

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Week 191 – Mark 12:35-13:23

Day 951: Mark 12:35-40**Verses 35-37a**

Cf. Mt 22:41-46; Lk 20:41-44.

Verse 35

Καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἔλεγεν διδάσκων ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, Πῶς λέγουσιν οἱ γραμματεῖς ὅτι ὁ Χριστὸς υἱὸς Δαυὶδ ἔστιν;

ἀποκριθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s
ἀποκρινομαι answer, reply, say
διδασκω teach
ἱερον, ου n temple, temple precincts

"As a passover visitor, with no place of his own in Jerusalem, he has made the public arena of the court of the Gentiles his base of operations since his arrival, and is by now presumably becoming a familiar figure there."

πως how(?)

Cranfield thinks this question was probably a response to a trick or trap question put to him. France comments, "In the narrative context ... it is hardly likely that those who were aware of Jesus' ostentatiously royal ride to the city, with the shouts of Hosanna and the invocation of the coming kingdom of David, could have seen this question as having no relevance to Jesus' own identity and status, even though its 'academic' presentation prevents it from being used against him as a messianic claim."

Verse 36

αὐτὸς Δαυὶδ εἶπεν ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ, Εἶπεν κύριος τῷ κυρίῳ μου, Κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν σου.

Ὁν ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι τῷ Ἁγίῳ cf. Acts 1:16; 28:25; 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21. Jesus asserts both the Davidic and Divine authorship of Ps 110. France, however, comments, "no one at that time would have doubted that a psalm which begins with the formula *David mizmor* was written by David... I would not be so confident as thirty years ago [R T France, *Jesus and the OT*] ... in the ... contention that the interpretation which was agreed in the first century is necessarily a better guide to the historical origin and exegetical sense of the psalm than the views of most modern scholarship. It may be so, but the argument was not mounted for the sake of twentieth-century critics and does not have to pass their scrutiny to be effective. As a rhetorical question launched by Jesus in the Temple it achieves its purpose."

κάθου Verb, pres midd/pass dep imperat, 2 s
καθημαι sit, sit down
δεξιός, α, ον right, δεξια right hand
ἕως ἂν until
θῶ Verb, aor act subj, 1 s τιθημι place, set, appoint
ἐχθρός, α, ον enemy, one hated
ὑποκατω prep with gen under, beneath
πους, ποδος m foot

"The quotation follows the LXX of Ps 110 (LXX 109):1 closely, though ὑποκατω is substituted for ὑποποδιον and the article is omitted before κύριος (the majority of MSS do however have a text assimilated to the LXX)." Cranfield. France comments, "It is perhaps more likely that Mark followed the LXX at this point ... (as in a wide range of MSS and versions), and the text was later assimilated to Matthew. But the authorities for ὑποκάτω, though not numerous, are also impressive."

Verse 37

αὐτὸς Δαυὶδ λέγει αὐτὸν κύριον, καὶ πόθεν αὐτοῦ ἔστιν υἱός; καὶ [ὁ] πολὺς ὄχλος ἤκουεν αὐτοῦ ἡδέως.

λεγειν with double accusative used to refer to calling *someone something* (cf. 10:18).

ποθεν from where(?), how(?), why(?)

"While in itself this conclusion is christologically unsatisfying, it leaves the way open for a more adequate christology to be put in place of 'Son of David'. Mark (unlike Matthew) does not guide the reader as to what that christology should be, but probably by the time his gospel was written he hardly needed to. It is most likely, both in the light of the christological emphasis of the rest of the gospel, and perhaps also because the discarded title has introduced the idea of sonship, that readers would think of the title 'Son of God'." France.

πολυς, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου
much, many

ὄχλος, ου m crowd, multitude

ὁ πολυς ὄχλος "Possibly 'the great crowd', but more probably 'the mass of people' (so Moffatt) or 'the common people' (AV, RV)." Cranfield.

ἠδεως gladly

Cranfield thinks that the latter half of the verse is better taken with what follows rather than what precedes – "a general statement introducing vv.38-40."

Verses 38-40

Cf Lk 20:45-47, also Mt 23 and Lk 11:37-12:1.

Verse 38

Καὶ ἐν τῇ διδασκίᾳ αὐτοῦ ἔλεγεν, Βλέπετε ἀπὸ τῶν γραμματέων τῶν θελόντων ἐν στολαῖς περιπατεῖν καὶ ἀσπασμοὺς ἐν ταῖς ἀγοραῖς

διδασκη, ης f teaching, what is taught
βλεπω see, beware of

Cf. 8:15.

θελω wish, will

Used here in the sense 'like,' or perhaps rather stronger, 'take pleasure in.'

