

“Mark 13: Jesus on the End Times - Part 3”

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[0 : 00] Ready to jump into Mark chapter 13? Open up your Bibles, and we have been going through the gospel of Mark. We're, what, three-quarters of the way through? And this is actually the third message on Mark 13, but the first two messages, we didn't get to verse 1 yet. So I promise today we're going to get to verse 1, and even more so. But the reason being, this is a passage, it's called the Olivet Discourse, and the reason it's called that, Jesus gives this teaching about the end times, what's going to happen in the future on the Mount of Olives, right next to where Jerusalem is. And so because of that location, it's given this name, this cool name, the Olivet Discourse. Really, Jesus is just talking to his disciples, because they ask him a question about what's going to happen in the future. The last two messages that we did, the first one we just talked about, just prophecy about the future in general, and why that's important, and why we should be interested in it. And then also, we did an overview of different views of the end times. Among Christian doctrine, theology, teaching, end times is probably where there's the most differences between denominations or groups of

Christians. And so, and one of the things that I said is, you know, any view that we hold, we should hold with humility. There's lots of good Christian people out there that might disagree with our take on the end times, and that's okay. But at the same time, we should also take it seriously. Jesus talked about the end times because he wanted us to know. And so we should, we should look at it with seriousness, but also humility. So the last two, two Sundays, I've kind of tried to set up why I'm going to take the view that I'm taking on the end times, or this passage specifically that Jesus is teaching.

This is a, this is a passage where Jesus is talking about a seven-year period that is just around the corner. And what's going to, what's going to happen during that seven-year period. Now, we take the view, you know, this church has for many years, and I do personally, that this is something that is going to happen in the future. But to the, for the disciples, it seemed like it was something that was going to happen very, very soon. And so, one of the things we looked at last week was, why would that be the case? And so, we looked at some passages in Romans, Romans chapter 10 and 11, that indicate that God was, had this plan for Israel, that he was going to accomplish, that had, you could see in the book of Daniel, we looked at the book of Daniel, Ron's going to be getting deep into the book of Daniel, but we looked at one or two passages last week. That according to this plan, the time of Jesus' that Jesus was teaching this was right before this seven-year tribulation. But Paul, in Romans chapter 10, 9, 10, and 11, indicates that something happened to the nation of Israel that caused this whole thing to basically get pushed, put on pause. Anybody ever, you're watching TV and you just hit pause, right, on the television and it just stops. It doesn't mean it's over, the movie's not over, but you just put it on pause. And so, that's what happened with Israel here, is there's this plan for what's going to happen to Israel, with Israel in the future, because Israel is a special nation to the Lord. But, what happened, because they rejected their Messiah during that time, right after Jesus died and rose again, and the apostles went out, and they went out to all the Jews to let them know that their Messiah had come, and they needed to trust in him and believe that he was the Messiah.

And many believed, well, really just a few, a handful, hundreds maybe, but so many, especially the leaders, rejected it and started persecuting them for their message. And so, as we read in Romans, the Bible says that God cut off Israel. He cut them off from their promises. But it also indicates a few verses later, but not permanently. In the future, and the Bible says there, in, I think it's Romans chapter 8, or chapter 11, verse 25, it says, when the time of the Gentiles is complete. So, God cut off Israel. He grafted in the Gentiles to be his people for a season, and that's the season that we live in, called the time of the Gentiles. Paul also calls it the dispensation of the grace of God.

[4 : 54] God. Because this dispensation, this era that we live in, is a time not of, not, not something, what's the word I'm looking for, where law, for example, the law of Moses is at hand, and then also some of these future things regarding the kingdom, but a time where grace is the prevailing message, that God, his favor and grace on all men, whether Jew or Gentile, just by trusting, in Jesus Christ. We're going to look at those differences a little bit more as we go on.

But today, we're going to read, we're just going to read through the passage, not the whole chapter 13, but just maybe, let's see, maybe 20 verses or so. And then we're going to just look at about half of those, because the, if you know anything about the tribulation, and you can see this both in Daniel, and in this passage, which actually references Daniel, and also in the book of Revelation. And there's more prophecies, but I think those are the big ones that speak to this time period, this tribulation period. But it's actually cut in half. There's two pieces, the first half, the first three and a half years, and the second three and a half years.

