



Mark 13:1-2 - Some Thoughts on Judgment

Setting the Stage for the Olivet Discourse, January 27, 2013

Text: Mark 13:1-2

Synoptic Readings:

- *Mat 24:1-2 ESV Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. (2) But he answered them, "You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down."*
- *Luk 21:5-9 ESV And while some were speaking of the temple, how it was adorned with noble stones and offerings, he said, (6) "As for these things that you see, the days will come when there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down." (7) And they asked him, "Teacher, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?" (8) And he said, "See that you are not led astray. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is at hand!' Do not go after them. (9) And when you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified, for these things must first take place, but the end will not be at once."*

Setting the Stage for the Olivet Discourse

- There are a few things we must keep in mind as we prepare to look at the Lord's discourse or discussions concerning eschatological events. Today is about that preparation. Then, before we go further, I'd like to offer some thoughts (hopefully encouraging ones) on judgment in Scripture.

A Balanced Hermeneutic

Let's review our Hermeneutical rules:

1. **Rule 1: A text cannot mean what it never could have meant to its author or his or her readers.**
 - a. This rule anchors us into the author's and hearer's context, and gives us a "foundation" from which to interpret and apply the passage we are reading.
2. **Rule 2: Whenever we share the same context with the original hearers, God's Word to us is the same as His Word to them.**
 - a. For example, people still struggle with lust, so commands against lust are binding. However we don't sacrifice sheep because Christ has come.
 - b. It is critical we don't try to culturalize the Text. We then run the risk of allowing carnality to interpret God's Word.
3. **Rule 3: The clear must interpret the unclear.**
 - a. Here is the process. Keeping all the rules in mind, we start with the most clear: biblical precepts (commands). Then we move to principles and patterns.
 - b. Precepts inform principles and supersede patterns. The patterns themselves must be considered in light of both precepts and principles. When we have a precept in context, we have God's Word on an issue and other passages must be interpreted in light of what is clearly stated. This is a HUGE point.
 - c. In the absence of precepts we then look to principles, and we do so considering those principles that are overarching. These include God's power (His sovereignty), God's person (His character), and God's plan. This also includes viewing passages through the lens of Christ...His Person, His Gospel, His Work, and His New Covenant. This is especially helpful in understanding the Old Testament.

Judgment/Prophetic Scriptures and their Interpretation,...some Help

1. One of the problems we encounter trying to interpret prophetic passages is figuring out what time frame the prophet meant.
 - a. A massive mistake is to assume that we (not the original hearers) can figure out the times without anchoring in the context!
2. There are three “times” or seasons normally one can observe:
 - a. The fore-future, which describes events that are relatively imminent, perhaps within a generation from the hearers.
 - b. The far-future, which describes events that are a “long” way off.
 - c. The final-future, which describes events that are final consummation in nature, i.e. the return of Christ and final judgment...new heaven/new earth stuff. ☺
3. To give you some examples...which “times” would you assign to the following Scriptures:
 - a. *Mic 5:2 ESV But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. Fore, far, or final in context?*
 - b. *Joh 2:18-21 ESV So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" (19) Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." (20) The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" (21) But he was speaking about the temple of his body. Fore, far, or final in context?*
 - c. *Joh 5:28-29 ESV Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice (29) and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment. Fore, far, or final in context?*
4. Now in our text today, it is quite easy from the perspective of history: the Lord meant the “fore-future.”
 - a. The Temple in Jerusalem, the place that gave Israel it’s theological and sociological identity, was destroyed by Rome in 70AD, along with most of the city.
 - b. It was a magnificent and massive structure, and was the heart of Israel in every way, for it was the House of God.
 - c. The Roman generals, Vespasian and Titus, laid siege against the land, and finally completely destroyed the city, killing an estimated one million people by starvation and the sword.
5. Let’s read a few quotes on the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman historian, Josephus:
 - a. "...the rebels shortly after attacked the Romans again, and a clash followed between the guards of the sanctuary and the troops who were putting out the fire inside the inner court; the latter routed the Jews and followed in hot pursuit right up to the Temple itself. Then one of the soldiers, without awaiting any orders and with no dread of so momentous a deed, but urged on by some supernatural force, snatched a blazing piece of wood and, climbing on another soldier's back, hurled the flaming brand through a low golden window that gave access, on the north side, to the rooms that surrounded the sanctuary. As the flames shot up, the Jews let out a shout of dismay that matched the tragedy; they flocked to the rescue, with no thought of sparing their lives or husbanding their strength; for the sacred structure that they had constantly guarded with such devotion was vanishing before their very eyes.



