



Session 4

The main focus in Mark 11-13 is God's judgment on Israel. In Mark 11-12, we see Jesus enter the temple, where his authority is both challenged and demonstrated. Particularly important in those chapters is the cursing of the fig tree which bore no fruit (11:12-21, representative of rebellious Israel) and the parable of the tenants (12:1-12). This theme of God's judgment on Israel carries over into Mark 13 which begins with Jesus' announcement that Jerusalem's temple will be destroyed, and is then followed by a private conversation where his disciples ask him about the timing of this event.

Jesus' prophecy came true in AD 70, when the Roman armies sacked Jerusalem and destroyed the temple in response to the Jewish revolt against Rome which began in AD 66. In The Jewish War, the first-century Jewish historian Josephus recorded the horrific living conditions in Jerusalem as it lay under Roman siege. Josephus estimated that over a million Jews were killed in the siege with 97,000 being enslaved. According to the fourth-century historian Eusebius, Jerusalem's Christians had already fled in response to a prophecy and were spared the suffering that overwhelmed the city.

This history is helpful to keep in mind as you read Mark 13, because it can be a particularly difficult chapter to interpret. It is generally agreed that Jesus refers to two distinct events in this chapter: 1) the temple's destruction in AD 70 and 2) his Second Coming at the end of time. But gifted Bible teachers do not always agree on when Jesus is referring to one or the other (if not both events at the same time). As you read, remember that this chapter continues the themes of Mark 11 and 12. Also, pay attention to the practical effects Jesus intends for his words to have for his disciples as he says these things.

Read Mark 13. Using the scripture pages at the back of the workbook, read this week's text in one sitting. Read the text a second time, writing down any initial observations you have. After you've read the text multiple times and made your own observations, work through the following questions. (There are also resources on the temple at the back of your workbook, starting on page 84.)

1. **Circle** anytime the temple is mentioned
2. **Underline** "be on guard/stay awake" language
3. **Highlight** anytime the phrase "these things" is used



1. Mark 13 is a passage where many respected scholars and theologians have differing viewpoints. What do you do when you come across a verse or passage that is hard to understand?

2. In studying the second half of Mark, we see Jesus frequently confronting the disciples' tendency to be concerned with "things of man" rather than "things of God" (Mark 8:33). Review the following verses and write down the *concerns* of the disciples as well as Jesus' *confrontation* of those concerns.

	<i>What "things of man" are the disciples concerned with?</i>	<i>How does Jesus confront the disciple(s) with "things of God"?</i>
9:33-37		
10:35-45		

Now write down the concern and confrontation found in Mark 13:1-2. What connections do you see with these between the three passages?

Concern:

Confrontation:

Connections to 9:33-37 and 10:35-45:

3. How do these concerns, confrontations, and connections tie into the overall theme found in sessions 3 and 4? (*See session introductions.*)

4. What two questions do the disciples ask Jesus (v. 4)? What prompted them to ask these questions?

5. How does knowing that Jesus is responding to their questions help us as we read the rest of the chapter?

6. How does Jesus begin his response to the disciples' questions in verses 5-8? What are some modern day applications we can draw from this?

7. What are some of the trials and persecutions that Jesus predicts in 13:9-13? How does this reinforce the theme of discipleship found throughout Mark?

8. Look at the following verses from the book of Acts. How do we see Jesus' words in Mark 13:9-13 fulfilled in the lives of the disciples?

Acts 4:1-12

Acts 6:8-10

Acts 18:12-13

Acts 27:23-24

Abomination of Desolation

This phrase comes from the book of Daniel (9:27; 11:31; 12:11) and refers to “an abomination so detestable it causes the Temple to be abandoned by the people of God and provokes desolation” (William Lane). Daniel was referring to the Seleucid ruler Antiochus Epiphanes who desecrated the temple in 168 BC. Jesus is saying that, once again, the temple will be desecrated.]

9. Compare Mark 13:14-23 to Luke's gospel account in Luke 21:20-24. How do these parallel accounts inform our understanding of what event Jesus is referring to?

10. Look for every time the phrase “these things” (or “all these things”; “all things”) is mentioned in Mark 13 and read the surrounding context. (Use ESV for this as other translations sometimes use a different phrase.) What are “these things” in reference to? What clues in the text help you draw that conclusion?

