

Jerusalem and The End

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[0 : 00] Now we began in chapter 13 to look at how the disciples spoke to Jesus as he was leaving Jerusalem and said, look at all these wonderful stones and the strength and power of them, tremendous buildings there are, and Jesus predicting how not one of them would be left standing one upon another.

They would all be thrown down. And the disciples naturally are anxious as to when this should be. And there are, we might say, three levels at which Jesus answers their anxieties. Three levels at which we might say any individual will have a concern for whether their souls or their lives or whatever. There is what is going to happen to them, which Jesus addresses and really looked at in the first part of the chapter last Lord's Day evening, what is going to happen to them, their witness that will be given, how they'll be scourged in the synagogue till he brought the four rulers and kings for his sake and so on.

So what's going to happen to them? There's what's going to happen to their country, to their city, Jerusalem. And that also is part of what Jesus is declaring here. And then there's what's going to happen on the last day when Jesus comes back.

So there's these three levels and they're all kind of interwoven one with another in this chapter. Because inevitably, if we were to ask Jesus much the same questions, we would want to know what's going to happen to me?

[1 : 22] What's going to happen to our country? What's going to happen when you come back, Lord? And the answers may not always be optimistic or encouraging, but through it all, the Lord promises to bring his people.

He promises never to leave them or forsake them. Like somebody being drawn on a rope, whether it's through burning fire or flooding waters or danger or whatever the case may be, they continue to be held.

But they continue to be drawn on. They continue to be brought to safety. And thus the Lord deals with his people as he brings them through all these trials and tribulations.

So he's dealt to an extent with what will happen in the spread of the gospel, how it will be in the teeth of great opposition, how the apostles themselves will suffer for their witness.

We saw that in verses 9, 10, 11 and so on. Now how this will be something which will divide families and loyalties. And of course, as we know, the gospel is the ultimate source of division.

[2 : 24] There will be families at the last day, some of whom will be in heaven with the Lord and some of whom will be in hell without him. Now there's not really a kind way of saying that.

That is the fact, the eternal truth, that there will be some, whether it's brothers and sisters or sons or daughters or parents, husbands or wives, some will be with the Lord in glory and some will be without him.

And they will be eternally lost. It is the ultimate division in humanity. Not race, not gender, not nationality, not language, but ultimately who is on the Lord's side and who is not.

And thus, humanity is ultimately divided into the lost and the saved. The brother shall betray the brother to death. The father, the son, children shall rise up against their parents, shall cause them to be put to death.

He shall be hated of all men from I am saved. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And that's where we left at last Lord's Day. Now Jesus goes on to talk about the time when Jerusalem itself shall fall.

[3 : 29] And he's talking in political and physical historical terms. And this was something which would happen within less than 40 years of his own lifetime.

If we think in terms of, it says in Luke's account of the gospel, Jesus began to be about 30 years of age when his ministry began. Not exactly 30 years of age. So let's say he's in his early 30s. And let's say his ministry lasts, you know, that the traditional amount of time is thought to be about three, three and a half years. So let's even say that Jesus is about 36, 37 when his ministry finishes. Well, they take off a few years because he must have been born before what we now call the year dot because Herod died in 4 BC. And of course, Jesus was born in the lifetime of Herod the Great. So even if you imagine 40 years of age, 40 years of age, 40 years of age, oh, that's an awful long time. It's not that long. 40 years ago from now was 1978. 1978 doesn't sound that long ago unless you're really young.

[4 : 34] It sounds pretty recent. That's 40 years. It's in less than that amount of time that Jerusalem was going to fall. That's going to fall to the Romans. Now, this shouldn't surprise us really because what we find, just as the gospel encourages people to be reconciled toward God, when a person is reconciled toward God, what is part of the fruit of that?

They are reconciled towards their fellow men and women. They seek forgiveness from those they have wronged. They seek to forgive those who have wronged them. They seek to be at peace with one another.

