

This is the second half of the Olivet Discourse. This is a challenging text to maintain a coherent view. Jesus changes his commentary from the moments leading up to the Temple's destruction to his ultimate return, but he continues to point to the Temple's destruction. Notice he said, "after that tribulation." He is speaking to a moment after the tribulation. Timing is a constant issue in determining prophetic speech. He preached this sermon prior to his death and resurrection so the disciples would not have had a clear idea of what Jesus was talking about in this passage.

Mark 13:24-27

The imagery used in this passage is pulled directly from Old Testament passages.

What does this tell us about the coming of Christ? If it is allegorical? Literal? How are the people of God treated?

How does this make you feel?

Mark 13:28-31

Jesus uses the example of a fig tree. How does the tribulation and return of Jesus compare to seasonal development of a fig tree? What are "these things?"

In one of the most challenging passages, Jesus says this "generation will not pass away until all these things take place." Once again what are "these things?"

Jesus is moving back in forth from the tribulation to the end of times, what possibly to do those two events have in common?

Mark 13:32-37

This is also confusing. Jesus said the end as at the gates, but then he calms people down and tells them they can never know when the end will happen.

He instructs his followers to live in the immediate expectancy of his return, but not be paralyzed by it. How does Jesus' potential imminent return impact your life?

How do we stay on guard and awake?

When the Temple was destroyed, the life of the typical Jew was altered. It was the end of era or in biblical terms the end of an age. The age of the Temple and Temple worship was over. A new age had to come. Likewise, when Jesus comes back it will the end of an age. The age of sin and death will be over.