

## No one knows the hour or sequence!

March 26, 2017

(Scripture Reading: Mark 13:1-8)

Today I would like to touch upon Christ's second coming passage according to Mark and Luke, today and then next week I would like to preach about the foot washing. There will be actual foot washing ceremony for all of us also. It should be a nice meaningful visual experience. I am looking forward to it!

When it comes to second coming, we always run to Revelation for answers. Don't! You must start with the words of Jesus first from Mark, Mathew, and Luke, and then move onto Daniel, Thessalonians, and then finally to Revelation to place any out of shape puzzle pieces. We cannot fit all the puzzle pieces perfectly as modern evangelists portray. There will be pieces that we can never fit. We can know the answers for such pieces only when it happens. Today I would like to preach this second coming of Christ from Mark's perspective of this second coming.

Mark 13:1-4 1As He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!" 2And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down."

3As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew were questioning Him privately, 4"Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?"

The disciples were just marveling at the Beauty of temple architecture. At that time Jesus prophesied about the whole temple structures. Not one stone will be upon another which will not be torn down!

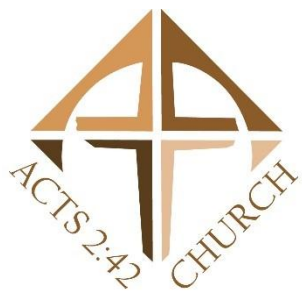
Afterward, they all went to mount of olives and sat down facing the temple (slide?). Then Mark gives us an interesting detail! Peter, James, John, and Andrew came to Jesus privately and asked for more detail concerning this temple destruction:

4"Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?"

A two-part question.

When will these things be, and

What will be the sign when all these things happen!



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What are "**these things**"? The words "**these things**" is mentioned twice actually.

"**These things**" are concerning the destruction of the temple and not about Christ's second coming! But our Lord Jesus adds that second coming part at the end of His prophecy. So first we must look at the temple destruction prophecy and then follow the prophecy about His second coming.

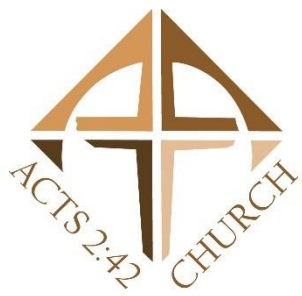
Mark 13:5-8 5 And Jesus began to say to them, "See to it that no one misleads you. 6"Many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He!' and will mislead many. 7"When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be frightened; those things must take place; but that is not yet the end. 8"For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will also be famines. These things are merely the beginning of birth pangs.

Now Jesus tells them about the signs of foreign invasion and temple destruction one by one. But most of the initial signs are too general.

1. There will be false prophets who will claim that they are Christ.
2. Wars and rumors of war
3. Earth quakes
4. Famines
5. Luke adds tidal waves also.

These things are always happening but it would be more intense before the destruction of the temple.

Mark 13:9-13. 9"But be on your guard; for they will deliver you to the courts, and you will be flogged in the synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them. 10"The gospel must first be preached to all the nations. 11"When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but it is the Holy Spirit. 12"Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. 13"You will be hated by all because of My name, but the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.



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Severe persecution was supposed to take place before this destruction of the temple. We all know through the Word of God that the persecution was rampant everywhere. Gospel was to be preached spoken in this context of persecution.

**Luke.21:13 It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony. (Luke 21:13 NASB)**

Proclaiming the Gospel through their sacrificial testimony is the best witness for all. If Christians became lunch for the wild beasts before sixty thousand people, and if those Christians stood the ground concerning their Lord Jesus and their conviction about his resurrection, such testimonies of the Gospel would have spread the world like wild fire.

**Mark 13: 14-19. 14“But when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. 15“The one who is on the housetop must not go down, or go in to get anything out of his house; 16and the one who is in the field must not turn back to get his coat. 17“But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 18“But pray that it may not happen in the winter. 19“For those days will be a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never will.**

This Abomination of Desolation incident had already happened once. Seleucid (Syrian emperor), Antiochus IV Epiphanes, desecrated the temple in BC 167. This led to Maccabean revolt, and the Jews were free briefly. Is Hanukkah story all about that?

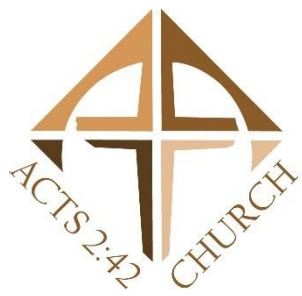
But Jesus warned that it was going to happen to this temple that was built by Herod the great. Remember the context in the beginning of Mark 13? The prophecies were mainly directed to those questions of disciples: **what will happen? When will these things happen?**

But according to modern evangelicals, this has not happened yet. According to them, the temple will be rebuilt, sacrifices will be offered again, antichrist will come and destroy the temple and then the end will come.