So what we're going to be looking at today is those first three and a half years, and then next week, we'll look at the second half of the tribulation. So let's just go ahead and read. Let's do this together. Or I'll read, but you go ahead and listen in as I read through these verses.

Mark chapter 13, verse 1. Then as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here. And Jesus answered and said to him, Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down. Now as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign when all these things will be fulfilled? And Jesus answered them, answering them, began to say, Take heed that no one deceives you, for many will come in my name, saying, I am he, and will deceive many. But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled, for such things must happen. But the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles. And these are the beginnings of sorrows. But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you out, excuse me, deliver you up to counter councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony to them. And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations. But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that. For it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. Now brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. And children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.

So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet standing where it ought not, let the reader understand, then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. And by the way, Daniel, he speaks of Daniel, this is that halfway point. This is the center, right in the middle of this seven-year tribulation. Let him who is on the housetop not go down into the house nor enter to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes, but woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days. And pray that your flight may not be in winter, for in those days there will be tribulation such as not been seen since the beginning of the creation which God created until this time, nor never shall be.

[9:10] And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved. But for the elect's sake whom he chose, he shortened the days. Then if anyone says to you, look here is the Christ, or look, he is there, do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will arise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. But take heed, see, I have told you all these things beforehand. We'll stop there and like I said we'll probably only get halfway through this section as we go verse by verse. But this is a description of a seven-year tribulation period. Notice one of the things that he said is that during this time the trouble, the suffering, will be worse, more severe across the world than has ever been seen since the very beginning of time. This is why we see, you know, apocalyptic type movies or literature, it's, it gets really, really bad. And that's based on what the Bible teaches is going to happen during this tribulation period. But let's just list out some of the things that happen. There's a destruction of a temple, of the temple, of the Jewish temple.

There's going to be religious deception. There's going to be international conflict. There's going to be natural disasters, persecution of believers, betrayals by even family members. There's going to be the preaching of the gospel that's going to go out against much resistance. There's going to be a thing called the abomination of desolation. What a strange phrase, but we'll look into that probably next week. And then a flight to safety because of what happens. And then even more intense persecution.

There'll be false Christs and false prophets. And then we'll, we didn't get to this part, but then heavenly wonders in the heavens. And then finally, what is described in the last few verses is the coming of Jesus Christ back to the earth. Let's go ahead and go back to verse one and just look at this verse by verse. It says that then he went out of the temple. They were, he's been at the temple here for a few days already, engaging with the leaders and with the people who were there. It's actually been very, there's been a lot of conflict involved. But they're leaving the temple probably at the end of the day. And one of his disciples says to him, they just make an observation, teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here. This, this temple that he's talking about was quite a sight to see. The temple, as you may know, was built by Solomon back hundreds of years earlier, over a thousand years earlier by, by Solomon. But then it was destroyed. The nation of Israel was taken captive.

They were conquered by the Babylonians and their temple was destroyed along with the rest of the city. And they were taken captive to different nations, different parts of Babylon. But one of the things that Daniel speaks of, we'll actually maybe look at this verse a little bit later, is that there's a time coming when the, that temple will be rebuilt. And he mentions actually a timeline that starts when an edict goes out to rebuild the temple. And that is actually recorded as an event that happens later, after Daniel. A king named Cyrus, he gets this idea and he says, hey, these Jews, I hear a lot about their city and their temple. And well, I kind of like the Jews for some reason. And he says, I want them to go build their, their city and their temple again. And so he gives permission. And that temple, if you look in the book of Ezra, you can actually see the recorded history of that event in the Bible, in the book of Ezra. So about 500 years previous to what we're reading here in Mark, that temple was rebuilt. But it was not nearly as opulent as what they were seeing at that time, because

Herod, one of the kings of Israel, about 50 years before this, and by the way, and we've looked at this in the past, but there were many, many Herods, but this is one of the original Herods of the dynasty of Herods. About 50 years before this, he decided he is going to make the temple this grand thing that is one of the most grand things in the face of the earth at the time. And he actually accomplished that to a great degree. The temple, the second, they call it the second temple, right? Because this was the second time it was built. So you might hear that in theology, or if you hear that word second temple, it's talking about the one that was rebuilt after the first one was destroyed.

