



Mark: Following in the Footsteps of Jesus

Chapter #13 – Watching and Waiting Faithfully

Main Idea

Mark 13 records Jesus' prophetic teaching about the end times, often called the Olivet Discourse. He warns of coming deception, urging His followers not to be misled by false messiahs or alarming events like wars, earthquakes, and persecution. These are only the beginning of birth pains. Jesus emphasizes endurance and faithfulness amid suffering, as the gospel will be preached to all nations. He then describes future tribulation and cosmic disturbances leading to the return of the Son of Man in power and glory. Using the fig tree as an illustration, Jesus calls for spiritual awareness and readiness. Since no one knows the exact day or hour, Believers are instructed to stay alert, watchful, and prepared for His return.

Chapter Outline

- Destruction of the Temple (verses 1 through 2)
- Signs of the End (verses 3 through 13)
- The Son of Man Coming (verses 24 through 27)
- Be Alert (verses 28 through 37)

Questions for Consideration

1. Why does Jesus warn against deception?
2. How should Believers endure hardship?
3. What role does hope play in prophecy? Consider the role of fulfilled prophecy in developing your answer.
4. Why is watchfulness essential?
5. How does this chapter shape Christian living and how we should live today for Jesus?



Mark 13 (NIV)

The Destruction of the Temple and Signs of the End Times

13 As Jesus was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!”² “Do you see all these great buildings?” replied Jesus. “Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.”³ As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately,⁴ “Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are all about to be fulfilled?”⁵ Jesus said to them: “Watch out that no one deceives you.⁶ Many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am he,’ and will deceive many.⁷ When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come.⁸ Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.

⁹ “You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them.¹⁰ And the gospel must first be preached to all nations.¹¹ Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.¹² “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death.¹³ Everyone will hate you because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.

¹⁴ “When you see ‘the abomination that causes desolation’^[a] standing where it^[b] does not belong—let the reader understand—then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.¹⁵ Let no one on the housetop go down or enter the house to take anything out.¹⁶ Let no one in the field go back to get their cloak.¹⁷ How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers!¹⁸ Pray that this will not take place in winter,¹⁹ because those will be days of distress unequalled from the beginning, when God created the world, until now—and never to be equaled again.

²⁰ “If the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would survive. But for the sake of the elect, whom he has chosen, he has shortened them.²¹ At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Messiah!’ or, ‘Look, there he is!’ do not believe it.²² For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.²³ So be on your guard; I have told you everything ahead of time.

²⁴ “But in those days, following that distress,
“the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light;
²⁵ the stars will fall from the sky,
and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.”^[c]

²⁶ “At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.²⁷ And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.²⁸ “Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near.²⁹ Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it^[d] is near, right at the door.³⁰ Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

The Day and Hour Unknown

³² “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.³³ Be on guard! Be alert^[e]! You do not know when that time will come.³⁴ It’s like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.³⁵ “Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn.³⁶ If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping.³⁷ What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’”

Footnotes

- a. [Mark 13:14](#) Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11
- b. [Mark 13:14](#) Or *he*
- c. [Mark 13:25](#) Isaiah 13:10; 34:4
- d. [Mark 13:29](#) Or *he*
- e. [Mark 13:33](#) Some manuscripts *alert and pray*