11. What is the main idea of Mark 13:32-37? How does this inform how you live the Christian life?



Session 4 Application

Reflect and Respond

Use these four questions to pray and reflect on what you've read this week. Ask the Holy Spirit to convict and guide you during this time.

Reflect

What do we learn about God in this passage and how should we respond to God as a result?

Look for:

- *God's character, concerns, and conduct*
- *Things to praise and thank God for*
- *Sin to confess and repent of*
- *Promises and truths to believe*

What do we learn about people in this passage and how should we respond to others?

Look for:

- *How they reflect God's character in the text*
- *How they reject God and his rule in the text*
- *Examples or ways to love, serve, and care for others*

Respond

What will these truths look like in action for you this week?

What questions do I still have? How will I investigate this further?



Notes

Small group discussion | Large group teaching



Session 5

Ever since Peter's climactic confession that Jesus is the Messiah (Mark 8:29), Jesus has been preparing his disciples for the events that unfold in these last chapters of Mark's gospel, though they have been slow to learn the lessons he has been teaching them.

As we approach this critical section, it's worth remembering who Mark is writing to. Mark's audience is most likely Christians in Rome who were undergoing severe persecution for their faith, and his purpose in writing this gospel is to remind them that the path of suffering that they are walking is the same path Jesus himself walked and the one he calls his disciples to follow him on. In other words, Jesus understands what they're going through because he's gone through it, and he can help them. Consider how Mark's original readers (as well as us today) might draw encouragement and strength in the midst of persecution from the scenes that follow.

Read Mark 14:1-15:20. Using the scripture pages at the back of the workbook, read this week's text in one sitting. Read the text a second time, writing down any initial observations you have. After you've read the text multiple times and made your own observations, work through the following questions.

1. **Circle** *betray or betrayal*
2. **Underline** *examples of Jesus' sufferings*
3. **Highlight** *Jesus' responses to others*



1. Review your annotations on how Jesus responds to others throughout this section. What aspects of God's character are revealed in his responses?

2. Mark 14:1-11 is considered to be a Markan sandwich, or intercalation. Identify the three sections of the Markan sandwich and summarize each section. (*For a review on intercalations, refer to page 24.*)

3. After God rescued Israel from Egypt, he entered into a covenant with them and ratified that covenant with blood (Exodus 24:1-8). In Mark 14:23-24, what does Jesus say when he drinks from the cup? What kind of covenant is being enacted here? (*See Jeremiah 31:31-34.*)

Passover

When Israel was enslaved in Egypt, God unleashed several plagues on Pharaoh and the Egyptians. On the final plague, God said that every firstborn son in Egypt would die. The Israelites could be spared from this judgment only if they killed a lamb and painted its blood on the doorposts of their homes.

When God approached these homes and saw the blood of the lamb on their doorposts, he would “pass over” their homes and spare the firstborn sons inside. In 1 Corinthians 5:7, Paul says that Jesus is our passover lamb. Because his blood has been shed for us, God’s judgment will pass over us.

4. What words are used to describe Jesus’ emotional state? How would this honest description have encouraged Mark’s original audience?

5. What does Jesus ask of the disciples in Gethsemane in 14:32-42? (Contrast this with a few verses earlier in v. 29.) Why did he ask this of the disciples?

6. How would you describe Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane?

v. 35-36 Jesus' prayer is _____

v. 39 Jesus' prayer is _____

How does this type of prayer exhibit Jesus' trust in his Heavenly Father?

7. Do you wrestle honestly with God in the midst of pain and uncertainty? How can reflecting on Jesus' prayer in the garden of Gethsemane help you in your own prayer time with God?

8. In Mark 14:53-72, Jesus is questioned before the chief priests and counsel. We also see that he is simultaneously rejected by Peter, just as Jesus predicted. Record the events of both Jesus and Peter in the chart below.

	Jesus		Peter
v. 60-61a		v. 67-68	
v. 61b-62		v. 69-70a	
v. 65		v. 70b-71	

9. What is significant about Jesus' response in verses 61-62?

10. How would you summarize this section in 1-2 sentences?



Session 5 Application

Reflect and Respond

Use these four questions to pray and reflect on what you've read this week. Ask the Holy Spirit to convict and guide you during this time.

