

Mark 13-14 - Prophecies and Events Surrounding Passover

Teacher: Pastor Paul LeBoutillier
Life Bible Ministry

Mark, chapter 13. It begins this way, *“And as he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what (beautiful) wonderful buildings!” (ESV)*

It seems almost a little strange to me for one of the, I mean, these guys had been around the temple, they'd seen it all of their lives, and by the way, the temple was not completely finished at this time. And this is the third temple. It's what we call Herod's temple. Of course, the first temple was built by Solomon, and then the next temple we call Zerubbabel's temple, because during the time of Ezra, we found that the temple needed to be rebuilt, although it wasn't rebuilt anywhere close to the original glory that Solomon built the temple with.

And then Herod, although he was hated by the Jews, took it upon himself, along with the help frankly, of some of the Roman builders to rebuild and refurbish the temple, and it was absolutely gorgeous. The temple complex was so massive. If you can imagine this, the temple complex took up one sixth of the whole entire city of Jerusalem. And some of the foundation stones which the disciples are here in this first verse calling Jesus's attention to were 40 feet long by 12 feet high by 18 feet wide.

Not all of them but some of them, and more amazing is that these stones were pure white in appearance. So, you had gold on the side of the temple and then you had these pure white stones, and it would just reflect the light in such an amazing way that people talked about having to turn aside their gaze when the sun was beating upon the temple because it was such a bright incredible vision, and here are the disciples saying to Jesus, isn't this amazing? It's massive, it's incredible and so forth. And yet notice Jesus' response.

In verse 2, Jesus said to them, *“And Jesus said to him, “Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.”* And what Jesus is prophesying here is the destruction of the temple, which would take place in A.D. 70, all right?

And in verse 3, *“And as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, ⁴ ‘Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?’”*

Stop there for just a moment. You can understand, can't you the disciples are understandably curious after Jesus makes this amazing statement that this massive, incredible temple, sometime in the future, they don't know exactly when, that's what they're wanting to know. But at some point, this is going to be destroyed to such a degree that not one stone would remain upon another. And so, they pull Jesus aside during a private audience, and they ask Him about it.

Now, Matthew's Gospel reveals that they also ask Jesus about the timing related to His coming. Which I believe that the disciples assumed would probably take place at the destruction of the temple. But Jesus is going to speak now in the following verses to these matters, and He's going to talk about the destruction of the temple. Which, again, we know, historically took place in A.D. 70. But He's going to talk about more than that. He's going to speak of other things. He's going to speak about things in the distant future, things that have not even yet come to pass to this day.

And He's going to use the destruction of the temple as kind of like a template, if you will. It becomes a type, or a parallel event to a greater judgement of God, which you and I know to be the Great Tribulation. And it comes to us in these passages in an interesting sort of a parallel form. And we're going to see here as Jesus speaks of one and then the other. And you'll see here, I trust that you'll be able to see as we go through these verses, just exactly what He's referring to when he does.

Verse 5. *“And Jesus began to say to them, ‘See that no one leads you astray. ⁶ Many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he!’ and they will lead many astray.”* Now let me stop you again, just for a moment, because Jesus is beginning to call to their attention what we refer to as, age long signs.

You've got to understand that when Jesus talks about signs for them to be mindful of, He's going to talk about age long signs, meaning they will go on during the entire Church age. And then He'll talk about age ending signs. In other words, the signs that are just about the end of the age, or those things that will signal the end of the age.

And I'm talking about the Church age, which we are in right now, and have been in for a couple of thousand years, and I believe we're getting very close to

the end of this age. That's just my opinion. But some of these signs, and these first ones that He will speak of, are age long signs. In fact, they're to be stretched over the entire Church age to the point where some people call them non signs because it is just part of our life. It's part of our daily, well it might not be a daily experience, these things tend to go in waves.

But you'll notice that the first warning He talks about is false messiahs, or false saviors who would come in His name. They will pretend either to be Him or be one of His representatives or whatever, but according to Jesus here they will not be true in either case. And so, we think, we look at this first warning of this age long sign, and you ask yourself, have we seen any of those? Yeah, just in my lifetime. Just in my lifetime, which of course is relatively short in the grand scheme of time.