στολη, ης f robe, long robe

A particular kind of cloak that was "the insignia of the learned" Cranfield – their academic gowns.

περιπατεω walk, walk about, live
ἀσπασμος, ου m greeting

Deferential salutations.

ἀγορα, ας f market place

Verse 39

καὶ πρωτοκαθεδρίας ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς καὶ πρωτοκλισίας ἐν τοῖς δεῖπνοις·

πρωτοκαθεδρια, ας f place of honour

"The bench in front of the ark (containing the scriptures) and facing the people." Cranfield.

συναγωγη, ης f synagogue,
congregation, assembly

πρωτοκλισια, ας f place of honour
δειπνον, ου n feast, banquet

Cf. Lk 14:7-10, also Jn 13:1-17 "for a graphic repudiation of a similar preoccupation with status and reputation among Jesus' own disciples." France.

Verse 40

οἱ κατεσθίοντες τὰς οἰκίας τῶν χηρῶν καὶ προφάσει μακρὰ προσευχόμενοι, οὗτοι λήμψονται περισσότερον κρίμα.

κατεσθιω and κατεσθω eat up, devour,
prey upon

οικια, ας f house, home, household

χηρα, ας f widow

"The vulnerability of widows is a recurrent theme in biblical literature, so that to defraud them is particularly despicable. κατεσθίοντες τὰς οἰκίας is a vivid phrase for taking material advantage of them (like our 'eat someone out of house and home'); cf. καταραγων σου τὸν βίον (Lk 15:30). How the scribes were alleged to do this can only be a matter of speculation. It could be through excessive legal fees, through mismanaging to their own advantage an estate of which they were made trustees, through taking their houses as pledges for unpayable debts, through promoting the temple cult which 'eats up' the resources of the pious poor, or more generally through exploiting their hospitality and trust." France.

προφασις, εως f false motive, pretence
μακρος, α, ον long

προσευχομαι pray

Cf. Mt 6:5.

λήμψονται Verb, fut mid dep indic, 3 pl
λαμβάνω

περισσοτερος, α, ον adj more, greater
κριμα, τος n judgement, condemnation,
punishment

Cf. Jas 3:1. "It is better in context to take the comparative not of varying levels of condemnation or punishment, but rather of the more obvious guilt of these people than of other less blatant sinners." France.

Day 952: Mark 12:41-13:2**Verse 41**

Καὶ καθίσας κατέναντι τοῦ γαζοφυλακίου ἔθεωρει πῶς ὁ ὄχλος βάλλει χαλκὸν εἰς τὸ γαζοφυλάκιον· καὶ πολλοὶ πλούσιοι ἔβαλλον πολλά·

καθίζω sit down, sit

κατέναντι prep with gen opposite, before

"There is no difference in meaning between κατέναντι and ἀπέναντι, and both are adequately represented in the NT. Since Mark uses the former in 11:2 and 13:3, it is more likely his stylistic preference. The inclusion of the name of Jesus in order to clarify the subject (which is clear from the context but not specified in this pericope) is probably a later addition." France.

γαζοφυλακίον, ου n Temple treasury, offertory box

"What exactly is meant is not certain: possibly the thirteen trumpet-shaped receptacles which, according to Mishnah, were placed against the wall of the Court of the Women, or the Treasury itself, or perhaps we should think of a receptacle for gifts placed in the Treasury but having an opening on the outside of the Treasury. The first or the last of these suggestions would seem to fit the narrative better than the second." Cranfield.

θεωρεῶ see, watch, observe, notice

βάλλω throw, place

χαλκός, ου m copper, copper coin

Here meaning any form of money.

πολύς, πολλή, πολυ gen πολλοῦ, ης, ου much, many

πλούσιος, α, ον rich, well-to-do

Verse 42

καὶ ἔλθοῦσα μία χήρα πτωχή ἔβαλεν λεπτὰ δύο, ὃ ἔστιν κοδράντης.

ἐλθοῦσα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s ἐρχομαι

εἷς, μία, ἓν gen ἑνός, μίας, ἑνός one, a χήρα, ας f widow

πτωχός, η, ον poor, pitiful

λεπτόν, ου n lepton (copper coin worth 1/2 quadrans or 1/128 denarius)

δύο gen & acc δύο dat δυσὶν two

κοδράντης, ου m quadrans (Roman copper coin worth 1/4 assarion)

"Mark's use of κοδράντης supports the view that he was writing in the west, as the *quadrans* was not in circulation in the east." Cranfield. France, however, comments, "The use of the Latin term is not necessarily due to a Roman origin for the gospel, since 'Roman designations of coins were already in the first century AD more common in Palestine than the Greek and Hebrew designations still also in use' [Schurer]; Matthew also uses the term (5:26)."

