

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 5TH, 2025 // GOSPEL OF MARK

DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE (MARK 13:1-2) THE SECOND TEMPLE

The first temple, known as Solomon's Temple, was built in the 10th Century and destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.

- The second temple was started by exiled Jews returning from Persia in 538 B.C. and underwent a massive renovation and expansion under King Herod beginning in 19 B.C.

"TEACHER, LOOK! WHAT MASSIVE STONES!"

The second temple remodel started in 19 B.C. and was completed only seven years before its destruction in 63 A.D. The temple was viewed as one of the great wonders of the ancient world.

- Gold plates covered the outside of the temple and were blinding in the sun. Where gold did not cover, massive blocks of pure marble were laid, which looked like snow from a distance.

"WHAT IMPRESSIVE BUILDINGS!"

It is no wonder the disciples were impressed by the sight of the temple.

- The temple was the center of Jewish life for almost 1,000 years. For many Jews in Jesus' day, the temple had become an idol. The temple was a good thing, but when it began to be more important to some than God Himself, it became an idol.

EVENTUAL DESTRUCTION OF THE SECOND TEMPLE

Jesus' prophecy that **"not one stone will be left upon another"** came to fruition 40 years later when Romans leveled Jerusalem.

- Historical writings say that the surviving Jews retreated to the fortified temple as a drunken Roman soldier set it on fire, melting the gold between the cracks of the temple. To retrieve the gold, the temple was taken apart stone by stone.

SIGNS OF HIS RETURN (MARK 13:3-8)

"TELL US..."

Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives with His inner circle of disciples (Peter, James, and John), and they included Peter's brother Andrew.

- With the temple in view, the disciples asked Jesus, **"When will these things happen? And what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?"**

HIS WORDS ARE STILL APPLICABLE

Jesus' response impacts not only the disciples who surrounded Him that day on the Mount of Olives but also those who would come to hear and believe His words in the future.

- Jesus prepared His disciples then and now for how we are to not only **live in a hostile world** but also **go out into a hostile world proclaiming the gospel** (Matthew 10:16).

APOCALYPTIC PROPHECIES

This section, known as the Olivet Discourse, contains some prophecies that would be fulfilled with the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D. while others will be fulfilled during a time of tribulation before Jesus' second coming.

- Jesus gives no date and time for these events. Instead, **He tells us to be awake and ready** (Matthew 24:43; 1 Thessalonians 5:2; Revelation 16:15; 2 Peter 3:10).

"WATCH OUT THAT NO ONE DECEIVES YOU."

Jesus warns His followers about the danger of false messiahs who will come claiming to be Jesus or representatives of Jesus.

- There will be many throughout history who will come claiming to be the Messiah and offer solutions to fix the problems of this world. **The only way we can tell what is false is to be familiar with truth.**

"WARS AND RUMORS OF WARS"

Jesus warned us not to be alarmed and deceived by political conflicts. There will be **false messiahs, wars, famines**, and earthquakes, but these are not signs of the end.

- An **absence of these things** should not lull us to sleep, but we must also not be so quick to view the **presence of these** events as benchmarks pointing to end times.

"THESE ARE THE BEGINNING OF BIRTH PAINS."

Jesus said these catastrophes will happen, and though they do not signal the end, they are the beginning of birth pains.

- As contractions grow more intense and closer together before a child is born so will these calamities increase in intensity and frequency before Christ's return. **We can have confidence during suffering, knowing it is part of God's plan.**

PERSECUTION (MARK 13:9-13)

PUBLIC PERSECUTIONS

Jesus told His disciples to be prepared to suffer publicly. This persecution is not a sign of the end but is simply to be expected.

- Jesus revealed the purpose in their persecution: They would be a witness to those who persecute them. **Persecution does not relieve the church's responsibility to preach the gospel.**

COMPLEMENTARY, NOT CONTRADICTORY

Peter said we are to always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks us to give the reason for the hope we have (1 Peter 3:15), but Jesus said not to worry beforehand what we will say (v. 11).

- These two passages fit together, telling the Believer to **be prepared** yet **unafraid** when facing opposition because the Holy Spirit is with us.

PRIVATE PERSECUTIONS

Jesus warned His disciples that they would not only face public humiliation but also **face persecution from their own families**, to the point that some would be put to death.

- Jesus' followers at this time would have come out of families who still practiced Judaism, and to follow Jesus, **they ran the risk of being cast out of the family and viewed as dead.**

LEAVING THE NORTH AMERICAN MINDSET

Few Christians in the Western world currently face persecution like Jesus described, but for the rest of the world these persecutions are a reality.

- In 2023, it was reported that **365 million Christians suffer high levels of persecution**. Places like Nigeria, North Korea, India, China, Pakistan, Somalia, and Sudan remain some of the most dangerous places for Christians.

PRODUCING ENDURANCE, CHARACTER, AND HOPE

This hatred towards Christians is not limited to governing bodies or relatives. Jesus said, **"You will be hated by everyone because of my name."**

- To identify with Christ means we can expect persecution (2 Timothy 3:12), even from those closest to us. However, **suffering for Christ can move us into a deeper relationship with Him and His Church** (Philippians 3:10-11; Romans 8:17; 1 Peter 4:13).

FAITH TRIUMPHS

"The one who endures to the end will be saved" does not imply a doctrine of works-based salvation. The ancient Greek word used for "endure" literally means to "remain under."

- When we face persecution, we cannot be so desperate for a way out that we compromise our faith. **If we have genuine faith, we will not give up on that faith under intense persecution.**

ALERT AND READY

- We are not to be distracted by timelines and events concerning His return, but we are to remain **alert and ready**.
- We must be **connected to Christ** so that we are not deceived.
- A **relationship with the true Messiah** and **reading the Word** are how we know what is false.

A GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE

- God does not use the reality of eternal blessing or consequence to scare us but to wake us.
- God does not tell us we will face persecution to scare us, but to prepare us and give us confidence and trust in Him.
- What is God showing you that He is graciously giving you the opportunity to address?