

**v.13:1. And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings [are here]!**

*Evening was approaching and the crowds which afforded Jesus His only protection were diminishing. If He did not leave the city He would be taken, especially since what many believe to be His final discourse had been directed against the Jewish leadership who were determined to kill Him.*

a) *As Jesus was leaving the temple at least one of His disciples pointed out to Him the enormity to the stones of which the temple was built and of the general glory and magnificence of the building. This comment, no doubt, was in response to the final cry of Jesus' discourse in which He said that the temple would soon be desolate.  
(Matt. 23:33-39)*

b) *The temple empty? Would not this holy place continue to be the house of worship and the center of Jewish life when Jesus came into power? Could a building more magnificent than this be constructed? The comment made by Jesus no doubt troubled them.*

c) *As Matthew Henry observed, "he not only went out of the temple, but departed from it, took his final farewell of it; he departed from it, never to return to it anymore; and then immediately follows a prediction of its ruin. Note, that house is left desolate indeed, which Christ leaves."*

**v.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.**

*The disciples are successful in getting Jesus to elaborate on His prediction concerning the temple becoming a place of desolation. He acknowledges the greatness of the buildings the disciples had brought to His attention and tells them that not only will they be empty, but utterly destroyed.*

a) *One stone would not be left upon another! All of the great buildings in this temple complex would be totally demolished. The temple was their link to God as well as their national identity. This comment or prediction had to fill them with dread, but also had to raise a million questions.*

**v.13:3-4 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?**

*They reached the mount of Olives and sat down. Whether this is where they spent the night or continued on to Bethany after a rest is not known. At any rate, Jesus was probably sitting on the*

mount watching the sun set upon Jerusalem. At this point, Peter, James, John and Andrew come to Him privately.

- a) These apostles, representatives of the entire group, ask Jesus some specific questions concerning His prophecy. Since their questions revolve around a timetable, namely, when?, it is probable that they had already concluded that it was in the realm of possibility that the temple would be destroyed and that Jesus was capable of doing it. (John 2:18-22)
- b) Again, these men were troubled and yet excited. Was this the eve of a great battle? Would He wait till after the Passover? He told the leadership that the next time they saw Him they would proclaim Him to be blessed. (Matt. 23:39) Three of these four men had recently witnessed Jesus in His glorified state. Is this how He would enter into Jerusalem, accompanied by Moses and Elijah?
- c) What would be the sign of His coming? The apostles had no idea of a second coming, so their question must be understood as a coming into power. What will be the sign of your coming into power? What should we, as your followers, look for? What will be our signal to take up arms?
- d) Matthew adds the phrase, "and of the end of the world." Their idea of the end of the world or end of the age was synonymous with Jesus' coming into power. They believed that the world as they knew it would soon come to an end. Jesus would soon rule the nations from Jerusalem.

"End translates 'sunteleia' a compound word that refers to completion, as in a final culmination of a planned series of events. In the disciples minds the end of the age would accompany Jesus' full manifestation of His messianic power and glory, bringing to a close the era of man's sin and rebellion against God and ushering in a divine kingdom of righteousness and judgment." John MacArthur

*Authors note:*

At this point we have reached a crossroads. The road taken will determine how the rest of the chapter is understood and interpreted. One approach is the futuristic road, that is, Jesus' answer to the disciple's question takes them 2000+ years into the future and speaks about a temple that still has not been built. It is by far the most popular road taken within Christianity since the 1800's. The second road is the historical approach, that is, all that is said by Jesus in this chapter was a direct answer to the apostle's question concerning the temple that they were currently looking at under the setting sun. This road was widely accepted for some 1800 years.

I have chosen to follow the historical road or approach, for it is the one that I believe is correct. Also, although widely accepted for a long, long time, it is one that you may not be as familiar with.

If you come to accept the historical approach to these particular scriptures, it may or may not change your personal view of the end time scenario. What it would mean is that you would have

*to remove these verses as a proof text for certain events you may believe will signal the literal end of the world, for under the historical approach these verses pertain to the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D, and so, have been fulfilled.*

***v.13:5-6 And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any [man] deceive you: For many shall come in my name, saying, I am [Christ]; and shall deceive many.***

*Jesus' answer which begins with these verses probably confuses the apostles, for although their response to this lengthy discourse is not recorded, His answer suggests the destruction of the temple and His coming into power would be a process and not the quick immediate happening they were looking for. Before His entry into Jerusalem He had tried to get them to understand this with a parable. (Luke 19:11)*

- a) *He tells them that deceivers would come onto the scene coming in His name, that is, they would be imposters claiming to be the Messiah. With the death of Jesus the Jews would continue to look for a messiah that would fulfill their expectations.*
- b) *The Jewish historian Josephus mentions many self-proclaimed messiah's rising up after the death of Jesus. Those disappointed that Jesus did not fulfill their expectations were quick to jump on the bandwagon of others. Among the more prominent were Theadas, Simon and Dositheus. Josephus writes that Felix, whom the apostle Paul stood before, was putting to death imposters everyday.*
- c) *In Luke's account, he adds the phrase, "go ye not therefore after them" which puts these false messiah's in the time frame of those who now listened to Jesus' words of warning. (Luke 21:8)*

*These verses are based on the premise that Jesus would be rejected as the Messiah which would in turn open the door to others who would claim to be the Messiah. This verse does not say others would come proclaiming to be Jesus the Christ, but simply the Christ or Messiah. Not even the majority of Jews today are looking for the biblical messiah. It is hard to believe how anyone making this claim would meet with much success or even be taken seriously.*

***v.13:7-8 And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for [such things] must needs be; but the end [shall] not [be] yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these [are] the beginnings of sorrows.***

*At the time this prophecy was given a general peace within the world prevailed. Rome ruled the civilized world and had set up a system of law. There was at the time no formidable power in the world to come against Rome, and so, threaten the peace.*

- a) *After the death of Christ history tells us that things quickly changed. The empire began to crumble from within as in one 18 month period four emperors met violent deaths. Nero, Galba, Otho and Vitellius committed suicide or were violently murdered. Distress and insecurity permeated the once stable empire.*
- b) *In a Roman history called the Annals of Tacitus covering the period in question we find such phrases as, "commotions in Africa and Thrace," "insurrections in Gaul and among the Parthians," "the war in Britain and in Armenia," as well as "disturbances in Germany."*
- c) *History tells us that these times were especially troublesome for the Jews. Fifty thousand were killed in Seleucia and there was an uprising against them in Alexandria. There was a battle between the Jews and the Syrians in Caesarea in which 20,000 were killed. The Jews refused to put a statue of Caligula in the temple, and so, lived in constant fear of this insane emperor.*
- d) *"And when ye shall hear." They were not hearing of such things when the prophecy was given. Since the time of the Roman empire no nation or kingdom has so dominated as to provide a general peace. Wars, rumors of wars, and troubles have been a way of life for 2,000 years.*
- e) *Histories of this era also record earthquakes, famines, and pestilence. Tacitus and Eusebius speak of famines in Rome, Judea and Greece. Josephus wrote of pestilence in Rome and Babylonia. Tacitus and Seneca wrote about great earthquakes, one in particular leveled 12 populous cities in Asia. All these events occurred between 40 and 70 A.D (Acts 11:28)*
- f) *Jesus told them these things must happen. They will come to pass, but they do not signal the end of the Jewish economy which would be the destruction of the temple and city. These are only the beginning of sorrows, that is, far greater problems were yet ahead.*

***v.13:9 But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.***

*Jesus had just told them about the troubling times that lay directly ahead for all peoples and nations, but He now warns them of the persecution that they would face. They would be targeted simply because they believed and identified with Him.*