Verse 43

καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ἡ χήρα αὕτη ἢ πτωχή πλείον πάντων ἔβαλεν τῶν βαλλόντων εἰς τὸ γαζοφυλάκιον·

προσκαλεσάμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m nom s προσκαλεομαι call to oneself πλείων, πλείον οἱ πλεον more

"Just possibly means 'more than any of those who ...'; more probably 'more than all of those put together who ...'." Cranfield.

Verse 44

πάντες γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ περισσεύοντος αὐτοῖς ἔβαλον, αὕτη δὲ ἐκ τῆς ὑστερήσεως αὐτῆς πάντα ὅσα εἶχεν ἔβαλεν, ὅλον τὸν βίον αὐτῆς.

πάντες Adjective, m nom pl πας περισσεύω be left over, be more than enough, have plenty

Participle here meaning 'their excess.'

ὑστερησις, εως f need, want, poverty

"Used also in Phil 4:11 in the sense of 'want', 'need'." Cranfield.

ὅσος, η, ον as much as; pl. all

εἶχεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s ἔχω

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, entire

βίος, ου m life, living, possessions

Here means 'livelihood'.

"It is natural to assume that large gifts are of more value to God than small ones (cf. 10:26!) – after all more can be done with them. But Jesus here calls in question this complacent assumption of conventional piety (cf. the somewhat similar significance of 13:1-2). The gifts of the rich, though large, were easy gifts: the widow's gift, though tiny, meant a real surrender of herself to God and trust in him, and therefore is honouring God *as God*, as one to whom we belong wholly and who is able to care for us." Cranfield.

Mark "turns upside down the normal human valuation of people. What matters in God's sight is not what a person has (and therefore is able to give without pain) but the devotion which causes her to give even at great personal cost, even though the amount of the gift may be completely negligible in comparison with the enormous wealth of the temple. The gift does not matter to God so much as the giver. And, it is implied, this should also be the basis of his people's valuation. By such a criterion the first will often be last, and the last first." France.

Verses 1-37

Cf. Mt 24:1-36; Lk 21:5-36.

Verses 1-2

Of 13:1-2 France writes, "Here is another misleading chapter division. While 13:1-2 is the setting for the question (13:3-4) which in turn provokes the discourse of 13:5-37, it functions also, and no less importantly, as the culmination of the lengthy section of Jesus' confrontation with the authorities in the temple which began in 11:27, following from his provocative acts in 11:11-25. Without 13:1-2 the sequence of dialogues in chapters 11-12 is left without a conclusion... It is thus appropriate that the whole episode ends not with the authorities taking action against Jesus (that will come later), but with Jesus, now the unquestioned winner in the contest, himself severing the connection by leaving the temple and pronouncing its downfall.

"The unnamed disciple's superficial admiration for the magnificence of the buildings, contrasted with Jesus' declaration of their ultimate bankruptcy, furnishes yet another example of the reorientation to the new perspective of the kingdom of God to which the disciples are committed but which they remain slow to grasp, and which Mark expects his readers to embrace. The old structure of authority in which God's relationship with his people has hitherto been focused, is due for replacement. The language of a ναὸς ἀχειροποίητος to replace the existing man-made structure (14:58), while it is not explicit at this point, is clearly implied. As Mt 12:6 has it, 'Something greater than the temple is here'. The discourse which will follow in vv. 5-37 will fill out the nature of that 'something greater'."

France continues by stating that Jesus' prediction of the destruction of the temple "is the only basis recorded by Mark for the charge which was to be brought against Jesus at his trial (14:57-58) and would remain in the minds of those who mocked him on the cross (15:29-30)."

Verse 1

Καὶ ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ λέγει αὐτῷ εἰς τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ, Διδάσκαλε, ἴδε ποταποὶ λίθοι καὶ ποταπαὶ οἰκοδομαί.

ἐκπορευομαι go or come out
ἱερον, ου n temple, temple precincts

"While ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ is not in itself a highly coloured phrase, its wider context suggests that Mark intended it to be noticed. Jesus has been in the temple continuously since 11:27; now he leaves it, and will not return again in Mark's narrative. The only other thing we hear of the temple (apart from the charge at Jesus' trial and on the cross) will be the tearing of its curtain as Jesus dies. Moreover, he goes from the temple onto the Mount of Olives (v. 3), presumably leaving by the east gate. It does not take a very profound knowledge of the book of Ezekiel to recall the dramatic description of God's abandonment of his temple as the chariot throne of God's glory rises up from inside the temple, pauses at the east gate, and comes to rest on 'the mountain east of the city' (Ezk 10:18-19; 11:22-23). So now again the divine presence is withdrawn from the temple, and it is left to its destruction." France.

