

LIGHTS OUT

***A day is coming when creation will be so full of evil that God will turn out creation's lights;
Then he comes in his Son to gather his chosen to renew his world forever.***

24 "But in those days, after that tribulation, THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT,

Covenant Presbyterian Church

MARK 13:14-27

28 April A.D. 2013



How believers have used Mark 13 and similar passages provides a good example of not listening to Jesus.

Mark 13:1-2 The Crucial Context is the Temple & Jesus' Cross

Everything in Mark 13 is influenced by what comes before it in Mark 11-12 regarding the Temple

The end of the Temple is at hand both because of Israel's unfaithfulness & because Jesus' death will be the last sacrifice.

Mark 13:3-4 Discern the Near (*these things/all these things*) from the Far (*those days/that day*)

these things/all... Mar 13:2, 8, 29, 30

those days/that... Mar 13:17, 19, 20, 24, 32

Mark 13:5-8 Deem Jesus' bigger than Distractors or Distractions

Jesus gives them no single sign (see 8:11 – 12) but instead a flustering hodgepodge of signs, some true and some false, but none useful for predicting the time of the end. The true signs of the end come so fast that they will provide no warning at all (13:24 – 27).

David Garland, NIV Applic. Comm., Mark, 491

13:5 Don't be misled

Birth pangs are but signs the birth is on the way—and these are but the beginning of birth pangs!

Mark 13:9-13a Jesus' aim supersedes our short-term anguish

Mark 13:10 The gospel must first be preached to all the nations.

Be on your guard! You'll be treated like me!

Mark 13:13b Those on the path are those who arrive at the destination.

Mark 13:13 "You will be hated by all because of My name, but the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.

1 Peter 2:4–5 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Birth pangs are calls to stay faithful 'til the birth.

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### **Mark 13:14-18    Moving from *these things* to *those days***

13:14 an abomination that desolates ( Antiochus Epiphanes in 168 B.C. sacrificing a pig to Zeus in the Temple); here, clearly still dealing with Titus' A.D. 70 destruction of the Temple, when most of Jesus followers remembered his words and fled to Pella.

13:15-16 those on rooftops and fields dare not take time to go in the house before fleeing

13:17-18 Know how bad things can be...

13:17 *those days*: may be a bridge to days beyond the hideous events during the siege of Jerusalem.

## **Mark 13:19-23 A day is coming when evil will so fill the earth that even God's selected ones seem in danger of being led astray**

13:19-20 these verses appear to utilize A.D. 70 to point to a betrayal of God's creation that is yet to come in its fullness, such that even the faithfulness of God's chosen ones is in jeopardy.

13:21-22 Claims of Messiah's coming will be trumpeted by false prophets, who contrasting Jesus' quiet ways will do works to draw attention to themselves.

13:23 Jesus has let his disciples know in advance so we can remain faithful

## **Mark 13:24-27 When God's patience and forbearance are complete he will turn out his creation lights and the end will come.**

13:24-25 Allusion common in OT prophecy and takes us back to the beginning when Sun and Moon rule the day and night

13:25 In Jesus's day some thought of stars as representing other powers, spiritual and political

13:26-27 The clouds are often spoken of as encompassing God as he comes on his chariot, so here we have an allusion to the divinity of the Son of Man. (See 13:32)

RE: His elect: scripture clearly teaches election, God's eternal knowing (choosing) and making certain the salvation of his own. But Martin Luther gives wise advice in his Preface to the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans. You can read it at: [http://www.ccel.org/l/luther/romans/pref\\_romans.html](http://www.ccel.org/l/luther/romans/pref_romans.html)

1/ we are so weak that if God did not give us the confidence that flows from his election none would be saved. This confidence sets us free to seek virtue!

2/ If we seek to use human reason to try to fathom the eternal knowledge only God can have we do harm to ourselves and others.

3/ We should follow and live out the order of Paul's letter; only after we (chapters 1-8) struggle against sin, and in chapter 8 begin to live in/by the Spirit even in suffering, will we be ready to see God's active providence in election (chapters 9-11) as comfort, instead of something to be feared or argued over.

### **Three Implications:**

## **The World Will End When the Son of Man Comes**

History is linear, not circular and is moving towards God's goal.

## **Take Heart for Justice Comes with God's Son**

The mischief caused by the misuse of eschatology—not least in contemporary America—has resulted in a virtual eclipse of eschatology in the life of the church. This unfortunate set of circumstances—both its abuse and its subsequent neglect—has weakened the church rather than strengthened it. If we dispense with eschatology, then the purpose and destiny of history fall into the hands of humanity alone. No one, I think, Christian or not, takes solace in that prospect. Unless human history, in all its greatness and potential as well as its propensity to evil and destructiveness, can be *redeemed*, human life is a futile and sordid endeavor. The longing that things *ought not to be* as they are, and *cannot be allowed* to remain as they are, is essentially an eschatological longing.

Edwards, J. R. (2002). *The Gospel according to Mark*. The Pillar New Testament Commentary (402).

## **Prepare and Respond for Judgment Comes with God's Son**

**John 5:18-44** 21 "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes. 22 "For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, 23 so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. 24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.