My question to you concerns our Lord's remarks and vicarious sacrifice on the cross. Jesus said, if you destroy this temple, I'll build it in 3 days. In other words, He referred to the temple of His body. Also, our Lord put an end to all the animal sacrifices through His sacrifice. **Starting animal sacrifice again undermines the precious sacrifice of our Lord.**

Now Jesus changes his conversation from temple destruction prophecy to His second coming.

**Mark 13: 24-27 24“But in those days, after that tribulation, THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, 25AND THE STARS WILL BE FALLING from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken. 26“Then they will see THE SON OF MAN**



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**COMING IN CLOUDS** with great power and glory. 27“And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven.

Now Jesus starts talking about the Day of the Lord, and His second coming. This is all about cosmological prophecies, and they are already spoken by prophets such as Joel and Jesus just repeats those prophecies concerning the day of the Lord. Then He adds something new! He vividly describes about His second coming in clouds with great power and glory! It will not be quiet. Mathew says that all the tribes will mourn and see the Lord. Yes. All flesh will see His majestic return! Also, Mathew says that the angels will gather all the elect with a great trumpet! Our rapture is not going to be a quiet one. It will be very noisy. Another interesting point. None of the Gospels say that His feet touch the earth! He will be in the clouds, but He will send His angels to gather the elect. So as Paul says, we will be transformed in the twinkling of an eye, and will be caught up in the air and brought to where He is.

There is something very peculiar about Mark version! Vs. 27. He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven. This rapture is not only on the earth but in the remotest parts of heaven also? Are there aliens in other regions of heavens too? Of all we know, **we may not be the God's only creation!**

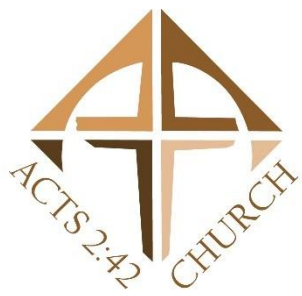
**Mark 13:28-32. 28“Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. 29“Even so, you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that He is near, right at the door. 30“Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. 31“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. 32“But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.**

Here Jesus warns the disciples and tells them to pay close attention to these signs. Here He assures that none of His words will fall to the ground. But about His coming, Jesus felt that He would return when the temple was to be destroyed!

**29“Even so, you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that He is near, right at the door.**

But then He adds a cautionary note concerning His coming:

**32“But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.**



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Here is where Jesus gave a mixed signal. On the one hand, He seemed to say that He would return as soon the temple destruction takes place, and on the contrary, He clearly said that the decision of His coming is not in His hand and no one knows that hour except His Father! You will understand all the letters of the apostles much better if you pay attention to this tension between the imminent return vs. Father's decision!

All the disciples read this mixed signal as His imminent return, and they sold everything and started living together. After the actual temple destruction, the expectation of His coming became high pitched!

In my humble opinion, the cosmological signs did not happen after the destruction of the temple. Now we are at the stage of seeing the cosmological signs. When they come, they will come rapidly, be ready and look up for your salvation!

The most confusing part of His prophecies is verse 30!

30“Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

31“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

If Jesus meant generation concerning the temple destruction, we could take this passage literally.

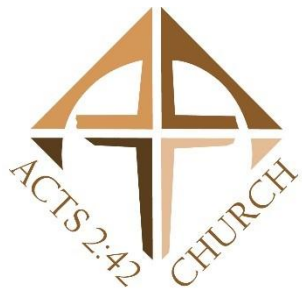
But if Jesus said this generation to witness His second coming also, then we may have to take it as the whole Human race until His second coming.

Again, in my humble opinion, He meant the destruction of the temple when He said that. It is also very much possible that Jesus could have believed that as soon as the temple destroyed He would return.

Now we know that He did not come during the first century, we can take it as the whole Christian generation until now or the whole human race.

Mark 13: 35-37. 35“Therefore, be on the alert—for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning— 36in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep. 37““What I say to you I say to all, ‘Be on the alert!’”

We are living in the last days. Father God could pull the trigger anytime and wrap up this story of humanity. Are you ready to face our Savior? **What is He going to tell Us? Well done my faithful servant or will He say, depart from me, yes workers of iniquity?** It is true, we are saved by grace. But are we living worthy of His praise **as His slave, or living as we please?** Examine yourself!



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### **Conclusion:**

1. Jesus brings out two different prophecies. One is about temple destruction, and the other is about His second coming.
2. Apostles connected these two and expected Him to return in their own time.
3. For us, prophecies surrounding the temple destruction are over. We must look toward the cosmological signs which are the prelude to His coming, just like volcanic lava and smoke warns us of an eruption.
4. Be ready. He will come when we least expect. His return will be a real surprise. But all flesh will see Him and tremble.

Pastor Daniel Israel