

Mark 13:24-37 “Watch and Pray!”

Mark chapter 13 has us arrive at the Olivet Discourse—paralleled in Matthew 24 and Luke 21—where the longest answer Jesus would ever give dealing with end times and future events.

Wars... Earthquakes... Famines... Pestilences...

THESE ARE THE BEGINNING OF SORROWS, OR “LABOR PAINS.”

Come on Pastor Mike...

“There has always been war and rumors of war.” There have.

“But there have always been earthquakes,” you say. And there have.

“There has always been famine and pestilence,” you say. There has.

But what Jesus is saying is that, **like birth pains**, these things will increase in frequency and intensity as the Tribulation period draws nearer.

THIS IS NOT BUSINESS AS “USUAL”.

Prophecy is not to entertain the curious... **nor given to scare us.**

Prophecy should awaken us... **and it should comfort us!**

Mark 13:14-23 Jesus covers what will occur in the middle of the tribulation.

70 prophesied weeks of God’s working with Israel... 69 weeks were completed when Messiah came.

I BELIEVE WE’RE STILL BETWEEN THE 69TH AND 70TH WEEK. A final seven year period has still been allotted to fulfill the remainder of the prophecy.

During the Great Tribulation God will punish the wicked, purify the Jews, and establish His kingdom in Israel. **In the interval (gap) God has opened the door of salvation to Gentiles.**

God stopped the clock so to speak, to allow Gentiles to be saved.

But when the last Gentile comes to Jesus, **"until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in."**

Beam us up Scotty! Rapture slide!

So there's still one week left. The history of Israel consists of 70 weeks. Therefore, one seven-year period remains to be unfolded. At that time, the prince of the people, antichrist—a charismatic, influential, intelligent world leader—will appear on the scene. **It is very possible He will pull off a miraculous feat of creating peace between Israel and the muslim nations . . . rebuilding of the temple will occur.**

3 ½ years into the tribulation The anti-Christ energized by Satan himself . . . will declare himself to be God.. "abomination of desolation" God will begin to pour out His wrath upon the world.

Mark 13:19 For *in* those days there will be tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the creation which God created until this time, nor ever shall be.

Seals, and trumpets and bowls of wrath will fall upon creation and mankind.

Revelation 16:2 Incurable open oozing sores on the worshippers of the anti-Christ those who take upon themselves the mark

Everything alive in the Ocean will be killed Rev. 16:3...

Outbreak of wars Rev. 6:4

deadly Famines Rev. 6:8

Uncontrollable fires boy we know what that's like!!! Rev. 8:7

Oceans blood Rev. 8:8

ASTERIODS HITTING EARTH AND TSUNAMIS DESTROY 1/3 OF THE SHIPS AROUND THE WORLD Rev. 8:8 and 9

Rev. 9:1-5 records **demons released and torment unbelievers for 5 months**

PROLONGED DROUGHT Rev. 11:6

Earthquakes so massive that islands disappear and mountains crumble... Rev. 16:20

Hailstones around 100lbs Revelation 16:21

Darkness across the planet Rev. 16:10

Concluding His train of thought verse 23 of Mark chapter 13 But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand. **He has reasons why He wants you to take heed, anticipating and being ready for His soon return:**

- **IT HAS A PURIFYING EFFECT IN OUR LIVES**
- **It gives us a sense of urgency**
- **It makes us bold in speaking to the lost**
- **It helps us keep a light touch on the things of this world**

WE all should wake up every morning and say, **"Jesus could come back today and I need to be ready." PRAY!**

Now we will conclude chapter 13 and the Olivet discourse

JOIN ME IN VERSE 24 Picture Jesus moving His eyes from the temple to beyond...

"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; **25** the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. **PICTURE A 9.0 EARTHQUAKE IN THE HEAVENS.** . . Immediately before the return of Jesus, before His **coming in the clouds with great power and glory**, the world will be wracked by cosmic catastrophes. In a sense, this is the groaning of all creation (Romans 8:22) and it will come to one last crescendo before the return of Jesus. **26** Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. There is the climax of history – the appearing of Jesus Christ as Lord, with great power and great glory. **RUAL REI S SAYS, GREAT POWER AND GREG LAURI E...**

27 And then He will send His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven. When Jesus returns to this earth **after that tribulation**, He will come *with* the saints in heaven and to **gather** those who have come to Jesus during the **tribulation** and have survived.

28 "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. **29** So you also, when you see these things happening, know that it is near—at the doors! The **fig tree** has a regular pattern - the leaves appear, then summer follows. When you see the leaves, you know **summer is near**. In the same way, when these signs - particularly the abomination of desolation - appear, the world can know that the triumphant return of Jesus is **near; at the door**.

This is just as Daniel prophesied in Daniel 12:11: the end *will come* 1,290 days after the abomination of desolation. In this, Jesus assures that the agonies of the great tribulation will not continue indefinitely; **they will have an end**.

According to Lane... "This was the perfect illustration at this time and place. Jesus taught this on the Mount of Olives, and "The Mount of Olives was famous for its fig trees, which sometimes attained a height of 20 or 30 feet." It was also the perfect time, because Jesus taught this right before

Passover, when fig trees were in the condition described in the parable - branches tender, leaves sprouting.”

Song of Solomon 2:11-13 makes mention of this: the blossoming of the fig tree shows winter is past and summer is near.

30 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. What **generation** does Jesus refer to? It cannot be the **generation** of the disciples, because they did not see the triumphant return of Jesus. I believe it's the **generation** that sees these signs - especially the abomination of desolation.

31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

B **I** **B** **L** **E** . . . **B**asic **I**nstruction **B**efore **L**eaving **E**arth.

