

## Notes on the Greek New Testament Day 66 – March 7<sup>th</sup> – Mark 13:14-37

### Works frequently referenced in these notes on Mark

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Cranfield, CEB    | <i>The Gospel According to Mark</i> (Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary), CUP, Cambridge, 4 <sup>th</sup> ed. 1972 |
| France, RT        | <i>The Gospel of Mark</i> (The New International Greek Testament Commentary), Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 2002           |
| Guelich, Robert A | <i>Mark 1-8:26</i> (The Word Biblical Commentary, vol 34A), Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1989                |
| Lane, William L   | <i>The Gospel of Mark</i> , Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1974   |
| Taylor, Vincent   | <i>The Gospel According to St Mark</i> , Macmillan NT Commentaries, London, 1952                                     |

#### Verses 14-20

In the light of the identification of 'the abomination of desolation' with Antichrist in 2 Thess 2:3-10, Cranfield argues that in verses 14-20 there is a "double reference". Jesus is speaking both of the destruction of Jerusalem, and particularly of the Temple, but also of things that will accompany the End." France, however, writes, "The mention of a βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως focuses our attention again on the temple, in which Daniel had originally spoken of the unwelcome presence of such a βδέλυγμα (Dn 9:27; 11:31; 12:11)." He argues that Jesus' words are to be understood as referring entirely to the destruction of Jerusalem.

#### Verse 14

Ὅταν δὲ ἴδητε τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως ἐστηκότα ὅπου οὐ δεῖ, ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω, τότε οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ φευγέτωσαν εἰς τὰ ὄρη,

ὅταν when

ἴδητε Verb, aor act subj ὄραω see

βδέλυγμα, τος n something detestable

ἐρημωσις, εως f desolation, destruction

"Occurs in the LXX version of Daniel 12:11 where it represents *sikkus somem*. The basic idea in *sikkus* is that of being detestable to, and rejected by God: it is particularly used of heathen gods and articles connected with them. The significance of the Hebrew participle *somem* (rendered by τῆς ἐρημώσεως) is that the abominable thing causes the Temple to be deserted, the pious avoiding the Temple on its account. That in Dan 12:11 the reference is to the heathen altar set up by Antiochus Epiphanes over the burnt-offering in the Temple in 168 BC is generally agreed ... Jesus' use of the phrase implies that for him the meaning of the prophecy was not exhausted by the events of the Maccabean times; it still has a future reference. The Temple of God must yet suffer a fearful profanation by which its whole glory will perish." Cranfield.

ἐστηκότα Verb, perf act ptc, n nom/acc s  
ἵστημι stand

"The masculine suggests that what is meant by βδέλυγμα is no mere idolatrous object but Antichrist himself." Cranfield. France, however, comments, "When Antiochus's emissaries desecrated the temple by setting up a pagan altar, they also designated it the temple of Ζεὺς Ολύμπιος (2 Macc. 6:2) and installed a statue of its new god; if Mark had in mind a counterpart to such a statue of the (male) god Zeus, he might well have spoken of 'him' standing (masculine) in the temple."

ὅπου adv. where

δεῖ impersonal verb must, should, ought

I.e. ἐν τοπῷ ἀγῶ – see Mt 24:15.

ἀναγινώσκω read

νοεῶ understand, discern, consider

Either Jesus' words meaning, 'let the reader of Daniel understand' or, more probably, a comment inserted by Mark. The reference of Jesus' words will need to be discerned in the light of events.

τοτε then, at that time

I.e. do not then delay.

φευγω flee, run away (from)

ορος, ος n mountain, hill

"The words suggest a reference to a state of war, the mountainous regions being obvious places of refuge." Cranfield.

### Verse 15

ὁ ἐπὶ τοῦ δώματος μὴ καταβάτω μηδὲ  
εἰσελθάτω τι ἄραι ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας αὐτοῦ,

δωμα, ατος n roof, housetop

I.e. the flat roof which was accessed by an external staircase.

