

Mark 13 Jesus Prophecies the Destruction of Jerusalem

Jesus Foretells Destruction of the Temple

13 And as he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!” **2** And Jesus said to him, “Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.”

Signs of (the End of the Age) Coming Destruction of Jerusalem

3 And as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, **4** “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?” **5** And Jesus began to say to them, “See that no one leads you astray. **6** Many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he!’ and they will lead many astray. **7** And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. This must take place, but the end is not yet. **8** For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. These are but the beginning of the birth pains.

9 “But be on your guard. For they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them. **10** And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations. **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. **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. **13** And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

The Abomination of Desolation

14 “But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not to be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. **15** Let the one who is on the housetop not go down, nor enter his house, to take anything out, **16** and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. **17** And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! **18** Pray that it may not happen in winter. **19** For in those days there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be. **20** And if the Lord had not cut short the days, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he shortened the days. **21** And then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘Look, there he is!’ do not believe it. **22** For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. **23** But be on guard; I have told you all things beforehand.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ, we have read your Word and we thank you for it. This is a difficult passage to understand but we ask for the enlightenment of your Spirit so that we can uncover its truths and treasures. Teach us history today, the history recorded in your Word, and the accompanying records of the historians of that day. Show us O Christ, your greatness, your knowledge of the future, your divinity as the true and final prophet of God, we pray in your great name, the name above every name, the name of Jesus. Amen.

Among all the cities of the world, none has the long-standing status and importance of Jerusalem.

On it's mountain Abraham offered up his son Isaac on the altar....

King David brought to it the Ark

Solomon built temple – glory of God filled it.

Sacrifices for sin were made...

Jesus himself was dedicated to the Lord...

Jesus spent 3 days there at age 12

In his public ministry Jesus attended the 3 yearly feasts there.

He cleansed the temple there.

He predicted he would die there and also rise from the dead.

It is honored by 3 major world religions.

Jesus had love and pity for it, it's people:

Luke 19 – Jesus rode into Jerusalem and beheld the city and wept over it: (Lu. 19:41-44):

⁴¹ (B) And when he drew near and saw the city, (C) he wept over it, ⁴² saying, (D) “Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now (E) they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ For (F) the days will come upon you, when your enemies (G) will set up a barricade around you and (H) surround you and hem you in on every side ⁴⁴ (I) and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And (J) they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know (K) the time of your (L) visitation.”

-the visitation of the Messiah

He also said in Matt. 23 :37-39:

³⁷ “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! ³⁸ See, your house is left to you

desolate. ³⁹ For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'

The textual witnesses:

Matt. 24, Mark 13: luke 19:41-44; 21; 23:27-30.

Destruction of the Temple

13:1 And as he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!" ² And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down."

Jesus is predicting what will happen to these beautiful bldgs..

Strategy of this sermon:

What will happen to temple -v. 23

Next sermon: What will happen before he returns – v. 24ff

Beauty of the temple

Foundation Stones in temple were 60 feet in length, while superstructure on top of them was composed of the whitest marble, stone nearly 68 feet long, 7 feet high and 9 feet broad.

The temple was adorned with solid plates of gold.

After it was burned in 70AD the Roman soldiers got crowbars to chisel out the gold...

² And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down."

p. 42*, "The Roman soldiers not only threw down the buildings, but even dug up their foundations, and so completely levelled the whole circuit of the city, that a stranger would scarcely have known it had ever been inhabited by human beings.'

[*Note: page references are from:

The Destruction of Jerusalem, by George Peter Holford, 1805. Sixth American Edition, 2001, Covenant Media Press, Nacogdoches, TX]

Signs of the End of the Age (misleading)

³ And as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, ⁴ “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?”

In disciples minds all this was one great event: destruction of temple, Jesus' coming and end of Age. But Jesus describes two events.

Day of the Lord concept...

⁵ And Jesus began to say to them, “See that no one leads you astray. ⁶ Many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he!’ and they will lead many astray.

Historical records confirm that all Jesus predicted came true. My source is *The Destruction of Jerusalem* by George Holford, written in 1805, in which he summarizes the writings of **Josephus....**(general who fought against romans then went over to their side and wrote *The Jewish Wars and Antiquities of the Jews.*)

Tacitus - c. AD 56 – c. 120), was a Roman historian and politician. Tacitus is widely regarded as one of the greatest Roman historians by modern scholars.^{[4][5]}

The surviving portions of his two major works—the Annals (Latin: *Annales*) and the Histories (Latin: *Historiae*)—examine the reigns of the emperors Tiberius, Claudius, Nero, and those who reigned in the Year of the Four Emperors (69 AD).^[6] These two works span the history of the Roman Empire from the death of Augustus (14 AD) to the death of Domitian (96 AD),

And Eusebius...

⁵ And Jesus began to say to them, “See that no one leads you astray. ⁶ Many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he!’ and they will lead many astray.

One year after the ascension, Dositheus the Samaritan, asserted he was the Messiah whom Moses prophesied, while his disciple Simon Magus (Acts 8) deluded multitude into believing the himself was ‘the great power of God. “Several more appeared over the years and gathered followings and attacked and defeated by the Roman governors.

⁷ And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. This must take place, but the end is not yet. ⁸ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.

Holford states that the whole period up to AD 70 Josephus recorded 150 pages of bloodshed. For example, about 3 years after Christ’s death, war broke out between Herod and Aretas, king of Arabia Petraea.

In Alexandria, Egypt, the Jews rebelled against Roman rule and the Romans retaliated by killing 50,000 of them “sparing neither infants nor the aged” p. 12

In fact, the whole Jewish nation rose up against the Romans which led to Judea being "deluged in blood" and then Jerusalem laid in ruins.

