

Daily Worship Notes

October 19th – 23rd, 2026



The Gospel of Mark

This week, please:

Pray for;

Mon - Andrew & Heather Quigley

Tues - Catherine Quigley

Wed - Louise Rock

Thur - Caleb Roseboom

Frid - Lorna Russell

Parents help your children to learn;

Westminster Shorter Catechism

Question 79:

Which is the tenth commandment?

Answer:

The tenth commandment is, *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's.*

Scripture Proofs:

Exodus 20:17; Deuteronomy 5:21.

Check out these Bible-by-chapter questions;

Question: What does a person do when they realize their guilt?

Answer: Leviticus 5:5, 6

Question: What two choices does he have if he cannot afford the guilt offering?

Answer: Leviticus 5:7, 11

Please pray and ask the Holy Spirit for help as you study Mark this week.

These notes are written by our minister, Rev. Dr. Andrew Quigley.



Monday – Mark 13:14-23 – The “abomination of desolation”.

After speaking about the events before his return, Jesus now focuses on Jerusalem's destruction. In what he says, Jesus speaks both about an event that is almost immediately on the historical horizon and an end-times ‘event’.

But, before we get into the immediate historic fulfillment of what Jesus says, what is this ‘abomination of desolation’? While Mark omits the direct reference to the prophecy of Daniel (Daniel 9:27, 11:31 and 12:11), which Matthew makes in the parallel passage in Matthew 24:15, in recording what Jesus says in verse 14, “let the reader understand,” he is pointing the reader to what Daniel wrote.

So, what does the *abomination* of desolation mean/refer to?

First, this abomination is utterly abhorrent to God. It's an outrage; a disgrace; evil, wicked, hideous, and loathsome. I say ‘it’, but Mark's wording makes it read as “standing where *he* ought not to be”. So, this is not simply the introduction of something idolatrous into the Temple, but a person who enters the holy place with the deliberate intention to commit blasphemy.

Second, ‘abomination of *desolation*’ tells us its effect: it will desecrate the Temple and leave it desolate, empty of worshippers, because God will withdraw His presence from it.

So, do we know when the immediate historical event took place? Yes, we do. It took place in AD 70. The contemporary historian Josephus, in his work *Wars*, writes, “These men therefore trampled upon all the laws of men and laughed at the laws of God, and for the oracles of the prophets they ridiculed the tricks as jugglers... For there was a certain oracle of those men that the city should be taken and the Sanctuary burnt, by right of war, when a sedition should pollute the Temple of God.” And that’s what they did: when faced with a Jewish Zealot uprising, the Roman legions under Titus (the son of Emperor Vespasian) surrounded Jerusalem, then they took the Temple and brought their imperial military standards into its courts (Luke 21:20), sacrificed to them, and then burnt it to the ground.

Questions:

Q1. What does the term ‘abomination of desolation’ tell us?

Q2. Is this a reference to something that actually happened, and if so, when?

Q3. What happened in AD 70?

Memory Verse: “This book of the law will not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night,” Joshua 1:8a



Tuesday – Mark 13:14-23 – Flee, run for your life; don't stop for anything.

In referring to “those who are in Judea”, Jesus is speaking about the Christians living there, including those, of course, in the city of Jerusalem itself. His command is simple: flee, literally leave everything (verses 14, 15), and run to the mountains when they see the “abomination of desolation standing where he ought not to be”. Jesus words are so direct, so forceful, that he even says that those resting on their rooftops aren't to re-enter their homes, but to get down the steps and run for their lives. And if you're working in the fields and you hear it's happening, then run; don't bother returning to wherever you left your coat; get out, just go. Not to be frivolous or flippant; it's like the announcement you hear on an aeroplane, ‘In the event of an emergency, you are to leave all carry-on bags and personal items, and make your way to the nearest exit.’ Why? Because every second counts, and it could mean the difference between life and death.

Jesus' heart is deeply affected at the thought of what this will mean for women who are pregnant and nursing mothers. He is also concerned that what he knows will transpire will not happen in the cold, wet Palestinian winter. What compassion he had (and still has) for the most vulnerable of his people. Our Saviour and Lord is no hard-driving taskmaster; his life was and is marked by incredible love. And see the command to ‘pray’. Brothers and sisters, we need to be praying men and women. So much in your life and mine is beyond our control, but our heavenly Father, who has adopted and loves us, has promised that he will listen to prayers offered by a contrite heart.

