NIV) this is not as likely.

MacArthur's interpretation - Heavenly bodies will careen at random through space (cf. Rev 6:13, 14; 8:10-13; 16:8, 17-20). powers... in the heavens. All the forces of energy that hold everything in space constant, and which Christ controls, He will allow to become random and chaotic (cf. Isa 13:6-16; 34:1-5; 2Pe 3:10-12). (MacArthur Study Bible)

Constable agrees - The Book of Revelation gives further information about the celestial phenomena that will happen then (Rev. 6-18; cf. 2 Pet. 3:10). However the Old Testament prophets also predicted these things (Isa. 13:10; 24:23; 34:4; Ezek. 32:7-8; Joel 2:10, 30-31; 3:15; Amos 8:9). If we take the wars, earthquakes, and famines of verses 7-8 literally, we should probably understand these phenomena literally too.

SUMMARY OF SIMILAR COSMIC SIGNS IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

Sun will be darkened:

- Isa. 13:10 = The **sun will be dark** when it rises
- Isa 24:23 = Then...the **sun** ashamed
- Jer 4:23-28 = the heavens above be **dark**
- Joel 2:10 = The **sun** and the moon grow **dark**
- Joel 3:15 = The **sun** and **moon** grow **dark**,
- Amos 5:20 = Will not the day of the LORD be **darkness**
- Amos 8:9 = the **sun** go down at noon and make the earth **dark** in broad daylight
- Rev. 6:12 = the **sun** became black as sackcloth made of hair

Moon will not give its light:

- Isa. 13:10 = And the **moon will not shed its light**.
- Isa 24:23 = Then the **moon** will be abashed
- Ezek. 32:7 = **moon** shall not give its light
- Joel 2:10 = The **sun** and the **moon** grow dark
- Joel 2:30-31 = the **moon** into blood, before the great and awesome **Day of the LORD** comes
- Joel 3:15 = The **sun** and **moon** grow dark
- Rev. 6:12 = And I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the **sun** became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole **moon** became like blood;

The stars:

- Isa 34:4 = all the **host** of heaven will wear away...All their **hosts** will also wither away As a leaf withers from the vine, or as one withers from the fig tree.
- Joel 3:15 = and the **stars** lose their brightness
- Rev. 6:13 = and the **stars** of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind

Powers of the heavens:

- Joel 2:10 = The **heavens** tremble
- Hag. 2:6, 21 = I am going to shake the **heavens** and the earth, the sea also and the dry land...I am going to shake the **heavens** and the earth.
- Luke 21:26 = the powers of the **heavens** will be shaken.
- Rev. 6:13 = the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind.

Mark 13:26 "Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN CLOUDS with great power and glory.

Related Passage:

Matthew 24:30 "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.

THE SUPREME SIGN: THE SON OF MAN

Then (tote) - When? After the tribulation. After the cosmic signs in verse 24-25. Matthew 24:30+ says "**then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky,**" The ultimate and final sign is the Son!

Then (5119)(tote) is an **expression of time** which means "At that time." When is Then? After the celestial signs just mentioned in [Mt 24:39](#), then they see **the sign** of all signs! This sign cannot be missed or mistaken by anyone on planet earth! Note the second use of **then** marks the time of mourning. First the sign and then the mourning. When used as an adverb **THEN** is always worth pausing to ponder and query asking questions like "What time is it? What happens next? Why does this happen now?, etc". When **then** is used (as determined by the context) to be an **expression of time** or "time phrase", it usually indicates **sequence** and thus marks that which is next in order of time, soon after that, following next after in order of position, narration or enumeration, being next in a series ([See English definitions](#) or [here](#)). Observing **then** can be very useful in following the course of events in a chapter or paragraph, especially in [eschatological](#) (prophetic) passages. Uses of tote in Mark (note the 4 uses in Mark 13 - they are important to discern the sequence of events in this eschatological passage) - Mk. 2:20; Mk. 3:27; Mk. 13:14; Mk. 13:21; Mk. 13:26; Mk. 13:27;

They will see = - How interesting that there are three "sightings" so to speak in Mark 13, the first one describing the sighting of the Antichrist (Mk 13:14) and the second one the sighting of the Christ (Mk 13:26)! The third in Mk 13:29 refers to signs one sees that indicate the coming of Christ is becoming nearer and nearer. Who is **they** who **will see** Him? They are those living on the earth at the time Christ returns in glory. Some will be destroyed by His coming. Others will rejoice at His coming. If you are on earth when He comes in His glory, which group will you be in?

THE SON OF MAN COMING IN CLOUDS with great power and glory - Who is **they**? Revelation 1:7[±] tells us in part who they is who will see Jesus returning to planet earth - "BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen. " The disciples would have immediately understood to Who Son of Man referred for Jesus had repeatedly used this term to refer to Himself in their presence (see below). He is quoting the passage from Daniel 7:13+ (see full context below)

Son of Man in Mark - Mk. 2:10; Mk. 2:28; Mk. 8:31; Mk. 8:38; Mk. 9:9; Mk. 9:12; Mk. 9:31; Mk. 10:33; Mk. 10:45; Mk. 13:26; Mk. 14:21; Mk. 14:41; Mk. 14:62

Hiebert writes that the verb **coming** "vividly portrays Him in the act of returning. His personal return to earth is in clouds, or "amid clouds." Matthew said, "in the clouds of heaven." The reference is apparently not to natural clouds but to that divine splendor which reveals yet conceals Jehovah's presence (Exod. 19:9; Ps. 97:2; Dan. 7:13; Mark 9:7). With great power and glory means not only that the returning one possesses power and glory but that He comes accompanied by a visible display of great power and glory, exercising divine authority and clothed with heavenly glory.

Brooks writes ""The same one who humbly ministered on earth (Mk 10:45), the same one who suffered and died (8:31), will return with 'great power and glory.'"

Jesus is quoting from Daniel's description of the Son of Man (a prophecy of Jesus)...