καταβάτω Verb, aor act imperat, 3 s

καταβαινω come down, descend

μηδε negative particle nor, and not, neither

εἰσελθάτω Verb, aor act imperat, 3 s

εἰσερχομαι enter, go in

ἄραι Verb, aor act infin αἰρω take, take

up, take away

Emphasises the urgency and need for great haste.

### Verse 16

καὶ ὁ εἰς τὸν ἀγρὸν μὴ ἐπιστρεψάτω εἰς τὰ  
ὀπίσω ἄραι τὸ ἱμάτιον αὐτοῦ.

ἀγρος, ου m field, farm, countryside

ἐπιστρεψάτω Verb, aor act imperat, 3 s

ἐπιστρεφω turn back, return

ὀπισω prep and adv back, behind

εἰς τα ὀπισω 'to the things behind [him]'

αἰρω take, take up, take away, set aside,  
raise

ἱματιον, ου n garment, robe

"The outer garment that would not be required for work in the field, but would be highly desirable at night." Cranfield.

### Verse 17

οὐαὶ δὲ ταῖς ἐν γαστρὶ ἐχούσαις καὶ ταῖς  
θηλαζούσαις ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις.

οὐαὶ interj. woe! how horrible it will be!

γαστρὶ Noun, dat s γαστηρ, τρος f womb;

ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχω be pregnant

θηλαζω nurse (of a mother feeding her child  
at the breast)

ἐκεινος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that

Cf. Lk 23:29.

### Verse 18

προσεύχεσθε δὲ ἵνα μὴ γένηται χειμῶνος·

προσευχομαι pray

γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι

χειμων, ωνος m winter, storm, bad

weather

"When the heavy rains would have made the wadis difficult to cross." Cranfield.

### Verse 19

ἔσονται γὰρ αἱ ἡμέραι ἐκεῖναι θλίψις οἷα οὐ  
γένονεν τοιαύτη ἀπ' ἀρχῆς κτίσεως ἢν ἔκτισεν  
ὁ θεὸς ἕως τοῦ νῦν καὶ οὐ μὴ γένηται.

ἔσονται Verb, fut indic, 3 pl εἶμι

θλιψις, εως f trouble, suffering

οἷος, α, ον relative pronoun such as, of what  
kind

γένονεν Verb, perf act indic, 3s γινομαι

τοιουτος, αυτη, ουτον correlative pronoun and  
adjective such, of such kind

ἀρχη, ης f beginning, origin

κτισις, εως f creation

κτιζω create, make

γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι

"For the language cf. Dan 12:1; also Jer 30:7 ... It seems likely that the thought is eschatological, the final tribulation of history being in view." Cranfield. France believes that the reference is to "the siege of Jerusalem, whose horrors Josephus so graphically describes" (*War* 5.424-38, 512-18, 567-76; 6.193-313). France continues by saying of οἷα οὐ γέγονεν τοιαύτη ἀπ' ἀρχῆς κτίσεως ἢν ἔκτισεν ὁ θεὸς ἕως τοῦ νῦν καὶ οὐ μὴ γένηται, "These are apparently stock expressions for unparalleled suffering, and are not to be pressed literally (e.g. by asking whether the Holocaust was not worse than the Jewish War). It should be noted, however, that καὶ οὐ μὴ γένηται sits very uncomfortably with any interpretation which understands these words to be describing the end of history."

### Verse 20

καὶ εἰ μὴ ἐκολόβωσεν κύριος τὰς ἡμέρας, οὐκ  
ἂν ἐσώθη πᾶσα σὰρξ. ἀλλὰ διὰ τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς  
οὓς ἐξελέξατο ἐκολόβωσεν τὰς ἡμέρας.

κολοβωω shorten, cut short

"The siege of Jerusalem, though terrible, lasted only five months, and that relatively short period is attributed to God's concern for his ἐλεκτοί (though πᾶσα σὰρξ would benefit)." France.