I think back over my lifetime at the year that Sue and I got married back in 1978, one of the big issues in the news was over 800 people who drank the poisoned Kool-Aid when Jim Jones led his followers into a mass suicide in Guyana and that was a terrible, terrible thing. But a false messiah.

In 1993, about 80 people were killed in a fire that destroyed their compound in Waco, Texas following David Koresh, who claimed to be the Messiah. And then finally over 30 suicides took place among a group called Heaven's Gate.

Many of you will remember back in 1997 because they were following a leader who claimed to know when God was returning. And again, these are just in the last 40 years. Not even exactly 40 years.

So, you've got these things that are just huge, and this has been going on for a long time. This is an age long sign. Jesus warned His disciples, this is going to be going on for the whole age. People are going to be rising up and drawing people after themselves and they will be false messiahs.

Next warning, verse 7. *“And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, (He says) do not be alarmed. This must take place, but the end is not yet.”*

I know there's been a lot of wars that have gone on in the history since Jesus said these words that have gotten people to the brink of saying it can't, Jesus has to come back soon after what we've seen, after what we've experienced and so forth, but Jesus said these things will happen and they will continue to happen.

He says, ⁸ *“For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. (but He says, but all) These are but the beginning of the birth pains.”*

And the coming of Christ and the end of the age is often likened to the birthing process and there are, Paul even talked about how we groan as in the pains of childbirth. We who are redeemed of the Lord, we groan because we're still in these bodies and we're still living in this fallen world where there is death and destruction and darkness all around us. And so, Paul says we groan, but it's almost that groaning that goes along with childbirth.

We're waiting for the sons of God to be revealed, right? We're waiting for the new heaven and the new earth to be revealed. But it's like this groaning. It's this, you know what He's talking about. Jesus continues with these age long signs throughout, happening throughout the Church age, moves on to persecutions.

Verse 9. *“But be on your guard. For they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them.”*

And then look at verse 10. Very, very important verse. *“And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations.”*

Do you remember when Jesus, really one of the last things He said to His disciples before ascending to heaven for the last time? He basically said, *“All authority in heaven and earth has been given unto me.”* (Matthew 28:18) And then He told them, to go into all nations, and teaching them to obey, *“baptizing them in the name of the Father...Son and the Holy Spirit,...”* Go into all nations. That's been the commission of the church for 2,000 years. We haven't finished it completely yet.

We need to go into all nations. You'll notice that Jesus speaks of the fact that we must, did you see that word? But this Gospel must be preached to all nations, and that word must emphasize that this is the will of God. It is the will of God that the Gospel would go into all nations. It must happen. It has been decreed by Him, but He doesn't just say must look what He also says. It says, this *“gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations.”* And the word, first tells us that this thing must happen before something else happens.

It must first be proclaimed before this other thing can take place. What is this other thing? The end of the Church age. That's what must, so the Gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations before the end of the age can come. And this is

made clear, actually, in Matthew's account. Let me show you this on the screen. This makes it even clearer. Check this out.

Matthew 24:14 (ESV)

And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, (And then look at this, Matthew records Him saying) and then the end will come.

So, you can see that this is what we're referring to— this must first, is talking about the end. And again, the end of the Church age. Right? And I want to just remind you what signals the end of the Church age? It's when the Church leaves. It's when the Church leaves this planet, and that takes place during what we call the rapture, or at the rapture. Paul talks about it in Thessalonians. He talks about how Christ will return in the clouds for the Church, and we will be caught up to meet Him in the air, and we meaning, the bride of Christ.

When the church is taken away or taken out of the scene. Guess what? We come to the end of the Church age and chaos is going to break loose because salt and light will have been picked up and taken out. That's what Jesus told us to be in this world. He says you are the salt of the earth; you are the light of the world. Well, that's going to be taken away when the church is taken out and that, of course, signals the beginning of the great tribulation.