Daniel 7:9-14+ "I kept looking Until thrones were set up, And the Ancient of Days (GOD THE FATHER) took His seat; His vesture was like white snow And the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, Its wheels were a burning fire. 10 A river of fire was flowing And coming out from before Him; Thousands upon thousands were attending Him, And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; The court sat, And the books were opened. 11 "Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn (THE ANTICHRIST IN THE LAST 3.5 YEAR PERIOD, THE GREAT TRIBULATION) was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire (READ Rev 19.20[±]) 12 "As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time. 13 "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, **with**

the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. 14 "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom (MILLENNIAL KINGDOM), That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

Mark 13:27 "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.

- **He will:** Mt 13:41,49 24:31 Lu 16:22 Rev 7:1-3 15:6,7
- **gather:** Ge 49:10 Mt 25:31,32 Joh 10:16 11:52 1Th 4:14-17 2Th 2:1 Rev 7:5-9
- **his elect:** Mk 13:20,22 Isa 65:9 Mt 24:22,24,31 Lu 18:7 Ro 8:33 Col 3:12 2Ti 2:10 1Pe 1:2
- **from:** De 30:4 Mt 12:42

Related Passage:

Matthew 24:31 "And He will send forth His angels with **A GREAT TRUMPET** and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

COMMENT - BOLD UNIQUE TO MATTHEW'S VERSION

And then is again the "expression of time" adverb [tote](#) which "points to a further act in the eschatological drama which will follow the return in due time." (Hiebert)

He will send forth ([apostello](#)) **the angels** ([aggelos/angelos](#)) - **He** is Jesus the King of kings! Matthew adds "with a great trumpet." Matthew describes the **angels** as "**His angels**" speaking of His sovereign authority as King.

Wiersbe - Mark 13:27 describes the regathering of Israel from the nations to which they have been scattered throughout the world (Deut. 30:3–6; Isa. 11:12; Jer. 31:7–9). They will see their Messiah and trust Him, and the nation will be created in holiness and glory (Zech. 12:9–13:1; 14:4–11). That there is a glorious future for Israel is stated by Paul in Romans 11.

Several passages describe the angels returning with Christ and acting as His supernatural servants...

Matthew 16:27; "For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father **with His angels**, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.

Matthew 25:31) "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, **and all the angels with Him**, then He will sit on His glorious throne.

Mark 8:38 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father **with the holy angels.**"

Matthew 13:31; He presented another parable to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field...39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and **the reapers are angels.** 40 "So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. 41 "The **Son of Man will send forth His angels**, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness,

And will gather together - "The double compound verb **gather together** (see [episunago](#)) conveys the thought that they will be gathered at a central rallying point, namely, around Himself." (Hiebert)

His elect - Third use of **elect** (Mk 13:20, 22, 27 -- see preceding note on [eklektos](#)). Do not miss the little possessive pronoun **His**! We are not our own but have been bought with a price and are now to glorify God in our bodies (1 Cor 6:19+, 1 Cor 6:20+, cf His possession - Titus 2:14+, 1 Pe 2:9+).

From the four winds - All directions or all "corners" of the earth referring to a global gathering or "harvesting." The point of course is that none of **His elect** will miss this gathering!

Grassmick has an interesting comment - Though not stated, this would appear to include a resurrection of Old Testament saints and believers martyred during the Tribulation (cf. Dan. 12:2; Rev. 6:9–11; 20:4). Nothing is said here about those not among the elect (cf. 2 Thes. 1:6–10; Rev. 20:11–15).

Earlier Jesus had declared

Mark 4:29+ "But when the crop permits, he immediately puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven- Literally "from earth's extremity to heaven's extremity." The picture is all directions. This simply amplifies the global aspect of the gathering. Matthew says "from one end of the sky to the other." "It strongly asserts that there will be no spot on the face of the globe where any of the elect will be overlooked." (Hiebert)

Grassmick - The Old Testament often mentioned God's regathering of dispersed Israelites from the remotest parts of the earth to national and spiritual unity in Palestine (Deut. 30:3–6; Isa. 11:12; Jer. 31:7–9; Ezek. 11:16–17; 20:33–35, 41). At the time of the Second Advent Israelites will be regathered around the triumphant Son of Man, judged, restored as a nation, and redeemed (Isa. 59:20–21; Ezek. 20:33–44; Zech. 13:8–9; Rom. 11:25–27). Also all the Gentiles will be gathered before Him (Joel 3:2) and like a shepherd He will separate "the sheep" (the elect) from "the goats" (Matt. 25:31–46). These redeemed Jews and Gentiles will enter the millennial kingdom, living on the earth in natural bodies (Isa. 2:2–4; Dan. 7:13–14; Micah 4:1–5; Zech. 14:8–11, 16–21). (BKC)

Mark 13:28 "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."

- Mt 24:32,33 Lu 21:29-31

Related Passages:

Matthew 24:32; 33+ "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; 33 so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door.

Luke 21:29-31+ Then He told them a parable: "Behold the fig tree and all the trees; 30 as soon as they put forth leaves, you see it and know for yourselves that summer is now near.

AN AGRICULTURAL ANALOGY

Wiersbe points out that "Jesus did not want His disciples to get so involved in the prophecies of the future that they would neglect the responsibilities of the present; so He closed the Olivet Discourse with two parables. (Matt. 25 adds three other parables—the bridesmaids, the talents, and the sheep and goats.) Note that the first parable (Mark 13:28–31) emphasizes knowing that His coming is near, while the second parable emphasizes not knowing the time of His return. Is this a contradiction? No, because they were addressed to two different groups of people—the first, to the Tribulation saints, and the second, to all believers of every age." (BEC)

Now - "now is transitional, marking the turn to the concluding hortatory section." (Hiebert)

Learn the parable from the fig tree- Note that Luke 21:29 adds "and all the trees". **Learn** is a command in the [aorist imperative](#) which calls for immediate obedience. The Parable of the Fig Tree cautions Tribulation saints to watch and to know the "signs of the times."

Wiersbe - Most of the trees in Palestine are evergreens and do not change dramatically with the seasons. Not so the fig tree; it is one of the latest to leaf out in spring, so its shoots are an indication that summer is indeed near. As Christian believers today, we are not looking for "signs" of His coming; we are looking for Him! But people living during the Tribulation will be able to watch these things occur and will know that His coming is near. This assurance will help them to endure (Mark 13:13) and to be good witnesses.

Constable - points out that "Jesus had previously used a fig tree to illustrate the generation of Israelites that 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 (vv. 9–13) culminating in the Tribulation (vv. 14–25) pointed to the commencement of Jesus' kingdom (vv. 26–27; cf. Luke 21:31).

