

## *Mark: Chapter 13*

*Disciple/apostle = learn/do.*

This chapter is known as Jesus' "apocalyptic discourse."

In this Module you will learn:

- Jesus' thoughts on temporary things versus the everlasting and eternal
- The Master's metaphysical lesson regarding the "end" of the material sense of things, (this will not be peaceful, but tumultuous and challenging), and his warning to be watchful

Jesus alerts everyone (for all time) to be watchful. Let's see why!



"And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch" (13:37).

Jesus puts us, his present day disciples, on “watch” with this discourse.

Jesus is speaking in nearly every verse of this chapter. If you have a ‘red letter Bible’ most of this chapter is red! A bit a narrative leads to private questions from the disciples. These questions elicit Jesus’ complex and involved response.

He has stated that not one stone will be on top of another in all the grand buildings and structures that had men in awe at that time. The disciples are astonished. After all, Josephus records that some of these stones were 45 feet long, many were 37 to 38 feet long, 12 feet high, and 18 inches wide (Ant. 15.11.3)<sup>1</sup>. Hence, their shock to hear this. *When? When will this happen?* they ask privately. *How will we know when it’s coming?*



<sup>1</sup> *Antiquities of the Jews*, Flavius Josephus (1st Century historian)

Jesus begins his response, “Take heed lest any man deceive you” (13:6). Maclear<sup>2</sup> points out that there are “four moral key-notes of the discourse” which are “beware, watch, endure, and pray” (141).

What does Jesus mean when he alerts us to watch? Why is it important — urgent even? How do we do it? What are the consequences if we do not diligently watch?

Watch (verb) — from same root as “wake.”

1. To be awake; to be or continue without sleep.
2. To be attentive; to look with attention or steadiness.
3. To look with expectation.

*My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning (Psalms 130:6).*

4. To keep guard; to act as sentinel; to look for danger.
5. To be attentive; to be vigilant in preparation for an event or trial (*Webster’s 1828*)

Watchful (adjective)

Vigilant; attentive; careful to observe; observant; cautious. It has of before the thing to be regulated, as to be watchful of ones behavior; and against, before the thing to be avoided, as to be watchful against the growth of vicious habits (*Webster’s 1828*).

The Apostle Peter writes, “The end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer” (*1 Peter 4:7*). He is communicating what he learned as a disciple. It is an example of learning and sharing.

Jesus’ apocalyptic teaching and warning to watch come just before the passion narrative — the crucifixion is imminent. Jesus asks his disciples to watch at this time because the culmination of his life-work is at hand, and it is not going to be easy. The Master was preparing to teach an eternal lesson — one that would last forever and speak to people of all cultures and backgrounds, in all time to come. It was the lesson of

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<sup>2</sup> *St. Mark, Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*, G. F. Maclear, D.D.

eternal life — the demonstration that man, as God’s likeness, cannot die, and that hate has not the power of Love. This unconditional divine Love ultimately lifts us up to permanent safety, encircled in the eternal affection of the I AM that protects us from everything — eternally. How could the Master Teacher teach such a lesson? Crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension.

We must watch — be alert — that our consciousness remains pure, spiritual, and on course. We must watch that suggestions of evil, threat, material and personal loss, and so forth, do not pull us away from our mission and God-given work. Jesus has already instructed his disciples, and instructed us, his present day disciples, to take up the cross. This is not an easy thing. We must have tremendously focused purpose and love.



Watchtower. A tower on which a sentinel is placed to watch for enemies or the approach of danger (*Webster’s 1828*).

One powerful and very practical bit of instruction given in this discourse — one that can change your life and/or save you from some event or circumstance of high stress or danger — concerns things you might say. Jesus teaches his disciples, “But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost” (13:11). He is speaking from experience. We have studied his words, his responses, when confronted with the traps of men’s constructing. He is telling us that it was the Father who spoke in him, who gave him spontaneously the perfect things to say. Now he tells us that we should rely on that same immediacy of divine Intelligence to communicate to our thought what we should say in any situation. We must “watch” that we stay consciously connected with the divine, that we always listen for angel thoughts, and practice this instant reflection of God’s Word as our words.