More on persecutions, look in verse 11. *“And when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.”¹² And brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death.¹³ And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.”*

And again, Jesus talks here about all kinds of persecutions that these things have come and gone throughout the Church age and the possibility of them rising again, even here in the United States of America is very much a possibility.

Now as we move on to verse 14 and following, Jesus is going to move past the age long signs and He's going to begin to deal with some of the age end signs. But I want you to remember that He's going to deliver this information in a two dimensional manner where he will be talking about God's immediate judgment

on Israel which will take place in A.D. 70, and He's also going to be referring, and it's going to dovetail in a very cool way, with the universal judgment of the great tribulation, right?

So again, you're going to be hearing these things together, but they dovetail because the judgment on Israel, again, is a template, a type for the great tribulation.

Verse 14. *"But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not to be (let the reader understand), (and that parenthetical comment is most certainly by Mark and was probably not spoken by Jesus) then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains."*

I want you to notice here, Jesus is specifically focusing here on Judea. Okay. Which tells you now that these first comments are limited to this short-term judgment to the nation of Israel.

He says, *"Let the one who is on the housetop not go down, nor enter his house, to take anything out, ¹⁶ and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. ¹⁷ And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! ¹⁸ Pray that it may not happen in winter."*

In other words, when the Roman army comes, the people are going to need to literally run for their lives. And they're going to see this advancing army and there will be no time to go back and get a coat. There's going to be no time to do anything. It's just, run for your life.

Verse 19. Now this is interesting. You'll notice with this statement we move past the immediate judgment, and we move into the dovetailing of the great tribulation. It says in verse 19, *"For in those days there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be."*

Notice how far reaching that statement is. He's saying now the tribulation now he's going to talk about as He begins to expand this into the great tribulation. He says this will be the greatest, and the worst tribulation that will ever come upon the face of the earth, all right, in the history of mankind. It will exceed all other judgments of the Lord. This is the outpouring of God's wrath on a global scale coming to the, as it relates to the great tribulation.

Verse 20. And He says, *"And if the Lord had not cut short the days, no human being would be saved."*

Now that's interesting, because guess what? People are going to be saved during the great tribulation. People are going to come to Christ during the great tribulation. We call them the tribulation saints. And there will be people, and who knows, they may be even people who went to church on a regular basis. Maybe even had their Bible in their lap and even considered themselves a Christian in some sort of rudimentary sort of a way. But when Jesus caught away the church, they weren't taken.

And they knew and understood then in a very painful sort of a way that they had not bowed the knee and had not accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior. They were not trusting Him for the forgiveness of their sins, and they were left during this time. And you can imagine that that's a huge shock. And I'm guessing that many, if not all, of those people will in fact be coming to the Lord during that time of the great tribulation, and they are the elect that Jesus is talking about here in this passage.

You'll notice that He goes on in verse 20, the second sentence of that verse. He says, *"But for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he shortened the days."* And again, the elect here refers to those redeemed during those days. This is not a reference to the bride of Christ. Remember, the bride of Christ is caught up to be with the Lord in the air prior to the great tribulation. So, this is not talking about the bride of Christ. This is talking about the tribulation saints. And Jesus is saying, were those days not shortened, none would survive. But for their sake, they will be shortened.

Verse 21 says, *"And then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it. ²² For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect."*

Now we have a false messiah warning that goes beyond the age long signs into the age ending into this time of the great tribulation where there's going to be this heightened work of spiritual supernatural activity during the great tribulation by false Christ, false prophets. He's talking here about the anti-Christ and the false prophet and so forth. And it says Jesus wants them to know these things will be false.

And that's why. He says, *"But be on guard; (Verse 23) I have told you all things beforehand."* Because there's going to be great spiritual issues going on at the time and people will be led astray with great deception.

Verse 24. *"But in those days, after that tribulation, (now this is basically the conclusion. of all of the wrath of God being poured out. It says) the sun will be*

darkened, and the moon will not give its light,²⁵ and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶ And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.”

