

“Judgment on Israel, Part 5”
(Mark 13:28-37)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

1. We’ve seen what Jesus is addressing in this chapter:
The destruction of the Temple.
2. We’ve seen whom He is addressing: His disciples.
3. We’ve seen the things He said that would precede the destruction of the Temple:
 - a. False Christs, wars, earthquakes, famines,
 - b. And their preaching the Gospel throughout the Roman Empire.
4. We’ve seen the signal He gave that the time had come:
 - a. The Abomination of Desolation –
 - b. Jerusalem surrounded by the Roman armies.
5. And what they were to do when they saw it:
 - a. Flee, get out of that place, run to the mountains,
 - b. Because of the judgment that was falling on Jerusalem.
6. And we’ve seen what would happen immediately following that tribulation:
 - a. Jerusalem would fall,
 - b. Those who pierced Him –
 - (i) Especially the leaders –
 - (ii) Would see this and know it was Jesus who did it.
 - c. And then the Lord would begin
 - (i) The evangelization of the entire world
 - (ii) To build His NT church
 - (iii) Made up of both believing Jews and Gentiles,
 - (iv) But primarily Gentiles.

B. Preview.

1. This morning, we’re going to finish this section
 - a. By looking at the two final things Jesus tells them
 - b. In connection with this event:
2. Main points:
 - a. The first has to do with the time frame in which these things would happen.
 - b. And the second with a warning to be on the alert.

II. Sermon.

- A. First, let’s consider the time frame in which these things would take place: Jesus tells them they would happen in their lifetime.

1. First, He points to the fig tree (v. 28).
 - a. He says you know when its branch becomes tender
 - (i) And puts forth its leaves
 - (ii) That summer is near.
 - b. In the same way,
 - (i) When they were to see
 - (ii) The signs He had pointed to,
 - (iii) They were to know that He was near: Right at the door (v. 29).
2. These things were going to affect them,
 - a. Jesus knew they would, which is why He was telling them.
 - b. And if this isn't enough to prove it,
 - c. Surely what He says next does: "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place" (v. 30).
 - (i) The generation of which they were part
 - (ii) Would not die off
 - (iii) Until everything He said took place.
 - d. As you already know
 - (i) There are so many who want to put some,
 - (a) If not all, of these events in the future.
 - (b) How can they do it
 - (c) In light of what Jesus says here?
 - (ii) They understand this word "generation" differently.
 - (a) Every word has a range of meaning.
 - (1) For instance, the word "green" can refer to
 - (2) The color green,
 - (3) To the fact that someone is a novice,
 - (4) To money,
 - (5) To someone who is envious,
 - (6) And so on.
 - (b) The same is true of the Greek word
 - (1) That's translated "generation" in our passage:
 - (2) It has other meanings
 - (3) One of which is "race."
 - (c) They believe Jesus is saying
 - (1) The Jews will not cease to be a distinct race
 - (2) Until all these things take place.
 - (3) The Jews still exist today
 - (4) And so this can be future.
 - e. But is that what He's really saying here?

- (i) Granted the word can mean race,
 - (a) And it is used once in the NT to mean that,
 - (b) By far the majority use is generation:
 - (c) Referring to those who were alive at that time.

- (ii) Throughout His ministry
 - (a) Jesus went out of His way
 - (1) To point out the wickedness
 - (2) Of that particular generation
 - (3) And warned that judgment would fall on them.

 - (b) Here are a few examples:
 - (1) “But He answered and said to them, ‘An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and *yet* no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet” (Matt. 12:39).
 - (2) “The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment, and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. *The Queen of the South* will rise up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find *it*. Then it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came’; and when it comes, it finds *it* unoccupied, swept, and put in order. Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. That is the way it will also be with this evil generation” (vv. 41-45).
 - (3) “And Jesus answered and said, ‘You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you?’” (17:17).
 - (4) “Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, so that upon you may fall *the guilt of* all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation” (23:34-36).

- (iii) When Jesus told His disciples
 - (a) That that generation then living
 - (b) Wouldn’t pass away until all these things took place,
 - (c) He was telling them they would live to see it.
 - (1) This was God’s judgment on them:

(2) The generation that rejected and crucified Him.

- f. How certain could they be
 - (i) That this was going to happen in their lifetime?
 - (ii) With absolute certainty!
 - (a) Jesus says, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away” (v. 31).
 - (b) His words were more enduring
 - (c) Than the creation itself.

B. Second, since these things were going to happen in their lifetime, but they didn’t know exactly when, Jesus told them to be ready at all times.

