

GROWING IN GRACE LETTERS! – Calling saints in Christ, (in our homes and with one another in Church), to walk in the Steps of Jesus! (1 Peter 2:15-25) Edited by James Bell, a servant of Jesus Christ!

8 12 25 V1n14 **JESUS IS COMING BACK!**

The LAST DAYS! (Acts 2:16-17; 2 Timothy 3:1; 1 Peter 1:20; 2 Peter 3:1-3; 1John 2:18-19) *We will live all of our earthly lives in the last days!* The New Testament reveals that the **LAST DAYS** are from when Christ went back to heaven, lasting until **HE RETURNS!** What Jesus reveals about the last days is vital for living the Christian life IN THESE LAST DAYS!

DOES the New Testament reveal what we can expect life to be like on planet earth until Jesus comes back? YES! **Does** the New Testament give warnings to heed, attitudes to embrace, and specific work for saints to do until Jesus comes back? YES!

One of several chapters in the Bible that sets forth clear truth on these matters is **Mark 13!** **NOTE: Let us read, receive and APPLY what JESUS reveals! MOREOVER, let us receive what is stated in Mark 13, without trying to 'fit' any of it into any prophecy system or position. [Mark 13:1-27, KJV]**

I. Mark 13:1-4— "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! ²And 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. ³And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him

privately, ⁴Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?"

NOTE: The disciples directed the attention of Jesus to Herod's Temple. Doubtless they were stunned as Jesus foretold the Temple's utter destruction! (Matt. 24:1-3, Luke 21:5-7) Moreover, what Jesus predicted in about 30 A.D. and Mark recorded in about 65 A.D. ... took place in 70 A.D. **What happened?** The Jews rebelled against Rome and the Roman Emperor Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple; and killed about 1,000,000 Jews!

However, as Jesus continues to teach it is clear that there is no way that all of the prophecies which Jesus sets forth in Mark 13 were fulfilled in 70 A.D. Further note: Keep in mind, that Jesus was teaching/equipping those who were called by God to be the 'foundation' builders for His "ONE NEW MAN" ... HIS HOLY TEMPLE, COMPRISED OF REDEEMED JEWS and GENTILES, **Ephesians. 2:13-22.**

II. Mark 13:5-13— "And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you: ⁶For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. ⁷And 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. ⁸For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers [many different] places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows. ⁹But 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. ¹⁰And the gospel must first be published among all nations. ¹¹But 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.

¹²Now 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. ¹³And 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 began to unveil - not only events that would take place in 70AD - but JESUS CLEARLY unveiled that which His disciples could expect to happen in the world, from their days — until Jesus comes back, at the last of the Last Days!]

These situations and events are not constant. They are often radically different in various parts of the world on the same day! Nevertheless, they are an ongoing part of life in our fallen world, until Jesus returns. AND, as time goes by, there is a GROWING INCREASE and intensity in these realities. (Matt. 10:17-22, 24:4-14, Luke 21:8-19)]

THE FOLLOWING REALITIES, (Mark 13:5-13), HAVE BEEN happening since the New Testament era. They are happening now; and they are coming upon the earth, ultimately with a vengeance:

[1] False Christs – Rev. 6:2, Matt. 24:5 [2] War – Rev. 6:3-4, Matt. 24:6-7 [3] Famine – Rev. 6:5-6, Matt. 24:7 [4] Pestilence- Rev. 6:7-8, Matt. 24:7 [5] Persecution, martyrdom, tribulation – Rev. 6:9-1; Matt. 24:9, 28. [Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, and the Revelation set forth the same sequence.]

NOTE: UNTIL JESUS RETURNS... a strong word of Jesus to His redeemed is: *"Take HEED lest any man deceive you ... !"* **AND WARS — for man knows not the way of peace!**

MOREOVER, in Mark 13:9-13 — Disciples of Jesus are exhorted TO BE ON GUARD, FOR many have been, are, and WILL BE PERSECUTED

FOR CHRIST'S SAKE: **1.** Throughout the centuries, Christ's disciples have been, are, and will be physically and/or psychologically tortured (v. 9). **2.** Nevertheless, the Gospel will be proclaimed to all nations, (v. 10; Matt. 24:14). **3.** The Holy Spirit has been, still is, and will be the 'Divine Speech Writer' for saints, (v. 11). **4.** In hatred of Christ and/or to save their own skin, even family members have, still do, and will betray saints, (v. 12)! **5.** God's elect have been, are, and will be hated by all (v. 13a). **6.** He that endures to the end, will be saved. (v. 13b) **[IMPORTANT NOTE: Saints do not endure in order to be saved; they endure because they are saved! The Holy Spirit indwells, empowers, and preserves every genuine Christian!]** **7.** Moreover, JESUS did not promise 'tribulation escape' for His disciples; nor did the Apostles.