I want you to notice something about that last statement. Jesus says in verse 26, *“then they will see the Son of Man.”* Did you notice Jesus didn't say, and then you will see the Son of Man. I checked in all of the translations, it's always they. It's speaking of they. These are the people that are there. Remember, the bride of Christ is with the Lord during the tribulation period. That's where the wedding feast of the Lamb will be taking place during that time.

And notice now He says, at the end, after the wrath of God is poured out in all of these ways these things will take place where the sun no longer shines, the moon no longer gives light, and the stars literally begin to fall from the heavens. It says the powers in the heavens will be shaken. I'm assuming speaking there of principalities and powers.

And He says, ²⁶ *“And then they, (those who are on the earth at that time) will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with power and great glory.”*

This is called the second coming of Jesus. The, when the, when Jesus comes for the church, that's not the second coming, that's the rapture. He doesn't come to earth during the rapture. We meet the Lord in the air. In His second coming, He comes to the earth, and we actually know where He's going to touch down. The Bible even tells us He will come to the Mount of Olives. That's where He will return. It's the same place where He left when He ascended.

Do you remember when He was up on the Mount of Olives with the disciples, and He's talking to them and He suddenly, He begins to rise and the disciples are all craning their necks back to try to get a final look, and suddenly there's a couple of angels standing there and say, men of Israel, why do you stand here gazing up into the heavens?

And he says, the angel said, *“This same Jesus who was taken from you will so return in the way you've seen him go.”* Not only in the way, which is on a cloud, but to the place, to the exact place. It's going to be amazing! But this is called the second coming.

Verse 27, *“And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect (Again, those saved during the time of the great tribulation) from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.”*

And then He says this, verse 28. *“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near.”*²⁹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates.³⁰ Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.”

This is a wonderful, wonderful promise. And He begins by using something that they would all understand in a farming agricultural society. He says, you guys know exactly what's going on with fig trees. You see them begin to leaf out, and you know that summer is near. You see that sign. He says, in the same way, when you see these things taking place, know this, that the generation that is alive, when those things begin to take place, that generation will not pass from the scene until all of this is accomplished.

And that's the point of what He's saying, simply this, when these things happen, it's going to be quick. We know that the whole tribulation period is a total of seven years. The first three and a half look fairly benign, the last three and a half, buckle up! But even so, it's a fairly short period of time. So, Jesus can say, when you begin to see these things happening, just like with the fig tree, you see the leaves that, summer is very near. When you see these things begin to happen, listen to me, this generation, the generation that sees those things beginning to happen, will not pass from the scene until they are all fulfilled.

Verse 31. I love this statement. *“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.”*

Wow! I tend to get up in the morning not worrying whether or not the earth is going to give way, but don't you? I mean, I literally go to bed at night thinking I'm totally expecting the earth to be here tomorrow, and the heavens for that matter. Fact of the matter is, they are going to pass away. And Jesus tells us here, by comparison, His Word is greater, more lasting, more eternal. Even though these things will pass away, His Word will not pass away, right? And yet, isn't it interesting? I put my trust in the fact that the earth's going to be here tomorrow, but I doubt His Word.

I doubt His promises. I see His Promises in the Word and I go, UUUHHH, God, can you confirm that for me, please? And yet, I never worry about the earth being gone tomorrow morning. And yet, that is transitory. That is going to go away. His Word will never go away. Ever. Isn't that amazing? This is one of those promises when you think about it, it'll change your life. I mean, if you embrace it.

And then He adds this, verse 32. *“But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”*

And I will just tell you that there are a lot of people who really are bothered by this statement, and they wonder if somehow this remark by Jesus is a concession on His part, that is somehow, He is lesser in equality with the Father. It has nothing to do with that. Listen, Jesus voluntarily laid aside many things to come and be one of us, and to live and teach and experienced life as we experience it, to suffer all of the temptations that you and I experience and then to take our sin upon Himself.