Parable (3850)(**parabole** from **para** = beside, near + **ballo** = throw, cast) is literally a throwing beside or placing of one thing by the side of another. In the NT **parabole** is "a rhetorical figure of speech, setting one thing beside another to form a comparison or illustration." (Friberg)

Fig tree (4808)(**suke** from **sukon** = a fig) is the fig-tree, which in Latin is the word *ficus* (see [Wikipedia](#)).

Neil D. Nelson notes that the **fig tree** "is not a type of Israel (**Ed**: Some say the budding symbolizes Israel becoming a nation in 1948 but such an interpretation is completely unfounded!). Jesus instead used it to make a straightforward analogy. (This is evident

in the Luke parallel where Jesus said: "*Look at the fig tree, and all the trees*" Any deciduous fruit tree would make the same point.) Just as the budding fig tree inevitably results in a harvest of figs, so the events of Mt 24:4-25 will inevitably usher in the judgment of the Son of Man at His coming. ([Journal of Dispensational Theology - Volume 11:33 Aug 2007](#))

SPRING IS SPRUNG

When its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves - Jesus' point here is simply that a budding tree of any type, which occurs in the spring, signifies summer is near. And in the same way, the "budding" of signs (so to speak) described in the previous section, signifies the coming of Christ and end of the age is near. He will go on to give several commands that call for a sense of readiness and alertness (Lk 21:34, 36+).

Hiebert - The first part of the sign is that the branch, the young shoot, has become tender, succulent because of the flowing sap; this is followed by the sprouting of the leaves. The present tense, **puts forth**, pictures the branch leafing out as in the very process.

You know that summer is near - Seeing is believing so to speak. In Matthew's parallel discourse, Jesus warned about false Christs who would mislead making false claims, but when one sees the clear, unmistakable signs (visible like the budding leaves of the trees), then and only then can you know that the visible aspect of the Kingdom of God is about to be manifest because of the return of the King of kings (Rev 19:16+).

What the Bible teaches - After the bare and barren state of the fig tree throughout winter, the first green shoots of spring tell that the summer is at hand....The suddenness of the appearance of the manifest kingdom is graphically expressed by Luke's use of the expression "they now shoot forth" (proballō). (What the Bible teaches – Luke)

J C Ryle - We see, thirdly, in this passage — how needful it is to watch the signs of the times in the prospect of the second coming of Christ. Our Lord teaches this lesson by a parable, "Behold the fig tree and all the trees. When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening — you know that the kingdom of God is near!" The disciples ignorantly supposed that Messiah's kingdom would be ushered in by universal peace. Our Lord, on the contrary, tells them that the signs which shall immediately precede it shall be wars, confusions, perplexity, and distress.

The general duty which these words should teach us, is very plain. We are to observe carefully the public events of the times in which we live. *We are not to be absorbed in politics* — but we are to mark political events. We are not to become prophets ourselves — but we are to study diligently the signs of our times. So doing, the day of Christ will not come upon us entirely unawares.

Are there any signs in our own day? Are there any circumstances in the world around us which specially demand the believer's attention? Beyond doubt there are very many. The drying up of the Turkish empire — the revival of the Romish church — the awakened desire of the Protestant churches to preach the Gospel to the heathen — the general interest in the state of the Jews — the universal shaking of governments and established institutions — the rise and progress of the subtlest forms of infidelity — all, all are signs peculiar to our day. All should make us remember our Lord's words about the fig-tree. All should make us think of the text, "Behold, I am coming quickly." (Revelation 22:7.)

Mark 13:29 "Even so, you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that He is near, right at the door."

NET Mark 13:29 So also you, when you see these things happening, know that he is near, right at the door.

NLT Mark 13:29 In the same way, when you see all these things taking place, you can know that his return is very near, right at the door.

ESV Mark 13:29 So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates.

NIV Mark 13:29 Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door.

GNT Mark 13:29 ο τωσ κα με ς, των δητε τα τα γιν μενα, γιν σκετε τι γγ ς στιν π θ ραις.

KJV Mark 13:29 So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.

YLT Mark 13:29 so ye, also, when these ye may see coming to pass, ye know that it is nigh, at the doors.

ASV Mark 13:29 even so ye also, when ye see these things coming to pass, know ye that he is nigh, even at the doors.

CSB Mark 13:29 In the same way, when you see these things happening, know that He is near-- at the door!

NKJ Mark 13:29 "So you also, when you see these things happening, know that it is near-- at the doors!

NRS Mark 13:29 So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates.

- know: Eze 7:10-12 12:25-28 Heb 10:25-37 Jas 5:9 1Pe 4:17,18

Related Passages:

Matthew 24:33+ so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door.

Luke 21:30+ as soon as they put forth leaves, you see it and know for yourselves that summer is now near. 31 "So you also, when you see these things happening, recognize that **the kingdom of God is near.**

RIGHT AT THE DOOR

Even so, you too, when you see these things happening Jesus emphasizes the visual aspect of these cosmic signs of Christ's coming with the verbs "**see**" (*blepo*) in verse 30 and "**see**" (*horao*) in this verse. The same phrase **these things** was used in Luke 21:28 when Jesus declared "'when **these things** begin to take place, **straighten up** and **lift up** your heads, because your redemption (~Redeemer) is drawing near." What **things**? This would certainly be things what one could perceive and see. Therefore, in context this would certainly include the visible signs of His return in Lk 21:25+ and then to the ultimate sign in Lk 21:27+ (cf Mt 24:30+ = "the sign") of the Son in the sky. What a dramatic contrast will be seen when the sun which is darkened will be replaced by the Son Who is descending in radiant, majestic splendor! O glorious day! What will soon follow His return? Logically when the King of kings returns (Rev 19:16-note), He needs a **Kingdom** over which He can rule as absolute Sovereign. So when one sees His "sign" they can know the Kingdom of God is not far behind!

Hiebert - The reference is to the events in verses 14–23 which mark the beginning of the end

Recognize that He is near, right at the door- Luke has "recognize that the kingdom of God is near." **Recognize** (*ginosko*) means to know by experience and what an experience it will be! Jesus urges them to be realizing what is happening. When you experience **these things**, they are like someone is "knocking at the door!"