There will be earthquakes in various places;

Tacitus records, for example, one in Apamea in Syria, which was so destructive that the emperor "in order to relieve the distresses of the inhabitants, remitted its tribute for five years." P. 14

there will be famines.

Acts 11:28 -

And one of them named **Agabus** stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius).

Agabus foretold one in days of Claudius in Acts "felt most severely in Judea 'where many perished for want of bread.'"

Paul records in 1 Cor.16:3 how the Gentile Christian converts in places like Galatia sent contributions to relieve their brethren in Judea.

These are but the beginning of the birth pains.

⁹ "But be on your guard. For they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them.

Stephen was stoned to death (Acts 7)

Acts 24:24-25 – Paul before Governor Felix:

²⁴ After some days Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, and he sent for Paul and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁵ And as he reasoned about righteousness and self-control and the coming judgment, Felix was alarmed and said, "Go away for the present. When I get an opportunity, I will summon you."

Acts 26:24-28 – Paul before King Agrippa:

²⁴ And as he was saying these things in his defense, [governor] Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you are out of your mind; your great learning is driving you out of your mind."²⁵ But Paul said, "I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I am speaking true and rational words. ²⁶ For the king knows about these things, and to him I speak boldly. For I am persuaded that none of these things has escaped his notice, for this has not been done in a corner. ²⁷ King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe." ²⁸ And Agrippa said to Paul, "In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?"^[a]

¹⁰ And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations.

Tacitus asserts that “the Christian religion, which arose in Judea, spread over many parts of the worlds, and extended to Rome itself where there was a great multitude.” P. 22

“Eusebius [Greek historian of Christianity – late 200’s and early 300’s) says that “the Apostles preached the Gospel in all the world, and that some of them passed beyond the bounds of the ocean and visited the Britannic isles.” P. 22

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

All apostles martyred except John. Many Christians persecuted and died.

The Abomination of Desolation

¹⁴ “But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not to be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

Abomination of desolation^[Notes 1] is a phrase from the Book of Daniel describing the pagan sacrifices with which the 2nd century BCE Greek king Antiochus IV replaced the twice-daily offering in the Jewish temple. Pig was offered in sacrifice.

When the Roman army entered the city, they carried banners with emblems of their gods and emperors on them. Soldiers entered temple and burned it.

¹⁵ Let the one who is on the housetop not go down, nor enter his house, to take anything out, ¹⁶ and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. ¹⁷ And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days!

¹⁸ Pray that it may not happen in winter. ¹⁹ For in those days there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be. ²⁰ And if the Lord had not cut short the days, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he shortened the days. ²¹ And then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘Look, there he is!’ do not believe it. ²² For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. ²³ But be on guard; I have told you all things beforehand.

Vespasian led the siege first but when Emperor Nero died he went back to Rome to assess the situation, which gave the Jews a 2 year reprieve.

According to Josephus, the siege of the city under Titus happened quickly, on Passover, when thousands of Jews had come to the city.

The Jews rushed out of the city and engaged the 10th legion and repulsed it, giving an opportunity for some to escape the city.

The destruction of the City:

p. 36 “The ground could not be seen for the dead bodies, over which the Romans trampled in pursuit of the fugitives; while the crackling noise of the devouring flames mingles with the clamor of arms, the groans of the dying and the shrieks of despair, augmented by the tremendous horror of a scene, to which the pages of history can furnish not parallel.” P. 37

Meanwhile, the Jewish factions continued to fight among themselves.

The Romans gained control of two of the three walls defending the city, then famine struck. The Jews violently snatched food from one another.

The besieged Jews “were compelled to eat their belts, their sandals, the skins of their shields, dried grass and ox manure – one Jewess cooked and ate her infant.

As starvation ravaged the besieged Jews, food for babies was taken from them. P. 31

Some left the city and fell into the clutches of the Romans who crucified great numbers of them.

Titus pleaded (p. 31) for the Jews to surrender but they refused.

p. 40, “Before their final demolition...Titus took a survey of the city and its fortifications; and, while contemplating their impregnable strength, was to have said this, “Had not God himself aided our operations and driven the Jews from their fortresses, it would have been absolutely impossible to have taken them...”

p. 41 “Josephus reckons that 1,100,000 Jews died in the siege”

p. 43 Josephus wrote: “If the misfortunes of all nations, from the beginning of the world, were compared with those which befell the Jews, they would appear far less in comparison.... no other city every suffered such things, as no other generation, from the beginning of the world, was ever more fruitful in wickedness.”

See Isa. 6:11-12

All the Christians escaped because they heeded Christ’s warning as seen recorded in

Luke 21:20ff:

²⁰ “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. ²¹ Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it, ²² for these are days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written. ²³ Alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! For there will be great distress upon the earth and wrath against this people. ²⁴ They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

APPLICATIONS

I. Jesus was the true and final prophet of God

Deut. 18:21-22

²¹ And if you say in your heart, ‘How may we know the word that the Lord has not spoken?’— ²² when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him.

Heb: 1

1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. Jesus’s predictions came true down to the smallest detail. How did he know exactly what would happen 40 years from then?

II. To reject the Messiah was a sin with the utmost terrible consequences.

III. Judgment on the Jews was a **foretaste of the judgement** coming on all who reject Jesus.

IV. We are **responsible** to respond to the revelation God has given to us (the Jews).

V. If you are not a believer, **flee the wrath to come** and run to Jesus.

VI. If you are a believer, **give unending thanks** to God.

Closing Prayer...

Next time: Signs of Jesus’ Coming.

Jeff Gregory, pastor
Good Shepherd Community Church, March 19, 2023