ἂν particle indicating contingency

σωζω save, rescue

σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, human being

ἐκλεκτος, η, ον chosen

ἐξελέξατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s  
ἐκλεγομαι choose

Cf. 2 Sam 24:16; Is 65:8.

Cranfield considers the fulfilment of these verses to be past, present and future.

### Verse 21

καὶ τότε ἂν τις ὑμῖν εἴπῃ· Ἴδε ὧδε ὁ χριστός,  
Ἴδε ἐκεῖ, μὴ πιστεύετε·

τοτε then

ἂν if

ἴδε behold, see

ὧδε adv here, in this place

ἐκεῖ there, in that place

πιστεῶ believe (in), have faith (in)

Cf. v.5.

### Verse 22

ἐγερθήσονται γὰρ ψευδόχριστοι καὶ  
ψευδοπροφήται καὶ δώσουσιν σημεῖα καὶ  
τέρατα πρὸς τὸ ἀποπλανᾶν εἰ δυνατὸν τοὺς  
ἐκλεκτούς·

ἐγείρω raise

ψευδοχριστος, ου m false Christ, one who  
falsely claims to be the Christ

ψευδοπροφήτης, ου m false prophet

δώσουσιν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl δίδωμι

σημεῖον, ου n miraculous sign, sign,  
miracle

τερας, ατος n wonder, object of wonder

Cf. Dt 13:1-3 LXX.

ἀποπλανᾶν Verb, pres act infin ἀποπλαναω  
mislead, deceive

δυνατος, η, ον possible

Deceivers will seek to exploit the 'apocalyptic' nature of the Jewish War to persuade the Christian community into thinking that the End has come. "The addition of εἰ δυνατόν, however, conveys an optimistic expectation that their faith will prove equal to the test." France.

### Verse 23

ὁμοῖς δὲ βλέπετε· προεῖρηκα ὑμῖν πάντα.

βλέπω see, beware of

προεῖρηκα Verb, perf act indic, 1 s προλεγω  
say beforehand, warn in advance

### Verses 24-27

Cranfield says that these verses speak of "Cosmic signs immediately heralding the Parousia. The ideas and language are derived from the OT." France disagrees. He writes, "It is especially in these verses that the interpretation of the discourse adopted in this commentary differs from the majority view... The disciples' question (vv 3-4) concerned the destruction of the temple which Jesus predicted in v. 2. They wanted to know when it would be and what sign would herald it... So far everything has fallen short of the full answer, but ἀλλά at the beginning of v. 24 alerts us to a new stage of fulfilment. The setting remains ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις, but now we are moving beyond the θλίψις of v. 19 to what must immediately follow it. And so we reach at last the destruction of the temple, described not in the prosaic terms of v.2 but in the richly coloured and evocative language of OT prophecy. Almost every word of vv 24b-27 is drawn from the prophets, and we shall examine the specific echoes in the notes below. The passages cited in vv 24b-25 use the language of cosmic disintegration to denote, as often in prophecy, climactic (*not* climatic!) changes to the existing world order. The lights are going out in the centres of power, and the way is being prepared for a new world order. As in vv. 26-27 it comes: Daniel's vision of the enthronement of the Son of Man will be seen to be fulfilled, and that Son of Man will send out his angels from his heavenly throne to collect into his kingdom the ἐκλεκτοί not now of Israel only but of all nations. "With that, the question is answered. The word 'temple' has not appeared but the imagery has powerfully conveyed to those who are familiar with OT prophecy the fundamental 'change of government' which is symbolised by the destruction of that now discredited building in Jerusalem and all that it represented. From now on it will not be the national shrine which will be the focus of the people of God, but the Son of Man to whom has now been given, as Dn 7:14 predicted, an everlasting and universal dominion which embraces all nations and languages.