NET Note - The verb **recognize** can be parsed as either present indicative or present imperative. In this context the imperative fits better, since the movement is from analogy (trees and seasons) to the future (the signs of the coming of the kingdom) and since the emphasis is on preparation for this event.

Right at the door - a common figure for an imminent event. Some versions say **"IT"** is near and others **"HE"** is near. Luke 21:30+ has **the kingdom of God is near**. The "kingdom" is an "IT" but it has a King, who is a "HE," so both translations are reasonable. **Hiebert** adds "The phrase at the doors is a common figure to denote nearness. The plural doors views the outer entrance to the house as consisting of folding doors. At, literally, "upon," pictures the subject so near as in fact already located on the doorstep."

NET Note - The verb *ginoskete*, "**know**" can be parsed as either present indicative or present imperative. In this context the imperative fits better, since the movement is from analogy (trees and seasons) to the future (the signs of the coming of the kingdom) and since the emphasis is on preparation for this event. Jesus is urging the the reader to realize what is happening.

Near (1451) (*eggus*) is an adverb which means near (or close) and can describe a **physical** position relatively close to another position (Lk 19:11) or also a **temporal** position of one point of time relatively close to another point of time (Mt 26:18 - referring to His Crucifixion). In context the emphasis is primarily on **near** in time.

Joel uses **eggus** 3x to describe the **Day of the LORD** as **near** (Joel 1:15-note, Joel 2:1-note, Joel 3:14-note, cp Ezek 30:3). In fact the events Jesus is describing here in Luke 21:25-38 are part of the Day of the LORD! If that "Day" was near when Joel wrote (835 BC), it is that much nearer in our day. The point is that we are to live our lives as if Jesus could return today. Our life motto should be "Perhaps Today!" Might that put a damper on those temptations to commit that sin that so easily entangles us? If we are looking for Him, we are more likely to be living for Him! See discussion of "[Vertical Vision](#)"

Matthew's version uses the adjective **near** (*eggus*) with the phrase **at the door** which serves to doubly emphasize nearness of the Kingdom. It does not tell us how near in time. James uses the phrase to alert believers that "the Judge is standing right **at the door.**" (James 5:9) In context the idea is that the return of Jesus is always imminent, but it does not tell us how close it is. **Hiebert** notes that more literally the Greek (of **at the door**) reads "*upon the doors* (plural)" where "*upon*" "pictures the subject so near as in fact

already located on the doorstep."

Comment on Luke's parallel - This has been the persistent object of the disciples' desire - the **Kingdom of God**. The disciples did not grasp that Jesus had to depart (See the prevalent [Jewish eschatological beliefs in Jesus' day regarding Messiah and His Kingdom](#)) and there would be a 2000 year interval until He would return to set up the **Kingdom of God** on earth, even asking Him after His resurrection "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6-note), a question that He did not refute, rebuke or correct and which makes absolutely no sense unless it were true (which it is). And so now, Jesus is giving them a parable to help them comprehend how the nearest of the **Kingdom** would be recognizable. They erroneously thought it was **near** now. It was not near in man's definition of time, but in God's definition of time a day is like a thousand years. Therefore (so to speak) only "two days" have passed since Jesus' departure.

Related Resources

- [Can the return of Christ truly be said to be imminent?](#)
- [Is Jesus coming soon?](#)
- [How are we to live our lives in light of Christ's return?](#)
- [What is the difference between the Rapture and the Second Coming?](#)
- [Is it possible to know when Jesus is coming back?](#)
- [What is the blessed hope?](#)
- [Tony Garland's discussion of the Arrival of the Kingdom of God](#)

Mark 13:30 "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

- that: Mt 16:28 23:36 24:34 Lu 21:32

Related Resources:

Matthew 24:34+ "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

Luke 21:32+ "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all things take place.

Note - Click here for a in depth discussion of to which generation Jesus is referring.

Truly I say to you - Jesus' "[amen](#)" statement signals the following is important and authoritative.

Truly I say to you in Mark - Mk. 3:28; Mk. 8:12; Mk. 9:1; Mk. 9:41; Mk. 10:15; Mk. 10:29; Mk. 11:23; Mk. 12:43; Mk. 13:30; Mk. 14:9; Mk. 14:18; Mk. 14:25; Mk. 14:30

This generation will not pass away until all these things take place - To which generation is Jesus referring? This is discussed in depth in Luke 21 commentary because one of the possible meanings of **this generation** is used by [preterists](#) to justify interpretation Mt 24:15-22 (and Mt 24:23-29) as past history!

These things in Mark 13 - Mark 13:4 Mark 13:8 Mark 13:29 Mark 13:30

Here are the two most reasonable interpretations of which **generation**: (Click here for a in depth discussion of to which generation Jesus is referring.)

(1) Jesus was using "**this generation**" to refer to the people who are living at the time of the Tribulation and witness all the signs Jesus had described. "The simple and most reasonable interpretation that the leaves of the fig tree represent the birth pains and the other signs of His coming Jesus has mentioned in this chapter and that **this generation** refers to the people living at the end time who will view those signs." (John MacArthur)

(2) Jesus was using the word **generation** as a qualitative term (as He had done numerous times in Matthew) and not as a quantitative term. **Richard Mayhue** - The pejorative view understands "**generation**" in the sense of referring to the category of rebellious, sinful people who have rejected God's truth and righteousness (cf. Mt 12:45; 23:35-36); this has an OT precedent in Dt 32:5, 20 and Pr 30:11-14. (See more detailed discussion)

For More Detailed Discussion see Related Resources:

- [Discussion of Which Generation in Matthew 24:34](#)

- Three Critical Exegetical Issues In Matthew 24: A Dispensational Interpretation Neil D. Nelson Jr., Ph.D.
- Seven Possible Interpretations of "This Generation" - Richard Mayhue
- "This Generation" and it's Preterist Exegetical Misuse - Bob DeWaay
- How Preterists Misinterpret Matthew 24:34 - Bob DeWaay

Mark 13:31 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away."