διδασκαλος, ου m teacher
ποταπος, η, ου what kind, what
wonderful

λιθος, ου m stone
οικοδομη, ης f building, structure

"The disciple's amazement is shared even by modern visitors who see the huge ashlar blocks in the remaining Herodian walls, and these were only the substructure, not the temple proper." France.

Verse 2

καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Βλέπεις ταύτας τὰς μεγάλας οἰκοδομάς; οὐ μὴ ἀφεθῆ ὧδε λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον ὃς οὐ μὴ καταλυθῆ.

βλεπω see, look
μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great
ἀφεθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s ἀφιρημι
leave

ὧδε adv here, in this place

"In the NT Greek either λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον (as in Matthew) or λίθος ἐπὶ λίθῳ (as in Luke) would be idiomatically acceptable, but the strong predominance of the former in MSS of Mark suggests that the latter is a scribal correction to Luke's more 'classical' use; the sense is not affected. ὥδε is also strongly represented, but would be a natural 'clarification' of a sense which is otherwise indicated (as in Luke) only by the context, so it may well be due to assimilation to Matthew." France.

καταλυθῆναι Verb, aor pass subj καταλυω
destroy, tear down

Jesus' prediction was fulfilled in a remarkably literal fashion: "Josephus (*War* 7:1-3) records the temple's being leveled to the ground, after previously being burned (*War* 6.249-66). Even the now-sacred Western Wall was not part of the temple but only the supporting structure for the platform on which it was built." France.

For Jesus' predictions of the destruction of the Temple, cf. 14:58; 15:29; Jn 2:19; Mt 23:38. "In so doing he was following in the steps of the prophets (cf. Jer 7:1-15; 26:1-24; Mic 3:10-12)." Cranfield.

Cranfield connects Jesus' prediction of this destruction with:

- i) The fact that with his coming the temple is superseded (cf. Mt 12:6);
- ii) It had become a stumblingblock to the Israelites;
- iii) The words of the disciples in the previous verse make it clear that it was proving a stumblingblock to them also.

Day 953: Mark 13:3-8

Verses 3-37

Of the discourse of verses 3-37, France writes "The prediction of the destruction of the temple from which it takes its cue is plain enough, but as the discourse develops its language becomes increasingly allusive, drawing on themes of OT apocalyptic and political prophecy which are not as familiar to most modern readers as they would have been to at least a proportion of Mark's original readers. As a result, widely divergent interpretations of the discourse have been proposed, and it remains the most disputed area in the study of Mark's gospel. In the account which follows I intend to keep clearly in view the context in which it is set, and the questions to which therefore it may be expected to provide answers. The disciples' question with which it begins seeks elucidation of Jesus' pronouncement about the destruction of the temple, and it is this question which must set the agenda for our interpretation of the discourse which follows. It is about 'the end of the old order'."

France resists the category of 'apocalypse' for this passage and comments that the "focus is as much on the pastoral need to prepare disciples for difficult times ahead as it is to explain the future course of events. A discourse which is constructed primarily around second-person imperatives addressed to the disciples does not look like what is normally understood by 'apocalyptic'."

France continues, "The view that the whole discourse is to be understood as relating to the temple's destruction and contains no parousia reference at all has the merit of simplicity and of respecting the narrative context in which it is set, but remains a minority view. It is now perhaps best exemplified by the work of N. T. Wright... Wright's interpretation agrees for the majority of the discourse with the view adopted in this commentary, but differs from it primarily in not recognising a clear break and change of subject matter in v. 32. For the crucial verses 24-27 this view corresponds with my own conviction that the apocalyptic language of these verses, drawn almost entirely from identifiable OT texts, relates, as did those texts in their own contexts, not to the collapse of the physical universe and the end of the world but to imminent and far-reaching political change, in the context of the predicted destruction of Jerusalem. On this view the 'coming of the Son of Man' is language not about an eschatological descent of Jesus to the earth but, as in the vision of Daniel from which it derives, about the vindication and enthronement of the Son of Man at the right hand of God, to receive and exercise supreme authority. In other words, what is being described in vv. 24-27, as in the OT passages from which their language is drawn, is a change of government: the temple and all that it stood for is out, and the Son of Man is in. The same theme will be picked up, in similar language, in the climactic declaration of Jesus' sovereignty in 14:61-62. I shall defend this exegesis below. For now it is necessary only to note that its effect is to remove at a stroke the single most embarrassing feature of chapter 13 for traditional Christian interpretation, the unequivocal and very emphatic statement in v. 30 that the events just described will take place before this generation has passed. They did!