They seek to show as far as possible love to one another. They become better citizens. They become more diligent employees. They become improved versions of their old selves in their dealings with men.

And this is partly because of their relationship now to God. You know, you don't have to love whoever happens to be in power to recognize that, okay, the powers that be ordained of God. So I have to pay my taxes. I have to do my civic duty. I have to recognize that whoever might be ruling any particular country at some time or other, they are the powers that God has allowed to be in place.

[5 : 44] I have to obey their laws except in so far as it causes me to violate the law of God. So we have to recognize. We have to be good citizens. In that sense, we become improved in our relationships with other people when we are reconciled to God.

By the converse of that, if we are determined to be at enmity with God, one who is at enmity with God will almost certainly be at enmity with his fellow men and women.

He will have a grudge against humanity. He will be ready to find fault with others. He will be probably one who is, you know, a contentious person, one who will be most likely ready to stir up strife or to fight, take offense or to look for trouble.

Although some people can be sweetness and light and still be complete and totally atheist. There are exceptions. But by and large, if one is not reconciled to God, not is one likely to be reconciled to one's fellow men and women.

And this is what we find here with the Jewish nation of Jesus today. Because they have rejected Christ and they have put him to an open shame and crucified him, they have rejected God's ultimate messenger to themselves.

[7 : 00] God himself has come down amongst them and they have rejected him and they have put him to death. They are therefore completely at war, as it were, with God in that sense.

The majority are, of course. The first Christians are Jews. All the early apostles are Jews and so on. So from that nation, he already has his own remnant, his own elect. But by and large, the nation has rejected God.

And because they are rejecting God, they think nothing of rejecting the political powers that surround them and those with whom they have to share a country at that time. So they are in an almost constant state of rebellion or warfare against the Romans.

The Romans at the peak of their power are not, of course, going to take this line down. In due course, within 30 years of the end of Jesus' lifetime, the Jews rose up in rebellion against Rome. They came very, very close to the Romans to provoking a civil war when the emperor Caligula was about to have an image of himself put into the temple holy of holies.

[8 : 10] And this was thought, this is going to be the abomination that causes desolation. This is going to be the thing that does it. And he was all set to do this. And all his advisors said, don't do it. Don't do it. It'll start a war.

There's going to be trouble. There's going to be hassle. And, of course, the Romans would win any such war, but at a huge cost. And they just didn't want the hassle. So they tried to say, don't do it.

Don't do it. He was determined to do it.

But he died in the providence of God before it could be implemented. However, in due course, a rebellion did break out. The Jews went to war with Rome.

And the war lasted four years. Now, to be able to make a war with imperial Rome last four years, it's going to be pretty fierce.

It's going to be a pretty, pretty vicious kind of war. The Holy Land is a small country. The population is comparatively small. They managed to fight them for four years. By the end of that four years, the land was completely devastated.

[9 : 10] Thousands had been killed. More had died of famine. They reckon like 1.1 million died of famine. Because the crops had been destroyed, anything that was left, the Roman armies ate up.

People were slaughtered in their thousands. And when it finally came to the siege of Jerusalem, at the end, it was just pure horrific. Jesus had advised his followers here, When ye shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand it where it ought not, let him that readeth understand.

Then let him that be in Judea, flee to the mountains. And let him that is on the house top not go down into the house, neither enter therein to take anything out of his house. Let him that is in the field not turn back again, for to take up his garment.

Now, the most obvious thing we might think in terms of the abomination that makes desolate, we go back to Daniel. Let's look at the actual verses. 9.27 in Daniel, He shall confirm the covenant for one week.

In the midst of the week, He shall cause the sacrifice, and the oblation to cease. And for the overspreading of abominations, He shall make it desolate, even until the consummation and the determined, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

[10 : 24] Okay, sounds a bit cryptic. Daniel 11, verse 31. Arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.