"And yet the question is still not fully answered. The disciples wanted to know about the time and the sign, and so vv. 28-31 finally sum up the implications of what Jesus has said from this point of view. The little parable of the fig tree reinforces the need for readiness when the disciples see ταῦτα taking place... And in v. 30 the time is finally and emphatically (ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν) spelled out not now in prophetic symbolism but in plain words: it will all take place within 'this generation'. And lest there be any room left for uncertainty, Jesus caps the whole predictive oracle with the assurance that his words are as sure and eternal as the word of God himself. With that, his answer to the question of v. 4 is complete. What follows in v. 32, introduced by περὶ δέ, will be on another subject."

#### Verse 24

Ἀλλὰ ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν ἐκείνην ὁ ἥλιος σκοτισθήσεται, καὶ ἡ σελήνη οὐ δώσει τὸ φέγγος αὐτῆς,

ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις is "an OT stereotyped expression with eschatological associations (cf. Jer 3:16, 18; 31:29; 33:15f.; Zech 8:23 etc.)." Cranfield.

θλίψις, εως f trouble, suffering

A "general recapitulation of all the evils of which Christ had previously spoken." Before the occurrence of these celestial signs the Church will have passed through the "whole course of its tribulation". Calvin.

ἥλιος, ου m the sun

σκοτισθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s

σκοτιζομαι be or become darkened

σεληνη, ης f moon

φεγγος, ους n light

"The language of v. 24b is paralleled at several points in the prophetic literature (Ezk 32:7; Jo 2:10, 31; 3:15; Am 8:9) but is verbally most closely related to Is 13:10, part of the oracle against Babylon, σκοτισθήσεται τοῦ ἡλίου ἀνατέλλοντος, καὶ ἡ σελήνη οὐ δώσει τὸ φῶς αὐτῆς. In v 25 the closest verbal link is with LXX Is 34:4, part of the oracle against 'all nations' but with special reference to Edom, καὶ τακήσονται πᾶσαι αἱ δυνάμεις τῶν οὐρανῶν ... καὶ πάντα τὰ ἄστρα πεσεῖται ..., where the 'powers of the heavens' are probably to be understood as a poetic synonym for the stars. In most of these passages the immediate reference is to the imminent downfall of specific nations (Egypt, Babylon, Edom, Israel, and Judah), though in Jo 3:15 there is a more universal perspective (all the nations gathered for judgment before Jerusalem). In the original prophetic context, therefore, such 'cosmic' language conveys a powerful symbolism of political changes within world history, and is not naturally to be understood of a literal collapse of the universe at the end of the world. It is, in the words of Wright, 'typical Jewish imagery for events within the present order that are felt and perceived as "cosmic" or, as we should say, "earth-shattering".' The events so described are catastrophic for the nations concerned, and to use such language adds a heavy ideological loading of divine judgment. God is redrawing the map of world politics, and the familiar structures of international affairs will never be the same again. But the dramatic collapse of the power structures is not the end of world history, but the beginning of a new and better phase, in which God's purpose will be worked out... What is startling about the use of such language by Jesus in this context is not that he uses the same imagery as the prophets, but that he uses it with regard to the fate of *Jerusalem* and its temple." France.

#### Verse 25

καὶ οἱ ἀστέρες ἔσονται ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πίπτοντες, καὶ αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς σαλευθήσονται.

ἀστηρ, ερος m star

ἔσονται Verb, fut indic, 3 pl εἰμι

οὐρανος, ου m heaven

πίπτω fall, fall down

οὐρανος, ου m heaven

σαλευθήσονται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 pl

σαλευω shake, disturb

**Verse 26**

καὶ τότε ὄψονται τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου  
ἐρχόμενον ἐν νεφέλαις μετὰ δυνάμεως πολλῆς  
καὶ δόξης·

"If vv 24b-25 have portrayed the negative side of Jesus' prediction, the end of the old order, in vv 26-27 we turn to the positive, the new order which is to take its place." France.