1. When were these things going to happen?
 - a. Jesus told them what to look for –
 - b. He gave them clues about the signs and seasons –
 - c. But not the exact time.

2. Why not?
 - a. Because Jesus didn’t know: “But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father *alone*” (v. 32).
 - b. Why didn’t He know?
 - (i) We don’t have too much time
 - (a) To explore why this is the case,
 - (b) But let me say this:
 - (1) The fact that He didn’t know
 - (2) Doesn’t mean that He isn’t God.
 - (3) Jesus is fully God!
 - (c) You need to remember
 - (1) That Jesus is also fully man.
 - (2) When He took our nature to Himself,
 - (3) He took all of its limitations,
 - (4) Including a certain degree of ignorance.
 - (ii) In His divine nature, He knows all things –
 - (a) Even the day and the hour.
 - (b) But in His human nature, He didn’t.
 - (1) He only knew what the Spirit communicated to Him.
 - (2) Was the man Christ Jesus ignorant of certain things? Yes!
 - (3) Was the divine Son of God ever ignorant of anything? No!
- c. But because He didn’t know and couldn’t tell them,
 - (i) They had to be ready at all times.
 - (ii) “Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the *appointed* time will come” (v. 33).

3. How were they to be ready?
 - a. By working and waiting.
 - (i) Jesus said, “*It is* like a man away on a journey, *who* upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, *assigning* to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert. Therefore, be on the alert – for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows in the morning – in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep. What I say to you I say to all, ‘Be on the alert!’” (vv. 34-37).
 - (ii) They were to be about the particular work
 - (a) He had given them to do
 - (b) Of evangelizing the world/the Roman Empire,
 - (c) All the while waiting for the signs
 - (d) He told them would signal
 - (e) The coming judgment.
 - b. Here’s an interesting point with regard to waiting:
 - (i) We’ve been looking at the imminent return of Jesus Christ –
 - (a) The belief that He could come at any time.
 - (1) Some believe He could have come
 - (2) Even from the time He ascended into heaven.
 - (b) But I want you to notice here
 - (1) That Jesus was telling His disciples
 - (2) That this coming –
 - (3) Which was His coming in judgment against the Jews –
 - (4) Wasn’t imminent yet!
 - (5) It wouldn’t become so
 - (6) Until they saw the signs Jesus pointing to earlier:
 - (A) He said to them, “Even so, you too, *when you see these things happening*, recognize that He is near, *right at the door*” (v. 29).
 - (B) They were to be looking for these signs
 - (C) That would signal that His coming in judgment was near.
 - (ii) Again, this judgment against Jerusalem
 - (a) Has already happened.
 - (b) Everything took place
 - (c) Just as Jesus said it would.
 - (iii) The Second Coming of Jesus Christ
 - (a) To raise the dead and gather all the living to judgment
 - (b) Is still future.
 - (c) We’ll look at this, Lord willing, next Lord’s Day evening.
4. In closing, let me remind you
 - a. That though this judgment has happened,

- (i) And though the second coming may be a ways off,
 - (ii) There is still that coming that we need to be ready for:
 - (iii) His coming for us at death.
- b. The Lord tells us that life is short.
- (i) James writes, “You are *just* a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away” (4:14).
 - (ii) And Peter writes, “All flesh is like grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls off” (1 Pet. 1:24).
 - (iii) Even if you should live to be 110,
 - (a) What is that compared to the endless stretches of time
 - (b) That come after it?
- c. How can you be ready to meet the Lord
- (i) When He comes for your soul at death?
 - (ii) You can in the same way
 - (a) That the disciples were to be ready
 - (b) For the Lord’s coming in 70 AD:
 - (1) Make sure you’re trusting Jesus Christ to save your soul,
 - (2) That you’re turning from your sins
 - (A) And seeking to live like He would
 - (B) If He was in your place,
 - (3) And make sure that in all you do,
 - (A) You seek to advance His kingdom
 - (B) Through your words and actions.
 - (iii) The Lord didn’t put you into this world
 - (a) Just to have fun –
 - (b) Though that is part of life –
 - (iv) He didn’t make you to seek your own fame and fortune.
 - (v) He made you for something far better:
 - (a) To make His name known here,
 - (b) And then to live with Him forever
 - (c) In a world filled with perfect love, joy and peace.
 - (d) Paul writes, “Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory” (Col. 3:1-4).
 - (vi) And so if you would be ready,
 - (a) Turn from your sins and trust the Lord,
 - (b) And busy yourself about the work He’s given you

(c) While you're waiting for Him to come and get you. Amen.

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