- a) *The warning is to be careful, to be on guard, to watch out for themselves, for they would be sought out and delivered up. They would be persecuted by Jew and gentile alike. Councils and synagogues represent Jewish authority, while rulers and kings represent the civil authorities.*

- b) *Exactly how much of this discourse the apostles understood is not known. At the very least they knew that a process was involved. Jesus would not come into power immediately, but some sort of battle lay ahead of them in which they would eventually be victorious. Jesus would tell all of the disciples these things before He died. (John 15:20-21, 16:1-14)*
- c) *In this case it is not necessary to consult secular histories for the Book of Acts documents the persecution that these men and all the followers of Jesus would endure soon after His death. (Acts 4:2-12, 5:17-18; 5:40, 7:59, 8:1-4, 16:20-23)*
- d) *In this persecution a purpose would be served. In each instance we find these men energized by the Holy Spirit testifying of Jesus Christ. Before councils, in the synagogues, before rulers and before kings Jesus Christ was boldly proclaimed. (Acts 26:27-28) Before the destruction of the temple the gospel of Jesus Christ had reached the palace of Caesar. (Phil. 1:12-14) Most believe that Paul stood before Caesar himself.*

**v.13:10 *And the gospel must first be published among all nations.***

*Jesus told these select apostles that the gospel would first be preached among all the nations. Matthew's account says that the gospel would first be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations before the end would come. (Matt. 24:14)*

- a) *In Matthew's account an interesting word change takes place in the original language. In verse 3, of chapter 24, when the disciples ask the question concerning the end of the world as they understood it, the word translated "end" means "the final consummation," while in both verse 6 and 14 the word Matthew has Jesus using for the word "end" means "the conclusion of an act or state." Jesus is most likely referring to the conclusion of the Jewish economy which would be synonymous with the destruction of the temple.*
- b) *With that being said, can a case be made that the gospel was published among all nations and preached in all the world before the temple was destroyed? On the day of Pentecost, the first day the church was in existence, the scriptures tell us that men "out of every nation under heaven" heard the gospel! (Acts 2:5)*
- c) *The apostle Paul definitely believed that the gospel had spread throughout the whole world in fulfillment of the words of Jesus. (Rom. 1:8, 16:26; Col. 1:5-6, 23) The scriptures do not say that in some point in time every person on the face of the earth will have heard the gospel message, and yet, this is what many futurists contend. It is this belief that convinces them that this discourse of Jesus must refer to the end of times.*

*"A third indicator is the worldwide proclamation of the gospel. That event absolutely rules out anytime*

during the apostolic age, when even the Roman empire was only partially evangelized.” “Just before the bowl judgments are poured out and the final great holocaust begins, and just before the increasingly rapid birth pains issue in the kingdom, God will supernaturally present the gospel to every person on earth.”  
(Rev14:6-7) John MacArthur

d) *The gospel being preached to all nations was the final great sign given to the Jews that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. Gentiles from every nation on the earth were coming to worship the one true God. They were following the teachings of a Jew. Furthermore, it was happening at a miraculous pace. Their scriptures were being fulfilled, and yet, their hearts were still hardened. (Zech. 2:11)*

**v.13:11-13** *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. 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. And ye shall be hated of all [men] for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

*In these verses Jesus elaborates on the warning He issued to them in verse 9. He tells them of the degree of hate that they would face, and yet, offers them instruction, consolation and hope.*

a) *They would be led away and delivered up, but they would not be alone. They would not have to depend upon their words and their own wisdom, but would be enlightened and energized by the Holy Spirit of God. They could be confident that they would make a good accounting of their faith and themselves in front of those who would sit in judgment of them. (John 16:7-8)*

b) *The hate felt for them because of the message they followed would increase to the point where it would surpass natural affection. Family members would betray each other even when such betrayal meant death. These things came upon the early converts because of the power held by the Jewish leadership. Many believed the choice was between a right relationship with God or sacrificing a believing family member. (John 16:2; Acts 8:1-4)*

c) *Jesus exhorts them to endure unto the end. (The same words used in Matthew 24:6, 14) They would be saved or delivered as true believers in Jesus from the tribulation and destruction that would come upon their persecutors, namely, the unbelieving Jews. If they endured they would be vindicated.*

**v.13:14.** *But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains:*

To this point Jesus has been answering the first question put to Him by the four apostles, namely, "When shall these things be?" He did not give them a date (in His human nature He did not know), but simply supplies them with a list of events that would take place, a general description of the times that lay immediately ahead.

- a) With this verse Jesus begins to answer the second question which dealt with a sign. What will be the specific event (sign) that will signal the destruction of the temple and the Jewish economy as we know it? This is what they really wanted to know, for from their perspective this is the day the kingdom would be physically set-up.
- b) An abomination is something that is detestable, disgusting, or repulsive, in this case, specific to the Jew. So the "abomination of desolation" would translate "the detestable thing that will make desolate or that will lay to waste."
- c) There are two references in the Book of Daniel to the abomination of desolation. (Dan. 11:31, 12:11) Both refer to the same historical event, namely, the setting-up of an idol in the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes in 175 B.C. The futurist believes this has a greater fulfillment in that a future antichrist will repeat the act, while the historicist believes that Jesus employs this language simply to signify that invading pagan armies will again occupy the city and the temple. (Dan. 9:26-27)
- d) Luke, in his account, has Jesus identifying the abomination as armies surrounding the city. This did take place in 70 A.D. when Jerusalem, and the temple in particular, was laid waste by the Romans. Furthermore, history tells us that the Christians heeded the sign of the surrounding armies and fled to the mountains just as Jesus had here instructed them to do. (Luke 21:20)

*Authors note:*

As to the futurist interpretation that another temple will be built and that the antichrist's takeover of that temple with the help of his armies will be the final fulfillment of the abomination of desolation, I propose that any rebuilt temple that employs animal sacrifices for the forgiveness of sin will itself be an abomination of infinite proportion to God and to the once for all sacrifice, Jesus Christ. This could never be sanctioned by God, and so, an idol placed upon a rebuilt altar would be nothing as compared to the abomination to God that that very altar would represent. Matthew has Jesus using the words "holy place." Can there be a place in a rebuilt temple that God would consider holy? Such a place would be an affront to His Son and tread upon His precious blood. These words were given to the apostles to serve a purpose, that is, to save them from destruction. What Jew worshipping in a future temple would know of this warning? Who would take heed of it? If a temple is rebuilt a Christian would not be worshipping there!