- **Heaven:** Ps 102:25-27 Isa 51:6 Mt 5:18 24:35 Heb 1:10-12 2Pe 3:10-12 Rev 20:11
- **my:** Nu 23:19 Jos 23:14,15 Ps 19:7 Isa 40:8 Zec 1:6 Lu 21:33 2Ti 2:13 Tit 1:2

Related passages:

Matthew 24:35 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

Luke 21:33 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

GUARANTEE THAT THE PROPHECY WILL BE FULFILLED

The prophetic words of the Olivet Discourse will not pass away but will assuredly be fulfilled in God's perfect timing. Amen!

Heaven and earth will pass away - This is a prophecy which is yet future. Jesus is the Creator "**for by Him all things were created**" (Col 1:16) and He is also the "Sustainer" for "**in Him all things hold together.**" (Col 1:17), but one day He will remove His Sustaining Hand and "**the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.**" (2 Pe 3:10+). In the Revelation John describes this unique time period writing "Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and **no place was found for them.**" (Rev 20:11+). In other words there was no place for earth and heaven because they had passed away, just as Jesus predicted. And after the judgment of all non-believers (Rev 20:11-15+), there will be a new heaven and new earth (Rev 21:1+).

When will **heaven and earth pass away**? After the Messianic Age which John says will last 1000 years, at the end of which Satan is released and then defeated and cast into the Lake of Fire forever and then the events of 2 Peter 3:10+ transpire which explains why John says of heaven and earth there is "no place found for them." As an aside, it is amazing that if one reads Revelation 19:11-21:1 literally and simply (not adding anyone's "systematic" theological views, be they dispensational or otherwise), the text clearly paints a logical, easy to discern chronology of events. However, if one resorts to allegorizing the text, it is not surprising that soon it begins to make no sense (i.e., it borders on "nonsense!"). Click here for a simple minded summation of Revelation 19-21 showing how it flows from one event to another if one reads it literally.

But - Term of contrast. It is always worthwhile to pause and ponder "What is being contrasted?" Usually (as in this case) it will be relatively straight forward. There was an old advertisement slogan "[The pause that refreshes.](#)" To pause gives the Spirit a chance to speak. If we are reading too quickly and passively, rather than slowly and actively, intentionally engaging the text, we are less likely to hear His voice. And pausing to ask simple questions tends to aid dynamic interaction with the Living Word and Living Lord, through His Living Spirit.

Of course the obvious wonderful contrast is that Jesus' words will never pass away, which was recorded by Isaiah centuries earlier when he wrote "The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever." (Isaiah 40:8)

My words will not pass away What is Jesus saying? Which **words**? Of course the truth that Jesus words **will not pass away** also applies to every word Jesus spoke, not just the prophetic words in the Olivet Discourse. But if **context means anything**, in this **context** Jesus is referring to the answer He has just given to the disciples' questions about Jerusalem's fate, about His return, about the establishment of the Kingdom of God and about the end of the age. Every "[jot and tittle](#)" of His prophetic answer will be perfectly fulfilled.

Pass away (3928)([parerchomai](#)) literally means to pass by (Lk 18:37), but here Jesus uses the verb figuratively meaning to come to an end, to disappear as the rich man in James 1:10, as the old things in those who have been born again (2Cor 5:17). Here are some other things that will come to an end (pass away) and thus will no longer be present

Matthew 5:18 "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth **pass away**, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

Luke 16:17; "But it is easier for heaven and earth to **pass away** than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail.

2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens **will pass away** with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

Revelation 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth **passed away**, and there is no longer any sea.

MacArthur writes "His word can neither be added to nor taken away from (cf. Deut. 4:2; Matt. 5:17-19; Luke 16:17; Rev. 22:18-19). The Word of God is the same unassailable, unchanging truth whether it speaks of the past, present, or future. Just as Christians were "born again ... through the living and enduring word of God" (1 Peter 1:23) and are being sanctified by the "word of His grace" (Acts 20:32), so also will they in the future be glorified, according to the promises of the Word (Rom. 8:17, 30). (MacArthur New Testament Commentary - Luke)

Philip Ryken has a great **illustration** of this passage - How sad it is that the living and abiding words of Jesus so often are opposed by people who reject the gospel. Whether it is false gospels like the so-called Gospel of Judas or religious hoaxes like The [Da Vinci Code](#), someone is always trying to cast doubt on the words of Jesus. But his words will never pass away, which means that eventually anyone who tries to discredit Jesus will be discredited himself. My favorite example comes from [Voltaire](#), the famous French philosopher. Not everyone remembers Voltaire these days, which is ironic, because he predicted that within fifty years people would no longer remember Jesus! It was a rash prediction, because the very year that Voltaire said this, the British Museum paid half a million pounds to purchase an ancient Bible manuscript, while at the same time a book of Voltaire's agnostic writings was selling for only eight pence in the London book stalls. Move forward fifty years to witness an even greater irony. After Voltaire died, the philosopher's home in Geneva was eventually purchased by the Geneva Bible Society. Fifty years to the day after the philosopher's outrageous prediction, the presses in his very own home were printing thousands of Bibles every day. Every copy included the words of Luke 21:33, written in French: "Le ciel et la terre passeront, mais mes paroles ne passeront point." Which means, as any Frenchman could tell you, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away." (Reformed Expository Commentary - Luke)

ILLUSTRATION - GOD has a way of turning the tables on evil. The French philosopher Voltaire predicted that Christianity would be swept from existence within one hundred years. Yet just fifty years after he died in 1779, the German Bible Society had occupied Voltaire's house and was using his printing press to produce stacks of Bibles. During World War II, Adolf Hitler erected a massive stone structure in Monte Carlo. It was to be a radio station from which to broadcast Nazi propaganda into North Africa. Today, from that very building, **Trans World Radio** beams the Gospel of Christ's redeeming love all across Europe and into Russia and Africa. Could these ironies of history be just a hint of the last word Christ will have at the end of this age?