[14 : 14] But it actually wasn't even finished at the time. There would be another 30 years even after this, or excuse me, yeah, yeah, 30 years after this, until it was actually finally completed. So it was a span of almost about 80 years that this construction project went on. Herod's temple was an imposing size. It was about 35 acres. Now you have the temple structure itself, the building you actually go into, but then there was a courtyard that was just vast, 35 acres. It was actually, if you look, think in terms of football fields, right? That helps us out, right? It's hard for us to think in measurements, but if you think about football fields, it was about five football fields long, five football fields long, and about four wide. So it was this huge complex. It was surrounded by walls.

The courtyard was surrounded by all these walls. And the walls were made up of a limestone, which if you've ever seen limestone, fresh limestone, it's very white. And the specific type of limestone that they used was very bright and brilliant. And they cut these huge pieces of limestone. Let me see if I put down, yeah, the largest stone they found was 40 feet long and 10 feet wide and eight feet high.

One stone. And so they quarried these stones and they actually know where they came from. And these are stones, many of them, modern cranes cannot even pick up today. They're so big.

But they used these stones to build out the temple on the temple mount. And today you can actually see some of the stones still left over. They're more of the foundation like a retaining wall. But if you've ever heard of the Western wall, and you see a lot of times if you see pictures of Jerusalem, people kissing the wall or praying at the wall or putting little prayers in the wall, that's the Western wall. And those are the stones that Herod, a lot of times they're called Herodian stones because they're the stones that Herod put in place there. But not only did you have these beautiful white stones, but also many, there was gold everywhere. Laid on top of the stone in some places, just all kinds of gold ornaments. And so you can imagine, especially on a bright day, whether from a distance or even up close, this huge size, these brilliant white and gold structure, it just was amazing to behold. And so one of the disciples is just saying, this place is amazing. And there were many other temples at the time, pagan temples to other false gods, and they were quite amazing as well. But really, many of them, especially in size, paled in comparison to what the Jews had at the time.

We'll continue on in verse 2, and Jesus answered and said to him, do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down. So he used this observation as an opportunity for a little lesson about the future. And I want to say, this isn't new information that the temple was going to be destroyed. This was something that had been foretold. And we read this, I think, last week or maybe two weeks ago, but from Daniel chapter 9.

[17 : 37] This is a prophecy. An angel came to Daniel and told him what was going to happen in the future. And he said this, Daniel chapter 9, verse 25, know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem, and again, this happened in the future after Daniel by King Cyrus, until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and 62 weeks. The streets shall be built again and the wall. So again, this happened, the rebuilding of the temple happened after Daniel had been given this message, even in troublesome times. And after the 62 weeks, Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. This is something that had been prophesied after the rebuilding of the temple many, almost 500 years later, it was prophesied that this same temple that would be rebuilt not long after Daniel would then again be again destroyed. And so this was something that was known by anybody who studied their Bible. We'll go to, we'll go on to verse 3. Now, as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, tell us, when will these things be and what will be the sign when all these things will be fulfilled? So they, they're traveling to the

Mount of Olives. It's just probably less than an hour to walk away. Actually, you have to go down a hill. There's a little valley and then up on the Mount of Olives. And you could, the Mount of Olives actually, if you go to the top, overlooks the temple. And so they were just sitting up there and four of his disciples come and say, hey, we want to know more. You just made this reference to something that's going to happen in the future. Tell us all the details if you're willing. And Jesus is willing.

Another thing, by the way, so this same account that we're reading this Olivet Discourse is also given, there's actually somewhat more detail given in the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew chapter 24 and 25.