And that's what happened. The church father Eusebius (260-339 AD), a prominent theologian and scholar whose work provides a significant historical bridge between the early persecuted Church and the rise of the Christian Roman Empire under Emperor Constantine, wrote in his most famous work, the *Ecclesiastical History* or Church History, that before the Romans' legions completely cut off the city in AD 70, the Christian community in Jerusalem fled the city, crossed the Jordan River to northern Perea (modern-day Jordan) within the dominions of Herod Agrippa II, and took refuge in a mountain city of Pella before the “abomination of desolation, proclaimed by the prophets, stood in the very temple of God”.

We may not face the abomination of desolation; however, no one knows the hour or day, but we are commanded to flee sin (2 Timothy 2:22, 1 Corinthians 6:18, 1 Corinthians 10:13) as if our lives depend on it.

Questions:

Q1. What did Jesus tell the believer in Judea to do?

Q2. How do we see Jesus' compassion in these verses?

Q3. What else does Jesus command his hearers to do?

Memory Verse: “This book of the law will not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night,” Joshua 1:8a



Wednesday - Mark 13:13-23 – The reality of the abomination of desolation.

Jesus is adamant that those who follow him in Judea must flee what's coming because they've never experienced anything like it. Reread what he says in verse 19: "For in those days there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be." That's astonishing. And again, if we had time to quote what the contemporary historian Josephus wrote in his work 'Wars', we would see that it was a truly catastrophic event for the Jewish people.

Roman taxation and oppressive governance in the AD 60s, along with Roman theft from the Temple treasury, led to a Jewish Zealot uprising against the Romans. This triggered a Roman response: Vespasian, the Roman Emperor, sent an army under Titus with between 50,000 and 70,000 troops, which encamped in Gibeah just north of Jerusalem; and, in April AD 70, blockaded the city and began building a 5-mile wall around it. The siege was devastating. The city was filled with people for the Passover celebration, which only added to the horrors that unfolded. A famine ravaged the city, with Josephus describing mass starvation and cannibalism. Those who attempted to escape were executed, and it is recorded that Arab and Syrian mercenaries working for the Romans disembowelled people while searching for hidden valuables. By June, the Romans had finished building the wall around the city, effectively cutting off supplies and all escape routes; although those inside tried to break through, the Romans were relentless and turned their attention to the Temple. (The exiles rebuilt this temple on their return under Zerubbabel and Jeshua in 516 BC. See Ezra chapters 1-6.) By August AD 70, the Romans had entered, desecrated, and destroyed the Second Temple, leaving only the section known as the 'Western Wall' standing as it does today. The consequences for the Jewish nation were disastrous, with hundreds of thousands dying from starvation or being killed. It's reckoned that almost 100,000 survivors were enslaved. The victory was celebrated in Rome by building the 'Arch of Titus', which shows the scale of the victory in the Roman mindset. The Jewish nation as a political entity with a physical centre was ended, as was Temple worship. The Romans later rebuilt the city as a pagan colony called 'Aelia Capitolina'.

Why give you this extensive history lesson? To show that what God says will happen does happen and that the final abomination of destruction will be horrific.

Questions:

- Q1. How does Christ describe the coming tribulation?
- Q2. How disastrous were the events of the summer of AD 70 for the Jewish nation?
- Q3. What does this tell us about what God says in His Word?

Memory Verse: "This book of the law will not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night," Joshua 1:8a



Thursday – Mark 13:20-27 – The Lord cut short the days for the sake of the elect.

God is sovereign in all His dealings. His eternal decrees are His eternal decrees, and they remain unchangeable; but Scripture sometimes seems to say, 'Well, God changed His mind on this'. When that is the case, we must be extremely careful not to deduce from such statements that God is malleable, someone who can shift direction with circumstances, or be forced to change things at the dictate of world events. That is NOT the case. God is not the world's puppet. So, how do we understand a statement like the one in verse 20, where it says the Lord "cut short the days... for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he shortened the days"? Well, it means God had a plan within His plan, and He sovereignly chose the plan that fit His eternal decrees. We need to understand that God's revealed will is His revealed will, and He will always act in ways consistent with it; but that doesn't mean we get to see every element of the plan. So, we live by faith and with hope for what we do not see, knowing that all things work together for good for those who love the Lord and are called according to His purpose.