*(In the book "Great Prophecies of the Bible," Ralph Woodrow summarizes the writings of the Jewish historian Josephus. pp 63-64)*

**v.13:15-18** *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: And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment. But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.*

*So the warning given by Jesus is to flee to the mountains. Not only those in the city, but those who dwell in the province of Judea in which Jerusalem was located. The fate of the nation was sealed. In Luke's account it states, "these are the days of vengeance."*

- a) *They are not to fight for defeat is imminent. If they attempt to hide they will be found. If they surrender they will be killed. They are to run. Again, this is not what these men wanted to hear or at this time could even understand. Was this some strategy? Would they regroup in the mountains to charge down upon the Romans with Jesus and the angels of heaven?*
- b) *Haste is of the utmost importance. They are not to delay. They are not to try to take anything with them. To do so would put them at unnecessary risk. Jesus gives two more examples to make this point. If they try to hold onto things that would make their journey or life more comfortable, they could pay with their lives.*
- c) *Nothing Jesus could have said would have prepared this generation of people for what was going to come upon them, however, by pronouncing a "woe" upon those who would be fleeing with children and especially infants, He tries to convey the gravity of the situation.*
- d) *The weather could make their escape even more difficult. It was one more thing that could work against them, and so, Jesus tells them to pray that these things would not come to pass in the winter.*

**v.13:19** *For [in] those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.*

*"For in those days shall be affliction," says Mark. "There shall be great distress in the land," says Luke. "For there shall be great tribulation," is how the words of Jesus were recorded by Matthew. All the gospel writers agree that this affliction, distress and tribulation would be greater than anything the world had known up to this point and greater than anything that would be experienced in the future.*

- a) *The great tribulation. Is it an event which stands ominously in mankind's future or a historical example of the wrath of God directed against the people and the generation that rejected and killed His Son? (Luke 23:28-31)*
- b) *History tells us that a civil war broke out among the Jews even before the Roman armies returned. One group encouraged by their supposed victory wanted to revolt against Roman rule, while the other group believed a peace with the Romans could be restored. Violence that could be described as a blood thirsty madness broke out in Israel.*
- c) *Again, I would refer to a rather lengthy passage of the book "Great Prophecies of the Bible" in which Ralph Woodrow quotes as well as summarizes the writings of the historian Josephus. pp.72-76*

***v.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.***

*The battle was so one-sided and the annihilation so great, that if it was not stopped by God's divine providence, no Jew would have been left alive. Such was the hate of the Roman for the Jew.*

- a) *The Lord shortened the days of destruction for the sake of the elect. The elect must be viewed as being synonymous with believers, that is, those who had accepted Jesus as the Messiah. Those who had fled to the mountains in obedience to the words of this prophecy could not have stayed there indefinitely. The armies could have easily taken to the hills and hunted them down.*
- b) *The Lord saves a remnant of His people who had come to accept Jesus as the Messiah. However, the elect could also include those, who in the foreknowledge of God would come to believe on Him, this tribulation driving them to see the truth of Christ.*

*Matthew uses the same terminology as Mark, namely, that the Lord would shorten the days. Luke in his account states, "and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the gentiles, until the times of the gentiles be fulfilled." The futurist uses the language in Luke and makes the "times of the gentiles" a period of time that extended to modern times. The term "trodden down" means trampled under foot and has nothing to do with rule. Jerusalem was trodden down by the Roman armies and God then cut short the "times of the gentiles."*

***v.13:21-23 And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here [is] Christ; or, lo, [he is] there; believe***

**[him] not: For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if [it were] possible, even the elect. But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.**

Yet another warning is given by Jesus as to those who during and after this time of tribulation would make messianic claims, but who were in reality, deceivers and seducers. Just as opportunity would knock for those individuals with the death of Jesus (vs. 5-6), so would opportunity present itself with this tribulation.

- a) As Matthew Henry puts it, "Seducers will be busy in that time, for they love to fish in troubled waters." Specifically, Jesus says both false messiahs and false prophets would arise. They would perform signs and wonders with the intent to fool or to seduce. In other words, they would do tricks. Josephus called these individuals "magicians and sorcerers." He said they led groups into the desert with the promise to deliver them.
- b) They were good at what they did. Their tricks were convincing and the deception strong. If it were possible they would have been successful, but the Lord preserved His elect.
- c) They were to pay attention to these things. They were to remember His words, for when the time came they could remain strong knowing that it was coming to pass as He had said.

**v.13:24-25. But in those days, after that tribulation, 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.**

Sensational verses, but are they to be taken literally or figuratively? If the sun was darkened to the point that the moon was no longer distinguishable in the night sky, then all life on earth would soon perish. If the stars literally fell, abandoning their orbits the fabric of the universe would unravel. Matthew in his parallel account says that these events would happen immediately after the tribulation described. (Matt. 24:29)

- a) If the tribulation happened in the year 70 A.D. and was directed against the Jewish population of Judea and specifically Jerusalem as the historical approach maintains, we know that immediately after these events the universe did not fall apart.
- b) All of the phrases used here by the gospel writers occur in the Old Testament and are used in a symbolic manner. Observe Isaiah in speaking of the destruction of Babylon. (Is. 13:10-11) The same language is found in Ezekiel in proclaiming God's judgment against Egypt. (Ez. 32:7-8) Joel used this language applying it to this very time, when the gospel would be delivered, the remnant saved, and the gentiles come to God. (Joel 2:31-32, 3:12-16)

- c) *In view of these scriptures a strong case is made that the Jesus is simply telling the apostles that the tribulation will leave the city and nation completely desolate. Judgment would be rendered and it would be final. The sun, moon and stars would no longer shine on their nation.*

***v.13:26-27 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.***

*These verses accurately describe the second coming of Christ, and so the end of the world. The word translated “then” is often used to indicate the order in which events will happen. Knowing that the apostles believed that the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world were synonymous, Jesus here separates the two events.*

- a) *The temple will be destroyed, the Jewish economy will end and remain desolate. Then, after an unspecified period of time, Jesus will return and the world will come to an end. They must equate the end with His coming and not with the destruction of the temple.*
- b) *He will come in the clouds. This is in harmony with what the angel would tell them at His ascension and also with John’s description of His coming in the Book of Revelation. (Acts 1:10-11; Rev 1:7) He will come with great power and glory. (2 Thes. 1:7-8) Believers will be gathered up to be with Him. (1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thes 4:14-17)*

***v.13:28-29 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near: So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, [even] at the doors.***

*Jesus provides a parable about a fig tree. Luke, including the phrase “and all other trees,” demonstrates that this is a simple analogy which Jesus desires to use to instill a truth in them, so the fig tree is not a symbol for Israel which many contend.*

- a) *The word translated “learn” means to genuinely understand, and so, to accept a teaching. It was something of great importance that they were to remember themselves and to teach and impart to others*
- b) *The lesson is important, but simple. They know that when the branches of a tree become tender and the leaves sprout from the branches that summer is near. This was something they knew from experience. It was common knowledge to them from the time they were children. It was something that they would never forget, but knowledge that had become part of them.*

- c) *In the same way these prophecies were to become a part of them. They were to become common knowledge to them. Something they would watch for and recognize immediately. When they saw the prophecies come to pass they would know that the destruction of the city was very near. Their lives depended on this knowledge.*

**v.13:30-31** *Verily 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.*

*With the phrases “these things” and “all these things” Jesus is referring to the destruction of the temple which was the subject of the question originally asked by the apostles, as well as all of the happenings and signs which would precede that destruction.*

- a) *He assures them that the generation then living would see the fulfillment of all these things. Before their generation passed away, God’s judgment would come upon the Jewish state.*
- b) *Jesus had already pronounced this judgment upon the people, their city and the nation in His final discourse in the temple. It was these words that probably prompted the apostles question. (Matt. 23:30-38)*

*Authors note*

*The futurist says that these words of Jesus refer to the generation then living, in other words, that all His predictions would come to pass within one generation. However, then His pronounced judgment upon the city just a few hours earlier would be unrelated to the discussion He was now having with the apostles which is highly unlikely.*

- c) *The word of God is eternal and true. It is surer than the very heavens and earth. That will eventually pass away. These prophecies He had declared to them would indeed come to pass just as He had said (Ps. 119:9; Ps 12:6)*

**v.13:32** *But of that day and [that] hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.*

*In verse 27 Jesus spoke of the end of the world as a contrast to the destruction of Jerusalem to demonstrate that they were not one and the same event as the apostles believed. He now concludes this discourse by again turning His attention to the end; to the passing away of the heavens and the earth.*

- a) *Only the Godhead, represented by the Father, knows the day and the hour when the world will come to an end and time as we know it will cease. The angels in heaven are not privy to this knowledge and, in fact, Jesus in His humanness did not possess this knowledge.*

- b) In Matthew's account, Jesus presents the end coming as a complete surprise. He compares it to the days of Noah when the flood that destroyed them was completely and totally unexpected. The end will come as a thief in the night. (Matt. 24:36-44)

**v.13:33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.**

The duty of the believer then, is to take heed, to watch, and to pray. This is the fourth time in this short discourse that Jesus has told them to watch. (v. 5, 9, 23) They should not pre-occupy themselves with when these things will happen for the knowledge is unattainable.