Mark just has one chapter given to this. Matthew actually has two full chapters of detail given to this discourse. So occasionally we'll be referencing some of those verses. But one of the things, just a little phrase that Matthew adds about their question, they ask, when will all these things be fulfilled? And then they also ask, and the end of the age. So they're talking about the end of the age.

And a lot of times we think about the apocalypse, this being the end of the world, and it's not really the end of the world. It's just the end of an era, an age. Because the world will not come to an end.

[20 : 27] Did you know that God intended the world to be eternal? Yeah. It will be. God's plan for the earth, now it will be made new, the Bible talks about, but God's plan for the earth is that this will be the home for his people for eternity.

When immortality, or mortality immortality is turned into immortality, this will be the home for believers forever.

But they want to know, when is this going to happen, and what are the signs? What are the signs we should be looking for? You know, Jesus had actually criticized some other people for asking about signs.

If you remember, we've looked at this in Mark, in Matthew chapter 16, verse 4, Jesus says this, some Pharisees, some of the Jewish leaders had come to him, and they said, show us a sign from the heavens that you are who you say you are.

And had, was there any evidence? Had Jesus given them any other evidence already? He had given them plenty of evidence. And so, what was his response? Oh, sure, I'll give you just one more sign.

[21 : 43] Is that what he said? No, here's what he said. Matthew 16, verse 4, You want a sign?

Forget it. I'm not going to give you a sign. But here, we see a difference, right? His own disciples, coming in humility, right? Not in antagonism, like these other Jewish leaders were, saying, hey, can you tell us about the signs we should look for in the end?

Because really, the Old Testament is all full of signs, things that the Jewish people should look for in the future. And so, God's not opposed to signs, but he is opposed to people who look for signs with a spirit of pride and are not really interested in the truth.

So, he's perfectly happy to give his own disciples an indication of the signs to look for. I think it's important to note, as we talked about in the beginning here, the age we live in is a time that the Bible actually refers to as a mystery.

If you pay attention closely as you read through the Bible, you'll see references to prophecy about the future, things that are foretold. But then there's a word used, especially in the New Testament, the word mystery.

[23 : 07] And everybody likes a mystery, right? But a mystery is just something that was not foretold. And so, the age in which we live, this age of grace, this time of the Gentiles, as it's described, Daniel never spoke of.

There's no prophecy about this time and what's going to happen. And so, we, as far as the end of our future, and one of the things we also talked about is this end, the end of the time of the Gentiles, is an event called the rapture, in which all those who trust in Christ will be taken up into the air to meet the Lord in the air.

And that will be the end of this age. And then, what Jesus is talking about here, this tribulation period, that's when it will start, at some point after that rapture period.

But Jesus here is talking about signs that they should look for about the tribulation. But, can we look at what's happening out in the world and look for those kinds of signs as to what's going to happen right before the rapture?

The Bible actually doesn't give anything. And so, we should be careful about trying to predict when these things are going to happen. The Bible indicates, like I said, in Romans 11 again, that God is going to graft his people back into their promises, back into their plan, refers to it as a tree, when the time of the Gentiles is complete.

[24 : 45] But there is no indication of any signs or anything as to when that would happen. You know, there's been, over the last, I don't know, 200 years, a lot more, I think, we talked two weeks ago about dispensationalism.

It's this new way of approaching the Bible in which you make a difference between Israel and the body of Christ or the church, these two groups. But many have tried to make predictions about when is this rapture going to happen?

When are these end times events going to take place? Especially when Israel became a nation, right? Because that seems to be an indication that, well, hey, things are being set up to, because the temple has to be rebuilt, the nation of Israel has to be there in order for these things to happen.

And that very well may be the case. The rapture and these end time events could happen tomorrow, could happen in 10 years, 20 years, but it could be 100 years, possibly even 1,000 years.

It's possible that that could be the case. But one of the warnings I want to give is there have been so many predictions about it's going to happen in five years.

[26 : 09] Back in the 70s and 80s, there was a guy, his name was Hal Lindsey. He wrote a book called The Late Great Planet Earth. It was all about this kind of stuff. His book was so popular, it was on the number one best-selling list in the country for 10 years.