III. Mark 13:14-23— "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: ¹⁵And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take anything out of his house: ¹⁶And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment. ¹⁷But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! ¹⁸And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter. ¹⁹For 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. ²⁰And 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. ²¹And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; believe him not: ²²For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. ²³But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things."

[IN THESE VERSES, different, distinct events are unveiled; Also, in Matt. 24:15-25, Luke 21:20-24] **[1] Around 175-164BC**, a man named Antiochus Euphronius erected a pagan altar in the House of God. Jesus prophesied that just as the Holy Place was desecrated then... it would happen again, which is what happened in 70AD. **Moreover, the New Testament gives implication that there is coming a day when the ultimate anti-Christ** will once again desecrate all that is holy!

Furthermore, the evil forces of man will be so out of control that were it not for God's intervention for the sake of His chosen Elect, all life would be destroyed from the earth, Matt. 24:22.

BEWARE: (Mark 13:22-23; Rev. 13:11ff; 16:14ff) The harlot churches dazzle the physical senses with sights and sounds and signs and wonders. **The ELECT**, the true Bride of Christ, relies exclusively upon the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. The Elect understand that if folk won't believe the pure Word of God, they will not savingly believe even if one returned from the dead! (Luke 16:27-31)

IV. Mark 13:24-27—“But in those days, **after** that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, ²⁵ And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. ²⁶ And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷ And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.”

NOTICE THE SEQUENCE, (Matt. 24:29-31; Luke 21:25-28)

1. Apocalyptic disturbances in the heavens. **2.** Arrival of the Son of man as the deliverer. **3.** Assembling of the scattered elect. (REMEMBER: Jesus is teaching His disciples, (the founding members of the New Testament Church), what to expect in the days of His Second Coming.

4. At no time in Mark 13, does JESUS divide His return into two stages divided by 3 or 7 years. His second coming is consistently set forth as ONE EVENT, at one and the same time— with and for His Elect!

THE ELECT: In addition to 'elect' references in Mark 13, Matthew 24, and Luke 18:7; we find additional VERSES, as to the New Testament understanding of the ELECT: Romans 8:33; Col. 3:12; 1 Tim. 5:21; 2 Tim. 2:10; Titus 1:1; 1 Peter 1:2; 2:6.

SO, IT IS BY GRACE, whether it be Adam and Eve, (Genesis 3:15); Noah; or Abraham, (Gal. 3:13-29); or any other Old Testament saint; or any New Testament era soul whose sins are COVERED by the precious blood of Jesus — that they, that we are CHOSEN OF GOD... elect out of every nation... and now we are no longer known as Jews or heathens (Gentiles)! **AND as His Elect, His redeemed— we will ALL, FOR ALL ETERNITY be the Bride, the LAMB'S WIFE — Revelation 21-22.**

ADDITIONAL NOTE:

Every child of God experiences tribulation during this life. (John 16:33) HOWEVER, Mark 13:19-27 speaks of a definite period of dire distress and short duration occurring immediately prior to Christ's return— called 'THE GREAT TRIBULATION!'

MANY are bold to SAY: 'Christian, don't worry — we will be raptured before that terrible Great Tribulation!' **LET'S ASSUME that the teaching of the Pre-tribulation Rapture is correct! FINE!**

HOWEVER, [1] REGARDLESS of the timing of and 'stages' of the return of Christ— You and I are ONLY one heartbeat away from eternity! [2] **DON'T FORGET: JESUS WILL SAVE MANY OF HIS ELECT**, during the 'Great Tribulation' period... and for all eternity, none of them HAVE ANY

COMPLAINTS! (Revelation 7) [3] **Regardless** of the correct timing/sequences of events, as to our LORD'S RETURN— **as to suffering and experiencing tribulation FOR CHRIST'S NAME'S SAKE: THE CLEAR WORD OF JESUS IS,**

**"FEAR NONE OF THOSE THINGS WHICH YOU WILL SUFFER, Rev. 2:10!
... YOU SHALL HAVE TRIBULATION, 2 Timothy 3:12! ... BE THOU
FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH! (Rev. 2:10)**

REMEMBER, ... AS TO the 'so called' Tribulation Saints: 1. THEY WILL NOT suffer the wrath of God any more than Noah did. Noah was affected by it but God's wrath did not touch him. Likewise, it will be in the last of the last days! 2. **However,** MAN'S PERSECUTION will touch God's redeemed— **always has** ... since Cain killed Able! **Always will** ... Many have been, are, and will be martyred!