- a) They should always be alert. Always on guard. This is against human nature for the more time that passes they will become pre-occupied with other things, their anticipation will wane and they will forget. Prayer will keep them watchful and alert.
- b) Forty years would pass until the prophecies uttered by Jesus concerning the fall of Jerusalem would be fulfilled. It has been some 50 times 40 years since Jerusalem has fallen and the command still applies to take heed, to watch and to pray.

**v.13:34-37 [For the Son of man is] as a man 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.**

The importance of the command to take heed, to watch and to pray is illustrated by Jesus through a parable. In fact, combining the accounts given by Matthew and Mark, Jesus illustrated this with five parables, namely, the man taking a journey, the thief in the night, the ten virgins, the talents and the sheep and the goats.

- a) Jesus represents Himself in the parable as a man leaving his household and going on a journey. Through this parable, He is once again telling the apostles that He will not usher in the physical kingdom at this time or even in the near future, but would physically leave them for a long time.
- b) The servants represented the apostles, and in effect, all believers. To each Jesus gives varying degrees of authority and assigns them tasks to complete in His absence. The porter, who is basically the doorman, is told to watch or to keep on the alert.
- c) One is first inclined to think the porter is a special individual apart from the servants of the

*household who have been assigned their various duties, but with the command “watch ye therefore” it becomes apparent that this is the duty of all. The porter could represent the church, and so, the shared duty of every member is to watch or to be on the alert.*

- d) Stressed is that no one knows when the master will return and that he will likely appear quickly and unexpectedly. It is curious that the four watches mentioned are the nighttime watches, and yet, the master is not to find them sleeping!*
- e) As Hendriksen puts it, “sleeping indicates moral and spiritual laxity.” Matthew Henry describes sleeping as, “secure in ourselves, off our guard, indulging ourselves in ease and sloth, mindless of our work and duty, and thoughtless of our Lord’s coming.”*
- f) The soldier, the fireman and in Jesus’ example the five wise virgins are all physically asleep, and yet, fully prepared to do their duty in an instant. In these verses for the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> time Jesus tell them to watch, that is, to be alert and prepared.*
- g) These words applied to the apostles and the believers of that time in not forgetting the signs of the times as far as the destruction of Jerusalem, but also to every believer throughout the ages who will personally be visited by their Master in death. The believer should always be prepared to meet his Master.*

*“Our present life is a night, a dark night, compared with the other life; we know not in which watch of the night our Master will come, whether in the days of youth, or middle age, or old age; but, as soon as we are born, we begin to die, and therefore, as soon as we are capable of expecting anything, we must expect death.” Matthew Henry*

**v.14:1-2** *After two days was [the feast of] the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put [him] to death. But they said, Not on the feast [day], lest there be an uproar of the people.*

The last discourse given by Jesus in the temple, in which He pronounced the judgment of God against the leaders, the people and the nation had a profound effect upon the apostles whose questions prompted the discourse recorded in chapter 13. We here find out that it also had a profound effect on His enemies who immediately gathered to plot His death.

- a) So as Jesus was instructing the apostles on the Mount of Olives two days before the Passover, His enemies were in the city plotting how they might take Him and kill Him. The word “craft” means “trick.” The idea is they sought a means by which they could isolate Him in some way; to lure Him away from the crowds which, as we have seen, afforded Him protection.
- b) Their plan is not revealed, but we are told they decided that it would not happen during the feast day, again, because of the crowds. There was a chance that the people might side with Him and that they might rekindle the spark of His triumphal entry into the city.
- c) By going to Matthew’s account we discover something amazing! (Matt. 26:1-5) As His enemies were deciding not to take Him during the feast, Jesus was proclaiming to His apostles that they would indeed take Him during the feast and crucify Him. Jesus, the Lamb of God, would be killed during the Passover feast.

**v.14:3** *And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured [it] on his head.*

With this verse we go back several days to the eve of Jesus’ triumphal entry into the city of Jerusalem. The reason for the “flashback” is probably to show that Jesus had predicted His death before entering the city and had submitted to be a symbolic anointing that pre-figured His burial. The story also gives background information of His betrayal by Judas. John, in his account, includes the story in chronological order. (John 12:1-2)

- a) Jesus attended a dinner at the house of a man known only as Simon the leper who resided in Bethany. Obviously, Jesus must have healed this man of the dreaded disease. Also attending were Lazarus, who He had raised from the dead, Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, and the apostles.
- b) At some point during the dinner, Mary approached Jesus holding a jar full of a very precious ointment. The jar must have been sealed in some way for she had to break it before pouring

some of the contents on the head of Jesus. The ointment described as spikenard, is made from the dried roots of a Himalayan plant and is particularly fragrant.

- c) John tells us that Mary also anointed the feet of Jesus wiping them with her hair. (John 12:3) By the fact that she broke the jar and from the reaction of the apostles we know that she used the full contents of the jar. John also tells us it was a pound of ointment, which according to Roman measure was 12 ounces.

**v.14:4-5** *And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.*

Mark tells us “some were indignant” while Matthew states, “his disciples had indignation,” but it is John who indicts Judas as being the most bothered by the act and for false pretences. (John 12:4-6)

- a) So it was Judas who quickly calculated the worth of the ointment, which equated to an average years wage. This was lavish treatment. One gets the impression that the apostles were not used to lavish and expensive things and treatment, so this had to shock them. They probably try to anticipate Jesus’ reaction and they all guess wrong.
- b) But again, it is Judas who is genuinely bothered. While the other disciples simply fail to get some “brownie points” it is Judas who himself covets the money for he was a thief. Why couldn’t he have spoken before she broke the jar? He had probably taken advantage of Jesus and the other apostles from the beginning.

**v.14:6-9** *And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, [this] also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.*

One can imagine Mary standing there next to Jesus as the criticisms are being leveled against her. All seem to be in agreement that Jesus did not desire such lavish treatment. What about her sister Martha? What was her opinion of Mary’s act? (Luke 10:39-42)

- a) Jesus turns the tables on all present as He immediately comes to Mary’s defense. He rebukes them, telling them to leave her alone, instructing them not to trouble her and informing them that He is pleased by the act. Hendriksen describes her act as, “unique in its thoughtfulness, regal in its lavishness, and marvelous in its timeliness.”