A book on end times prophecy. Can you believe that? For 10 years in this country, the number one best-selling book was The Late Great Planet Earth by Hal Lindsey. And many people were just fascinated with what the Bible said what's going to happen in the end.

But he really, he was convinced that the rapture was going to happen sometime in the 80s, 1988, because it was a generation after Israel was formed. And now we're, what, 40 years later, and you know what has happened?

Many people have seen that and they said, you know what, these Christians, they don't really, they don't know what they're talking about. And so it has really caused a lot of challenge to the Christian faith because some have been so convinced and made such a strong case when it really didn't happen.

So I think we should be careful when it comes to predicting when these things will come to pass. Let's go to verse 5. And Jesus answering them began to say, take heed that no one deceives you.

[27 : 25] He's starting in to this seven-year tribulation. These are the things that you need to be careful about. I want you to know about these things because you need to take heed.

Take heed, be careful. The first thing that he talks about is deceptions. And he says this in verse 6, for many will come in my name saying, I am he, and they will deceive many.

Now there's two possibilities here I think when people come and say that I am he. Either they're claiming to be Jesus himself or maybe they're claiming that Jesus wasn't the real Messiah, but I am.

So there will be people during this period who will claim to be the Messiah, the Jewish Messiah, the Savior of the world. But they'll be false. They'll be fakes.

But some people will believe them. So Jesus says, take heed. And how will they know if somebody is the real Messiah or not?

[28 : 27] How would they know during this time? Well, one, Jesus I think here is saying, hey listen, this is the beginning of the tribulation and he actually tells them, remember as we read at the end, when is Jesus coming?

Is he coming at the beginning of the tribulation or the end? At the end, right? So he says, hey listen, don't be deceived because I'm not coming at the beginning, I won't be there.

Some people will claim that they're me or that they are the true Messiah, but I'm not coming until the very end, after the seven years, after this whole thing is done, and there's going to be a lot of mayhem.

And so just know, at the beginning, people are going to claim that they're going to be liars, they're not going to be telling the truth. And then when Jesus comes, is it going to be secretly?

Is it going to be kind of on the sly? Is it going to be off in a corner? No, here's what it says in Revelation chapter one, verse seven. Behold, he is coming with the clouds.

[29 : 34] And remember when Jesus ascended in the beginning of Acts, he ascended into the heavens, and the angels said, how is he going to return? He's going to return the same way that he went up.

He went up into the clouds, he's coming back in the clouds. In fact, he's going to land on the right same spot on that Mount of Olives. He went up from the Mount of Olives, the Bible says he's going to return right there to the Mount of Olives where he left.

But it says, behold, he is coming in the clouds and every eye will see him. When Jesus returns, no one will have any doubts about his coming.

Because the heavens will part. Now, unless you live in the general vicinity of Jerusalem, you probably won't see that. But the other thing that the Bible teaches is that there will be a trumpet sound in the voice of an angel.

will be heard across the entire world. And no one will have any doubt that something enormous, something incredible has happened.

[30 : 41] And those believers will know exactly what that is. Application for us. We live in this age of grace.

we will be raptured out of here before this seven-year tribulation. Should we be concerned about false messiahs? Unfortunately, yes. Even today, right, we've seen, and I hear every once in a while pockets of some guy out in South America or different places who claims that they are the messiah.

And in fact, has anybody ever heard of a newspaper called the Washington Times? Washington, the Washington Times is a newspaper. It's a very popular newspaper. It's actually kind of conservative, if you will.

It was started by a guy named Sung Young Moon. Something Moon. Anyway, he claims he's the messiah. He's passed away now. But he claimed that he was the messiah.

He's Korean. And people who follow him, they call them Moonies. The Moonies. And so, you know, this is something that even we should be careful of.

[31 : 51] Listen, if somebody says they're the messiah, unless you saw them come out of the clouds with a trumpet sound, it's not Jesus. Verse 7, but when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled, for such things must happen, but the end is not yet.