"Why then am I not content, with Wright, to remove the parousia altogether from Mark 13? First of all, there is a marked change of subject in v. 32. It is not merely that *περὶ δέ* frequently has this function elsewhere in the NT, but also that whereas in the discourse up to that point Jesus has spoken of 'days' which are coming and of events summarised as *ταῦτα (πάντα)*, v. 32. speaks instead of *ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνη*. No such (singular) day has been mentioned so far, and there is a marked contrast between the certainty of the temporal prediction with regard to the date at which *ταῦτα πάντα* will occur (v. 30) and the ignorance of even the Son concerning the 'day and hour' now envisaged."

France provides an analysis of indicators of time and sequence in Mark 13 to add support to his conclusion that v. 32 marks a shift in focus from the imminent to the more distant.

Verse 3

Καὶ καθημένον αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν Ἐλαιῶν κατέναντι τοῦ ἱεροῦ ἐπηρώτα αὐτὸν κατ' ἰδίαν Πέτρος καὶ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωάννης καὶ Ἄνδρέας,

καθημαι sit, sit down
 ὄρος, οὐς n mountain, hill
 ἔλαια, ας f olive tree
 κατέναντι prep with gen opposite, before

"κατέναντι need be no more than a note of location, giving a viewpoint over the temple just as in 12:41 Jesus had a viewpoint over the treasury; as such it is a narrative prompt to the reader to recognise that the following discourse relates to the fate of the temple, which dominates the view as Jesus speaks. But following on his abandonment of the temple and prediction of its destruction κατέναντι τοῦ ἱεροῦ may also be intended to underline that Jesus is 'over against' the temple in a more profound sense as well (ἐναντίος means 'opponent')." France.

ἐπηρώτα Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s
 ἐπερωτω ask, question
 ἰδιος, α, ον one's own; κατ' ἰδιαν privately

Verse 4

Εἰπὸν ἡμῖν πότε ταῦτα ἔσται, καὶ τί τὸ σημεῖον ὅταν μέλλῃ ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι πάντα.

πότε interrog adv. when?
 ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἶμι
 σημεῖον, οὐ n sign
 ὅταν when
 μελλω (before an infin) be going, be about, be destined
 συντελεῖσθαι Verb, pres pass infin
 συντελεω end, complete, bring about

"It would be natural for the disciples to assume that the destruction of the Temple would be part of a complex of events leading to the End... The disciples, excited and disturbed by Jesus' prediction, want to know when the Temple is to be destroyed and what is the sign by which they may know that the final consummation is approaching. Their question is one that pervades all biblical and extra-biblical apocalyptic. They want to be told what will be the 'sign' – that is, they want an infallible means of recognising the approach of the End; they want in fact to be relieved from having to 'watch'. But instead of a single sign Jesus gives them a baffling multiplicity of signs. The purpose of his reply is not to impart esoteric information but to strengthen and sustain faith." Cranfield.

France comments, "The persistent view that the second half of the question has a more 'eschatological' reference than the first half, while it is primarily due to a prior judgment about the subject matter of the discourse that follows, is also sometimes supported by Mark's use of the verb *συντελεῖσθαι*, which recalls Matthew's extension of the question to cover also the *συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος*." France thinks the question is entirely about the destruction of the temple, 'when will it happen, and how will we know that it is due?'

Verses 5-37

Cranfield divides this discourse into three parts:

- i) vv 5-23 *The End is not yet*, in which Jesus outlines characteristics which will mark the whole period between the Incarnation and Parousia – which are also signs which point to the End;
 - ii) vv 24-27 *Cosmic signs* immediately heralding the Parousia;
 - iii) vv. 28-37. *Watch therefore!*
- Compare France's comments before verse 3.

Verses 5-8

"The discourse begins on a note which is one of its most persistent characteristics, the warning against premature expectation. It begins with an imperative, *βλέπετε*, which will be repeated in vv. 9, 23, and 33. The disciples, and those who following them will read these words, are called to discernment and warned against the sort of superficial impressions of 'fulfilment' which have been the bane of students of apocalyptic and eschatological literature ever since." France.

Verse 5

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἤρξατο λέγειν αὐτοῖς,
Βλέπετε μὴ τις ὑμᾶς πλανήσῃ·

ἄρχω rule, govern; midd begin

"As in 4:1 ἤρξατο λέγειν alerts the reader to expect a substantial discourse." France.

