

“The World Saved – How Can These Things Be?”

Romans 11:11-15, 25-27 (Mark 13:1-30)

March 27, 2022

I. Romans 11 and the Future

- A. Rom. 11:11-27 seems to promise a glorious Christian age, with myriads of saved Jews and Gentiles.
- B. But how can this be with New Testament passages predicting Great Tribulations and other judgments leading up to the end of the world?

Matthew 24:21 - For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.

Revelation 7:14 - ...And he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

Matthew 24:29 - “But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.”

II. Mark 13:1-30

- A. Boundary Marker 1 – The true subject matter of Mark 13.
 - 1. In Mark 13:1-4, the disciples ask Jesus about His claim that the Temple in Jerusalem will be decimated and how will they know when that time is near.
 - 2. In the rest of the passage, Jesus is talking about that event, not the end of the world.
- B. Boundary Marker 2 – The timing of the fulfillment of the prophecies of Mark 13.
 - 1. In Mark 13:30, Jesus says that everything He predicted would take place in lifetime of those alive in His day (“this generation will not pass away until all these things take place”).
 - 2. Jesus was not prophesying about events that would happen thousands of years in the future; He was talking about things that would occur within the next 40 years.
 - 3. The Temple, Jerusalem, and Judea were destroyed by the Romans in 68-70 AD.
- C. False Messiahs – Mark 13:5-6
 - 1. Many men claimed to be the Messiah both before and after Jesus.
 - 2. Paul is even mistaken for one of them in Acts 21:

Acts 21:38 – (To Paul) “Are you not the Egyptian, then, who recently stirred up a revolt and led the four thousand men of the Assassins out into the wilderness?”

- D. Wars and Rumors of Wars – Mark 13:7-8
 - 1. Though this wasn’t the case when Jesus spoke these words, war characterized the Roman empire beginning in the 60’s AD.

2. Earthquakes and famines were everywhere in those days (See Acts 11:27-29).

E. Persecutions and the Gospel to Everyone – Mark 13:9-13

1. All of Jesus' disciples were persecuted.
2. According to Paul, the Gospel reached all peoples long before 70 AD.

Colossians 1:23b - ...*This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.*

F. The Abomination of Desolation and a Uniquely Bad Tribulation – Mark 13:14-20

Luke 21:20-21 – *But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it...*

"I shall therefore speak my mind here at once briefly: — that neither did any other city suffer such miseries, nor did any age ever breed a generation more fruitful in wickedness than this was, from the beginning of the world. It appears to me that the misfortunes of all men, from the beginning of the world, if they be compared to these of the Jews, are not so considerable as they were." – Josephus (1st cen. Jewish historian) Jewish Wars V, 10:5

G. More False Christs and False Prophets – Mark 13:21-23

1. False prophets troubled the early church (Col. 2:18).
2. Josephus reports of false prophets and wonderworkers within besieged Jerusalem.

H. The Sun Darkened, the Stars Falling – Mark 13:24-25

1. Jesus is quoting the prophetic language of Is. 13 and Eze. 32.
2. Both prophets use such language to prophesy the *historical* destruction of Babylon (Is. 13) and Egypt (Eze. 32).
3. Jesus is using that traditional prophetic language to talk about the destruction of historical Jerusalem (see Mark 13:1-4).

I. The Son of Man Coming on the Clouds – Mark 13:26-30

1. Jesus was quoting the prophet Daniel.

Daniel 7:13–14 - ¹³ *I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. ¹⁴ And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.*

2. Daniel 7 is a prophecy of Christ's *ascension* up to heaven, not His return (for that, see 1 Cor. 15).
3. Christ is saying that the destruction of Jerusalem is proof that He has ascended into heaven and has been given dominion over all things.