Reflect

What do we learn about God in this passage and how should we respond to God as a result?

Look for:

- *God's character, concerns, and conduct*
- *Things to praise and thank God for*
- *Sin to confess and repent of*
- *Promises and truths to believe*

What do we learn about people in this passage and how should we respond to others?

Look for:

- *How they reflect God's character in the text*
- *How they reject God and his rule in the text*
- *Examples or ways to love, serve, and care for others*

Respond

What will these truths look like in action for you this week?

What questions do I still have? How will I investigate this further?



Notes

Small group discussion | Large group teaching



Session 6

Mark's gospel comes to a close with Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. As you read this section, you may want to read Isaiah 52:13-53:12 and earlier passages from Mark (like 8:34-38; 10:45) as well. Watch how Jesus exemplifies his own teachings about the cost of discipleship. Again, imagine how this section would have resonated with Mark's original audience of persecuted Christians.

Also, remembering that Jesus' identity has been a major and recurring theme throughout Mark's gospel (1:1, 11; 8:29), be on the lookout for another major confession of Jesus' identity in this section.

Read Mark 15:21-16:8. Using the scripture pages at the back of the workbook, read this week's text in one sitting. Read the text a second time, writing down any initial observations you have.

This workbook section is significantly shorter than other sessions. Use your time this week to reflect on all that you've learned thus far.



1. **Circle** "crucifixion" and other words of rejection/mockery
2. **Underline** acts of devotion from Jesus' followers
3. **Highlight** the confession of Jesus' identity and the declaration of his resurrection

1. Back in Mark 10:37, James and John made a request of Jesus. What was their request? Who does this "honor" go to in Mark 15?

2. What two titles did Mark use to describe Jesus at the start of his gospel (1:1)? What title did Peter confess in 8:29? Who confesses the other title in this passage? What is surprising about this second confession?

Centurion

the officer who was in command of a hundred Roman soldiers, supervising Jesus' execution.

3. How does Mark highlight the fact that Jesus was in fact really dead in Mark 15:42-47?

4. Re-read the following passages from Mark. How do we see these passages fulfilled at the close of Mark's gospel?

8:31

9:30-32

10:32-34

14:28

5. How would you summarize the second half of Mark's gospel? (Mark 8:31-16:8) How have these chapters encouraged you? How have they challenged you?



Session 6 Application

Reflect and Respond

Use these four questions to pray and reflect on what you've read this week. Ask the Holy Spirit to convict and guide you during this time.

Reflect

What do we learn about God in this passage and how should we respond to God as a result?

Look for:

- *God's character, concerns, and conduct*
- *Things to praise and thank God for*
- *Sin to confess and repent of*
- *Promises and truths to believe*

What do we learn about people in this passage and how should we respond to others?

Look for:

- *How they reflect God's character in the text*
- *How they reject God and his rule in the text*
- *Examples or ways to love, serve, and care for others*

Respond

What will these truths look like in action for you this week?

What questions do I still have? How will I investigate this further?



Notes

Small group discussion | Large group teaching



SESSION 4

Mark 13

1. **Circle** anytime the temple is mentioned
2. **Underline** "be on guard/stay awake" language
3. **Highlight** anytime the phrase "these things" is used



Jesus Foretells Destruction of the Temple

1 And as he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!" 2 And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down."

Signs of the End of the Age

3 And as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, 4 "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?" 5 And Jesus began to say to them, "See that no one leads you astray. 6 Many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and they will lead many astray. 7 And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. This must take place, but the end is not yet. 8 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. These are but the beginning of the birth pains.

9 "But be on your guard. For they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them. 10 And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations. 11 And when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. 12 And brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death. 13 And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

The Abomination of Desolation

14 "But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not to be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 15 Let the one who is on the housetop not go down, nor enter his house, to take anything out, 16 and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. 17 And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! 18 Pray that it may not happen in winter. 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. 20 And if the Lord had not cut short the days, no human being would be saved. But for the sake

of the elect, whom he chose, he shortened the days. 21 And then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it. 22 For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. 23 But be on guard; I have told you all things beforehand.