βλεπω see, look, be able to see, beware
of

πλαναω lead astray, mislead, deceive

"The first of the signs of the End is the presence of deceivers." Cranfield.

Verse 6

πολλοὶ ἐλεύσονται ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου
λέγοντες ὅτι Ἐγὼ εἰμι, καὶ πολλοὺς
πλανήσουσιν.

ἐλεύσονται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 pl
ἐρχομαι

ὄνομα, τος n name

Either 'claiming to be sent by me' or 'arrogating to themselves the title of Messiah which by right belongs to me'. On the first interpretation, the *ἐγὼ εἰμι* would mean that they would claim that Jesus had come. France thinks that the warning is directed against the kind of 'messianic' leaders who emerged between Jesus' ministry and the Jewish war.

Verse 7

ὅταν δὲ ἀκούσητε πολέμους καὶ ἀκοὰς
πολέμων, μὴ θροεῖσθε· δεῖ γενέσθαι, ἀλλ'
οὐπω τὸ τέλος.

ὅταν when, whenever, as often as
πολεμος, ου m war, battle, conflict

The second characteristic of the 'last times' is conflict and suffering.

ἄκοη, ης f report, news

θροεῖσθε Verb, pres pass imperat, 2 pl
θροεομαι be alarmed or startled

Cf. Jer. 51:46.

δει impersonal verb it is necessary, must

"Wars are sure to happen, and their occurrence is *not* to be seen as having any eschatological significance." France.

οὐπω not yet

τελος, ους n end, conclusion,
termination

"Here is another word which seems to some to suggest a reference to the end of the world, but τέλος is a very general word for 'end', the completion of a process (e.g., 3:26; Mt 26:58; Lk 1:33), and the nature of that 'end' depends on the context. Here there has been no word of any 'end' other than that of the temple's destruction, for which in this context τὸ τέλος is the obvious term to use. The disciples have asked when the catastrophic event predicted by Jesus will be accomplished (συντελέω), and he replies by speaking first of when that completion (τέλος) is *not* to take place." France.

Verse 8

ἐγερθήσεται γὰρ ἔθνος ἐπ' ἔθνος καὶ βασιλεία ἐπὶ βασιλείαν, ἔσονται σεισμοὶ κατὰ τόπους, ἔσονται λιμοὶ· ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων ταῦτα.

ἐγειρω raise

ἔθνος, ους n nation, people

ἔσονται Verb, fut indic, 3 pl εἶμι

σεισμος, ου m earthquake

τοπος, ου m place; κατὰ τοπος 'from place to place', 'in various places'

λιμος, ου m & f famine, hunger

"The addition of καὶ before ἔσονται (or in some witnesses its substitution for ἔσονται) is a natural 'improvement' to the awkward asyndeton of ἔσονται λιμοί, as a second and shorter ἔσονται clause. The addition of λοιμοί in a few texts may be accounted for both by assimilation to Luke and by the similarity in sound and appearance to λιμοί, and both that addition and the more common insertion of καὶ ταραχαί [ταραχος = 'confusion', 'disturbance'] would help fill out the very meagre clause ἔσονται λιμοί. The inclusion of ταραχαί is widely attested, and is not due to assimilation to another version, and so has more claim to be original than λοιμοί; but it might also be the result of a careless scribe misreading the following ἀρξή. The text seems to have been subject to imaginative expansion." France.

"First century earthquakes might include one experienced at Jerusalem in AD 67 (Josephus, *War* 4.286-87; cf. 1.370 for an earlier earthquake in Palestine), and further afield Acts 16:26 mentions an earthquake in Philippi, while news of the partial destruction of Pompeii by an earthquake in AD 62 or of a major earthquake in Asia Minor in AD 61 would probably have reached Palestine. There was a major famine in the reign of Claudius, c. AD 46 (Acts 11:28; Josephus, *Ant* 3.320; 20.101...)." France.

ἀρχη, ης f beginning

"implies that there is plenty more to follow and that the sufferings will get worse." Cranfield.

ὠδιν, υνος f birth-pains, suffering

"The Rabbinic expression 'the birth-pangs of the Messiah' (meaning not the sufferings of the Messiah but the sufferings expected to precede his coming) was probably already current in the time of Jesus ... The origin of the expression is perhaps to be seen in such passages as Isa 26:17; 66:8; Jer 22:23; Hos 13:13; Mic 4:9f. For the use of the image in the NT, cf. Jn 16:21; 1 Thess 5:3, the first of which well illustrates the meaning here." Cranfield. France comments that "This range of usage suggests a 'live' metaphor, capable of being adapted to a wide variety of uses, not a technical term in the later rabbinic sense which would therefore carry its own ready-made eschatological application."