Finally, Daniel 12, verse 11. From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. All very cryptic, all very kind of deep. There was, if you like, a short-term fulfilment. Fulfilment to what Daniel wrote. And that was in the days of the Greek king Antiochus, who sought to stamp out Judaism and the Hebrew religion in the country.

He brought in a statue of the god Zeus, the Greek god Zeus, and set it up in the temple itself. He tried to abolish all the customs.

He forbade circumcision and so on. In the immediate short-term, many people took that as being the abomination that causeth desolation. But some people take it meaning the Roman egos and standards, that when they come into Jerusalem, into the temple, that's the abomination that causeth desolation.

[11 : 36] Okay? Except that Jesus can't be referring to that at this point, because if that's what you're thinking of, if you're thinking of the Roman standards and the egos coming into the temple courts, that doesn't happen until Jerusalem falls.

And by the time Jerusalem falls at the end of a horrific siege of however many years, it's a bit late then to be telling people to flee to the mountains and so on. So the likelihood is that the abomination that causeth desolation that Jesus is speaking of is the presence of pagan armies approaching Jerusalem, which they ought not to do.

The desire of the Lord's people is that that should never happen. Lamentations chapter 1, verse 10, Now, in Lamentations, it's speaking of the first fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians.

That was bad. It was a terrible occasion. The first time Jerusalem ever fell, it was a pale imitation of what happened when the Romans did it.

You know, in 2 Kings chapter 21, we read of this verse that described, I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria. In other words, I'll judge them like I judge Samaria.

[13 : 14] And the plummet of the house of Ahab. And I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish. Wiping it and turning it upside down. That's what happened to the Holy Land and to Jerusalem when the Romans eventually were finished with it.

It was like a dish that had been wiped clean. They took the land and they raised villages to the ground. They cut down all the trees and used them to crucify the population.

They slaughtered people wholesale. They adopted scorched earth policy. They wiped it clean. When it came to Jerusalem, the Babylonians left ruins to sort of stand as a witness to this is what we do to cities that oppose us.

The Romans didn't leave ruins. They demolished manually the entire city. They dug down the foundations. They erased every last vestige of any habitation there.

They wiped it clean. Literally in that sense. So what they were going to do was had never been done before, had never been seen before.

[14:22] The abomination that causeth desolation, I would suggest to you that Jesus is warning of, is the approach of the Roman armies towards Jerusalem.

So when you see that, let him that is on the housetop. Why might you be on the housetop? You might be working on the housetop. Or you might be watching to see the approach of that.

You stay where you are as long as you can. You gather up your victuals or your supplies and you keep watch. And as soon as you see them, you run. You don't say, oh well, where can we go for safety?

Where can we go for both free? Maybe we'll go and stay with auntie so-and-so. Maybe we'll go up north to gather you or whatever. No, you just run for the hills. You just run. Don't go and gather anything from the house.

If you're out in the field, don't go back into the village. Just run. As soon as you see them, there isn't time to go and get anything else. Let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither into the land.

[15:17] Let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment. And you might think, well, what about your family? What about the people that you love and that you care about? Well, obviously, if you know these armies are approaching, you're going to have them on a state of alert anyway, hopefully.

Woe to them that are with child, to them that give suck in those days. Pray that your flight be not in the winter. You know, Jesus is talking about an ability to actually run somewhere. If you get to the hills in time, you might survive.

If you get to the mountains, don't think you'll have more safety in one village or another because you won't let them destroy everything. Your only hope is to hide in the mountains. But you can hide somewhere.

If he was talking here about the second coming, there's nowhere to hide. Peter tells us about, you know, the mountains melting with fervent heat and everything burning up with fire. And the Lord's elect having been gathered, of course, from the four winds.

So what happens to the people who are left when the earth is melting with sort of volcanic fervent heat and all sort of dissolving? Well, there was nowhere to run then, is there?

[16:23] It's like the flood, only worse. You've had it. You can't run to the hills then. There's nowhere to go. Nowhere for cover. But what Jesus is talking about here in this section implies there is somewhere that you might be able to go to escape.