There were many things He laid aside and this is simply a personal choice on His part to voluntarily restrict Himself from some of the knowledge of the Father, but He does it out of submission to the Father, and that's to show you and I submission. But it in no way changes or diminishes in any way His deity. Please understand that. This is not a concession on His part. It's not an admission of somehow being lesser than.

Verse 33, *“Be on (your) guard, keep awake.”* Now that's obviously not a physical awakesness that He's referring to. He's talking about spiritually being alert and being prepared for these things to begin to happen.

He says, *“For you do not know when the time will come.”*³⁴ *It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake.*³⁵ *Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning—*³⁶ *lest he come suddenly and find you asleep.*³⁷ *And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake.”*

What is He talking about here when He talks about staying awake? Now He's talking about the rapture. You see, we don't know when that's going to happen. That could happen at any time. That could happen tonight. There's nothing standing in the way of the rapture happening. It is really the next event, prophetically, and He can't be referring to the second coming. You know why? Because after the rapture takes place, everybody can just count off seven years.

It's like, and believe me, when the rapture takes place, people are going to notice. When the bride of Christ is suddenly gone, people are going to - now, how they explain it, who knows? Probably something about aliens, I imagine. But whatever the explanation is, people are going to notice. And there are going to be a lot of people who are aware enough about Bible prophecy, even though

they didn't bend the knee to Jesus. And they're going to know. Okay, that was the rapture.

And we've just, we've now reached the end of the church age, and we are now beginning that time of the great tribulation. And they're going to know, they're going to know when Jesus is going to come back. Those people that understand prophecy. And no one understands the times and so forth related to the tribulation and the coming of Christ. They're going to know. But there's one thing that we do not know. There's one thing we have no idea as to when that'll happen, and that is when Jesus comes for the church.

That's the one thing we have absolutely no idea and there's only one thing for you and I to do and that is stay awake. It just means, stay alert. He could come at any time. How do you want the Lord to find you? That's the question that really, I need to ask myself every so often.

I find myself surfing the internet watching some videos on YouTube. I think okay, now is this the way I want to find you? Be found, or, I mean, how do you want to be found when Jesus returns? Jesus even said, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth? Will He find you and I walking in faith, trusting in Him and so forth?

Chapter 14. *"It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him, ²for they said, 'Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar from the people.'"*

And the reason for that is because the Jewish religious leaders were very, very attentive to the Romans. The Romans would not put up with any kind of public disturbance at all. And the religious leaders knew that Jesus was popular with the common people. And they knew that if they were to arrest Him out in the open, it would probably cause a riot among the people. So, they had to figure out some way to figure out, I mean, where He was where is He staying at night? We never know. He never stays in the same place. We don't know where He's running off to.

Well, that's of course why, when Judas came along, that was exactly what they needed because now they could arrest Him, potentially, without crowds by doing it in the middle of the night, when nobody was awake. People would wake up the next morning, hear about it, it would be a done deal. And that's pretty much the way it was. By the time people woke up on that good Friday, Jesus was already on the cross, for some people anyway.

It says in verse 3, *“And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he was reclining at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, (very costly) and she broke the flask and poured it over his head.”*

From what I understand, it had a very weak neck, and they would just literally break it off and then begin to pour it out. And by the way, John's Gospel makes it clear that this anointing is done by Mary, the sister of Lazarus. And by the way, it may sound really crazy to you and I to pour oil over somebody's head, but actually anointing the head of your guest was fairly common when you were having a festive Jewish occasion at your home, and there was someone there of relative importance and so forth. So, this was not completely uncommon, but we find out as we read into these verses that Mary's act had a greater meaning than just the usual hospitality.

Verse 4. *“There were some who said to themselves indignantly, “Why was the ointment wasted like that? ⁵ For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor.” (that’s about a year’s wages) And they scolded her.”* And by the way, John, again, tells us that this was, that this criticism was led by Judas Iscariot.

“⁶ But Jesus said, “Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. ⁷ For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have me.”