The Coming of the Son of Man

24 "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, 25 and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. 26 And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. 27 And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

28 "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. 29 So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. 30 Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. 31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

No One Knows That Day or Hour

32 "But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Be on guard, keep awake.[a] For you do not know when the time will come. 34 It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants[b] in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. 35 Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows,[c] or in the morning— 36 lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. 37 And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake."

Footnotes

- a. Mark 13:33 Some manuscripts add *and pray*
- b. Mark 13:34 Or *bondservants*
- c. Mark 13:35 That is, the third watch of the night, between midnight and 3 a.m.



SESSION 5

Mark 14



1. **Circle** *betray or betrayal*
2. **Underline** *examples of Jesus' sufferings*
3. **Highlight** *Jesus' responses to others*

The Plot to Kill Jesus

1 It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him, 2 for they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar from the people."

Jesus Anointed at Bethany

3 And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, [a] as he was reclining at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head. 4 There were some who said to themselves indignantly, "Why was the ointment wasted like that? 5 For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii [b] and given to the poor." And they scolded her. 6 But Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. 7 For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have me. 8 She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial. 9 And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her."

Judas to Betray Jesus

10 Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. 11 And when they heard it, they were glad and promised to give him money. And he sought an opportunity to betray him.

The Passover with the Disciples

12 And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, "Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?" 13 And he sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a

man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him, 14 and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' 15 And he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; there prepare for us." 16 And the disciples set out and went to the city and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

17 And when it was evening, he came with the twelve. 18 And as they were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." 19 They began to be sorrowful and to say to him one after another, "Is it I?" 20 He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me. 21 For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born."

Institution of the Lord's Supper

22 And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." 23 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. 24 And he said to them, "This is my blood of the [c] covenant, which is poured out for many. 25 Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

Jesus Foretells Peter's Denial

26 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. 27 And Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away, for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.' 28 But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." 29 Peter said to him, "Even though they all fall away, I will not." 30 And Jesus said to him, "Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times." 31 But he said emphatically, "If I must die with you, I will not deny you." And they

all said the same.

Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

32 And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” 33 And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. 34 And he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch.” [d] 35 And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. 36 And he said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.” 37 And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? 38 Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” 39 And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. 40 And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to answer him. 41 And he came the third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.”

Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

43 And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. 44 Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard.” 45 And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, “Rabbi!” And he kissed him. 46 And they laid hands on him and seized him. 47 But one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant [e] of the high priest and cut off his ear. 48 And Jesus said to them, “Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? 49 Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled.” 50 And they all left him and fled.

A Young Man Flees

51 And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body. And they seized him, 52 but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked.

Jesus Before the Council

53 And they led Jesus to the high priest. And all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes came together. 54 And Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he was sitting with the guards and warming himself at the fire. 55 Now the chief priests and the whole council^[f] were seeking testimony against Jesus to put him to death, but they found none. 56 For many bore false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree. 57 And some stood up and bore false witness against him, saying, 58 “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’” 59 Yet even about this their testimony did not agree. 60 And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, “Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?”^[g] 61 But he remained silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” 62 And Jesus said, “I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.” 63 And the high priest tore his garments and said, “What further witnesses do we need? 64 You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?” And they all condemned him as deserving death. 65 And some began to spit on him and to cover his face and to strike him, saying to him, “Prophesy!” And the guards received him with blows.

Peter Denies Jesus

66 And as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came, 67 and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, “You also were with the Nazarene, Jesus.” 68 But he denied it, saying, “I neither know nor understand what you mean.” And he went out into the gateway^[h] and the rooster crowed.^[i] 69 And

the servant girl saw him and began again to say to the bystanders, "This man is one of them." 70 But again he denied it. And after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, "Certainly you are one of them, for you are a Galilean." 71 But he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, "I do not know this man of whom you speak." 72 And immediately the rooster crowed a second time. And Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept.[j]

Mark 15

Jesus Delivered to Pilate

1 And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate. 2 And Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And he answered him, "You have said so." 3 And the chief priests accused him of many things. 4 And Pilate again asked him, "Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you." 5 But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.

Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified

6 Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. 7 And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. 8 And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. 9 And he answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" 10 For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up. 11 But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. 12 And Pilate again said to them, "Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" 13 And they cried out again, "Crucify him." 14 And Pilate said to them, "Why? What evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him." 15 So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and

having scourged [k] Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

Jesus Is Mocked

16 And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters), [l] and they called together the whole battalion. [m] 17 And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. 18 And they began to salute him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 19 And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. 20 And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.

Footnotes

- a. [Mark 14:3](#) *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see [Leviticus 13](#)
- b. [Mark 14:5](#) A *denarius* was a day's wage for a laborer
- c. [Mark 14:24](#) Some manuscripts insert *new*
- d. [Mark 14:34](#) Or *keep awake*; also verses [37](#), [38](#)
- e. [Mark 14:47](#) Or *bondservant*
- f. [Mark 14:55](#) Greek *Sanhedrin*
- g. [Mark 14:60](#) Or *Have you no answer to what these men testify against you?*
- h. [Mark 14:68](#) Or *forecourt*
- i. [Mark 14:68](#) Some manuscripts omit *and the rooster crowed*
- j. [Mark 14:72](#) Or *And when he had thought about it, he wept*
- k. [Mark 15:15](#) A Roman judicial penalty, consisting of a severe beating with a multi-lashed whip containing embedded pieces of bone and metal
- l. [Mark 15:16](#) Greek *the praetorium*
- m. [Mark 15:16](#) Greek *cohort*; a tenth of a Roman legion, usually about 600 men



SESSION 6

Mark 15

1. **Circle** "crucifixion" and other words of rejection/mocking
2. **Underline** acts of devotion from Jesus' followers
3. **Highlight** the confession of Jesus' identity and the declaration of his resurrection



The Crucifixion

21 And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. 22 And they brought him to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull). 23 And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. 24 And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take. 25 And it was the third hour[a] when they crucified him. 26 And the inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." 27 And with him they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left.[b] 29 And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, 30 save yourself, and come down from the cross!" 31 So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. 32 Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also reviled him.

The Death of Jesus

33 And when the sixth hour[c] had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.[d] 34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" 35 And some of the bystanders hearing it said, "Behold, he is calling Elijah." 36 And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." 37 And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. 38 And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. 39 And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he[e] breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was the Son[f] of God!"

40 There were also women looking on from a distance, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. 41 When he was in Galilee, they followed him and ministered to him, and there were also many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem.

Jesus Is Buried

42 And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, 43 Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. 44 Pilate was surprised to hear that he should have already died.[g] And summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. 45 And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the corpse to Joseph. 46 And Joseph[h] bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud and laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock. And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. 47 Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where he was laid.

Mark 16

The Resurrection

1 When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. 2 And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. 3 And they were saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?” 4 And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. 5 And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. 6 And he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. 7 But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you

will see him, just as he told you.” 8 And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Footnotes

- a. [Mark 15:25](#) That is, 9 a.m.
- b. [Mark 15:27](#) Some manuscripts insert verse [28](#): *And the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “He was numbered with the transgressors”*
- c. [Mark 15:33](#) That is, noon
- d. [Mark 15:33](#) That is, 3 p.m.
- e. [Mark 15:39](#) Some manuscripts insert *cried out and*
- f. [Mark 15:39](#) Or *a son*
- g. [Mark 15:44](#) Or *Pilate wondered whether he had already died*
- h. [Mark 15:46](#) Greek *he*

THE TEMPLE MOUNT IN THE TIME OF JESUS

Herod's Temple Mount was the focal point of Jerusalem during the time of Jesus. Sitting atop Jerusalem's north-eastern ridge, it occupied one-sixth of the city's area. Under Herod the Great, the Temple Mount's foundation was expanded to encompass approximately 1.5 million square feet (140,000 square meters). Its foundational walls were constructed using gigantic stones, the largest found being 45 feet long, 11.5 feet high, and 12 feet thick (13.7 m by 3.5 m by 3.7 m).

Wilson's Arch formed a bridge over the Tyropoeon Valley below, leading from the Temple Mount to the Hasmonean Palace. A section of the western wall south of Wilson's Arch (187 feet/57 m long, sometimes called the Wailing Wall) has been a place of prayer for Jews for the last 700 years. The lowest seven stone courses, which can be seen at ground level, are Herodian.

The early square Temple Mount preserved its identity as a separate area with its own walls and gates.