- b) *In answering their concerns about the poor, Jesus confirms that this was a unique opportunity that Mary took full advantage of. There would always be poor whom they were obligated to care for, but Jesus would be with them for only a little while longer. This is not the first time that Jesus indicated that His presence on earth was a special time which provided unique opportunities. (vv 2:18-20)*
- c) *Unknowingly, Mary had anointed His body for burial. She prepared His body "aforehand," for because of the Sabbath the body of Jesus was not properly prepared. The women were on their way to the tomb on Sunday morning to anoint Him, but obviously never got the chance. It had been done aforehand. He was risen. (Mark 16:1-4)*

*"In this particular and unique act of worship, when Mary poured this perfume upon Jesus' body, without her ever realizing it she did it to prepare Him for burial. It became a symbolic deed that anticipated His death and burial." John MacArthur*

- d) *Jesus proclaims that this act of Mary would become a part of the gospel record. He says this with all authority. It has come to pass as this story appears in three of the gospel stories and has been read by believers throughout the ages.*

***v.14:10-11 And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them. And when they heard [it], they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.***

*Exactly when Judas contracted with the chief priests to deliver Jesus to them we do not know. It was probably either during or shortly after the meeting held by the various leaders in which they sought a way to seize Him. (vv. 1-2)*

- a) *So it is possible that as Jesus and the other apostles left Jerusalem to go to the Mount of Olives, Judas stayed behind, found out about the meeting, and made his move. Matthew tells us that it was Judas who sought a price to betray Jesus. (Matt. 26:14-15) It is Luke that tells us the betrayal had to take place in secret which ties this to the meeting mentioned above. (Luke 22:6)*
- b) *It says that the Jewish leaders were glad, in other words, they couldn't believe their good fortune. Probably as they were trying to figure out how to isolate Jesus, in walks Judas seeking to sell out his master. Believing themselves to be righteous they probably believed that this was God blessing their efforts.*
- c) *As to his reasons we can only take an educated guess. We have seen that Judas was a thief motivated by worldly gain. He saw the power of Jesus and the favorable response of the people to Him. He heard the promises of Jesus to His followers and had no reason to doubt*

that Jesus couldn't deliver. (vv. 10:29-30; Matt 19:28) However, most recently, He heard Jesus increasingly talking about His death. He saw the triumphal entry suddenly turn into a non-event. He must have had more insight into these things than the other apostles. Jesus accepting the lavish worship of Mary and the rebuke directed toward Judas may have been the final straw. He decided to cut what he believed was his losses.

**v.14:12-17** *And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover? And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he will shew you a large upper room furnished [and] prepared: there make ready for us. And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover. And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.*

The first day of unleavened bread or the day on which the Passover lamb was to be killed had arrived. The apostles asked Jesus where they were to prepare the meal. He sends two of the apostles into Jerusalem whom Luke identifies as Peter and John.

- a) Much like He did before His triumphant entry into the city, Jesus gives the two apostles very specific instructions. When entering the city they will see a man carrying a pitcher of water. They are to follow this man into a house and there ask the owner, on behalf of Jesus, where they are to prepare the feast.
- b) In all probability this man was himself a follower or disciple of Christ. The message which starts out "The Master saith" or "The Master wants to know where the room is" seems to confirm this. The two apostles go into the city, everything happens exactly as Jesus tells them it would, and the arrangements are made.
- c) In the evening Jesus himself arrived in the city and proceeds into the upper room to celebrate the Passover with His apostles. Whether John and Peter left to get the others and they arrived together or whether the others simply showed up, we do not know.

**v.14:18-21** *And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me. And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, [Is] it I? and another [said, Is] it I? And he answered and said unto them, [It is] one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish. The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.*

*As they are sitting down eating the Passover meal Jesus announces that one of them would betray Him. With this prediction the room is filled with heaviness. One by one they ask Him, "Is it I." The impression is given that they genuinely have no idea who He could be speaking about, which demonstrates the deceptive powers of Judas.*

- a) *Jesus tells them it is the one "that dippeth with me in the dish." They were all dipping bread in the dish. In all probability the act had already taken place. It wasn't meant to be a sign to all, but only to His betrayer. The one that had dipped in the cup with Him was the only one that knew. (Matt. 26:25)*
- b) *Even before Judas asks Him, Jesus pronounces that it is inevitable that He go to the cross, however, that does not somehow negate the responsibility of the man that would betray Him. Just as He knows who would betray Him, Jesus also knows that despite the warning Judas would go on to condemnation. Not having ever existed would be preferable to an eternity in hell.*

***v.14:22-25 And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake [it], and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave [it] to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.***

*The eating of unleavened bread and the drinking of wine was done at several points during the Passover meal. So the breaking of bread, the blessing, the cup and the giving of thanks was a part of the Passover meal since the time it was first instituted by God in the land of Egypt.*

- a) *The Passover meal was the oldest of Jewish ordinances. It pre-dated the priesthood, the law and the prophets. The first Passover, in effect, gave birth to the Jewish nation, but more importantly the Passover lamb was a pre-figuring of Jesus Christ. (Ex. 12:46; Ps. 34:20; John 19:36) Jesus was proclaimed by John the Baptist to be the Lamb of God, a proclamation that began His public ministry. (John 1:29)*
- b) *The Passover lamb was initially used by God to bring physical deliverance to the nation, and then, for thousands of years pointed to the Lamb that God would provide to bring spiritual deliverance to His people. With this particular Passover the time had come. In celebrating this final Passover, as being the One that this memorial pointed to, He in effect fulfilled its design.*

*"But the Passover Jesus was now concluding with the disciples was the last divinely sanctioned Passover ever to be observed. No Passover celebrated after that has been authorized or recognized by God. Significant as it was under the Old Covenant, it became a remnant of a bygone economy, an extinct*

*dispensation, an expired covenant. Its observance since that time has been no more than a religious relic that serves no divinely acknowledged purpose and has no divinely blessed significance. To celebrate the Passover is to celebrate the shadow, after the reality has already come. Celebrating deliverance from Egypt is a weak substitute for celebrating deliverance from sin.” John MacArthur*

- c) *With the words, “This is my body” and “This is my blood” Jesus institutes a new covenant or testament. One that was a part of the old, hidden within it, but that could not take effect until He died. (Heb. 9:14-17) He predicted His death, and so, the new testament that would now take effect.*
- d) *He institutes the bread and wine to be the symbols of remembrance, for this memorial was to continue on until the end of time, pointing back to the once for all sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Bread and wine, the simplest forms of sustenance that could be taken internally thus symbolizing the spiritual nature of deliverance which the death of Christ wrought. (Luke 22:19-20)*
- e) *At this particular Passover meal, which took place in an upper room somewhere in the city of Jerusalem; at this particular time and place in history, two testaments came together in Jesus Christ. He was the common factor, present in both, for all have salvation only in Him. Up to this point His people had looked forward in hope and from this time on His people would humbly look back in thankfulness.*
- f) *However, at the same time His people still look forward in joy, for the table holds the future hope of heaven. A new heaven and a new earth will come into being and Jesus will again partake of the cup with the redeemed in the kingdom of God. (Rev. 21:1-7)*

**v.14:26 *And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.***

*The Passover meal concludes with the singing of hymns. Literally the verse states, “When they had hymned.” In all probability it was a recitation or singing of Psalms, specifically Psalm 115-118, which are songs of thanksgiving and praise. Leaving the upper room, they head for the Mount of Olives which had been their place of refuge all week.*

*Author’s note:*

*Much took place in the upper room after the institution of the memorial and before the singing of the final hymns that Mark chooses not to record. In fact, the events recorded in John chapters 13-18 all take place during this time. We find out in Luke that with the institution of the cup, Jesus again brings up the subject of His betrayer. This time the apostles begin to “enquire among themselves” who this betrayer might be and this turns into an argument as to who is the greatest among them. (Luke 22:20-24) Jesus puts an end to their argument by washing their feet. (John 13:4-5) For the third time Jesus brings up the subject of His*

betrayed, whom He then specifically identifies to John. (John 13:18, 21-31) With Judas gone, Jesus instructs His faithful apostles telling them of the Spirit he would send and earnestly praying to His Father. (see John 14-18)

**v.14:27-28** *And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee.*

This prophecy or prediction of Jesus is given to the apostles as they make their way to the Mount of Olives. He tells them that before the night is over they would all be offended because of Him.