In those days shall the affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. And except the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved.

But for the elect's sake whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days. Now, again, it's implied here that the Jewish nation almost ceased to exist after that particular war.

1.1 million dying of starvation and famine. 97,000 being taken off as captives are some of the figures that are suggested by historians.

There's just almost nothing left. But it's almost nothing left. It's not absolutely nothing left. The Christians who by then had taken Jesus at his word to flee, they fled from Jerusalem and from Judea up north to Pella, which is south of the Sea of Galilee and on the eastern side of the Jordan.

[17:40] It's in a different territory from Judea itself. And they fled there for safety. And as a result, they escaped the worst of the persecution that followed. Because they took Jesus at his word and they got out while they still could.

The rest of Judea did the opposite. They all flooded into Jerusalem. And as they flooded into the city where they thought they would be safe, of course, what happens when a city's population, you know, suddenly balloons by thousands and thousands of people?

And then they closed the gates and they, oh good, we're safe now. And then the Roman armies come round, they settle down, they're there for the long haul. What happens? Whatever your food supplies are going to be, they are not able to sustain this huge influx of additional people. Famine sets in. Famine is not a quick, tidy way to die. It is reported by historians. People dropped in the streets. Once the dead were there, there was nobody to tithe them away or bury them because nobody had energy.

Hunger makes you listless. It makes you have no energy. You're just dragging yourself about looking for something. You can hear reports of people gnawing on the leather straps of their sandals for hunger.

[18 : 53] People sort of searching the sewers to try and eat cow dung or whatever it is that they could find because they were just so completely famished.

Some reports of cannibalism at the time. You know, 1.1 million people in the country dying of famine. You know, we can't begin to go into the horror of that.

What was left in the country? Jesus predicts and prophesies what is coming. This is what happens when a nation, first of all, turns against God and then secondly turns against their fellow man.

You find that your fellow men are a lot less merciful than God in his mercy. But the one so often follows from the other. Except the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved.

But there was a Jewish remnant that did survive. The elect from he has chosen. Then if any man shall say to you, lo, here is Christ, or lo, here is there, believe him not.

[19 : 56] For false Christs and false prophets shall rise and shall show signs and wonders to seduce, if all possible even the elect. What's he talking about here? He's talking about after the fall of Jerusalem, what would have seemed to every Jewish person like the end of the world.

That's when every charlatan and chancer in the place would now be saying, oh look here's the Messiah, oh there's one, so and so, he's going to be it, oh look this charismatic leader, he's the one who's going to change everything.

In their desperation, they were ready to latch hold of anything, to clutch at any straw. Now of course it has been said many times with a great deal of truth, that when people cease to believe in the true God, it's not that they then come to believe nothing, it's that they are ready to believe anything.

And that's what we find both in our own world with the rejection of the true God, it's not that now people are complete convinced atheists, it's not that they're ready to dabble in this kind of Eastern mysticism, or give a wee bit of credence to that particular religion, or this fake religion, or this false prophet, dabble in this, dabble in that, and crystals, and crystal balls, and necromancy, and a wee bit of wicca, witchcraft here, all manner of things is accepted as being normal, because people say, well I'm spiritual, but I'm not religious.

They'll believe anything, because they have rejected the true God. And this is what Jesus is talking about here. Once the disaster has come, people will clutch at straws, right, left, and center, and say, oh here's Christ there, here's the Messiah, here's a leader, here's somebody that's going to save us from this terrible thing that has happened.

[21 : 36] False Christs, false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. But take ye heed, behold, I have foretold you all things.

Those who have the true Christ, don't need to worry about the fakes. They don't need to worry that somebody is going to come to them and show something better than the truth of what they've got. They know the living God. They don't have to be seduced by false gods and false prophets. Because once you have the truth, you can recognize the emptiness and the fake nature of all the other false gods.