Robinson's Arch and its massive stairway led from the Tyropoeon Street below up to the Royal Stoa.

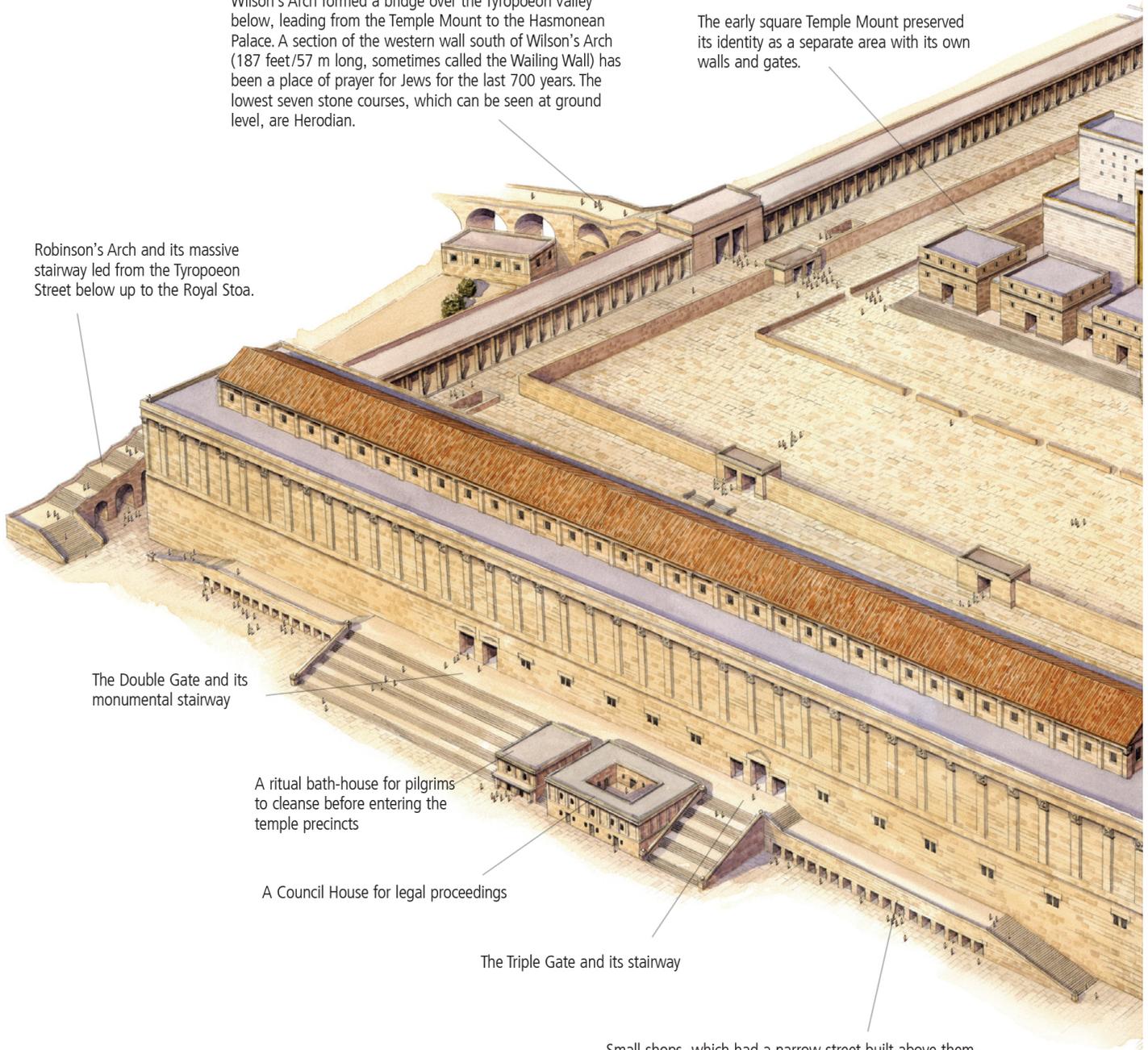
The Double Gate and its monumental stairway

A ritual bath-house for pilgrims to cleanse before entering the temple precincts

A Council House for legal proceedings

The Triple Gate and its stairway

Small shops, which had a narrow street built above them, were built along the southern wall of the Temple Mount.