Day 954: Mark 13:9-13

Verse 9

βλέπετε δὲ ὑμεῖς ἑαυτοῦς· παραδωσουσιν ὑμᾶς εἰς συνέδρια καὶ εἰς συναγωγὰς δαρήσεσθε καὶ ἐπὶ ἡγεμόνων καὶ βασιλέων σταθήσεσθε ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς.

βλεπω see v.5

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

"The sufferings referred to in vv 9-13 are sufferings peculiar to disciples – persecution." Cranfield. France comments, "The warning is not so that they should try to escape persecution, but to prepare them to endure it faithfully."

παραδωσουσιν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl
παραδιδομι hand over, deliver up

"The choice of this verb, with its echoes of 9:31; 10:33, suggests a link between their treatment and that of Jesus himself." France.

συνεδριον, ου n Sanhedrin; pl local city councils

Cranfield argues that εἰς συναγωγας is better taken with δαρησεσθε than with παραδωσουσιν (the εἰς being equivalent to ἐν). Jesus is telling them that his disciples will be viewed as heretics by the Jews.

δαρήσεσθε Verb, fut pass indic, 2 pl δερω
beat, strike

ἡγεμων, ονος m governor, ruler

βασιλευς, εως m king

σταθήσεσθε Verb, fut pass indic, 2 pl

ἴστημι set, place

ἐνεκα (ἐνεκεν and εἰνεκεν) prep with gen

because of, for the sake of

μαρτυριον, ου n testimony, witness

The meaning is illustrated from the book of Acts and particularly the commission given by the risen Christ to Paul, Acts 9:15,16.

Verse 10

καὶ εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη πρῶτον δεῖ
κηρυχθῆναι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον.

ἔθνη see v.8

"Jesus' excursions into Gentile territory (5:1-20; 7:24-8:10) and his Gentile following in 3:8 have begun to prepare us for this vision, and we have seen in 7:24-8:10 a deliberate extension of the blessings of Israel's Messiah to the surrounding peoples. It is possible that the explicit inclusion of πάντα τὰ ἔθνη in the Isaiah quotation in 11:17 is a further pointer in this direction, even if that is not the main thrust in context. Later the confession of Jesus as Son of God by a Gentile officer will be foretaste of the universal church (15:39). But this verse, and by implication 14:9) is the most explicit indication in Mark's gospel of the universal scope of the good news and therefore of the Christian mission, as it will be spelled out in Matthew's final commission (28:19-20) and in the whole narrative of Luke's second volume. In v. 27, as we shall see, that vision will be further developed." France.

πρῶτον adv. first

I.e. before the End.

δει see v.7

κηρυχθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin κηρυσσω
preach, proclaim

εὐαγγέλιον, ου n good news, gospel

"It is part of God's eschatological purpose that before the End all nations shall have an opportunity to accept the gospel. The interval is the time of God's patience during which men are summoned to repentance and faith; it has for its content the Church's mission to the world. That does not mean that the world will necessarily get steadily more Christian or that the End will not come till all men are converted. It is a promise that the gospel will be preached, not that it will necessarily be believed. The disciples' witness is another characteristic of the last times." Cranfield.

France, however, comments, "The proclamation of the gospel to all nations is the precursor to the events which the disciples have asked about, and that, we have argued, is the destruction of the temple. In that case, here is another 'sign'. The temple will not be destroyed (and with it the central role of Israel in God's purposes come to an end) until the good news has already gone out beyond Israel to πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, and so the new 'temple' which replaces the physical building will not be a solely Jewish institution. We shall see this vision expressed in v. 27 in the gathering of the elect from all over the world into the newly established sovereignty of the Son of Man. The proclamation of the εὐαγγέλιον is the means by which this ingathering will be accomplished, and the scope of that proclamation must therefore be universal. Moreover, it must be carried out πρῶτον, so as to be the basis of that new beginning which follows from the end of the old order (and of the temple which symbolises it). So before the temple is destroyed, the good news must be proclaimed to all the nations." Drawing attention to Rom 15:19, 23 and also Rom 16:26; Col 1:6, 23, France continues, "From that point of view Mark, writing in Rome some time later, would have found no difficulty in perceiving that the good news had indeed been proclaimed to πάντα τὰ ἔθνη while the temple was still standing. There was already in existence an international people of God even if not every nation on earth had yet heard the good news (or indeed was even known to exist at that time)."

Verse 11

καὶ ὅταν ἄγωσιν ὑμᾶς παραδιδόντες, μὴ προμεριμνᾶτε τί λαλήσητε, ἀλλ' ὃ ἐὰν δοθῇ ὑμῖν ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ὥρᾳ τοῦτο λαλεῖτε, οὐ γὰρ ἐστε ὑμεῖς οἱ λαλοῦντες ἀλλὰ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον.