This is interesting because wars are and rumors of wars. Let me ask you a question. Has there been any generation since the beginning of time when there has not been wars or rumors of wars?

No. This is just something that is typical to every generation, depending on where you're at. You know, America, thankfully, has lived in a time of relative peace and security for the last 200 years, but that's fairly unique to America.

Everywhere in the world, there's all kinds of conflict going on, and what we experience here is actually pretty uncommon when it comes to the rest of the world. We know that where these things are supposed to take place, in Israel, there's constant conflict, even right now.

And so wars and rumors of wars have been going on for a long, long time, especially out in the Middle East. And so how are we to take this? I think that this is a description of an intensity beyond just the normal kind of warfare that goes on during most of human history.

[33 : 19] And what he's saying is, listen, he says, for such things must happen, but the end is not yet. He's saying, don't worry, it's going to get pretty intense, but it's not the end yet.

So just kind of hold on, hold on for the ride here. In fact, we know that in that middle period, that time of that, what do you call it, the time of the desolation, the middle part of the tribulation, those three and a half years after, that's when it gets really, really bad.

So he's saying, hey, listen, there's going to be some wars and some rumors of wars, the conflict's going to heat up, but you ain't seen nothing yet, really. Verse 8, for nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles, and these are the beginning of sorrows.

So nation against nation, this is likely some kind of world war where every nation is involved. You know, many during World War I and World War II thought maybe this is what the Bible was talking about.

This is a world war. Nations all over the world, excuse me, rising up against each other. But no, that wasn't what was going to happen, but this something will happen in like manner in which there will be lots and lots of conflict.

[34 : 48] There will be earthquakes, it says, earthquakes in various places. Again, how long have there been earthquakes in the world? A long time. There's, you know, every few years it seems there's a major earthquake somewhere in the world.

But in this case, there's going to be earthquake after earthquake after earthquake after earthquake that will be a sign of God's judgment. And they won't be natural in origin.

All of the earthquakes, and I'm going to, I know some people may disagree with me on this, but I believe all earthquakes that we experience today are all natural in their origin. You know, you can actually look and see what's happening.

These plates, these fault lines, what's happening is things are slipping off, right? These plates are slipping off each other and causing a huge quake, and sometimes they cause tsunamis, and sometimes they knock down all kinds of buildings.

You can see the natural origins, but these will be of supernatural origin. You know, I think a lot of people, when they see an earthquake or a tsunami, a lot of people are quick to say, oh, this is the judgment of God on this city or that city that experienced it.

[35 : 55] It wasn't at Haiti, I don't know, five years ago or ten years ago. I kind of lost the track of when that was, but they experienced these horrendous earthquakes, or at least one earthquake, that destroyed so many things.

And some people said, oh, this is the judgment of God on Haiti. Now, does Haiti deserve God's judgment? Yeah. But is there any country in the world that doesn't deserve God's judgment?

No. No. No. No. And the only reason that God's judgment of earthquakes doesn't work on America is because we've, our architects have built better buildings that stand up.

But when God really judges a nation, is God going to allow better buildings to prevent him from judging those nations? No. And so I don't think that we should be quick to say every catastrophe that we see out in the world is God's judgment.

You know, in the Old Testament especially, there were lots of judgments, right, that include things like earthquakes and plagues and things like that. Here's what in 2 Corinthians 5 that it says about the time in which we live.

[37 : 10] 2 Corinthians 5.18, Now all things are of God who has reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. That is that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses to them.

And he has committed to us the word of reconciliation. See, God's not judging the nations right now. He's not judging the world. Now there will be a judgment day to come.

The Bible says that it's appointed unto man once to die and then the judgment. Anyone who's not in Christ will face that judgment day in the future. But when it comes to judging nations here on the earth, right now God is saying, let peace remain, at least his peace, right?

Among men there's not peace. But he is not judging the nations right now. Further on, in the same passage, it speaks of famines. Same thing.

I think there will be of supernatural origin. Revelation 6.6 speaks of a time when bread will be ten times more expensive than it was before.