But if you don't have the truth, how can you tell? You know, I can't speak French. So if somebody was coming along saying, blethering away what sounded to me like French, and I would say, oh yeah, James, they must be able to speak it really well.

They might be speaking mostly gibberish, with a few French words thrown in. But somebody who actually is French can come along and say, oh no, he's speaking rubbish, but that couple of words are actual French. No, no, he's speaking Jewish.

[22 : 43] That's not French. And then somebody else comes along who does speak flawless French. He says, oh, it's that person. He's speaking the language correctly. I can tell because I am French.

That person could say. I'm none the wiser. Because I don't have the language. So I can't tell what's true and what's false. But the person who does have it, they can tell. And if I have Christ, if I belong to him, then I can tell what is fake.

And I can tell what is truth. I can tell a genuine fellow born-again believer. And I can tell somebody who's just putting on a front of supposedly being vaguely religious or just going to church but doesn't really have the Lord in their heart.

You can usually tell that even now at this stage, whether somebody's a born-again Christian or whether or not they're just kind of going through the motions. You can tell by what not only comes out of their mouth.

You can tell what shines as it were from their heart. You can tell by the priorities that they have. You can tell about what matters to them. Because if you have the reality, you can tell the reality.

[23 : 49] And if you have the reality, likewise, you can tell what is false. Take ye heed. Behold, I have told you all things. But in those days, after that tribulation, notice the simple tunes that is coming here.

He has been talking about the fall of Jerusalem. Now he switches to talk about the second coming, about his own return. The two, one does not follow automatically from the other.

But these are two different things which he is talking about because these are the things the disciples want to know about. And he's not saying, this is going to come immediately after the fall of Jerusalem.

He doesn't say that. Nor does he say, oh well, it's going to be in 25 years time. It's going to be in 50 years time. This is the date when it's going to happen. Put it in your diaries. He's not saying that.

But in those days, after that tribulation, don't say how long after.

Maybe hundreds of years. Maybe thousands of years. We now know that it is thousands of years. After that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not give her light, the stars of heaven shall fall, the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

[24 : 53] And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

In other words, when the Son of Man genuinely appears in the clouds of glory, nobody's going to be in any doubt then. You know, nobody's going to say, oh, I wonder if this one's the real Messiah. Well, he's doing some really clever tricks and he looks like he's the real thing. And look at all these people following him. And then he seems to be, he seems to be an earthbound charlatan. One of half a dozen or many others, fakes charlatans.

But when the Son of Man appears with the clouds of glory in heaven and all the holy angels with him, well, there's no doubt about that. Everybody can see that. Everybody can see the reality of that and the comparison, the contrast between the reality and the fake monograd.

They shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. They'll gather his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven. And we might think, well, how's everybody going to see that?

[26 : 02] Because if he, let's say Jesus, when he comes back, appears over Jerusalem, that's the most logical place you would think that he's going to appear. And I say, well, if he's in Jerusalem, we can't see him.

We won't be able to see him there, will we? Maybe, maybe not. If we can't see him, it won't matter because his elect will be gathered from wherever they are in Scotland or Greenland or Canada or South Africa or wherever they happen to be, we'll be gathered to him where he is.

But I think we will still be able to see him. You know, the sun in the sky is in one place. We think it's in one place. But on any given day, you'll be able to see the sun in the sky from Jerusalem and from Syria and from Africa and from America and from all the different places.

You'll see the same sun in the sky on the same day. And it's right up there. We all scan it over different places on the earth and we can still see it. And I think we will still be able to see the son of man when he comes.

And we will have no doubt that that's who it is. But, of course, we have to be ready when he comes. That's the main thing. Now learn a parable of the fig tree. When our branches yet tender and put forth leaves, you know that someone is near.

[27 : 11] So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors. Lettily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass till all these things be

done.

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. He's paraphrasing there what the prophet Isaiah says in chapter 40. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand forever.