- a) The language literally means, “fall away from me” or “become untrue to me.” The conversation at supper centered around a betrayer who was among them, but here Jesus tells them that they would all forsake Him.
- b) He quotes the book of Zechariah. The shepherd will be struck down. (Zech. 13:7) He would be smitten of God. God would lay all our iniquity upon Him. (Is. 53:4-6) God would not spare His own Son. (Rom. 8:32)
- c) The sheep, in turn, would be scattered. More than any other animal sheep are dependent upon their caretaker or shepherd. Without the shepherd they wander off in every direction. His apostles would flee into the night. Jesus had delivered the same prediction to them earlier that evening, but in a more veiled fashion. (John 16:31-32)
- d) Jesus offers words of optimism. He would not hold it against them. They would behave as the “sheep” that they were. They would again be united and He would come to them. He here predicts His resurrection. The angel told the women at the tomb to remind the disciples of this very prediction. (Mark 16:7)

**v.14:29-31** *But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet [will] not I. And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, [even] in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.*

It is Peter who once again objects to the words of his Master. He says that he would never be offended of Jesus or be untrue to Him, and yet, his very words contradict those of Jesus, and so, are words of unbelief and unfaithfulness.

- a) Not learning the lesson of the foot washing and the accompanying discourse of Jesus, Peter’s words place him above his brethren. Opting not to say “we shall never be offended,” he singles

himself out as the only one of the group that would remain true. In other words, "I am greater and more trustworthy than all the others."

- b) The last two times Peter contradicted Him, Jesus delivered a sharp rebuke. (Mark 8:32-33; John 13:8) This time however He simply offers to Peter a prediction. He tells Peter that this very night Peter would deny Him three times before the cock crowed twice.
- c) Peter loved Jesus deeply and sought only to please his Master. His words were heart felt and sincere although spoken rashly and in overconfidence. We will see how he drew his sword when they came to take Jesus. He was ready to defend Him, but as we will see, that final rebuke to put away his sword drained him of courage and filled him with confusion.
- d) Peter does not back down. With the prediction of Jesus he denies the fact that he would ever be unfaithful more strongly and persistently. He says that he would die before he would deny his Lord in any way. Peter carries on in such a way that the others have no choice but to join in. They all agreed that they would never forsake Him.

**v.14:32-34** *And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray. And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.*

Jesus and the apostles cross over the Brook of Cedron and enter into the Garden of Gethsemane. The garden was east of Jerusalem at the foot of the Mount of Olives. The word means "oil press," and so, the garden was probably a grove of olive trees. The olives were squeezed for the oil, and so, the site probably had some sort of shelter being a workplace of sorts.

- a) In all probably this is where Jesus and the apostles had spent every night that week. The owner was probably someone whom Jesus knew and the garden provided a place of retreat and refuge for Jesus and the apostles. Judas obviously knew that this was where Jesus would be spending the night.
- b) Upon their arrival Jesus instructs the apostles to sit while He goes further into the garden to pray. He leaves the eight and takes with Him Peter, James and John. Proceeding into the garden with the three men, He is filled with horror and anguish.
- c) The words are strong. He was pressed down and overwhelmed. In modern terminology He was having an anxiety attack. His mental burden was so great that it was shutting Him down physically. He communicates this to the three telling them that He was "sorrowful unto death."

- d) *We know the words of Jesus are true. Whatever He was feeling or experiencing was so powerful that it was potentially fatal. Was the separation from His Father as the sin offering beginning? Was the weight of the sin of the world beginning to press upon Him? Did He know all that was going to come upon Him or didn't He know all of the details and was heading into this not completely enlightened as to what would happen?*
- e) *He experienced the perfect and infinite sorrow of God as a man. He was learning obedience. (Heb. 5:8) God paid a price for our salvation and maybe this verse gives us a bit of insight into the price that was paid. Communicating His inward state to the three apostles He instructs them to wait and goes on alone.*

**v.14:35-36** *And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things [are] possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.*

*Luke tells us that Jesus proceeded about a stones throw away from the three apostles before He fell to the ground and began to pray. Matthew tells us that He fell on His face and prayed. There was no rock to support His body as the famous picture portrays and no other man to comfort Him as He laid in the dirt alone presenting the appeal of His human nature to the Father who represents the divine will.*

- a) *Jesus prays that if it be possible, that is, if there be any other way that God's plan for mankind could be accomplished, that what He knew was ahead of Him would be taken away. He appealed to God's attribute of almightiness, that is, His being able to do anything, but He then submitted to the divine will.*
- b) *The dual nature of Jesus presented unique temptations. Here, His flesh and His spirit are pulling Him in opposite directions and He seeks an option that would allow His dual nature to be reconciled. Jesus had the emotions of a man, and so, had a natural aversion to pain and also a spirit of self-preservation. The Father had put all things into His hands. He was in control of His own fate. The divine will however said to go on to the cross. His agony in the garden was His seeking to reconcile His human and divine nature. Jesus, even as a perfect man, found the two natures to be irreconcilable, and so, the solution, "not my will, but thy will be done." Even a perfect human nature must submit to the divine.*

**v.14:37-38** *And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour? Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly [is] ready, but the flesh [is] weak,*

*Jesus returns to the place where He had left the three apostles and finds them sleeping. He had*

commanded them to watch and pray, but they could not. They had no idea of the significance of this night or what was about to happen. Their bellies were full and they had walked a long way. It had been a long and eventful day and this garden had provided them a comfortable and safe place all week.

- a) Jesus' rebuke is directed toward Peter. The rebuke amounts to, "Even you, Peter?" Peter had been the most adamant among the apostles as to not forsaking his Master, and so, even though all three were guilty it is Peter who is singled out. Jesus commands them for the second time to watch, that is, to stay alert, and to pray.
- b) Many things went on that night that they did not understand. The prediction of a betrayer and a more general announcement that they would all forsake Him; was made by Jesus. They had to know that something was up, that something was different because of the concern that was being shown by Him. Now was the time to stay alert. Now was the time to take their confusion to the Father. Being forewarned, they should have been beseeching the Father, as was Jesus, that they would not give in to the temptations that were soon to come upon them.
- c) The spirit was indeed willing. They truly believed they would fight for Him and even give their lives for Him if necessary, but the flesh was weak. Jesus himself was experiencing the weakness of the flesh even in His perfection. If Jesus needed to be strengthened in prayer, how much more the apostles?
- d) It is Peter who years later would write, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." And also, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations."

**v.14:39-40** *And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words. And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they what to answer him.*

Jesus left the three apostles and again prayed to the Father. He was fighting the same temptations and basically prayed the same prayer. Luke tells us that at some point an angel was sent to Him to strengthen Him and that His praying was so intense that His sweat fell from Him as great drops of blood. (Luke 22:43-44)

- a) He returns to His apostles a second time, but the results are the same. They did not heed His warning, but were fast asleep. Obviously taken by surprise and embarrassed they didn't know what to say to Him.

- b) Once again Jesus leaves them to pray. At the beginning of His ministry the devil tempted Him three times in the wilderness. Now for the third time Jesus goes off alone to fight the temptations His flesh is presenting to Him, for the third time He submits to His Father's will.

**v.14:41-42** *And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take [your] rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.*

Jesus again returns. With the three apostles who neglected to follow the instructions of Jesus and to pray, there is no change. They are all fast asleep. However, with Jesus, who persisted and agonized in prayer, there is a definite change.