[38 : 16] And what would cause that? Well, scarcity, right? Supply and demand. When food becomes scarce, people charge more for it. Verse 9, But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues.

You will be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony to them. And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations.

There's going to be a time, this is going to be a time of intense persecution. Again, a persecution that has not been seen since the beginning of the world.

I think it's interesting, there are really two, it seems, that persecution is coming from two places. One, he mentions councils and being brought before rulers and kings, probably Gentile ones, right?

But then, he also mentions you will be beaten in synagogues. Well, who's the ones in charge of the synagogues? It's the Jews.

[39 : 24] So, the believers, those who are preaching Jesus out in the world, they will be persecuted not only by unbelievers in the Gentile world, but unbelievers in the Jewish world.

Those who will say, don't tell me about this Jesus, the Messiah, and they'll persecute and beat up the believers, even in the synagogues.

The reason, it says, it gives a reason, it's going to be for my sake, it says there in verse nine, for my sake. They're going to be preaching Jesus, and because of that message about Jesus, and their testimony of Jesus, that's why they will be persecuted and beaten.

They'll be brought before kings and rulers. And why would that be? Kings and rulers. I think the primary reason is when you stand before a king or a ruler, the message that you have has more of a likelihood to get out there, right?

If you're able to get in front of a king or some kind of a ruler, a lot more people are going to hear about it. Did you hear about that nut that was standing before king so-and-so, and what he said?

[40 : 42] It's an opportunity for the word to get out. And so God will give his people during that time the opportunity to stand before kings and rulers.

And then it says this, and the gospel must be first preached to all the nations. Matthew 24, verse 14, in Matthew, this parallel passage, the same account, also adds this, and then the end shall come.

So in this gospel must first be preached to all the nations, and then the end shall come. And some people who don't really see the difference here, that this is something for the future, something for Israel specifically, and not for us Gentile believers, us grace believers, have taught that, hey, as Christians, if we send out missionaries all over the world, then we will hasten the coming of the Lord.

And the Bible actually talks in another place about hastening the day of the Lord. And so you can see how somebody might think that. But I don't think that's the case at all.

Even though we should send out missionaries, we should get the gospel out to as many people as we can. The gospel of God's grace. I don't think that that's what this is talking about at all.

[42 : 06] In fact, the gospel that Jesus was teaching was called the gospel of the kingdom. And his message, remember, was repent. Israel, repent. For the kingdom of God is at hand.

The kingdom's coming. The kingdom's coming to the earth with the king himself. And you need to repent and turn back to God. The gospel that we preach today is much more than that.

Not just turning to God, but we have a specific object of our faith. Jesus died for the sins of the world, and we tell all the people around us, and this is what we believe ourselves as Christians.

This is what makes us Christians. As we look at what Jesus accomplished on the cross, and we see what God promised us through that. That if we will trust that what he accomplished on the cross for us is sufficient for us, that we can have eternal life in him.

That's the gospel message. That's the good news. That by trusting in what he did for us, that he died for our sins, we can be saved.

[43 : 19] I've got a lot more here left. I think we might, I don't know how many parts we're going to go into. Part five, six, seven, eight? What do you guys think? But my time is out.

Can we just end there? We'll just end there and pick this up. We didn't get through the first three and a half years. There's still some more to go, and some great details that I think are important to know.

But let's just wrap it up right there. Father, we love you. We love your word. And this, a lot of these end times things can be really challenging to understand.

But you wrote it for our learning that we would know and understand. And we come to these scripture verses humbly to try to understand what you want us to know. We ask you to open up the eyes of our understanding, that we would understand these things as we read them.

and thank you for your grace, that in this time of grace you are willing to give us your peace and to give us righteousness that we didn't even earn.

[44 : 37] That we could be the righteousness of God, as it says in 2 Corinthians 5. That just by trusting in what Jesus Christ accomplished for us, we can be completely forgiven of all our sins.

And have peace with you and know and be assured that we have eternal life. May we keep all those things in mind as we read and study through these things. In Jesus' name, amen.