Now, Jesus, when he speaks about the parable of the fig tree here, the fig tree was often taken as an emblem for the Jewish nation, the Jewish people.

Also notice in verse 28, the word narrow. He has switched again from talking about the second coming and the end of all things to switching back to the fall of Jerusalem.

And Jesus does not specify and say, now the fall of Jerusalem, it's nothing like the second coming. It's nothing to do with the second time. He's not specifying when that second coming will or will not be.

[28 : 11] But remember how in verse 24, he says, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened. It doesn't say how long after the second coming will be. But verse 28, it's now learn a parable of the fig tree.

He's back again to the present generation. He's back again to talking about the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the nation. Now learn a parable of the fig tree. When her branches yet tender and prudent four leaves, you see the signs of nature.

You know that someone is coming. You know what's on the way. When you see the outward symptoms beginning to come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors. This generation shall not pass to all these things be done.

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. Now, we could speculate and say, oh well, then Jesus got it wrong about the second coming. You could either say on the one hand, no, he's talking about the fall of Jerusalem, which answers the problem.

Secondly, you could say, oh well, the word generation, it's taken in a different sense, which is, there's lots of different ways, at least three or four different ways of taking the word generation. But clearly, as far as the fall of Jerusalem is concerned, he's speaking about it being within their lifetime, which of course it proves to be inside 40 years, the lifetime of that generation.

[29 : 31] Then he goes back again. He's switching back to speak now about the coming of the Son of Man. That day and that hour knoweth no man, know not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

Now, this could be something of a problem verse for us. We think, well, how could it possibly be that if Jesus is God the Son, the second person of the Trinity, how can he not know?

How can he not know what his Father knows in heaven? How can he be so much less than the Father that he just doesn't know? Well, you need to bear in mind that Jesus is both wholly human as well as wholly divine.

In his humanity, there are certain constrictions. When he is not yet incarnate in the womb of the Virgin, as God the Son, he fills the heavens and the earth.

When he becomes human flesh in the womb of the Virgin, he no longer fills the heavens and the earth. God the Son is constricted within the Virgin's womb. When he is born, he is constricted within the manger in Bethlehem and Nazareth then and all the places where he physically is.

[30 : 47] When he is in Jerusalem, he cannot be in Galilee. Likewise, when he is in Bethany, he cannot be in Nazareth. He is physically constrained and likewise, there are aspects of his life and ministry on earth, some of which he is able to discharge because of his divine nature, some of which he discharges by the giving of the Spirit to him.

There is an element of progression and growth in Jesus' earthly capacity, his human capacity and human growth.

We see that in aspects that are revealed in God's Word. In Luke chapter 2, verse 52, Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man.

It's talking about Jesus in his earthly ministry, his physical growth and his mental ability to take on board that which the Lord gradually gives to him.

That is that which is given to him by the Spirit from his Father. Isaiah 42, verse 1, Behold, my servant, as God the Son on earth, he is the servant of his Father.

[32 : 07] My servant whom I uphold, my elect and whom my soul delighteth, I have put my spirit upon him. He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. Well, can we really say Jesus, the servant of God?

Surely he's God the Son. But this is how he is described. If we go to chapter 52 in Isaiah, there's absolutely no doubt whatsoever where we read chapter 52, verse 13, Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled and be very high, and so on.

And that goes on continuously into chapter 53. There is no chapter in the entire Old Testament that speaks so eloquently and precisely about Jesus Christ than Isaiah 53.

It is clearly talking of Jesus the Christ, and it describes him in the preceding verses as the servant of God. In John chapter 5, verses 19 and 20, we read, Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself but what he seeth the Father do. For what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son and showeth him all things that himself doeth.

[33 : 34] I'll read that again. Showeth him all things that himself doeth, and he will show him greater works than these that ye may marvel. Now let's read that verse 20 again because there's a time factor in this.

The Father loveth the Son, present tense, and showeth him all things, is showing him, present tense, all things, that himself doeth. And he will, future tense, show him greater works than these that ye may marvel.