τοτε then, at that time

ὄψονται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 pl ὄρω  
see

"All men, not just disciples, are presumably included in this indefinite plural." Cranfield.

νεβηλη, ης f cloud

πολυς, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου i)  
much

δοξα, ης f glory, splendour

Cf. Dan 7:13f. "Daniel's vision, as we have seen at 8:38, is one of enthronement, of the 'one like a son of man' coming before the throne of God to be given universal and everlasting dominion. It is the imagery of setting up a new kingdom to replace the failed regimes of previous empires, and it is located not on the earthly scene but in the presence of God in heaven. Here then is the ultimate divinely sanctioned authority, to which 'all peoples, nations and languages' must now be subject... Here is an even more telling counterpart to the irony of vv 24-25. There prophetic visions of the downfall of Israel's enemies were drawn on to depict God's judgment on Israel herself as represented in the temple. Here a vision of Israel's triumph is transferred to a 'Son of Man' whose authority is to supersede that which Jerusalem's temple has hitherto represented. Here, for those who appreciate the nuances of OT language, is a startling statement of the idea that Jesus himself, and derivatively the church, the international body of people who acknowledge his sovereignty, is now to be understood as the true Israel, the people of God through whom God's earthly agenda, hitherto focused on Jerusalem and its temple, is now to be carried forward... This is what Daniel's vision is all about, the transcendent power of God which has put an end to usurping human 'powers' and has established the final, universal sovereignty of the Son of Man. So also when the temple is destroyed the existing δυνάμεις σαλευθήσονται (v. 25), while by contrast the newly established 'power and glory' of the Son of Man will be there for all to see." France.

**Verse 27**

καὶ τότε ἀποστελεῖ τοὺς ἀγγέλους καὶ  
ἐπισυνάξει τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων  
ἀνέμων ἀπ' ἄκρου γῆς ἕως ἄκρου οὐρανοῦ.

ἀποστελεῖ Verb, fut act indic, 3 s ἀποστελλω  
send, send out

ἐπισυναγω gather, gather together

ἐκλεκτος, η, ον chosen

The growing community of Jesus' disciples, cf. v.20. "Their 'gathering' (ἐπισυνάξει), echoes OT predictions of the 'gathering' of the Jewish exiles back to their land, primarily Dt 30:4 (LXX συνάξει) and Zc 2:10 (EVV 2:6; LXX συνάξω), both of which also speak of gathering from the ends of the earth (Dt 30:4, ἀπ' ἄκρου τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἕως ἄκρου τοῦ οὐρανοῦ; Zc 2:10, ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων τοῦ οὐρανοῦ); the main point of v. 27 looks like a combined allusion to these two texts. Cf. also Ps 147:2 (τὰς διασπορὰς Ἰσραὴλ ἐπισυνάξει). Here again is an ironical reversal of the sense of the OT language used; the gathering of the ἐκλεκτοί of the Son of Man will be from the whole world not by extracting Jewish exiles from their places of captivity, but by including people of all nations in what have been hitherto the Jewish community of the people of God. This is the fulfilment of the vision of v. 10, that the εὐαγγέλιον will be proclaimed to all nations...

"In view of the association of angels with the enthroned Son of Man in 8:38, and in the absence of any clear indication that the normal meaning of ἄγγελος is inappropriate here, I ... think it ... likely that angels are here credited with a 'missionary' role in the ingathering of God's people; cf. the description of angels in Heb. 1:14 as λειτουργιχὰ πνεύματα εἰς διακονίαν ἀποστελλόμενα διὰ τοὺς μέλλοντας κληρονομεῖν σωτηρίαν." France.

τεσσαρες neut τεσσαρα gen τεσσαρων four  
ἀνεμος, ου m wind

ἄκρον, ου n boundary, extreme limits

γη, γης f earth

ἕως to, up to, as far as

Cf. Deut 30:3f; Jer 32:37; Ezek 34:13; 36:24; Zech 2:6.