Hebrews 4 verse 12 “For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Proverbs 29:18 Without a **VISION** my people **perish**

VISION ... understanding of God's word

perish ... wander aimlessly

Without an understanding of God's word my people wander aimlessly

John 8:31 “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. **32** And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

Psalms 1:2-3 But his delight *is* in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. **3** He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

Psalms 119:9&11 How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. **11** Your word I have hidden in my

heart, That I might not sin against You.

31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. **HIS WORD IS TRUSTWORTHY AND TRUE!**

32 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. How could Jesus *not* know that day and hour? Did not He, as God, know all things? Jesus did not know this, but it was not because He gave up His omniscience - He is unchanging God. It was because He voluntarily, in submission to the Father, restricted His knowledge of this event. The incarnation... God took on human flesh... 100% God and 100% man.

This means that anybody who claims to have a revelation as to when this event is going to take place has been deluded. Even the angels do not know.

Remember that even after his resurrection he said to his disciples, "The times and the seasons are not for you to know. **(Quit trying to find out!)**

WHY AND HOW do people fall away? My heart grieves with those who fall away.

When Jesus crashed into my darkness on July 6, 1982 I was saved from the bondage of sin... why would I want to go back to that bondage. A slave who was set free wanted to go back to being a slave. **Proverbs 26:11**

As a dog returns to his own vomit, So a fool repeats his folly. I find nothing appealing about my vomit...

As long as we abide in Christ you cannot lose your salvation. **IT IS THIS OUR LORD IS WARNING AGAINST?**

Our duty is to stay awake and WATCH!

As Jesus declares in verse 33 Take heed, **WATCH AND PRAY**; for you do not know when the time is. **"I don't know when Jesus is coming so I have to be alert, eager, and ready for His coming."****34** It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch.

35 Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning— **36** lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. **37** And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!”

COMMENTARY BY KEN GIRE... The celebration of a Hebrew wedding spans an entire week, sometimes two, with the wedding banquet frequently spilling over into the next morning. **THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE HAS GONE TO SUCH A BANQUET AND LEFT WORD THAT HE WASN'T SURE EXACTLY WHAT HOUR HE WOULD RETURN.** But his servants stay dressed in their work clothes, keeping the wicks of their lamps trimmed and the reservoirs filled with oil.

They wait up for their master so that should he be hungry, they will be ready with food; should he be thirsty, they will be ready with drink; should he be tired, they will be ready to prepare his bed.

They wait up for him so they can serve him They wait up for him so he won't have to come home to a dark and empty house. **BUT MOST OF ALL**

THEY WAIT UP FOR HIM BECAUSE THEY love HIM. He is a good master. His yoke is easy. His words are kind. And his love is evident in all his dealings with them. It is only fitting that they should wait up and watch for him, putting his needs above their own. The house is quiet when a sound from the streets is heard. **“He's coming!”** one of the servants calls out, and they all jump to their feet. But when they squint out the window, they see it's only a stray dog nosing around the neighborhood.

Later that night the hinges rattle, and one of them calls out: “He's at the door!” But they open the door to discover it's only the mischief of the wind.

Midnight passes and the oil in their lamps burns on into the wee hours of the morning. They are weary from the toil of the day and wearier still from staying up that night. They know their master will return, they just don't know when. **But the very thought of his return invigorates them, giving them a second wind for their work.** They bust themselves by doing things that would please him. Little things, quietly done. Things that he alone would notice.

They build a fire in the hearth to chase away the pre-dawn chill. They want

the house to be as warm and inviting as they can make it.

Finally, one of the servants hears footsteps. He alerts the others, and they gather at the door. **The door opens.** The master has returned. He stands in the doorway, visibly moved by the warmth of their welcome.

It moves him so much he goes into the kitchen and takes off his festive robe, hanging it on a peg. **FROM ANOTHER PEG HE TAKES ONE OF THE SERVANT'S GARMENTS AND PUTS IT ON.** He tucks the flowing hem into his sash so it won't encumber him.

Then he invites the servants to recline at this table. For an awkward moment they don't quite know how to handle the honor. But he insists, and finally they settle around the low table, where he waits on them.

AT FIRST THE REVERSAL OF ROLES PUZZLES THEM. The master of the house doing the work of an ordinary household servant? And at first they are reticent to have him wait on them. But as he goes about filling their goblets and dishing out their food, an almost giddy feeling comes over them. **THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE, WAITING ON THEM!**

The last time the disciples sat at a table with their master was in an upper room where he surprised them all by wrapping a towel around his waist and washing the dirt off their feet. When he returns, he will once again dress himself to serve, waiting on those who have waited up for him.

What a surprise. What an honor. What a Savior.

When he came to this earth, he came not to be served but to serve. When he comes again, he will come as he left ... as a master who serves.

PRAYER:

Help me to realize that you will return one day, just as you promised. And help me to understand that if that day doesn't dawn in my lifetime, then in death I will return to you.

Help me to realize that your arrival or my departure is always imminent. That it will come suddenly, unexpectedly, like a thief in the night. And with my realizing that, Lord, help me to live my life in a continual state of watchfulness.

Help me to be watchful for your return without being fanatical about when and how it will happen. Keep me from being fearful of whatever night may darken the world, or falsely alarming others every time I hear a sound in the street or a noise at the door.

Give me such a discriminating ear that I may know the difference between your footsteps and a dog nosing around the neighborhood, between your

knock and simply the wind of world events rattling the hinges.

But when you do knock, Lord, may I be among the first to greet you at the door. Dressed for work. **Lamp in my hand.** Ready to serve.

Until then, help me to do the work that would please you – the quiet, unpretentious work of a common household servant. And grant me the grace to take delight in little things quietly done, **THINGS THAT YOUR EYE ALONE MIGHT CATCH AND APPRECIATE....**

**J E S U S S A Y S , " W A T C H A N D
P R A Y ! "**