

# Mark

## Lesson 16 Chapter 12-13

### Participant Guide

Leader Guide Bible Studies

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# The Kingdom of Heaven

## Lesson 16, Mark 12, 13

### Prayers

#### Introduction

Jesus entered Jerusalem riding a colt of a donkey and was ushered by a crowd waving palm branches and shouting of hosanna. Then he went to the temple, drove out all who were selling livestock, and overturned the tables of the money changer quoting the prophet Jeremiah 7:11-15, <sup>11</sup>“It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you make it a den of robbers. <sup>15</sup> And I will cast you out of my sight, as I cast out all your kinsmen, all the offspring of Ephraim.” He healed the blind and lame who were brought to him. The chief priests and scribes became indignant when they heard the judgment against them and saw the miracles Jesus did, and heard the praise of children and adults in the crowd.

Jesus returned to Bethany after clearing the temple. Early the next morning, Jesus entered the temple courts, and the chief priests, elders, and teachers of the law immediately confronted his authority to teach the people. He addressed the Pharisees and the crowd through parables and illustrations about the kingdom of heaven, judgment, and the Son of Man's return. The phrase, "the kingdom of heaven" is only found in Matthew and is synonymous with the "kingdom of God" found in the other gospels. Matthew quotes Jesus as using both expressions.

Jesus taught in parables to fulfill scripture, Psalm 78:2, “I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world.” Jesus spoke parables to reveal God's hidden wisdom, to confound the hard-hearted, and as a sign that he was of a prophet of God (Ezekiel 21:2, Hosea 12:10).

In Galilee and Judea, Jesus told parables like the mustard seed, yeast, and talents to describe how the kingdom of heaven, God's kingdom, would spread throughout the world. Through other parables like the good Samaritan, the prodigal son, and the widow and wicked judge, Jesus taught his disciples about loving their neighbors and enemies, forgiveness, and persistence in prayer,

In this lesson, we will focus on Jesus' final public teaching in Jerusalem.

#### **The Authority of Jesus Questioned, Parallel verses in Mt 21:23-27; Lk 20:1-8**

Mk 11:27 They arrived again in Jerusalem, and while Jesus was walking in the temple courts, the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders came to him.

Mk 11:28 “By what authority are you doing these things?” they asked. “And who gave you authority to do this?”

Mk 11:29 Jesus replied, “I will ask you one question. Answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

Mk 11:30 **John's baptism—was it from heaven, or from men? Tell me!”**

Mk 11:31 They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will ask, ‘Then why didn't you believe him?’

Mk 11:32 But if we say, ‘From men’ . . . .” (They feared the people, for everyone held that John really was a prophet.)<sup>v</sup>

Mk 11:33 So they answered Jesus, "We don't know." Jesus said, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."

1. This preface to Jesus teaching in the temple courts is found in Matthew, Mark, and Luke and provides the basis for Jesus' teaching in parables.
  - a. Why did the chief priest's question Jesus' authority?
  - b. Since the priests asked, why didn't Jesus simply answer that he was the Messiah since he already told them during the fall Festival of the Tabernacles and the winter festival of Hanukah?
  - c. What purpose did teaching in parables in this setting serve?

### **The Parable of the Tenants, Parallel verses in Mt 21:33-46; Lk 20:9-19**

Mk 12:1 He then began to speak to them in parables: "A man planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress, and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey.

Mk 12:2 At harvest time, he sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them some of the fruit of the vineyard.

Mk 12:3 But they seized him, beat him and sent him away empty-handed.

Mk 12:4 Then he sent another servant to them; they struck this man on the head and treated him shamefully.

Mk 12:5 He sent still another, and that one they killed. He sent many others; some of them they beat, others they killed.

Mk 12:6 "He had one left to send, a son, whom he loved. He sent him last of all, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

Mk 12:7 "But the tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.'

Mk 12:8 So they took him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.

Mk 12:9 "What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others.

Mk 12:10 Haven't you read this scripture: " 'The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone;

Mk 12:11 the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes'? (Psalm 118:2)"

Mk 12:12 Then they looked for a way to arrest him because they knew he had spoken the parable against them. But they were afraid of the crowd; so they left him and went away.

2. The parable of the tenants accompanied the parable of the two sons (Matthew 21). Both parables are set in a vineyard, a familiar image to the people taken from Isaiah 5:1-7.

Isa 5:1 I will sing for the one I love a song about his vineyard: My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside.

Isa 5:2 He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines. He built a watchtower in it and cut out a winepress as well. Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit.

Isa 5:3 "Now you dwellers in Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. Isa 5:4 What more could have been done for my vineyard than I have done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad? Isa 5:5 Now I will tell you what I am going to do to my vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it will be destroyed; I will break down its wall, and it will be trampled. Isa 5:6 I will make it a wasteland, neither pruned nor cultivated, and briers and thorns will grow there. I will command the clouds not to rain on it."

Isa 5:7 The vineyard of the LORD Almighty is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are the garden of his delight. And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed; for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.

