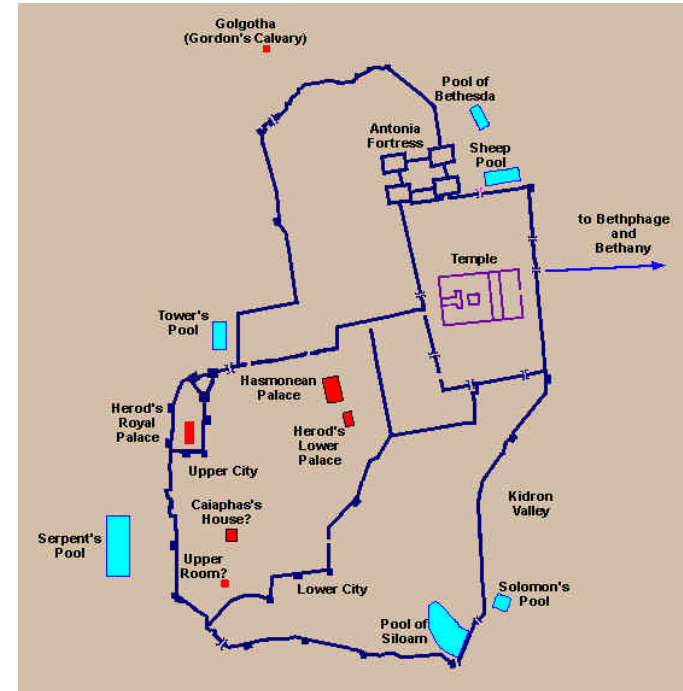


4. As you look over chapter 13, what are some of the things Jesus teaches His followers to do while they wait for His return?

5. Chapter 13 ends with Jesus' final word, "Watch!" What are you watching for in your life these days?

Chapter Thirteen

JESUS' TEACHING ON THE END OF ALL THINGS



WHERE IS JESUS?

1. Outside the Temple
2. The Mount of Olives

OVERVIEW : This chapter is commonly known as The Olivet Discourse, because Jesus taught this from the Mount of Olives just east of the temple in Jerusalem. This is the longest teaching session of Jesus recorded in Mark.

The teaching begins with the disciples commenting on the splendor of the temple and the huge stones at its foundation. Jesus immediately prophesies that a day is coming when no stone of this magnificent temple will be left standing. He also warns of false messiahs, wars, natural disasters and great persecution of His followers.

In about 20 B.C., Herod began a massive rebuilding project on the temple that had been in a moderately restored state for nearly 500 years since being rebuilt by Ezra after the Exile. The project ultimately was not completed until probably around 64 A.D., and the temple was completely destroyed by the Romans in A.D. 70! The temple was never rebuilt, and today the Moslem mosque called the Dome of the Rock sits on that very site. Some of the disciples lived to see the destruction of the temple, and this undoubtedly gave them the confidence to believe that all the prophecies of Jesus concerning the end times would come true as well.

It seems apparent that Jesus made these predictions about the future to teach His followers how to live in the midst of great trials. It is doubtful that He ever intended them to be used to try and predict the exact time of His return. In fact, at the end of the chapter Jesus declares that even He doesn't know the date and time of His final return! The ultimate goal of these teachings is that the believer be prepared and spiritually alert at all times as we wait for Jesus' return.

FOR YOUR GROUP STUDY:

1. What observations have you made in your study of Mark this week?
2. Do you take the same time and energy to prepare for the return of Christ that you would for a wedding or the birth of your baby? Explain what you are doing to prepare.
3. If you knew that Jesus was returning today, what would you do differently in your life?

7. It is not hard to understand persecution by governments or enemies, but why do you think family members will persecute Christ followers?

8. What does it mean to “stand firm to the end” (v. 13)?

Read Mark 13:1.

? *“The Temple.”* The temple in Jesus’ time was in the process of being rebuilt by Herod. It wouldn’t be completed until AD 64, and then was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70. It covered nearly one sixth of the City of Jerusalem.

Read Mark 13:4.

? *“Fulfilled.”* The Greek word here is ***synteleisthai***, which means “to be accomplished” and most likely refers to the final consummation of the age.

Read Mark 13:5

? *“Watch out”* The Greek word here is ***blepete***, which means “to be on your guard.” This word occurs four times in this discourse (13:5, 9, 23, 33).

Read Mark 13:14.

? *“The abomination that causes desolation.”* This is prophesied three times in Daniel (9:27; 11:31; 12:11), and refers to the desecration of the temple by the enemies of God as well as to pagan idolatry and detestable practices.

Read Mark 13:32.

? *“The Son.”* Jesus is here affirming His humanity. The emphasis is not on His limitations, but on the Father’s all-knowing nature. In His incarnation, Jesus willingly accepted the limitations of humanity

FOR YOUR PERSONAL STUDY:

1. Who knows when Jesus will return?
2. What is Jesus' purpose in making the predictions He does in chapter 13?
3. Read 13:5-13 and list at least three signs Jesus identifies that the believer must be on their guard against.
4. Read Zechariah 14:1-4. What is the significance of the Mount of Olives in regard to Christ's return?
5. Read 13:26 and Acts 1:1-11 and Revelation 1:7. What is one clear sign we can expect when Jesus returns?
6. Read 13:11. How do you respond to Jesus' words that the Holy Spirit will give the believer words to testify?

How have you seen this take place in your life?