- a) I guess you can say that Jesus is once again himself. He is strong. He is at peace. He is confident. The victory over the flesh and the devil had obviously been won. He is in charge. No one could possibly take Him, but He would give himself over in obedience to the will of the Godhead.
- b) Coming upon the men, He tells them to sleep and to take their rest. Jesus is basically talking to himself as the apostles are sleeping. Was this a sarcastic comment born out of the frustration He must have felt with them or was it delivered out of compassion for their weakness as He was once again the shepherd who was to watch over them?
- c) Did He immediately wake them or did He sit silently with them for some unspecified period of time watching them sleep and praying over them as a father prays over his sleeping children?
- d) The phrase, "it is enough" only appears in Mark's account and presents a puzzle to many commentators. Might it be that He did indeed let them sleep until the appointed time, watching over them until He woke them with the declaration, "It is enough."
- e) The hour had arrived for Him to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. He instructs them to get up and informs them that His betrayer had arrived. They could have easily escaped into the blackness of the night, but He instructs His apostles to go forward. He chose to meet His betrayer face to face.

**v.14:43-45** *And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead [him] away safely. And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master; and kissed him.*

*As Jesus was waking up Peter, James and John, Judas, leading a very large group of men, comes into the garden. The three apostles wake-up to the sound of this group of men bearing down on them. It was these same apostles who had earlier woke up to witness the transfiguration. (Luke 9:32)*

- a) *This group consisted of the temple guard along with a band of Roman soldiers. The group seems to have been led by Malchus who was the high priest's personal servant, and of course, Judas. The group was large, heavily armed and held torches and lanterns. (John 18:3)*
- b) *They were seeking a man in a wooded area in pitch darkness, and so, came prepared to conduct a manhunt expecting Jesus and the apostles to scatter into the night. The group probably first encountered the eight apostles whom Jesus had told to sit down when they first entered the garden.*
- c) *Jesus did not run, but with His three groggy apostles walked toward those who were looking for Him. John's gospel tells us that He approached the group and boldly asked them who they were looking for. When He identified himself to them, in a final display of power and control, this large group of heavily armed men went backwards and fell to the ground. (John 18:4-9)*
- d) *Even though Jesus identified himself to them they were probably caught off guard by His boldness and believed that this might be an attempt to deceive them. They still needed Judas to render a positive identification, so Judas, according to the signal he had worked out with the group beforehand betrays his Master with a kiss. (Matt. 26:48-50)*

**v.14:46-47** *And they laid their hands on him, and took him. And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.*

*With the positive identification made they take hold of Jesus. The apostles observed the boldness of Jesus before this mob as well as the display of His power when the entire group was knocked off their feet. This had to encourage the apostles to believe that they would be victorious if a fight broke out, but on the other hand, Jesus just surrendered. They were confused as to what course of action they should take, and so, they seek direction from Jesus. (Luke 22:49)*

- a) *John tells us it was Peter who does not wait for an answer, but draws his sword and cuts off the ear of Malchus the high priest's chief servant. Peter and the other apostles probably would have been killed immediately, but Jesus takes control of the situation in order to protect His apostles. (John 17:12)*
- b) *Peter is reprimanded not only in front of the other apostles but also in front of his enemies. Jesus tells Peter that irrational acts of violence fueled by anger is never the answer. He*

*was a man of peace and would continue to be known as such. His cause would not be championed by violence and the success of His church would not be attributed to force.*

- c) *He also confirms to Peter that He is in total control. Seventy two thousand angels were at His immediate disposal. His fate was not in the hands of eleven men with two swords. Jesus had chosen to give himself over.*
- d) *Finally this was His Father's will. In His agony and anguish He had found the answer and was strengthened. Would He turn back now? He was determined to go forward and complete the mission. The scriptures must be fulfilled. He would lay down His life for the sheep. (Matt. 26:52-54) Luke tells us that Jesus healed Malchus, literally putting the ear back onto his head. (Luke 22:50-51)*

***v.14:48-49 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and [with] staves to take me? I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled.***

*Luke tells us that some of the leaders of the Jews were also present. They make their appearance only when it is determined that they control the situation. They probably were "bringing up the rear" as observers. (Luke 22:52-53)*

- a) *Jesus rebukes these leaders as they approach. Jesus taught openly in the temple, but they would not take Him in public. Their cowardice dictated that they take Him under the cover of darkness and accompanied by a small army.*
- b) *He proclaims that the scriptures must be fulfilled, that is, He must be taken and handed over to evil men. He must secure man's salvation by His death. (Zech. 11:12, 13:1)*

***v.14:50-52 And they all forsook him, and fled. And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about [his] naked [body]; and the young men laid hold on him: And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.***

*True to the prediction of Jesus, all of His apostles ran away into the night. (v.27) The Jewish leaders had their man so probably saw no immediate need in trying to find eleven men who scattered into the darkness in different directions. They wanted to get on with the proceedings as soon as possible and believed these men posed no threat.*

- a) *It must be noted that running away was not the apostles first choice. (Luke 22:49) Although grossly outnumbered their first reaction was to fight. This shows that they believed that with Jesus they would be victorious.*

- b) *They ran away only after they saw that Jesus was surrendering to the mob. They ran away only after He rebuked Peter for his violent act. They had to be totally confused and this confusion bred helplessness and fear within them.*
- c) *The story of the young man is included in the gospel record only by Mark. This along with the fact that the young man is unidentified leads many to believe the young man is the author, but this can in no way be proven.*
- d) *It does not say the young man was a follower of Jesus, but that he followed Him to the garden. A curious young boy is awakened in the night by Jesus and the group of apostles leaving the city, wraps himself in a sheet and follows. Now he finds himself in the middle of this conflict and himself must make a quick escape. The possibilities behind this story are endless.*

***v.14:53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes.***

*Jesus is led back into the city of Jerusalem to the compound of the high priest. Already assembled and waiting for Jesus to arrive are all of the chief priests, elders and scribes. All of the Jewish leaders have come out to judge Him on this holy night.*

- a) *John tells us that Jesus was first brought before Annas for what could be called a preliminary hearing. Annas was the former high priest and the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was the current high priest. Secular sources confirm it was Annas who wielded the true power.*
- b) *This preliminary hearing is recorded only in John. (John 18:13, 19-24) He asks about Jesus' followers and His doctrine. Jesus does not give a specific answer but simply tells him that His doctrine is common knowledge. The abuse begins as Jesus is struck by a guard.*

***v.14:54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.***

*John tells us that he and Peter followed Jesus independently and from a great distance. They both end up at the high priest's compound. None of the other nine apostles are mentioned.*

- a) *John, known to the high priest, was allowed to proceed into the palace, while Peter when he arrived, remained outside of the gate. The relationship between John and the high priest is not disclosed. It seemed to be more than a mere acquaintance for John is able to easily get Peter into the compound. (John 18:15-16)*
- b) *The two men are briefly united. John proceeds into the hall where Jesus' trial before Caiaphas will take place but Peter stays outside in the courtyard warming himself by the fire.*

- c) *Why didn't Peter accompany or stay with John? Perhaps he could not gain access to the hall even with John's influence. Maybe he thought it best to "lay low" for it was he who had cut of the ear of the high priest's servant.*

***v.14:55-59 And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none. For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together. And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, 'We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. But neither so did their witness agree together.***

*It becomes apparent that the preliminary questioning by Annas was to buy time. The Sanhedrin, that is, the chief priests and all the council had assembled, their minds already made up to put Jesus to death but they were scrambling to find witnesses to testify against Him.*

- a) *To make this illegal trial a least appear to have some legitimacy they needed witnesses, but could find none. The next best thing was false witnesses. These individuals came forward testifying against Him, but they all contradicted each other substantiating nothing.*