- a. What is the vineyard in Isaiah's parable?
  - b. What is the theme of Isaiah's parable that Jesus will follow?
3. The Pharisees understood the parable was against them.
- a. Who were the Pharisees in the Parable?
  - b. Who is the owner of the vineyard?
  - c. Who were the servants?
  - d. Who was the son of the vineyard owner?
4. What warning did Jesus give the Pharisees for their actions?
5. After the warning, Jesus spoke prophetically, reciting Psalm 118:22-23, words without any apparent connection to the parable. What did Jesus mean by reciting this Psalm to the Pharisees?

Ps 118:22 The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone;

Ps 118:23 the LORD has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

Ps 118:24 This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

## **Paying Taxes to Caesar, Parallel verses in Mt 22:15-22; Lk 20:20-26**

Mk 12:13 Later they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in his words.

Mk 12:14 They came to him and said, “Teacher, we know you are a man of integrity. You aren’t swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

Mk 12:15 Should we pay or shouldn’t we?” But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. “Why are you trying to trap me?” he asked. “Bring me a denarius and let me look at it.”

Mk 12:16 They brought the coin, and he asked them, “Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?” “Caesar’s,” they replied.

Mk 12:17 Then Jesus said to them, “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.” And they were amazed at him.

6. At his point, the priests were planning to trap Jesus and murder him but Judas had not come forward with his plan to betray Jesus. What was the thinking behind the trap of the taxes?

## **Marriage at the Resurrection, Parallel verses in Mt 22:23-33; Lk 20:27-38**

Mk 12:18 Then the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question.

Mk 12:19 “Teacher,” they said, “Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and have children for his brother.

Mk 12:20 Now there were seven brothers. The first one married and died without leaving any children.

Mk 12:21 The second one married the widow, but he also died, leaving no child. It was the same with the third.

Mk 12:22 In fact, none of the seven left any children. Last of all, the woman died too.

Mk 12:23 At the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?”

Mk 12:24 Jesus replied, “Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God?”

Mk 12:25 When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.

Mk 12:26 Now about the dead rising—have you not read in the book of Moses, in the account of the bush, how God said to him, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’?

Mk 12:27 He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are badly mistaken!”

7. Into what great teaching did Jesus turn this question?
8. The chief role of the Sadducees was the administration of temple worship. They were not friendly to Jesus and were not seeking his counsel. What might they have hoped to accomplish by this overly complicated question?

## The Greatest Commandment, Parallel verses in Mt 22:34-40

Mk 12:28 One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

Mk 12:29 "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Mk 12:30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'

Mk 12:31 The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.'"

Mk 12:32 "Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him.

Mk 12:33 To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."

Mk 12:34 When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.

## Whose Son Is the Christ? Parallel verses in Mt 22:41-46, Mt 23:1-7; Lk 20:41-44, Lk 20:45-47

Mk 12:35 While Jesus was teaching in the temple courts, he asked, "How is it that the teachers of the law say that the Christ is the son of David?"

Mk 12:36 David himself, speaking by the Holy Spirit, declared: " 'The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet." ' "

Mk 12:37 David himself calls him 'Lord.' How then can he be his son?" The large crowd listened to him with delight.

Mk 12:38 As he taught, Jesus said, "Watch out for the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and be greeted in the marketplaces,

Mk 12:39 and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets.

Mk 12:40 They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely."

9. Jesus' discussion on the son of David delighted the crowd, but what serious point was he making?

10. For what charges did Jesus say the Pharisees would be punished?

## The Widow's Offering, Parallel verses in Lk 21:1-4

Mk 12:41 Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts.

Mk 12:42 But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny.

Mk 12:43 Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others.

Mk 12:44 They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on.”

11. What are the lessons from the widow’s offering?

### **Mark 13:1-37 Signs of the End of the Age. Parallel verses in Mt 24:1-51; Lk 21:5-36**

Mk 13:1 As he was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!”

Mk 13:2 “Do you see all these great buildings?” replied Jesus. “Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.”

Mk 13:3 As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately,

Mk 13:4 “Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are all about to be fulfilled?”

Mk 13:5 Jesus said to them: “Watch out that no one deceives you.

Mk 13:6 Many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am he,’ and will deceive many.

Mk 13:7 When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come.

Mk 13:8 Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.

Mk 13:9 “You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them.

Mk 13:10 And the gospel must first be preached to all nations.

Mk 13:11 Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit. <sup>f</sup>

Mk 13:12 “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death.

Mk 13:13 All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. <sup>i</sup>

Mk 13:14 “When you see ‘the abomination that causes desolation’ standing where it does not belong—let the reader understand—then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

Mk 13:15 Let no one on the roof of his house go down or enter the house to take anything out.

Mk 13:16 Let no one in the field go back to get his cloak.

Mk 13:17 How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! <sup>k</sup>

Mk 13:18 Pray that this will not take place in winter,

Mk 13:19 because those will be days of distress unequalled from the beginning, when God created the world,<sup>l</sup> until now—and never to be equaled again.<sup>m</sup>

Mk 13:20 If the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would survive. But for the sake of the elect, whom he has chosen, he has shortened them.