The idea behind what Jesus is saying here, is listen, if you really wanted to help the poor, you could do it at any time and you don't have to be sitting around criticizing what's happening in this room. If you want to go out and help the poor, go out and help the poor. You always have the poor with you. You have every opportunity, every day to go and help the poor.

But I'll tell you something, you don't every day have me in your presence. And you need to look beyond what she has done, and you need to see that there's a meaning behind it. And He goes on to explain what that was.

⁸ “She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial. ⁹ And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.”

I love reading that verse because we're fulfilling this prophecy again right now tonight. We're telling again the fact that Mary did it, and it's being done in memory of her.

Now I think Judas was smarting after Jesus, rebuked him, cause it says in verse 10, *"Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. ¹¹ And when they heard it, they were glad and promised to give him money. And he sought an opportunity to betray him"*

And again, that betrayal would surround the idea of going to the religious leaders and telling them where Jesus could be found and arrested in a quiet manner, apart from the crowds and their knowledge.

Verse 12. *"And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, 'Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?'" ¹³ And he sent two of his disciples and said to them, 'Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him, ¹⁴ and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'*

¹⁵ "And he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; there prepare for us." ¹⁶ And the disciples set out and went to the city and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover."

And by the way, you might have heard some different and interesting sort of computations as to when they did this, and when Jesus was crucified, and when did He really rise from the dead? Listen, the Passover preparations would be made on the 14th or on Thursday. That was on their calendar Nissan 14. And that implies that Jesus' last meal with His disciples was the regular Passover meal, which they had that evening, which according to the Jews remember, is the next day.

You and I don't think that way. When the sun goes down to the Jew, it's a new day. So, guess what? It's on the 14th when they're making the preparations, the sun goes down, it's now the 15th, and that's Friday. Nisan 15. And Jesus was crucified later that day, which was on Friday.

Verse 17. *"And when it was evening, he came with the twelve. ¹⁸ And as they were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, 'Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.'" ¹⁹ They began to be sorrowful and to say to him one after another, 'Is it I?'" ²⁰ He said to them, "It is one of the*

twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me. ²¹ For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.”
(That's pretty ominous)

²² “And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, “Take; this is my body.” ²³ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. ²⁴ And he said to them, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. ²⁵ Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

²⁶ And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. ²⁷ And Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away, for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’ ²⁸ But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.” ²⁹ Peter said to him, “Even though they all fall away, I will not.”

Isn't it interesting? You know, Jesus says to the guys, By the way, you're all going to fall away on account of me tonight. Oh, and by the way, then all this is going to happen, and then I'm going to rise, and I'll see you in Galilee. Instead of stopping and going, wait a minute, you're going to rise? Which would be the obvious sort of, I mean, if there's one thing that should really take them by surprise, it's the whole idea, okay, you're going to rise and meet us back in Galilee?

What do they focus on? I'm not going to fall away. Isn't it interesting? We hear things in a personal way, when our pride has been pricked, it's wait a minute, and we just kind of miss the essence of the beauty of what Jesus is prophetically speaking about here related to all of this. And Peter says to Him even though they all fall away I will not.

³⁰ “And Jesus said to him, “Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.” ³¹ But he said emphatically, “If I must die with you, I will not deny you.” And they all said the same. (And in Peter's defense, it says they all said the same) ³² And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” ³³ And he took with him Peter and James and John and began to be greatly distressed and troubled.”

Look at verse 34, very interesting. “And he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch.”

I've always wanted to know what that means. I've read that verse and what does it mean to have your soul sorrowful unto death? It's ominous, I'll say that. But I think the reason we don't really understand it is that we don't really know what He suffered that night.

We limit, so many times, His suffering to the cross and yes, that was terrible, so terrible that Jesus cried out to the Father, why have You forsaken Me? But this night at Gethsemane and the suffering that overtook his soul at that time and this became, we know from other Gospel accounts to have a physical manifestation. To be suffering so great of soul. Remember the soul is the human seat of emotion.