"Though the Church be now tormented by the malice of men, or even broken by the violence of the billows, and miserably torn in pieces, so as to have no stability in the world, yet we ought always to cherish confident hope, because it will not be by human means, but by heavenly power, which will be far superior to every obstacle, that the Lord will gather his Church." Calvin.

**Verse 28**

Ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς συκῆς μάθετε τὴν παραβολήν· ὅταν ἦδη ὁ κλάδος αὐτῆς ἀπαλὸς γένηται καὶ ἐκφύῃ τὰ φύλλα, γινώσκετε ὅτι ἐγγὺς τὸ θέρος ἐστίν·

συκη, ης f fig tree

μάθετε Verb, 2 aor act imperat, 2 pl μανθανω  
learn, find out

ὅταν when, whenever

ἦδη adv now, already

κλαδος, ου m branch

ἀπαλος, η, ον putting out leaves

γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι

ἐκφυω put out (leaves)

φυλλον, ου n leaf

ἐγγυς adv near

θερος, ους n summer

**Verse 29**

οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς, ὅταν ἴδητε ταῦτα γινόμενα, γινώσκετε ὅτι ἐγγὺς ἐστὶν ἐπὶ θύραις.

οὕτως and οὕτω adv. thus, in this way

ἴδητε Verb, aor act subj ὄραω v.26

ταῦτα must refer to the signs mentioned

θυρα, ας f door, gate

France writes of "the quite unjustified tendency of some to translate it as 'he is near' (RV, RSV, NRSV, JB, NJB). ἐγγός is an adverb, not a masculine adjective, so that the phrase means 'he/she/it is near', leaving the identity of the 'he/she/it' to be determined by the context. And here the context leaves little room for doubt. The disciples had asked when the temple would be destroyed and how they would know the time. Jesus' reply, with the focus shifting emphatically back to the disciples again (καὶ ὑμεῖς ... γινώσκουσιν), now homes in directly on the latter part of their question: *this* is how you will know that it (the destruction of the temple, the subject of the question and of the whole discourse so far) is near; this is the σημεῖον you asked for...

"ταῦτα must therefore refer to the matters set forth in vv. 14-22, after which the destruction of the temple will follow quickly and inevitably; there will be little time to get away. It is therefore quite inappropriate to the flow of the discourse to understand v. 29 as referring to anything subsequent to the destruction of the temple. That would make it useless as a sign in response to the disciples' question, as well as introducing a quite unnecessary tension with the clear temporal limit set in v. 30. Verse 29 thus sums up all that Jesus has just spelled out in vv 14-27, the preliminaries in verses 14-22 (ταῦτα γινόμενα) and the climax itself in vv 24-27 (ἐγγός ἐστὶν ἐπὶ θύραις)."

**Verse 30**

ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη μέχρις οὗ ταῦτα πάντα γένηται.

οὐ μὴ adds decisiveness.

παρέλθῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s παρερχομαι  
pass, pass away

γενεα, ας f generation, age

μεχρι and μεχρις prep with gen until

οὗ adv where; μεχρι οὗ until

γένηται see v.28

Cranfield lists a variety of interpretations of this verse:

- i) ἡ γενεα ἢ αὕτη means mankind in general;
- ii) means the Jewish people;
- iii) means Christians;
- iv) means 'people of this sort' – meaning, 'there will be unbelievers until the end'.
- v) ταῦτα παντα refers to the destruction of the Temple;
- vi) refers to Christ's Passion and Resurrection;
- vii) refers to the signs of the End mentioned in vv.5-23.

Cranfield himself argues that we need to understand that the Incarnation-Crucifixion-Resurrection-Ascension, on the one hand, and the Parousia on the other, belong essentially together and are in a real sense one Event, one divine Act, being held apart only by the mercy of God who desires to give men opportunity for faith and repentance." He says of Jesus' words in this verse, "The meaning then is that the signs of the End which Jesus has described in vv 5-23 will not be confined to a remote future: his hearers must themselves experience them, for they are characteristic of the whole period of the Last Times."