*"Note well that according to our passage the people who were supposed to be neutral judges 'were themselves seeking evidence to put him to death.' Ostensibly they were gathered for the purpose of investigation; in reality they were bent on annihilation. In their search they were never successful. To be sure some so-called witnesses showed up, but their testimony was false." Hendrikson*

- b) *Whether some of these men actually heard Jesus or whether they were coached they attempt to show that He was a defamer of the temple. They said they heard Him say He would destroy the temple and within three days He would build another without the use of human hands.*
- c) *What they were referring to is quoted in John 2:18-19. A careful look shows that He never said He himself would destroy anything. He spoke of them killing Him, that is, destroying the temple that was His body. He would raise it up in three days. The reference to "with" and "without hands" is also absent.*
- d) *Needless to say, nothing could be proved, in fact, they disagreed among themselves. Nothing was being accomplished. A trial, illegal and fixed, was still going in Jesus' favor!*

***v.14:60-61 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what [is it which] these witness against thee? But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?***

*The outcome of the trial had already been decided. It was supposed to be short and sweet, but now was not going according to plan. Caiaphas, presiding over the trial, is obviously frustrated, and so, decides to take matters into his own hands.*

- a) *He stands up in the middle of the proceedings and questions Jesus. Although Jesus' silence is working to his advantage it irks Caiaphas. Who can listen to accusations brought against them, most of them false, and remain silent?*
- b) *He basically asks Jesus, "How can you say nothing? Don't you hear what these men are bringing against you?" Jesus remains silent in fulfillment of the scriptures. (Is. 53:7) The leadership had plotted against Jesus for a long time and had patiently waited to spring their trap, but now everything was falling apart. They needed something to tell the people, something to take before Pilate, something to give a shred of legitimacy to these proceedings, and something to appease their own conscience.*
- c) *Caiaphas, probably in desperation, decides to take another route. The witnesses had proved useless, so he must get Jesus to speak. He must get Jesus to provide new evidence that will condemn Him.*
- d) *Caiaphas asks the decisive question. It is the question the Jewish leadership had been seeking a direct answer to for a long time. It can be argued that Jesus never directly declared himself to be the Messiah to the Jewish leadership but once this was done there could be no excuse. "Art thou the Christ, The Son of the Blessed?" Total silence probably immediately fell over the crowded hall.*
- e) *Why didn't Jesus remain silent? Matthew tells us that Caiaphas prefaced the question with the words, "I adjure thee by the Living God." (Matt. 26:63) In this legal proceeding Caiaphas in effect places Jesus under oath. This, plus the fact that Jesus must plainly declare himself to be the Messiah to the leaders of Israel, causes Him to break His silence.*

**v.14:62** *And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.*

*Jesus speaks answering Caiaphas in the affirmative. Quoting both Daniel and David He describes himself as sitting at the right hand of God and as the One who would come in judgment. (Dan. 7:13-14; Psalm 110:1)*

- a) *He declares himself to be equal with God, and so, gives Caiaphas what he needs to convict Him. He incriminates himself with the truth. Once again, Jesus proves that it is He who is in charge. If He wouldn't have provided the so-called evidence they needed they couldn't have convicted Him even in a sham trial.*

**v.14:63-64** *Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.*

*With Jesus' answer Caiaphan tore his robes. It was not a spontaneous act being appalled that Jesus had supposedly blasphemed, but was scripted. It had to be done in a way described in the Talmud, such was the far reaching effect of the restrictions that the Jews had placed themselves under. Caiaphas had to be elated for he had in effect saved the day.*

*"When the high priest ceremoniously tore his robes, he did so not out of grief and indignation over the presumed dishonor of God's name but rather out of joy and relief that at last, Jesus had placed himself into their hands, condemning himself out of His own mouth. Although Lev. 21:10 strictly forbade the high priest's tearing his garments, the Talmud held that judges who witnessed blasphemy had a right to tear their robes if they later sewed them up. By his traditional and theatrical display, Caiaphas dramatically gave the appearance of defending God's name, but inwardly he gloated over the illegal, unjust, and devilish victory he imagined he had just won." John MacArthur*

- a) *Caiaphas asks the assembly what purpose would be served by bringing other witnesses forward and in effect declares an end to the trial. They all had heard the declaration of Jesus. They were all witnesses and as members of the Sanhedrin, witnesses who were above reproach.*
- b) *With the words "What think ye," Caiaphas hurriedly asks for a verdict. They all found Him to be guilty and pronounced the sentence of death in accordance with the law. (Lev. 24:16)*

**v.14:65** *And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.*

*The impression is given that the abuse began immediately and by the esteemed members of the Sanhedrin. The phrase "and some" must be separated from the phrase "and the servants" who most likely represent the officers of the temple guard.*

- a) *Such was their hate for and jealousy of Jesus that they spit upon Him. They covered His face striking Him and mockingly asking Him to prophecy as the Messiah as to whom it was that hit Him. (Matt. 26:67-68) The temple guard then took their turn abusing Him.*

**v.14:66-68** *And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest: And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.*

*Mark here gives the account of the three denials of Jesus by Peter. These occurred during the trials before Annas and then Caiaphas. So while Jesus was inside testifying to the truth and John*

witnessing that testimony, Peter was outside lying as to his relationship to Jesus.

- a) The first denial occurs shortly after Peter enters the compound. In fact, it was the very woman who kept the door and had let Peter in who first suggested that Peter was a follower of Jesus. (John 18:17-18) Notice the word "also." She obviously knew John was a disciple. John asked her to let Peter in, and so, she assumes that Peter is also a disciple.
- b) The words of the maid do not have to be taken as being accusatory. She simply could have made her way to the fire and asked him out of curiosity. Jesus had to be the conversation of choice throughout the compound. Peter denies knowing Jesus and even plays dumb as to what is going on.
- c) He is fearful and nervous. Soldiers and the temple guard are also present at the fire. Peter was not only an apostle, but had tried to kill the chief servant of the high priest. He quickly leaves the area before the conversation can go any further. As he makes his way to another area called the porch a rooster crows.

**v.14:69-72** *And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is [one] of them. And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art [one] of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth [thereto]. But he began to curse and to swear, [saying], I know not this man of whom ye speak, And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.*

Another maid saw Peter and said out loud to all that he was one of Jesus' disciples. John uses the word "they" in his account suggesting that this time others joined in with the maid agreeing with her.

- a) For the second time Peter denies his Master saying that he is not one of Jesus' disciples. Matthew tells us that this denial is more forceful than the first in that it included an oath. (Matt. 26:71-72)
- b) Probably still on the porch, but about an hour later, Peter is confronted again, this time by a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off. This man had probably witnessed the event, however, with the poor lighting and confusion he's not totally sure. He is sure enough to push the issue and offers Peter's accent as further proof. (John 18:26; Luke 22:59)
- c) Certain that he had been discovered he resorts to intimidation to make an escape. He begins to curse and to swear in his denial of Jesus. From the gospel accounts at this precise moment two

*things occur probably simultaneously. In conjunction with the prediction of Jesus the cock crows for the second time and Jesus, who is probably being transferred to another area, is able to turn and have eye contact with Peter. (Matt. 26:74; Luke 22:60-62)*

*Authors Note:*

*The third denial, the second crowing of the rooster, and a look from Jesus all coming together at one point in time, the prophecy had been fulfilled. He knows it and he instantly reflects upon it. He did not know himself as well as he thought he did. This would be his last contact with Jesus before Jesus died. Peter was totally humbled. He left the premises and wept, a broken man.*