



Talking Future on the Mount of Olives

Mark 13:1-8, 26-27

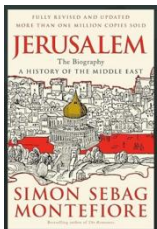
(May 31 -- Pastor Darin)



Mark 13:1 As Jesus was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, **“Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!”** Darin got to travel to Israel in 2012 on a trip with 25 other pastors. Tour in the evening of the excavation around the temple walls. The stone blocks are indeed massive and impressive. The further down he and the team walked the more he felt like Indiana Jones. Everybody is dazzled in the moment, everyone except Jesus. Jesus knows what is going to happen in the future so he uses this moment to set everything in proper perspective for those 12 guys but also for us as well.



From our best reckoning we believe that Jesus was 33 years old when he made this prophecy about the destruction of the temple and its surrounding area. This prophecy came true 37 years later in AD 70.



“Titus commanded an army of four legions — a total of 60,000 Roman Legionnaires and local auxiliaries who were eager to deliver the final blow to the defiant but broken city. Within the walls, perhaps half a million starving Jews survived in diabolical conditions: thousands of bodies putrefied in the sun. The stench was unbearable. Titus had ordered all prisoners and defectors to be crucified which resulted in 500 crucifixions per day leading up to the final assault. In that horrific last attack the temple was burned and over 10,000 starving Jewish defenders died.

The disciples — hearing this scary prediction of the future ask the logical question, **“Tell us when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are all about to be fulfilled?”** The two words in the original Greek for “these things” are **ταῦτα πάντα**.

Now it is super essential to keep this piece of history solidly in our minds b/c Mark 13 has been taken over in Evangelical Church culture by the End Times Prophecy crowd who are focussed on picking up the signs in current events that the events imagined in the **Left Behind Novels** or spelled out in countless books like Hal Lindsay’s ***The Late Great Planet Earth***.

What gets lost in all this speculation of the future end of history is Jesus’

references to things in history that will have already long occurred. Clearly at the beginning of Mark 13 Jesus is talking about what will happen in AD 70 — within the lifetime of his disciples. As the chapter continues, Jesus does move towards prophesying, predicting the future, about his return, his coming back at the end of history. If we don't keep both time periods in mind — we will find ourselves getting way off track when we read this chapter.

Here is an example — verses 28-31. Some Bible scholars in the past, reading verse 30 *"this generation will not pass away until all these things have happened"* have said, well Jesus just didn't know. He clearly thought he was coming back to judge the world and wrap up history within the disciples' lifetime. But if we keep these two time periods in mind — we understand that Jesus is referring back to the beginning of chapter 13 — the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in AD 70.



? It's been said that the Christian Faith is a historical one. Either it did or did not really happen. Have you ever thought much about that? Do you feel that accurate evidence from history strengthens your faith or do you feel that is irrelevant in your walk with Jesus? A warning at just the right time can make all the difference. Following the initial warning about what was to come in AD 70 Then Jesus begins to lift their gaze up, way up, down through the ages to proclaim that one day he would return in glory and power. In v. 26 Jesus declares, **"At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory."** Important to note that he isn't coming on the clouds but in amongst them – he is bringing them with him. The first 3 chapters of the Bible describe God creating the world and giving the first human the *Garden of Eden* to live in – total paradise. What made it paradise was the immediate presence of God – in God's immediate presence nothing evil, twisted, diseased or impure can exist. When sin entered the picture the immediate presence of God was removed. Shows up periodically throughout the Old Testament, most notably when God rescued the Hebrew slaves out of Egypt he led them by the cloud of glory during the day. Hebrew word for the glory cloud is Shekinah. That's what Jesus is bringing with him when he returns – the glory cloud of power and holiness and everything will be set right.

The **end of death**, the **end of disease**, the **end of hunger**, the **end of poverty**, the **end of injustice** and **the end of violence**. That is why we are to long for his second coming and work alongside him to prepare for it.

? Does this proper understanding of Jesus' 2nd coming inspire you to get on mission with him?