France comments, "There is a clear continuity between the question [in v 4] when μέλλῃ ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι πάντα γένηται and the answer that this generation will not pass away until πάντα γένηται. If the former phrase referred to the destruction of the temple (and, as we have seen, nothing in its context suggests any other reference), then so must the latter. ταῦτα παντα in this context must therefore refer to the whole complex of events Jesus has just been predicting in vv. 14-27. The answer to the disciples' question is thus comprehensively rounded off by as plain and definite a time scale as they could have wished for."

**Verse 31**

ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ παρελεύσονται, οἱ δὲ λόγοι μου οὐ μὴ παρελεύσονται.

παρελεύσονται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 pl  
παρερχομαι

"The words are remarkable, in that they echo the declaration of Is 40:7-8, that while grass and flowers may wither, God's word stands forever. The reliability of the word of Jesus is no less than that of the word of God himself... In Mt 5:18; Lk 16:17 the same imagery is used of the permanent validity of the law; Jesus' λόγοι are thus put on a par with the Torah in terms of authority and permanence." France.

### Verse 32

Περὶ δὲ τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης ἢ τῆς ὥρας οὐδεὶς οἶδεν, οὐδὲ οἱ ἄγγελοι ἐν οὐρανῷ οὐδὲ ὁ υἱός, εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ.

"Περὶ δὲ ... as the opening phrase of a paragraph signals a change of subject. It is used several times in this way in 1 Corinthians as Paul moves from answering one question to the next, and we have seen it used by Mark in this way already in 12:26, where Jesus turns from the specific issue of the place of marriage in the resurrection life to the more general issue of the validity of the resurrection belief itself. Here it naturally suggests a similar shift to a new topic, and the more so because the dependent genitive consists of a pair of phrases (τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης ἢ τῆς ὥρας) which are here introduced into the discourse for the first time. While the plural αἱ ἡμέραι (ἐκεῖναι) has been used several times to describe the period of the siege of Jerusalem (vv 17, 19, 20, 24), no singular day has been mentioned which provides a suitable antecedent to ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνη in v. 32. Moreover, the statement of ignorance concerning this 'day and hour' contrasts strongly with the resounding certainty (ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν) of Jesus' pronouncement of the time within which the ταῦτα described in the previous verses will occur (v. 30). We have moved emphatically from the known to the unknown." France.

France argues that the new subject, spoken of here as τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης, is the parousia – the same subject as in Mt 24:36f. He writes, "The phrase ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνη has this sense in a number of places in the NT where an explicit antecedent is equally lacking. In Mt 7:22 and Lk 10:12 the context requires that it refer to the day of judgment, but the identity of the 'day' is no more explicit in those passages than here. The same reference to the day of judgment is clearly intended in 2 Tim 1:12, 18; 4:8, though again no antecedent is expressed in these contexts. In 1 Cor 3:13 ἡ ἡμέρα alone suffices to convey the same reference. It seems, then, that in early Christian parlance 'that day' or even 'the day' was in itself a recognised eschatological term where the context allowed it to be so understood. Mark could thus expect his readers to detect in the use of this phrase a shift from the historical events of the Jewish War to a more ultimate perspective, without having to spell this out. Any readers/hearers who managed to miss the idiom would quickly realise the change of subject when they heard in vv. 33-37 what the coming of ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνη was to be like."

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο see v.17

ἢ ἢ ἢ

ὥρα, ας f hour, moment

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμία, οὐδεν no one, nothing

οἶδα know

οὐδὲ and not; οὐδὲ ... οὐδὲ neither ... nor

"The full reality of the Incarnation involved such ignorance on the part of Jesus during his earthly life. Calvin goes to the heart of the matter when he speaks of the Son of God 'enduring' it 'on our account' and connects it with his 'discharging the office of Mediator'. A clearer warning against all speculation about the *when* of the Parousia could hardly be imagined." Cranfield.