In other words, there are things that the Father has not yet shown to the Son. There are things which although he be divine, Jesus in his human nature and ministry has yet to be revealed to him. And things which have not yet been revealed to him, he is not in a position to reveal to the disciples. And we might think, well, come on, that's stretching it a bit.

Surely, Jesus would have known all things, and if he knew all things, then why doesn't he just tell them? Why doesn't he just say, it's going to be another 1900 years, but I am going to come back.

[34 : 43] It's going to be another 2000 years, and then I'll come back. No, this is not what he's given to do. And we might think, is he just keeping it back from them? No, I would suggest to you, it would not be a kindness, perhaps, if Jesus knew, but didn't tell them.

Therefore, I would suggest to you that just as John implies, there are some things which the Father is in the process of showing to the Son, and what he shows to the Son, the Son reveals to his disciples and followers, and there are some things which the Father has yet to show to the Son.

And because they are not yet shown to him in his human ministry, they cannot yet be revealed.

This, I would suggest to you, is one reason why it says that of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, and the Son, but the Father.

No man knows of it. God in heaven knows of it, but man does not know of it. And at this stage, Jesus is a man. He is one who is earthbound.

He is one to whom the Father has not yet revealed this precise date, time, and location of whatever. This is something which has yet to be done.

[36 : 04] God the Son in his humanity is not in a position to convey this yet. If he did know it, he would be duty bound, you might say, to reveal it to his disciples.

Why? Well, remember what we looked at this morning in the prophet Amos. In the prophet Amos, we read chapter 3 verse 7, Surely the Lord God will do nothing, nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants, the prophets.

Now, the ultimate prophet is the Lord Jesus Christ, the prophet, priest, and king. But in his earthly ministry and capacity, that which God is going to do, he has not yet revealed to the sun in his earthly capacity.

God will do nothing but he revealeth his secret unto his servants, the prophets. When God is going to come back, no doubt that will be revealed by the signs and the times and the little indicators that things are going to a conclusion.

Now, you could say there's plenty of indications that time is drawing toward its conclusion. We don't yet know whether it is close or whether it's further away. That's not the point.

[37 : 18] Jesus is making the point that he is definitely coming back. But the precise time and hour is hidden from his disciples and has not yet been revealed to himself.

Now, this is something which I hesitate to have said. I would hold back from saying such a thing that might imply some kind of dishonor or some kind of shortcoming on the part of God the Son.

I would not say it were it not for the fact that Scripture teaches it. That which God himself has revealed in his word and that that hour, that day and that hour, knoweth no man, know not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son but the Father.

And as some commentators have pointed out, this constriction on the Son's part is unique to Mark. It is not revealed in the other Gospel accounts.

We've said throughout how Mark's account of the Gospel is replete with little eyewitness details. Something like this that might seem to cast aspersions on Christ's ability or his knowledge or his divinity, which of course it doesn't, but you could be taking it that way is something which perhaps people might hesitate to write down, but God has inspired it to be written down.

[38 : 40] It is there for us, and I would suggest to you the reason that it has been withheld from the Son is because if it were not withheld from the Son, he would be duty-bound to communicate it to his disciples.

What the Spirit gives him, he passes on. He says in John 17, everything that you've given me to convey to them, I have told them, I have passed on everything to them, but clearly this has not been given to them, so he's not in a position to pass it on.

The cynical, in an earth-bound cynical political sense, lesser servants in a government keep things from whether the Prime Minister or the President or whatever, on what they call plausible deniability, so that the big chief, the President or the Prime Minister, who truthfully say, I didn't know about this, so I can't be held responsible.

I'm not suggesting that the Godhead acts in this kind of cynical way, but rather there is that which the Son does not have revealed to him, because if it is revealed to him from the Father, he would be duty-bound to pass it on to his disciples.

