

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 12TH, 2025 // GOSPEL OF MARK

THE GREAT TRIBULATION (MARK 13:14–23) WHAT IS THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION?

The phrase used by Jesus is taken from the words of Daniel (9:27; 11:31; 12:11).

- The word *abomination* is used 29 times in the OT and suggests something detestable and offensive to God. *Desolation* implies that the people of God will be unable to occupy the temple and abandon it because of the abomination.

PAST FULFILLMENT OF THE PROPHECY

There is a sense that the prophecy of Daniel was fulfilled in the past, but why would Jesus mention it here if it was already fulfilled?

- In 167 B.C., the Syrian Ruler Antiochus Epiphanes desecrated the temple by sacrificing a pig on the altar, set up public brothels in the courts, and set up a statue of Zeus outside the Holy Place.

FUTURE FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY

Jesus' words seem to have a dual meaning in that the prophecy and warnings can be attributed to the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D. while still pointing to a future event.

- Essentially, there is a time before the return of Christ when a Jewish temple will be desecrated with such defilement that it will bring about the judgment of God.

- **2 Thessalonians 2:3b–4**

“FOR THOSE WILL BE DAYS OF TRIBULATION...”

It seems that Jesus is describing tribulations that the Jews would face during the fall of Jerusalem while shifting into a tribulation unlike anything that has been seen before and that will never be seen again.

- The language here is borrowed from Daniel to describe a period of time, known as the Great Tribulation, before the return of Christ.

- **Daniel 12:1b**

- **Daniel 12:11**

“AND YOU MUST WATCH!”

Revelation 14–19 gives us further details into this time of falling away and rebellion that leads to God's judgment and wrath being poured out during the end times.

- Jesus reminds us again to **be alert and ready** so that we are not deceived by false messiahs and prophets performing signs and wonders.

THE SON OF MAN RETURNS (MARK 13:24–27) “BUT IN THOSE DAYS, AFTER THAT TRIBULATION”

Jesus is describing catastrophes in the cosmos that will happen in those days after the tribulation right before the return of Christ.

- Phrases like “in those days” and “the day of the Lord” are used interchangeably throughout Scripture to refer to the end times. Jesus is encouraging us that tribulation will end with the return of the King of the cosmos.

TEMPORARY GIVES WAY TO THE ETERNAL

The first time Jesus came to earth it was seen by a few people who visited Him at His birth, but His return will be seen by all as the “Son of Man” returns “with great power and glory.”

- The King of the universe will return to gather His people on Earth and those who have gone before us to celebrate His return and be with Him for all eternity.

PARABLE OF THE FIG TREE (MARK 13:28–31) “HE IS NEAR—AT THE DOOR.”

There is an order that must be followed when it comes to a fig tree: The leaves appear, then summer follows. Likewise, there is an order to the events leading up to the return of Christ.

- Just as a fig tree survives the brutal winter and produces leaves indicating that summer is near, so the agonies of tribulation will cease and indicate that **the return of Christ is near**.

WHAT WAS JESUS REFERRING TO?

Jesus said to His disciples on the Mount of Olives, “Truly I tell you, **this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things take place.**”

- Two questions arise when looking at Jesus' statement: Who is “**this generation**”? And what was He referring to with “**all these things**”?

A POSSIBLE INTERPRETATION

Since the disciples sitting with Him did pass away before seeing the triumphant return of Jesus, He could not have been talking about them as individuals.

- Some people believe “**this generation**” refers to a **race or people**, meaning that Jesus is promising that the Jewish people will not cease to exist before the end of all things.

ADHERING TO TRUTH IN UNCERTAINTY

Most likely, when taken in context with what surrounds these statements in the other Gospels, Jesus is referring to a **future generation that will be alive when these events unfold**.

- Whether “this generation” refers to all mankind or Christians alone, we know **these events will happen quickly** once set in motion and **God's heart is that none would perish** (2 Peter 3:9).

GOD OPERATES IN THE ABSOLUTE

Jesus makes a claim to His deity, saying that the created world we see is temporary. Heaven and earth will one day cease to exist, but His words will last forever.

- Jesus is sovereign over creation (Colossians 1:16) and in the undoing of what was created (Revelation 21:1; 2 Peter 3:10). **We can trust Jesus above anything this world offers.**

PAY ATTENTION (MARK 13:32–37) FULLY GOD, FULLY MAN

Jesus is God and omniscient (all-knowing). Not knowing the date of His return does not diminish or cast aside His claim to divinity.

- Just like His transfiguration displayed the great power He contained in flesh while fully God and fully man, this too displays how unfathomable His power is, that **He voluntarily chose to restrict His knowledge of this event.**

“NO ONE KNOWS... BUT ONLY THE FATHER.”

Jesus' disciples wanted to know when these things would take place (13:4), and He told them that He did not know the date of His return and that an exact timeline was not to be their focus.

- At His ascension, Jesus told the disciples that it was not for them “**to know times or periods that the Father has set by His own authority**” (Acts 1:7).

- **Luke 21:36**

ALWAYS WATCHING

Four times in six verses, Jesus emphasized the need for us to pay attention.

- Since we do not know when Jesus is coming, some of us will be lulled to sleep because He has not returned yet. Some of us will try to predict a date and time. Instead, since we do not know, we must **be alert, eager, and ready for Him to return**.

JESUS IS COMING SOON

- How soon is soon? Since “soon” could be five minutes, five years, or five centuries, we should live as if His return is imminent.
- To live as if Jesus is returning soon will create a sense of urgency in us to make sure our house is in order.
- Living as if Jesus is returning soon has a way of putting things in proper perspective.
- If we are living as if Jesus' return is imminent, it will cause us to loosen our grip on the things of this world.
- The thought of Jesus returning soon should open us up to honest self-evaluation and purification through repentance.
- Believing Jesus is coming soon will embolden us to tell others.