The French philosopher [Voltaire](#) would certainly fit Jesus' warning about spiritual "dogs and a hogs" in Matthew 7:6 [note](#), for he violently opposed God, His Holy Word and His precious Son. How tragic that one of the most fertile and talented minds of his time (which parenthetically bears witness to the common grace and longsuffering of our great Father), was such a vicious opponent of truth, using his pen to retard and demolish Christianity as much as humanly possible. Once speaking about our Lord Jesus Christ, Voltaire uttered the unspeakable words "Curse the wretch!" Voltaire was so self deceived and arrogant that he once boasted that within "twenty years Christianity will be no more. My single hand shall destroy the edifice it took twelve apostles to rear." God however is not mocked beloved (see Galatians 6:7 [note](#), Galatians 6:8 [note](#)) and so not surprisingly shortly after Voltaire's death the very house in which he printed his vicious anti-Christian literature became the home of the Geneva Bible Society! ([However see another discussion on this topic](#)) A nurse who attended Voltaire at the time of his horrible death vowed "For all the wealth in Europe I would not see another infidel die." Voltaire's physician, Trochim, also attended the infidel up to the time of his last breath, and is quoted as hearing Voltaire's last desperate (rightly so) cry "*I am abandoned by God and man! I will give you half of what I am worth if you will give me six months' life. Then I shall go to hell; and you will go with me. O Christ! O Jesus Christ!*" Voltaire is the epitome of the type of individual that citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven (per orders of our Master) must refrain from sharing the precious and holy truth of God's Word. I had such an encounter with an atheist and finally ceased speaking truth to him when he became too vile in his attacks of me and my Lord.

Mark 13:32 "But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

- of: Mk 13:26,27 Mt 24:36-42 25:6,13,19 Ac 1:7 1Th 5:2 2Pe 3:10 Rev 3:3
- neither: Rev 1:1

TIME OF JESUS' RETURN NOT KNOWN

But - Term of contrast. Those who have discernment and heed Jesus' warnings and commands will have some sense of the proximity of His coming, but will not know the precise moment!

Of that day or hour no one knows - That day when God intervenes visibly and obviously and openly in human history and sends His Son back to earth. The atheists and agnostics will be shocked!

Hiebert - Plummer points out that "after the Resurrection Christ does not say that He is ignorant." It was not expedient that His people should know the day and hour of the end, and it was not a part of His revelation to them. God's wisdom graciously withheld any indication of a definite date for the Second Coming, otherwise no believer living before the indicated date could have experienced the purifying hope of His coming (1 John 3:2-3+).

Wiersbe reminds us that "When He was on earth in His humiliation, Jesus did not know the day or hour of His coming again. Even the angels do not know. The unsaved world scoffs at us because we continue to cling to this "blessed hope," but He will return as He promised (2 Peter 3). Our task is to be faithful and to be busy, not to speculate or debate about the hidden details of prophecy." (BEC)

Not even the angels ([aggelos/angelos](#)) in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone- We see a similar statement in Acts 1:7- "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority."

Hiebert on the **angels** - although the angels will have a part in the work of the eschatological day (v. 27), the time has not been revealed to them. Their limited knowledge is also indicated in Ephesians 3:10 and 1 Peter 1:12.

Grassmick - This openly expressed limitation on Jesus' knowledge affirms His humanity. In His Incarnation Jesus voluntarily accepted human limitations, including this one (cf. Acts 1:7), in submission to the Father's will (cf. John 4:34). On the other hand Jesus' use of "the Son" title (only here in Mark) instead of the usual "Son of Man" revealed His own awareness of His deity and sonship (cf. Mark 8:38). Nevertheless He exercised His divine attributes only at the Father's bidding (cf. Mk 5:30; John 8:28-29). The words "**that day or hour**" are widely understood to refer to the Son of Man's **second coming** (Mark 13:26). But that event will climax a series of preliminary events. In light of Old Testament usage and this context (Mk 13:14, 29-30) it is preferable to understand "**that day**" as referring to "the **Day of the Lord**." The "**Day of the Lord**" includes the Tribulation, the Second Advent, and the Millennium (cf. Isa. 2:12-22; Jer. 30:7-9; Joel 2:28-32; Amos 9:11; Zeph. 3:11-20; Zech. 12-14). It will begin suddenly and unexpectedly (cf. 1 Th 5:2+), so no one except the Father knows the critical moment.

Constable - Jesus' ignorance of this information was a result of His incarnation (Phil. 2:6-8). Jesus may not have known this information when He made this statement, but He probably knows the time of His return now.

Mark 13:33 "Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time will come.

- Mk 13:23,35-37 14:37,38 Mt 24:42-44 25:13 26:40,41 Lu 12:40 21:34-36 Ro 13:11,12,14 1Co 16:13 Eph 6:18 1Th 5:5-8 Heb 12:15 1Pe 4:7 5:8 Rev 3:2 16:15



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**BE READY
ALL THE TIME!**

Hiebert - The announcement of the coming of the end led easily into the need for watchfulness.

Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time will come- Since no one knows the day or the hour Jesus gives not one but two commands! Both commands are [present imperative](#) (see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) and call for continual vigilance! An always alert lifestyle is necessary because of the uncertainty of the time of Jesus' return. The verb for **alert** is **agrupneo** "*the opposite of listlessness, expressing alertness.*" In sum, **agrupneo** expresses wakefulness and watchfulness, for the latter could hardly transpire without the former.

Wiersbe - Watchfulness has nothing to do with going to heaven. It is purely a matter of pleasing Him, hearing His loving commendation, and receiving His reward (Matt. 25:14–30).

Hiebert says keep on the alert "has the root meaning "to chase sleep," hence, it is a call "to be awake," with the added idea of being on the lookout for danger."

Phillip Ryken comments that "every time Jesus talked about the end of the world, he always gave his disciples the same practical advice to get ready for it now, before the time comes. Jesus did not give us signs of the coming judgment so we could chart the future, but to exhort us to practice what J. C. Ryle described as "perpetual preparedness." Are you ready for the end of the world?" (Reformed Expository Commentary - Luke)

Take heed (look, beware, take care, take heed) (991)(see notes on [blepo](#)) This is the four use of this verb in Mark 13:5, 9, 33. Clearly a key point in the entire chapter is to be taking heed.