- b. "Most of the slain were peaceful citizens, weak and unarmed, and they were butchered where they were caught. The heap of corpses mounted higher and higher about the altar; a stream of blood flowed down the Temple's steps, and the bodies of those slain at the top slipped to the bottom."
 - c. "When Caesar failed to restrain the fury of his frenzied soldiers, and the fire could not be checked, he entered the building with his generals and looked at the holy place of the sanctuary and all its furnishings, which exceeded by far the accounts current in foreign lands and fully justified their splendid repute in our own."
 - d. As the flames had not yet penetrated to the inner sanctum, but were consuming the chambers that surrounded the sanctuary, Titus assumed correctly that there was still time to save the structure; he ran out and by personal appeals he endeavored to persuade his men to put out the fire, instructing Liberalius, a centurion of his bodyguard of lancers, to club any of the men who disobeyed his orders. But their respect for Caesar and their fear of the centurion's staff who was trying to check them were overpowered by their rage, their detestation of the Jews, and an utterly uncontrolled lust for battle.
 - e. "Most of them were spurred on, moreover, by the expectation of loot, convinced that the interior was full of money and dazzled by observing that everything around them was made of gold. But they were forestalled by one of those who had entered into the building, and who, when Caesar dashed out to restrain the troops, pushed a firebrand, in the darkness, into the hinges of the gate. Then, when the flames suddenly shot up from the interior, Caesar and his generals withdrew, and no one was left to prevent those outside from kindling the blaze. Thus, in defiance of Caesar's wishes, the Temple was set on fire.
 - f. "The Temple Mount, everywhere enveloped in flames, seemed to be boiling over from its base; yet the blood seemed more abundant than the flames and the numbers of the slain greater than those of the slayers. The soldiers climbed over heaps of bodies as they chased the fugitives."
6. Why was this judgment so harsh?
- a. Because the people committed the greatest sin, the unforgiveable sin: they rejected Christ.
 - b. In the Old Testament, God punished His people twice for basically rejecting Him to worship false Gods, and it was just as severe..
 - The Assyrian Captivity, around beginning 740-722BC:
2Ki 17:6-9 ESV In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria, and he carried the Israelites away to Assyria and placed them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. (7) And this occurred because the people of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods (8) and walked in the customs of the nations whom the LORD drove out before the people of Israel, and in the customs that the kings of Israel had practiced. (9) And the people of Israel did secretly against the LORD their God things that were not right. They built for themselves high places in all their towns, from watchtower to fortified city.
 - The Babylonian Captivity, beginning around 599 BC.
Jer 3:6-9 ESV The LORD said to me in the days of King Josiah: "Have you seen what she did, that faithless one, Israel, how she went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and there played the whore? (7) And I thought, 'After she has done all this she will return to me,' but she did not return, and her treacherous sister Judah saw it. (8) She saw that for all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away with a decree of divorce. Yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but she too went and played the whore. (9) Because

she took her whoredom lightly, she polluted the land, committing adultery with stone and tree.

- c. If God judged His people for rejecting His written Word, then surely judgment would come for rejecting the Living Word...one greater than the Temple!
- d. *Mat 12:6 ESV I tell you, something greater than the temple is here.*

It's important to understand the serious nature of God's judgment, both fore, far, and final.

1. The Lord Jesus' pronouncement came exactly true, and as we walk through the Olivet Discourse, our challenge will be to acknowledge, based on the context, what was "fore" and what is yet future and final; for surely, some (not all) of it described (as you'll see) the nightmare we just read from Josephus.
2. Friends, God takes sin seriously. Although men like to think judgment is "afar off," it arrives before you know it.
 - a. *Ecc 8:11 ESV Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed speedily, the heart of the children of man is fully set to do evil.*
 - b. *Zep 1:12 ESV At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are complacent, those who say in their hearts, 'The LORD will not do good, nor will he do ill.'*
3. Let us never forget:
 - a. The Lord is King, Lawgiver, and Judge! (Isa 33:22)
 - b. The Lord's judgment is righteous and never wrong! (Rev 19:11)
 - c. The Lord is patient, wanting men to repent! (2 Pet 3:9)
 - d. The Lord's say is final; nothing can thwart His plans...

Isa 46:8-11 ESV "Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors, (9) remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, (10) declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,' (11) calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country. I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it.

Some Judgment Encouragement!

Since this was kind of heavy, let's end with the thought of that wonderful Day that is yet future.

*Rev 11:15-19 ESV - Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." (16) And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God **fell on their faces and worshiped God, (17) saying, "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign. (18) The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth."** (19) Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail.*

REACHING OUTREACH

Today is Missions Sunday! Thank you for your support of our orphanage in Cambodia and Project Nanzala.

As we come to the end of January and the Sanctity of Human Life month, we want to thank you for blessing the CPC with your giving through the LifeChange Baby Bottle Campaign. Please make sure to turn in your baby bottles today, if you haven't already. Please see Sis. Mignon Vaughn with any questions or concerns. God bless and thank you again.

TEACHING EDUCATION

Attention: CRCC Covenant and Incoming Members:

Bishop McLeod has assigned the following book for the First Quarter of this year:

The Second Mayflower by Kevin Swanson

Care Groups are a vital part of our ministry and visitors are more than welcome to attend! The care group home meetings resume next month. If you do not know the location of the care group in your area please contact the church office and GET CONNECTED! ☺

RELEASING MINISTRY

If you're interested in serving in ministry, please pick up and fill out a **Volunteer Service Ministry Application** located on the table in the foyer area. When completed, please return to Pastor Bobby White or Sis. Hope Peoples.

CRCC and The D6 Reformation present:

A Call to Battle

Men's Conference 2013

April 26-27, 2013

"Reclaiming Biblical Manhood and Fatherhood through the Power of Jesus Christ"

Calling all Men and Fathers to join us for 7 Battle Equipping Session that will empower you to take the fight to the enemy! Registration continues today!

Registration Fee \$50 – Men ages 20 and up/ \$20 Young men 10-19/ Free ages 9 and under

Early Bird Registration - Save \$5 by registering before Sunday, Feb. 24.

For more information on session speakers and topics, visit: www.D6Reformation.org

CATECHISM

Q.59. Which day of the week has God designated as the Sabbath?

A. From the beginning of the world until the resurrection of Christ God established the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath. From that time until the end of the world the first day of the week is the Christian Sabbath.

Q.60. How do we keep the Sabbath holy?

A. We keep the Sabbath holy by resting the whole day from worldly affairs or recreations, even ones that are lawful on other days. Except for necessary works or acts of mercy we should spend all our time publicly and privately worshipping God.