And Jesus was so emotionally overwrought and suffering so greatly in the seat of his emotions that it had a physical manifestation that it says, He sweat as it were great drops of blood. And there's things going on physiologically, that are compounding all of this to the point where He says, and I assume He's not exaggerating in any way, this is unto death. I am greatly distressed even, to death.

I trust one day perhaps we'll know. I trust one day we'll know, at least to some degree, what Jesus suffered for us that night. But for now it's shrouded in mystery. And we read the words, but we don't understand the dynamic behind it.

Verse 35 says, *“And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. ³⁶ And he said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”*

By the way, I think that's the most powerful prayer that we can pray because it's a prayer that puts God's will first and foremost. And you'll notice that Jesus said, if possible, remove this thing. And we know that this hour did not pass from Him. And we know from that, that there was no other possible way. There was no other way to save mankind. Because Jesus prayed, if possible, then let this cup pass. It didn't pass. He drank it full.

Verse 37, *“And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? ³⁸ Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”*

And I have no doubt that statement is far reaching, going beyond this very night, something that Jesus wanted Peter to remember, and the others, and us, to

remember, even to this day, and it has to do with being watchful, as He told us all to do for His coming.

³⁹ “And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. ⁴⁰ And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to answer him. ⁴¹ And he came the third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.”

⁴³ And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. ⁴⁴ Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard.” ⁴⁵ And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, “Rabbi!” And he kissed him. ⁴⁶ And they laid hands on him and seized him.

⁴⁷ But one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. (We know this to be Peter who did this.) ⁴⁸ And Jesus said to them, “Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? ⁴⁹ Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled.” ⁵⁰ And they all left him and fled.”

I love how Jesus confronts them with their duplicity, but notice that Mark omits the fact that Jesus reached up and healed the man whose ear had been cut off in that flailing attempt by Peter to defend Jesus. And then Peter, excuse me, Mark goes on to tell us something that none of the other Gospel writers tell us.

It says in verse 51, *“And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body. And they seized him, ⁵² but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked.”*

Now, you might ask the question, why would somebody be out at night with just a linen cloth? Well, that's actually, that would be their sleeping clothes. This probably is a situation where someone was at home or at least was sleeping. They would take off their outer garment and they would use it as a blanket. And they would just leave that inner cloth, that inner linen garment on, and that was pretty much it.

And by the way, this young man who is spoken of here in verse 51 and verse 52 is believed to be John Mark, actually the writer of this Gospel. And it is thought,

very possible, that it was at his home that the Last Supper took place, and that perhaps Mark was made aware somehow of what was happening. That Judas, through treachery, had gotten this crowd together to come arrest him with the religious leaders.

And perhaps John Mark just arose from his bed and ran out where he knew Jesus was staying in order to warn Him. Who knows? We don't know exactly. But the fact that he was wearing just a linen cloth about his body would tell us that he'd been sleeping. Because that's what, that's how they slept. It's an interesting sort of a thing that we wonder about.

⁵³ “And they led Jesus to the high priest. And all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes came together. ⁵⁴ And Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he was sitting with the guards and warming himself at the fire.”

By the way, that's never a good idea, to follow Jesus at a distance and warm yourself by the fires of the enemies of God. That will put you in a place of compromise every time.

⁵⁵ “Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking testimony against Jesus to put him to death, but they found none. ⁵⁶ For many bore false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree. ⁵⁷ And some stood up and bore false witness against him, saying, ⁵⁸ “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’” Now, you and I know what statement Jesus really made. And that's not it.

⁵⁹ “Yet even about this their testimony did not agree. ⁶⁰ And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, “Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you.” ⁶¹ But he remained silent and made no answer. Again, the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?”

And the term of the blessed there, which by the way is found in this sense, only here in the New Testament, is obviously a Jewish substitute for God. In other words, are you the Son of God?

⁶² “And Jesus said, “I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.” And that refers, again, to His second coming. *⁶³ And the high priest tore his garments.”* And by the

way, he tore his garments against the Law. The high priest was never to rend his garment. That was against the Law, the Mosaic Law.