3. **"BUT ... DOESN'T JESUS LOVE US TOO MUCH TO LET US GO THROUGH SUCH?"** The Holy Spirit moved the pen of the PERSECUTED TRIBULATION-EXPERIENCING APOSTLE JOHN, (Rev. 1:9) writing to persecuted TRIBULATION-EXPERIENCING saints (Rev. 1:9; 2:9; 2:10; 7:9-17) — "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood..." (Revelation 1:5) **JESUS PROVED HIS LOVE FOR HIS SAINTS AT CALVARY!!**

BOTTOM LINE:

GREAT TRIBULATION OR NOT — "O JESUS ... IN LIGHT OF WHO YOU ARE ... grant me grace to be FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH, (Revelation 2:10)!

REMEMBER: Phillipians 1:29 —

For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake!"

QUESTION: Is Jesus worth dying for?

Many do not think so! They choose the world today, they are 'marked' by the world today;

And IF they are present in the time of the ultimate fulfillment of Revelation 13— they will choose 'SUBMISSION to the world system' over loyalty to Christ! They will betray saints. I suspect that they will be lauded for their wise choice; while foolish looking true followers of Jesus are slaughtered. **SUCH IS 2000 YEARS OF CHURCH HISTORY!** EVEN TODAY, GENUINE CHRISTIANS LOOK LIKE FOOLS TO THE WORLD! ... AND EVEN TODAY, many in the pulpits and pews are ALREADY in bed with the world!

However, Revelation, chapter 14 reveals the astonishing reality that the once persecuted and/OR martyred saints, WILL forever be REJOICING IN HEAVEN, while the worldly wise, (who chose physical food over Christ), will forever be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the LAMB! (Rev. 14:9-19)

O DEAR SAINTS, until JESUS COMES BACK— LET US Focus on Feeding, Cultivating, and Guarding LOVE FOR JESUS CHRIST! Such love for Jesus WILL OVERFLOW WITH love for and ministry to the saints; and OVERFLOW with gospel sharing to the lost; and in BEING FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH!

1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. **15)** For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. **16)** For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the

trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first, **17)** Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus, we shall always be with the Lord. **18)** Therefore comfort one another with these words.

[Comment: SO, just letting the text say what it says — WHEN Jesus leaves heaven and returns toward earth, (with all the above saints/the elect/the redeemed) — THEN, the saints, (who at that time are living on earth) shall be CAUGHT UP... and join with... (ALL THE OTHERS... MEETING THEM and MEETING JESUS in the air) ... IN THE CLOUDS... to henceforth FOREVER be with the LORD!

These verses DO NOT SAY that Jesus returned to heaven, to stay there for 3 or 7 years. **The simple truth of these verses is this:**

Jesus is returning TO EARTH; and ON HIS WAY TO EARTH — He is coming BOTH with and FOR His Elect. **Nothing EVEN hints that Jesus turns around and goes back to heaven.** He is obviously on His way to earth ... and as He is coming, He comes for and with all the redeemed.

Mark 13:24-27— 24) “But in those days, **after that tribulation**, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; **25)** the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in heavens will be shaken. **26)** Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. **27)** And then He will send His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven.”

**REGARDLESS ... LET US ONE AND ALL ‘HANG OUR HATS’ HERE:
O DEAR SAINTS, until JESUS COMES BACK—**

LET US Focus on Feeding, Cultivating, and Guarding LOVE FOR JESUS CHRIST! Such love for Jesus WILL OVERFLOW in love for and ministry to

the saints; and OVERFLOW with gospel sharing to the lost; and in BEING FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH!

Grace and Peace to all Saints in Christ!

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ANNOUNCEMENTS:

EVERY SATURDAY * 8:00am**, — Men's Bible Study! (*Doors open by 7:30am... coffee, juice, donuts, and Hardee's Biscuits!*)
[8/16/25 – Ephesians 6:17-18]

NEXT Ladies Bible Study, AUGUST 19, 2025 @ 11:00am
(LADIES Bible Study, from JOB!) (NO CHILD CARE.)

*****EVERY TUESDAY: LADIES PRAYER MEETING FROM 10:00 to 10:30am, come in back door, under drive-thru awning, go IN THE IMMEDIATE FIRST ROOM ON THE RIGHT!**

***** Tuesday Evening, Southside Young Adult Group; Bible Study, (EXODUS), @ 7:15pm, at Jaden & Rhi's home**

WEDNESDAYS: 6:30pm — (Come in Back double door, under Drive Thru Awning) ** Adult MEN'S Prayer Service

**** Young FAMILIES STUDY/Prayer Service**

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***** LOVE OFFERINGS UNTO THE LORD (by MAIL or by ONLINE GIVING) For Church Ministry and/or MISSIONS:**

SUCH funds, (if checks), make out to Southside Baptist) — MAIL TO: Southside Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1594, Gallatin, TN 37066 / OR... *TO GIVE* via ONLINE GIVING:

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