Be alert (keep watch)(69)([agrupneo](#) from **a** = without + **hupnos** = sleep; cp **agrupnia** - 2Co 6:5, 11:27) literally means to abstain completely from sleep, pass sleepless nights, to be sleepless, to lie awake and think about (Liddell Scott) to stay alert, and then figuratively to stay alert, to remain vigilant and fully aware of threatening peril, "to be alertly concerned about" (BDAG). The figurative picture is one who is spiritually alert and wide awake to spiritual intrusions (Mk 13:33, Lk 21:36, Ep 6:18). **Wuest** adds that **agrupneo** "*is the opposite of listlessness, expressing alertness.*" ([Ref](#)) In sum, **agrupneo** expresses wakefulness and watchfulness, for the latter could hardly transpire without the former. It is interesting that **BDAG** has two meanings for **agrupneo**, the first meaning "to be vigilant in awareness of threatening peril" which indeed would apply to all who are unbelievers, who are in great peril should Jesus return and they have procrastinated in regard to believing in Him! The second meaning in **BDAG** is to "be alertly concerned about" and would be apropos for all genuine believers. We keep alert because of our hope of heaven, while the lost world is vigilant regarding the peril of hell. Share the Good News with someone this week beloved reader! While we still have time! (cf 2 Cor 6:2).

A T Robertson - This means to be sleepless and so keep awake and be ready is the pith of Christ's warning.

Time (2540)([kairos](#)) in this context refers to all points of time, past, present, or future time, those times marked by suitability season, (favorable) time, opportunity (2 Cor 6.2). Jesus is saying that all times are the season for prayer, but is especially referring to the "last season," on earth preceding His return.

Mark 13:34 "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.

NET Mark 13:34 It is like a man going on a journey. He left his house and put his slaves in charge, assigning to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to stay alert.

NLT Mark 13:34 "The coming of the Son of Man can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. When he left home, he gave each of his slaves instructions about the work they were to do, and he told the gatekeeper to watch for his return.

ESV Mark 13:34 It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake.

NIV Mark 13:34 It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.

GNT Mark 13:34 ς νθρωπος π δημος φε ς τ ν ο κ αν α το κα δο ς το ς δο λοις α το τ ν ξουσ αν κ σ τ τ ργον α το κα τ θυρωρ νετε λατο να γρηγορ .

KJV Mark 13:34 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.

YLT Mark 13:34 as a man who is gone abroad, having left his house, and given to his servants the authority, and to each one his work, did command also the porter that he may watch;

ASV Mark 13:34 It is as when a man, sojourning in another country, having left his house, and given authority to his servants, to each one his work, commanded also the porter to watch.

CSB Mark 13:34 It is like a man on a journey, who left his house, gave authority to his slaves, gave each one his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to be alert.

- **it is like a man:** Mt 24:45 25:14-30 Lu 19:12-17
- **and to:** Ro 12:4-8 13:6 1Co 3:5-10 12:4-31 15:58 Col 3:24 4:1
- **and commanded:** Eze 3:17-21 33:2-9 Mt 24:45-47 Lu 12:36-40 Ac 20:29-31
- **the doorkeeper :** Mt 16:19 Joh 10:3 Rev 3:7

THE PARABLE OF THE ABSENT HOUSEHOLDER

This story is unique to Mark.

It - What is "IT"? From the immediate context it refers to the appointed time, and in the greater context, the time of Christ's return.

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 (see [gregoreuo](#) below) - Be on the alert is present tense calling for this to be his continual duty. Gregoreuo means to keep awake and figuratively to be watchful or vigilant.

Hiebert on doorkeeper - The porter was the doorkeeper who guarded the outer gate, thus controlling all access to the entire house.

Wuest - Vincent's note is helpful: "The apostles are thus compared with the **doorkeepers**, verse 34; and the night season is in keeping with the figure. In the temple, during the night, the captain of the temple made his rounds, and the guards had to rise at his approach and salute him in a particular manner. Any guard found asleep on duty was beaten, or his garments set on fire. Compare Revelation 16:15, 'Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments.' The preparations for the morning service required all to be early astir. The superintending priest might knock at the door at any moment. The Rabbis use almost the very words in which scripture describes the unexpected coming of the Master. Sometimes he comes at the cockcrowing, sometimes a little earlier, sometimes a little later. He came and knocked and they opened to him (Edersheim, 'The Temple')." The words "when the time is" of verse 33 are defined in their context as the time of the return of the Master, namely, the second Advent of the Messiah to Israel.

Mark 13:35 "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 in the morning--"

NET Mark 13:35 Stay alert, then, because you do not know when the owner of the house will return— whether during evening, at midnight, when the rooster crows, or at dawn—

NLT Mark 13:35 You, too, must keep watch! For you don't know when the master of the household will return-- in the evening, at midnight, before dawn, or at daybreak.

ESV Mark 13:35 Therefore stay awake-- for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning--

NIV Mark 13:35 "Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back--whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn.

GNT Mark 13:35 γρηγορετε ο ν ο κ ο δατε γ ρ π τε κ ρ ι ο ς τ ς ο κ α ς ρ χ ε τ α ι , ψ μ ε σ ο ν κ τ ι ο ν λεκτοροφων ας πρω ,

KJV Mark 13:35 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:

YLT Mark 13:35 watch ye, therefore, for ye have not known when the lord of the house doth come, at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or at the morning;

ASV Mark 13:35 Watch therefore: for ye know not when the lord of the house cometh, whether at even, or at

midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning;

CSB Mark 13:35 Therefore be alert, since you don't know when the master of the house is coming-- whether in the evening or at midnight or at the crowing of the rooster or early in the morning.

NKJ Mark 13:35 "Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming-- in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning--

NRS Mark 13:35 Therefore, keep awake-- for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn,

- Mk 13:33 Mt 24:42,44

BE EVER READY

Therefore - Term of conclusion. Since you do not know the time of the master's return. Here Jesus applies the parable to His disciples but in verse 37 He widens it to include all disciples because nobody knows when Jesus Christ will return

Hiebert - In applying the lesson, Jesus made no distinction between the porter and the other servants. In their attitudes, all of His disciples must be like the porter.

Be on the alert is a command in the [present imperative](#) once again calling for us [to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#) this as our lifestyle or habitual practice.

Be on the alert (1127)([gregoreuo](#) from [egeiro](#) = to arise, arouse) means to be watchful or to refrain from physical sleep. Later [gregoreuo](#) came to be used in the moral and religious sphere and was used to call for one to **be on the alert**, in a **constant state of readiness** and **vigilant** (alertly watchful especially to avoid danger this word suggesting intense, unremitting, wary watchfulness; keenly alert to or heedful of trouble or danger as others are sleeping or unsuspecting). We are to be watchful and ready to respond to external influences, focused, alert for the winds of temptation or overt attacks of evil. We are to remain alert lest we be deceived by the devil the deceiver or sin which is deceitful (Heb 3:13).