ὅταν when, whenever, as often as

ἄγωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl ἄγω bring

προμεριμναω worry ahead of time
λαλεω speak, talk

"The promise that words will be supplied is for hard-pressed disciples on trial, not for lazy preachers!" France.

ὅ ἐάν whatever
δοθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3s διδωμι
ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that
ώρα, ας f hour, moment
ἅγιος, α, ον holy

"In their hour of need God ... will give them the word to speak (cf. Ex 4:12; Jer 1:9)." Cranfield. France comments, "Luke enthusiastically records the fulfilment of this promise (Lk 12:11-12; 21:12-15; in the latter it is Jesus himself rather than the Spirit who will supply the words) in the narratives of Acts 4:8, 31; 5:32; 6:10; 13:9 etc."

Verse 12

καὶ παραδώσει ἀδελφὸς ἀδελφὸν εἰς θάνατον καὶ πατὴρ τέκνον, καὶ ἐπαναστήσονται τέκνα ἐπὶ γονεῖς καὶ θανατώσουσιν αὐτούς·

παραδώσει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s
παραδιδωμι
θανάτος, ου m death
τέκνον, ου n child
ἐπαναστήσονται Verb, fut midd dep indic,
3 pl ἐπανισταμαι turn against, rebel
against
γονεὺς, εως m parent
θανάτω kill, put to death

"will deliver them to death', 'bring about their death', rather than 'kill them'." Cranfield. Cf. Mt 10:35f = Lk 12:52f.; also Mic 7:6.

Verse 13

καὶ ἔσεσθε μισοῦμενοι ὑπὸ πάντων διὰ τὸ ὄνομά μου. ὁ δὲ ὑπομείνας εἰς τέλος οὗτος σωθήσεται.

ἔσεσθε Verb, fut indic, 2 pl εἶμι
μισεω hate, despise
ὄνομα, τος n name

Cf. Mt 24:9; Lk 21:17 also Mt 10:22; 5:11; Jn 15:18-20; 1 Jn 3:13.

ὑπομείνας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s
ὑπομενω endure, remain
τελος, ους n end

here means 'to the end' rather than 'to the End', cf. Jn 13:1; 1 Thess 2:16; 2 Chron 31:1. "There is no expectation that this hostility will be overcome, only that it must be endured." France.

σωθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s σωζω
save

Day 955: Mark 13:14-23

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 ἐρημωσεως 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 ἐρημωσεως ἐστηκότα ὅπου οὐ δεῖ, ὁ ἀναγινωσκων 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 ἐρημωσεως) 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 βδελυγμα 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 Ὀλύμπιος (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

δει impersonal verb must, should, ought

I.e. ἐν τοῦ ἀγίου – see Mt 24:15.

ἀναγινωσκω read

νοεω 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)

ὄρος, οὐς 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 [δὲ] ἐπὶ τοῦ δωματος μὴ καταβάτω μηδὲ εἰσελθάτω ἄραί τι 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

ἄραί Verb, aor act infin αἶρω 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 ἄραί 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]'

αἶρω 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)

ἐκεῖνος, 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 θλιψὶς οἷα οὐ γέγονεν τοιαύτη ἀπ' ἀρχῆς κτίσεως ἢν ἔκτισεν ὁ θεὸς ἕως τοῦ νῦν καὶ οὐ μὴ γένηται.

ἔσονται Verb, fut indic, 3 pl εἶμι

θλιψὶς, εως f trouble, suffering

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

γέγονεν 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 ἦν 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 ἐσωθῆ 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 εἰάν τις ὑμῖν εἴπῃ, Ἴδε ὧδε ὁ Χριστός, Ἴδε ἐκεῖ, μὴ πιστεύετε·

τοτε then

εἰάν if

ἴδε behold, see

ὧδε adv here, in this place

ἐκεῖ there, in that place

πιστευω believe (in), have faith (in)

Cf. v.5.

Verse 22

ἐγερθήσονται γὰρ ψευδόχριστοι καὶ ψευδοπροφήται καὶ δώσουσιν σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα πρὸς τὸ ἀποπλανᾶν, εἰ δυνατόν, τοὺς ἐκλεκτούς.

ἐγειρω 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 διδωμι

σημειον, 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

ὑμεῖς δὲ βλέπετε· προεῖρηκα ὑμῖν πάντα.

βλεπω see, beware of

προεῖρηκα Verb, perf act indic, 1 s

προλεγω say beforehand, warn in

advance