

tion of desolation standing where he ought not (let him that readeth understand), then let them that are in Judaea flee unto the mountains: and let him that is on the housetop not go down, nor enter in, to take anything out of his house; and let him that is in the field not return back to take his cloak" (14-16).

1. The "abomination of desolation" refers to the heathen armies of Rome which would surround the holy city, and stand "where he ought not."
2. This final sign was the time given for immediate flight from the city by Christians "in Judaea."
3. Haste in departure was more necessary than any material possession.

B. Such tribulation as hath not been: "But woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days! And pray ye that it be not in winter. For those days shall be tribulation, such as there hath not been the like from the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never shall be. And except the Lord had shortened the days, no flesh would have been saved; but for the elect's sake, whom he chose, he shortened those days" (17-20).

1. Josephus witnessed and recorded the war which was almost "an echo of the prediction of Christ"--B.W. Johnson, People's New Testament with Notes, I, 131.
2. Such tribulation would have destroyed the whole human race, had the Lord not "shortened those days."

V. MORE WARNINGS AGAINST FALSE CHRISTS: "And then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is the Christ; or, Lo, there; believe it not: for there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show signs and wonders, that they may lead astray, if possible, the elect. But take ye heed: behold, I have told you all things beforehand" (13:21-23).

STUDIES IN MARK--LESSON THIRTY-EIGHT

Destruction of the Temple Foretold

Mark 13:1-23; Matt. 24:1-28; Luke 21:5-24

INTRODUCTION -

I. LESSON LINKS AND CONTEXT.

- A. After observing and commending the poor widow's offering, and after his encounter with the Greeks in the temple (Mark 12:41-44; John 12:20-50), Jesus departed from the temple (Matt. 24:1; Mark 13:1; John 12:36).
- B. He was then leaving God's house never to return to it.

II. NATURE AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE LESSON.

- A. The forecast of the destruction of the temple is part of a prophecy delivered to the disciples privately, consisting of two parts: (1) The destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish state (Mark 13:1-23); and (2) the Messianic coming (13:24-37).
- B. The temple they observed was actually the third which occupied that site, having been started by Herod, and requiring forty-six years and some 10,000 skilled workmen to complete (John 2:20).
- C. They were greatly astonished at the Lord's word that it would be utterly destroyed so that not one stone would be left upon another.
- D. This lesson emphasizes our need of watchfulness (13:3-10,31-37).

DISCUSSION -

I. OCCASION OF THE PREDICTION (13:1-4).

- A. Behold: "And as he went forth out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Teacher, behold, what manner of stones and what manner of buildings" (1)!
 1. As Jesus and his disciples were leaving, the disciples called his attention to the buildings of the temple and how it was adorned with goodly stones and offerings (Matt. 24:1; Luke 21:5).
 2. The temple was a massive limestone structure (Josephus says marble), presenting such an appearance of permanence that disciples from Galilee "connected its destruction with the end of the world"--John T. Hinds, Annual Lesson Commentary, 5-28-33.
- B. Not one upon another: "And Jesus said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left here one stone upon another, which shall not be thrown down" (2).
 1. This prediction greatly astonished the apostles, raising later discussion.

2. This forecast was literally fulfilled within forty years.
- C. Asked privately: "And as he sat on the Mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when these things are all about to be accomplished" (3,4)?
1. McGarvey-Pendleton say "he was in the middle portion of the mountain, for that is the part...opposite to the temple."
 2. Only the four fishermen were present when Andrew asked the question, and only these four were present to hear the discourse which embraces all of Mark 13, and Matthew 24 and 25.
 3. Matthew 24:3 reveals that the second part of the question was a request for "the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"
- II. FALSE CHRISTS, WARS, EARTHQUAKES, FAMINES (13:5-8).
- A. Be not deceived: "And Jesus began to say unto them, Take heed that no man lead you astray" (5; cf. Lk.21:8).
1. Man often departs from God by being misled, so watch.
 2. The mistake of being led astray by a false Christ would be tragic.
- B. Shall lead many astray: "Many shall come in my name, saying, I am he; and shall lead many astray" (6).
1. This first sign of the approaching destruction would involve various claims by false messiahs, resulting in many being led astray (Matt. 24:5).
 2. Though there is a day of reckoning, pretenders leave a sorry and sorrowful record on the earth.
- C. Wars: "And when ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, be not troubled: these things must needs come to pass; but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.." (7,8a).
1. Though nation rising against nation, and rumors thereof, have persisted for centuries, historians have recorded several such uprisings which did occur before the destruction of Jerusalem.
 2. "The end is not yet" must refer to the Jewish state.
- D. Great natural disturbances: "There shall be earthquakes in divers places; there shall be famines: these things are the beginning of travail" (8b).
1. Whatever calamities preceded the end of the Jewish system, unparalleled sorrow was to follow such "beginning of travail."
 2. The literal fulfillment of the Saviour's predictions served as a sign confirming their faith in his

- divine foreknowledge of these things.
- III. PERSECUTION OF THE DISCIPLES TO PRECEDE THE END (13:9-13).
- A. Outbreak of persecution: "But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in synagogues shall ye be beaten; and before governors and kings shall ye stand for my sake, and for a testimony unto them" (9).
1. This is the fourth sign given by Jesus.
 2. The book of Acts furnishes much evidence of its fulfillment.
- B. Must first be preached: "And the gospel must first be preached unto all the nations" (10).
1. Cf. Col. 1:6,23: "All the world" (Matt. 24:14) is here understood to mean the "whole world" known in that period.
 2. "Jerusalem," the seat of the old dispensation, was not removed until the new dispensation was sown throughout the then known world"—McGarvey-Pendleton, 624.
- C. Be not anxious: "And when they lead you to judgment, and deliver you up, be not anxious beforehand what ye shall speak: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye, for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Spirit" (11).
1. Whatever the circumstances, the disciple of Jesus was to be under divine protection and providential care. Cf. Luke 21:18: "Not a hair of your head" shall perish.
 2. This is the third time Jesus made this promise (Matthew 10:20; Luke 12:12).
- D. Brother betray brother: "And brother shall deliver up brother to death, and the father his child; and children shall rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death" (12).
- Fired by hatred for the faith in Christ, persecution would prove to be stronger than family ties.
- E. Hated of all men: "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved" (13).
1. That Christians were so hated is confirmed by the Roman Tacitus.
 2. Whatever the state of the Christian--prosperity or adversity--faithfulness unto "the end" is essential (Rev. 2:10; etc).
 3. "In your patience ye shall win your souls" (Luke 21:19).
- IV. THE LAST SIGN, AND THE SIGNAL FOR FLIGHT (13:14-20).
- A. Jerusalem compassed: "But when ye see the abomina-