Jesus speaks to the disciples of fleeing, not taking time to go back for things, not entering their houses again.



Metaphysically, this aligns with one's consciousness that must flee from evil and not poke around at it or worry over any kind of loss. Flee evil — race toward God — all will be gain and you are safe. In a more historic look, Jesus referred to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Josephus writes of the atrocities or “misfortunes of men, from the beginning of the world, if they be compared to those of the Jews, are not so terrible as theirs were.”

Jesus uses classic apocalyptic wording, “. . .the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. 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” (13:24-27). This language is repeated very closely in John's book of *Revelation* which is entirely apocalyptic literature. Peter, James, John, and Andrew were the four who asked about the stones being thrown down and what the end would be. John repeats these ideas in his Gospel but especially in his book of *Revelation*.



Another quite remarkable statement from Jesus in this discourse is that “Heaven and earth shall pass away” but his “words” would never pass away. Never mind that no one was writing that down. He was not being careful that his words were in writing. He just spoke them and left them in the care of the Father. Here we are thousands of years later, reading them! Here are his words, straight from the Father, as he explained, still working with great power in us, his present day disciples!

*Stern command to be watchful*

“But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a an taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.



So now what? Sleep? No way! In *Proverbs* we read, “Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:” (6:10). Result? “So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man (11). Not good.

Worth repeating, here is a fuller version from *Proverbs* in a later chapter! “I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man (24:30-34).

## CROSS REFERENCES

Mark 13:2

And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

there: 1Ki 9:7-8; 2Ch 7:20-21; Jer 26:18; Mic 3:12; Mat 24:2; Luk 19:41-44; Luk 21:6; Act 6:14; Rev 11:2

Mark 13:4

Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?

Dan 12:6, Dan 12:8; Mat 24:3; Luk 21:7; Joh 21:21-22; Act 1:6-7

Mark 13:12

Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.

Eze 38:21; Mic 7:4-6; Mat 10:21, Mat 24:10; Luk 12:52-53, Luk 21:16

Mark 13:15

And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take any thing out of his house:

Gen 19:15-17, Gen 19:22, Gen 19:26; Job 2:4; Pro 6:4-5, Pro 22:3; Mat 24:16-18; Luk 17:31-33; Act 27:18-19, Act 27:38; Php 3:7-8; Heb 11:7

Mark 13:20

And except that 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.

for: Isa 1:9, Isa 6:13, Isa 65:8-9; Zec 13:8-9; Mat 24:22; Rom 11:5-7, Rom 11:23-24, Rom 11:28-32



Mark 13:24

But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,

Isa 13:10, Isa 24:20-23; Jer 4:23-25, Jer 4:28; Eze 32:7; Dan 7:10, Dan 12:1; Joe 2:30-31; Amo 5:20; Zep 1:14-18; Mat 24:29-31; Luk 21:25-27; Act 2:19-20; 2Pe 3:10, 2Pe 3:12; Rev 6:12-14, Rev 20:11

Mark 13:27

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.

shall gather: Gen 49:10; Mat 25:31-32; Joh 10:16, Joh 11:52; 1Th 4:14-17; 2Th 2:1; Rev 7:5-9

his elect: Mar 13:20, Mar 13:22; Isa 65:9; Mat 24:22, Mat 24:24, Mat 24:31; Luk 18:7; Rom 8:33; Col 3:12; 2Ti 2:10; 1Pe 1:2

Mark 13:33

Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

Mar 13:23, Mar 13:35-37, Mar 14:37-38; Mat 24:42-44, Mat 25:13, Mat 26:40-41; Luk 12:40, Luk 21:34-36; Rom 13:11-12, Rom 13:14; 1Co 16:13; Eph 6:18; 1Th 5:5-8; Heb 12:15; 1Pe 4:7, 1Pe 5:8; Rev 3:2, Rev 16:15