It suggests to you, therefore, Scripture teaches that it is not revealed as yet. However, in a sense, that's immaterial to us, because Jesus says, take ye heed, watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is.

[40 : 02] The Son of Man is a man taking a far journey, who left his house, gave authority to themselves, to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. To every man his work. he's not going to come back to the cook and say, why didn't work to do?

Everybody with their work to do? And the grooms at the stables dealing with the horses, and if the master goes away and he leaves everyone with their particular job to do, he's not going to come back to the cook and say, why didn't you scrub down the horses like the groom was meant to do? And he's not going to say to the butler, why didn't you prepare better meals like the cook was meant to do? He's not going to blame the little maid that's meant to be doing the chimneys and the fireplace, saying, why didn't you do a better job on the move?

Everybody's got their own tasks and duties to fulfil. Everybody is set in their place with their particular employments and duties and abilities and the place where the Lord puts them and the task he gives them to fulfil, and we are not all the same, but we are all given our due responsibility to fulfil.

He doesn't say, do somebody else's job better than them. He doesn't say to the cook, go and mind the door like the porter should be doing. Or he doesn't say to the butler, you go and scrub down the horses like the groom should be doing.

[41 : 27] Rather, everybody is given their particular task, their particular place, their particular duty. What is it to which the Lord has called you? What is it which is the job, the task, the duty which the Lord has assigned to do?

That is the thing the Lord would have you to be fulfilling faithfully, diligently, watchfully. It's not whether or not you can do somebody else's job. It's whether or not you can do the one he's given you faithfully.

And diligently. You know, if he's only given you the two talents, you can't be expected to perform like the guy who's given ten. And likewise, if he's given ten, he's not going to get away with just doing what we've been expecting if we've only been given two.

Our different tasks, our different duties are specific to us. But the point is, do them faithfully. Do them diligently. Do them watchfully.

Do them as those who must give an account at the last day. Watch ye therefore, for you know not when the master of the house cometh, at the evening or the midnight or the clock going or the morning, lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.

[42 : 30] What I say unto you, I say unto all, watch. It doesn't really matter in a sense. You know, if you're being diligent in faith, it doesn't matter if you're caught out.

If everything is in a reasonable state of readiness. If your soul, if your life is in a reasonable state of readiness, yes, it won't be perfect. But if, for example, you are, let's say you're a gardener and you keep your garden, you keep the weeds down, you keep the grass cut, you keep the roses pruned back and you keep the fences well painted and nailed up and you look after everyone, you keep it spick and span and trade.

You know, every day, but you know, you're keeping an eye on it and so on. Then somebody comes and visits and they say, oh my, your garden's looking good. And you think, oh, no, I haven't been able to do this with the roses.

I haven't been able to dig the garden. They're like, oh, the grass is needing a cut and so on. And then when they say you're dead, right, look at the state of the place. If you're on top of it day by day and this is your task, this was your job, then it's fine.

As long as you're on top of it, as long as you're keeping it going, as long as you're keeping it up, whatever your task, whatever your duty, whatever it is the Lord is calling you to in his name, whatever you are meant to be, whether they're made week, whether the Lord's day, whether you're calling, whatever it is your job and employment is, that's what he's calling you to do faithfully and diligently as a Christian, as a follower of Jesus.

[43 : 54] If you are not yet reconciled to the Lord, that is the thing you've got to do first and foremost. That is the thing you must do before you do anything else. Nothing else will count, no matter how faithfully it's done, if you're not reconciled first to the Lord.

Get that done and then sort out your relationship with others and then focus on the work the Lord has given you to do. We don't know when he's going to come, but I'll say I'll bet you, but of course I'm not a betting man.

You can be certain that the Lord will give you time to sort out your life before he comes if you're sincere and diligent about doing so. He's not trying to catch you out.

He's not trying to send people to hell that want to be saved. But he's going to give everyone sufficient time if they had acted on what he had said.

What I say unto you, the Lord says, I say unto all, watch.