Mk 13:21 At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ<sup>61</sup>!' or, 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it.<sup>n</sup>

Mk 13:22 For false Christs and false prophets<sup>o</sup> will appear and perform signs and miracles<sup>p</sup> to deceive the elect—if that were possible.

Mk 13:23 So be on your guard;<sup>q</sup> I have told you everything ahead of time.

Mk 13:24 "But in those days, following that distress, " "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light;

Mk 13:25 the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'

Mk 13:26 "At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.

Mk 13:27 And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

Mk 13:28 "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near.

Mk 13:29 Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door.

Mk 13:30 I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.

Mk 13:31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

Mark records the prophetic words of Jesus in chapter 13. They are arranged in three sections. Verses 1-2 clearly relate to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70AD. In the second section, the disciples ask what the signs will be when this happens, and Jesus answers them in verses 4-23. The final part of the prophecy, the end of the age, begins in verse 24 – following those days of distress.

Herod's buildings were on a grand scale. Their destruction must have seemed unthinkable to the disciples. Herod fashioned his temple after Solomon's plans. It was 90 ft long, 30 ft wide, and 60 feet high. The altar was a square 75 ft wide and 22 feet tall. Josephus described the temple façade as covered with plates of gold. When the Romans destroyed the temple in 70 AD, they took the gold façade and the sacred objects from the temple and set fire to the structure, prying the stones apart to retrieve the gold in the joints. The stones from the Herod structures that remain today are part of the foundation and retaining walls. The blocks are colossal, some of the largest building stones in the world. The largest exposed stone is "Western Stone" 44.5 feet long, 11 feet high, and 300 tons. Smaller blocks range in size from 7 to 26 feet long.



Romans felled the forests bare surrounding Jerusalem to make siege equipment. After breaching the city walls, the Romans slaughtered thousands and enslaved thousands more to work in Roman mines. No distinction was made between rich, poor, man, woman, or child. Corpses were heaped up around the altar, and the city was set to fire, so the devastation of Jerusalem was complete.

Following Jerusalem's destruction, the Temple Mount lay desolate for 60 years until Emperor Hadrian began erecting a Roman city dedicated to Jupiter, Aelia Captolina. The Roman city built on the temple mount led to the Jewish Maccabean revolt in 135 AD.

12. What did Jesus tell his disciples they would experience before the destruction of Jerusalem?

- a. Verse 6, 21-22 -
- b. Verse 7 -
- c. Verse 8 -
- d. Verse 9 -
- e. Verse 10 -
- f. Verse 11 -
- g. Verse 13 -
- h. Verses 14-19 -

13. What signs accompany the coming of the Son of Man at the end of the age in verses 24-31?

### **The Day and Hour Unknown**

Mk 13:32 **“No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.**

Mk 13:33 **Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come.**

Mk 13:34 **It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.**

Mk 13:35 **“Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn.**

Mk 13:36 **If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping.**

Mk 13:37 **What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’ ”**

14. Jesus makes it clear that God the Father knows when He will send His Son to return. The unknown timing of Jesus' return is in contrast to other specific Biblical prophecies:

1. The 70-year prophecy against Babylon (Jeremiah 25:12) “But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt,” declares the LORD, “and will make it desolate forever.

609 BC – Ascent of the Babylonian empire, Battle of Haran, the end of the Assyrian empire

539 BC – End of the Babylonian empire, Cyrus of Persia captures Babylon

70 years

2. 70-year prophecy against Jerusalem (2Chronicles 36:21) The land was desolate for 70 years. The time equivalent to all the sabbath rests Israel did not observe in fulfillment of the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah.

586 BC destruction of the Jerusalem temple by the Babylonians

516 BC Consecration of the Jerusalem temple

70 years

3. Arrival of the Messiah. See Daniel 9 and review the prophetic timing of these events.

Da 9:24 “Seventy ‘sevens’ are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy.

Da 9:25 “Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens.’ It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble.

Da 9:26 After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing.<sup>32</sup> The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.

- a. Verse 24 What purposes would be accomplished for the Jewish people and Jerusalem in the seventy sevens (490 years)?

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.

- b. Verse 25 How many years would there be from issuing the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the coming of the Anointed One?

- c. Verse 26 What happens to the Anointed One after the seven sevens and the sixty-two sevens (483 years)?

## **Closing Prayer – John Baillie**

Almighty God, who in Your infinite wisdom has ordained that I should live my life within these narrow bounds of time and circumstance, let me now go forth into the world with a brave and trustful heart. It has pleased You to withhold from me a perfect knowledge; therefore do not deny me the grace of faith by which I may lay hold of things unseen. You have given me little power to shape things to my own desire; therefore use Your own omnipotence to bring Your desires to pass within me. You have willed it that through work and pain I should walk the upward way; be then my fellow traveller as I go.