"And surely that man must be singularly mad, who would hesitate to submit himself to the ignorance which even the *Son of God* did not hesitate to endure on our account." Calvin.

### Verse 33

βλέπετε ἀγρυπνεῖτε, οὐκ οἴδατε γὰρ πότε ὁ καιρὸς ἐστίν·

βλεπω see, look, beware of

ἀγρυπνεω be alert, watch over

The converse is the danger of being caught asleep (v. 36).

Some MSS add και προσευχεσθε. France comments, "Prayer is more likely to have been added than omitted, as a conventional expression of the exhortation to watch, especially in the light of 14:38 (cf. with ἀγρυπνέω, Lk 21:36; Eph 6:18), but is less appropriate here, especially as it produces an awkward series of three unconnected imperatives."

πότε interrog adv. when?  
καιρος, ου m time, appointed time

The disciples' ignorance of the date of the Parousia is not an excuse for being unprepared, but a reason (γαρ) for increasing vigilance." Cranfield.

### Verse 34

ὡς ἀνθρωπος ἀπόδημος ἀφείς τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ καὶ δοὺς τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐξουσίαν, ἐκάστῳ τὸ ἔργον αὐτοῦ, καὶ τῷ θυρωρῷ ἐνετείλατο ἵνα γρηγορή.

ἀποδημος, ον away from home, on a journey  
ἀφείς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ἀφημι  
leave  
οἰκία, ας f house, home, household  
δοὺς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s διδωμι  
δουλος, ου m slave, servant  
ἐξουσία, ας f authority, right, power  
ἐκαστος, η, ον each, every  
θυρωρος, ου m & f door keeper  
ἐνετείλατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s  
ἐντελλομαι command, order  
γρηγορεω be or keep awake, be alert

"The motif of the absentee householder is familiar in the gospel tradition, not only in Matthew's parousia parables (24:45-51; 25:14-30) and Luke's related parables of the watching slaves (12:35-38; cf. 12:42-48) and the pounds (Lk 19:11-27), but also already in Mark with a different setting in the parable of the tenants of the vineyard (12:1-12)." France.

### Verse 35

γρηγορεῖτε οὖν, οὐκ οἴδατε γὰρ πότε ὁ κύριος τῆς οἰκίας ἔρχεται, ἢ ὄψε ἢ μεσονύκτιον ἢ ἀλεκτοροφωνίας ἢ πρωῖ,

ὄψε adv. late in the day, evening  
μεσονυκτιον, ου n midnight  
ἀλεκτοροφωνια, ας f before dawn (lit  
cockcrow, the watch from midnight to 3  
a.m.)  
πρωῖ adv early morning, in the early  
morning, morning

"The four watches correspond with Roman usage." Cranfield.

### Verse 36

μὴ ἐλθὼν ἐξαίφνης εὕρη ὑμᾶς καθεύδοντας·  
ἐξαίφνης suddenly, unexpectedly  
εὕρη Verb, aor act subj, 3 s εὕρισκω  
καθευδω sleep

"The Christian disciple, it seems, is never off duty." France.

### Verse 37

ὁ δὲ ὑμῖν λέγω πᾶσιν λέγω· γρηγορεῖτε.

"... sums up vv.33-6 and also the whole discourse from v.5 onwards. The command to watch is addressed not only to the four, but also to the rest of the Twelve, to Mark's readers in the Church of Rome, and to the whole Church throughout the Last Times. The meaning of this watching for the returning Lord, which may be said to be the whole duty of Christians, is drawn out by the three parables of Mt 25. To watch for him is to make sure that our faith is no counterfeit which at the last crisis will vanish, but that true faith which will enable us to take our place beside him. It is to use the time that remains before his coming in the work of winning others for him. It is to recognise him gratefully in his intermediate comings in the persons of the least of his brethren." Cranfield.