But he rent, or *“tore his garments and said, “What further witnesses do we need? ⁶⁴ You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?” And they all condemned him as deserving death. ⁶⁵ And some began to spit on him and to cover his face and to strike him, saying to him, “Prophecy!”*

What that means is, they would strike him while his face was covered, and then they would demand him to tell them which of them had actually struck the blow. And it goes on to say at the end of verse 65. *“And the guards received him with blows.”*

Which is also to say, the guards beat him as well. And now we deal and end this chapter with poor Peter. ⁶⁶ *“And as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came, ⁶⁷ and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, “You also were with the Nazarene, Jesus.” ⁶⁸ But he denied it, saying, “I neither know nor understand what you mean.” And he went out into the gateway and the rooster crowed. ⁶⁹ And the servant girl saw him and began again to say to the bystanders, “This man is one of them.”*

⁷⁰ *But again he denied it. And after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, (And by the way, we're told from another Gospel writer that the relative of the man whose ear he cut off, was among those standing there. That's going to be a little intimidating. And said to Peter) “Certainly you are one of them, for you are a Galilean.” They could tell by the way he spoke.*

⁷¹ *“But he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, “I do not know this man of whom you speak.” ⁷² And immediately the rooster crowed a second time. And Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, “Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.” And he broke down and wept.”*

It can be a powerfully disappointing thing to discover that you're not the person you thought yourself to be. And that's what's happening to Peter here. Peter was the man who was pretty boastful on several occasions, had a lot of guts, even to the point of bringing Jesus aside and rebuking Him when He talked of going to Jerusalem and there, dying on a cross.

Peter had a lot of guts. Didn't always connect it with brains but there was something of Peter that needed to be revealed so that he would be operating under a new understanding of who he really was and how much he needed the Lord.

And don't you know that we all go through that at some time in our life? You know, the Bible says, humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up. Well, guess what happens if you don't humble yourself in the sight of the Lord? He'll humble you Himself. And this was one of those times for Peter. And this was desperately needed in Peter's life. And although it says he broke down and wept, and we're told he wept bitterly. And this is a grown, big, burly man. Fisherman.

And yet he's weeping, probably convulsively, like people do when you're just so ashamed of what you have accomplished, what you've done. All of this bragging, these other guys might do this, but not me, sort of a thing. And Jesus says, actually Pete it's worse for you. They're all, you're all going to desert me. You're going to go beyond that. You're going to deny me. You're going to deny you never, you never even knew me. Never.

See, but the response of Peter saying never was, came from his own understanding of who he was. We know from another Gospel account that the enemy was actually involved in this whole compromise, don't we?

Because we learn from a different Gospel rendering that Jesus actually said to Peter, Satan has asked this very night to sift you as wheat, but I've prayed for you, so that when you return, you'll strengthen your brothers. So, there was a sifting going on.

God was allowing Peter that night to be sifted. Why? So that he might know who he really was. Listen, Peter was being prepared in one of the most dynamic ways possible. Prepared for the ministry that God was calling him to as, frankly, one of the pillars of the Church. But until Peter recognized how weak he really was he would not be truly ready for that ministry.

And the same is true for us. You want to be used by God? I just want to be used by God. Best thing you can do is say, God, show me who I really am. Not who I think I am, not who other people think I might be, but who you know me to be.

And you know what happens when we have that revelation of who we really are? We come to a place of realizing our bankruptcy, don't we, before God. And we basically say to God, we stop saying, Not me, God, I'm not going to do the, when these other people might flake out on you, but not me. Then we start saying, God, yeah, that's me. And we start realizing that His power is made perfect in our weakness.

That's what that revelation actually shows us. I am a weak man. And the sooner you and I say about the things God has called us to, God, I can't do this, but you can do it through me, and I want to be your vessel, and I want to let Your Spirit flow through my life, and I want you to receive the glory. Not me, you.

But I just want you to know right off the get go here. I cannot do what you're asking me to do because in my flesh dwells no good thing. But through your power in me, I can do all things through Christ, right? Not through gritting my teeth, not through trying harder, but through Christ who gives me strength, amen?