For - Term of explanation, explaining why they (and we) were to be continually alert and vigilant.

You do not know when the master of the house is coming-This uncertainty should motivate diligence in maintaining an alert state. The word master is [kurios](#) which suggests that Jesus is applying the picture of the absent landlord to Himself.

Whether in the evening (6–9 P.M.), **at midnight** (9 P.M. till midnight), **or when the rooster crows** (midnight till 3 A.M.) **in the morning** (3–6 A.M.) - This was a common way to describe the four watches of the night (the Roman System of time). The point is that He could return on any of these watches. **Hiebert** notes that "The third watch derived its name from the familiar crowing of cocks about midway between midnight and sunrise."

Mark 13:36 in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep.

NET Mark 13:36 or else he might find you asleep when he returns suddenly.

NLT Mark 13:36 Don't let him find you sleeping when he arrives without warning.

ESV Mark 13:36 lest he come suddenly and find you asleep.

NIV Mark 13:36 If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping.

GNT Mark 13:36 μ λθ v ξα φνης ε ρ μ ς καθε δοντας.

KJV Mark 13:36 Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.

YLT Mark 13:36 lest, having come suddenly, he may find you sleeping;

ASV Mark 13:36 lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.

CSB Mark 13:36 Otherwise, he might come suddenly and find you sleeping.

NKJ Mark 13:36 "lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.

NRS Mark 13:36 or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly.

NAB Mark 13:36 May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping.

NJB Mark 13:36 if he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep.

GWN Mark 13:36 Make sure he doesn't come suddenly and find you asleep.

- **he finds:** Mk 14:37,40 Pr 6:9-11 24:33,34 Song 3:1 5:2 Isa 56:10 Mt 24:48-51 Mt 25:5 Lu 21:34 22:45 Ro 13:11-14 Eph 5:14 1Th 5:6,7

THE DANGER WARNINGS ARE INTENDED TO AVERT

in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep - **He** is Jesus. **You** is the disciples. The time of His return is unknown so that it will occur without warning. The idea of "**asleep**," would refer especially in the spiritual sense. .

Hiebert - Suddenly states not the speed but the unexpectedness of the return. "If the suddenness causes disaster, the fault lies with those who have not watched. The time of our Lord's absence is the *world's night*, but it is no time for His servants to yield to spiritual sleep, to grow unresponsive to the hope of His return.

Suddenly (1810) (**exaiphnes** from **ek** = of + **aiphnes** = suddenly) means happening unexpectedly, quickly without warning, unexpectedly, at once. Referring to the unexpected nature of Christ's Second Coming (Mk 13:36). Luke describes the sudden appearance of that "a light (the radiant Redeemer!) from heaven flashed around" Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:3+, Acts 22:6+). 5x - Mk. 13:36; Lk. 2:13; Lk. 9:39; Acts 9:3; Acts 22:6.

Sleep (2518) (**katheudo** from **katá** = an intensive + **heúdō** = to sleep) means literally to sleep, fall asleep or be fast asleep and figuratively to die or be dead (Matt. 9:24; Mark 5:39; Luke 8:52 cf. John 11:11-14; 1 Th. 5:10; Da 12:2). Another figurative sense speaks of an attitude of spiritual laziness or indifference, to be spiritually indolent, to be indifferent. The idea is to be "asleep" in your sin, secure and unconcerned in sin, or indolent and careless in the performance of duty (Eph 5:14, 1 Th 5:6, cf. parallel thought but not using *katheudo* in Ro 13:11-13; 1 Cor. 15:34).

Mark 13:37 "What I say to you I say to all, **Be on the alert!**"

- **I say:** Mk 13:33,35 Lu 12:41-46

WATCH FOR HIM

The NLT paraphrases it "I say to you what I say to everyone: Watch for him!"

Luke 21:34-36+ is a good parallel to this passage - '**Be on guard**, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap; 35 for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth. 36 "But **keep on the alert** at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

What I say to you I say to all, Be on the alert - Jesus repeats the command **be on the alert** and He is calling for this to be our lifestyle (**present imperative** calling for one **to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey!**) Notice the word **all** signifying that this command is for every disciple of every age.

Barclay says Jesus' command to **all** "gives us the great task of making every day fit for Him to see and being at any moment ready to meet him face to face. All life becomes a preparation to meet the King."

Wiersbe - the Parable of the Householder warns all of us today (Mark 13:37) to be alert, because we do not know when He will return to take us to heaven (1 Cor. 15:51-52). Like the householder in the story, before our Lord went from us back to heaven, He gave each of us work to do. He expects us to be faithful while He is gone and to be working when He returns. "Take heed, watch and pray" is His admonition.

MacArthur sums up Mark 13 - So in response to the disciples' question about the end of the age, the Lord Jesus explained that He would return after a long period of world history, which will culminate in a final, catastrophic period of global tribulation. Jesus carefully forewarned the future generation that will witness those final events, including the rise of the Antichrist and his desecration

of the temple, that the end is near. Though the events predicted in the Olivet Discourse are still future, its truth serves to instruct every generation of believers throughout church history. On the one hand, it serves as a vivid reminder that the things of this world are temporary (cf. 2 Peter 3:11–13; 1 John 2:15–17; 3:2–3), and that the redeemed are citizens of an eternal kingdom that is yet to be revealed on earth when the Lord comes in glory (Phil. 3:20–21; Heb. 11:16). On the other hand, it provides a compelling motivation for believers to proclaim the glorious gospel of Christ to those who are perishing, so that they might be saved from the impending judgment of God (cf. 2 Cor. 5:20–21; 2 Peter 3:14–15).

This reminds me of the words in first John

Now, little children, **abide** ([present imperative](#)) in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming. (1 John 2:28+)

And Paul's words in Second Corinthians

Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. 10 For we must **all** appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that **each one** may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, **according to what he has done**, whether good or bad. (2 Cor 5:9-10+)

Be on the alert ([1127](#)) see above on [gregoreuo](#)