In verse 22, Jesus repeats the warning from verses 5-9 about false prophets. While this may have primarily addressed the numerous pseudo-Messianic rebellions of the AD 60s and later reached into first-century Christianity with its Gnosticism and other heresies, it still holds true for us today. Anyone who teaches a false gospel and presents themselves as the proclaimer of a heretical 'truth' falls squarely into the spectre of false Christs and false prophets. And let's be careful not to think that that could never happen to Ottawa RPC.

This warning leads to a short passage that pulls together quotations from the Old Testament scriptures, which present a clear picture of the coming of the *Son of man*. When the last days arrive, the tribulations of all the preceding days will end; all that holds the heavenly bodies in their orbits and enables the sun, moon, and stars to light the earth will give way, and all the light they project will stop. The sun's light will be extinguished, the moon's radiance will disappear, and the stars will tumble from there; they have been fired since the day of creation. This is beyond our comprehension.

And then...

Question:

- Q1. Can man change God's plans?
- Q2. Can any church become subject to false teaching, and if so, how?
- Q3. What will happen to the sun, moon and stars at the end of time?

Memory Verse: "This book of the law will not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night," Joshua 1:8a



Friday – Mark 13:24-27 – And then....

We finished yesterday with the words “And then...” And then what? Immediately, without hesitation, as the world is plunged into darkness unlike anything it has ever experienced, the Lord Jesus Christ will come in great power and glory in the clouds.

2000 years ago, the Son of Man appeared on the earth; not counting equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptying himself he took the form of a servant, and was born in human likeness in lowly circumstances in Bethlehem. He then lived on the earth in daily submission to His heavenly Father, before ultimately offering up his life as a once-for-all atonement sacrifice to satisfy divine justice on the cross at Calvary. But his second coming will be an entirely different event.

- The Lord Jesus Christ shall come visibly; he shall be seen, as promised in Acts 1:9: “in clouds,” as stated in Daniel 7:13. The clouds are his chariots, as in Psalm 104:3.
- He shall come victoriously in great power, revealing the omnipotence with which he has been ruling since the day God highly exalted him as Mediatoral King over all creation and bestowed on him the name that is above every name.
- His glory, which is the sum of all his divine attributes, shall shine before men, as it fills the earth: Psalm 24:8-10; Titus 2:13; 1 Corinthians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:7, 4:13.
- He will come vocally with a shout and the trumpet sound of the archangel (1 Thessalonians 4:17). He will not be on his own as he was when he ascended to heaven, but will be accompanied by the vast heavenly host of elect angels whom he shall send out throughout all the earth to gather in his elect people from the four corners of the world. Men and women, of all nationalities and languages, will be gathered in, including those who have died in Christ; the resurrection is clearly implied. What has been sown perishable, in dishonour and weakness, will be raised imperishable, glorious and powerful. That which has been sown a natural body will be raised a spiritual body. Again, this will be an event like no other the world has ever seen.

The last great Day will have begun; the final judgment of all mankind will take place, and your life will never be the same again, for all eternity.

Questions:

Q1. What will happen immediately before Christ returns?

Q2. How will Christ return?

Q3. What will take place when he does?

Memory Verse: “This book of the law will not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night,” Joshua 1:8a

Sing praise to God

<https://newcreationrpc.org/psalms>

Psalm 72C

9. May waving grain on hilltops thrive;
Like Lebanon, its harvest yield.
May people flourish, towns revive,
Like grasses growing in the field,
Like grasses growing in the field.

10. O may his name forever live;
Yes, like the sun, may his fame last.
By him may people blessings give,
May all the nations call him blessed,
May all the nations call him blessed.

11. May God be blessed – the LORD alone -
Blessed be the God of Israel.
For only He has wonders done;
His works all other deeds excel,
His works all other deeds excel.

12. And may His name of glorious worth
Receive its praise eternally;
And may His glory fill the earth
Amen, Amen; so may it be,
Amen, Amen; so may it be.