The Antonia Fortress was where Herod (and later the Romans) commanded the garrison in order to protect the temple and to suppress religiously motivated rebellion.

Herod's Temple (for a detailed cutaway drawing, see p. 1943)

The Court of the Women was the farthest point of the inner temple complex that women could enter.

The Pool of Israel was probably used to wash sacrificial animals before they were led to the Temple Mount.

The Golden Gate, then known as the Shushan Gate

Stairs descended from the Muster Gate into the Kidron Valley and eventually went up to the Mount of Olives.

The eastern city wall of Jerusalem

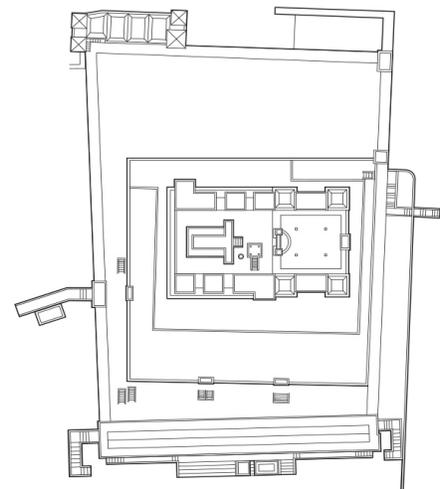
Solomon's Porch, the portico built along the eastern wall, was a place of congregation (cf. John 10:23; Acts 3:11).

The soleg (a low, latticed screen or railing) prohibited Gentiles or non-purified Jews from entering the temple courts.

The Court of the Gentiles was the area between the soleg and the outer walls of the early square Temple Mount.

The Royal Stoa was a 912-foot-long (278 m) portico, containing four rows of 40 columns. The Sanhedrin met in the central apse after c. A.D. 30. This may have been where Jesus cleansed the temple. The southeast corner overlooking the Kidron Valley created a drop of 140 feet (43 m) to the street below, and 300 feet (91 m) to the valley below. This may be the "pinnacle of the temple" mentioned in Matt. 4:5 and Luke 4:9.

Temple Mount Architectural Plan



0 250 500 ft
0 50 100 150 m



Not One Stone Left Upon Another

by Paul L. Maier

The catastrophic fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 forever changed the face of Judaism—and the fate of Christians in the Holy Land.

Jesus predicted it 37 years before it happened. Herod Agrippa II and his sister Bernice, who heard Paul's testimony at Caesarea (Acts 26), tried hard to prevent it, as did the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus (our main source of first-century information). But the fall of Jerusalem and the burning of the Temple in A.D. 70 happened nevertheless, and it was a catastrophe with almost unparalleled consequences for Jews, Christians, and, indeed, all of subsequent history. It compelled a whole new vector for synagogue (not Temple) Judaism, it submerged the Jewish homeland for the next 19 centuries under foreign domination, it helped foster the split between church and synagogue, and it set the stage for rampant prophetic speculation about the End Times that continues to the present day. Few episodes in history have had that sort of impact.

The Jewish rebellion in A.D. 66 that ignited the war with Rome was by no means inevitable. Judaism was a legal religion in the Roman Empire, and Nero's own empress, Poppaea, was very interested in it. Contrary to biblical novels and movies, far worse things could happen to you in the ancient world than to be conquered by Rome. The Romans hung out the traffic lights in their sprawling empire, curbing piracy at sea and brigandage by land, thus providing security in the Mediterranean world. The apostle Paul's missionary journeys would have been impossible without the Pax Romana, the "Roman peace" that ordered society. As for the "horrors" of Roman taxation, I would much rather have paid the tribute to Rome as a citizen of Jerusalem than American income tax!

Still, Rome did have wayward governors who were not always disciplined, even if there was an extortion court set up for this purpose at Rome. Governors of Judea had a particularly difficult role, because according to Deuteronomy 17:15 it was heresy for any Gentile to govern God's people: "You must not put a foreigner over you who is not your brother." Nevertheless, the governors Rome sent to Judea in the first century were able enough, including Pontius Pilate, who could never have had a ten-year tenure there had he been the villain so familiar in sermons and novels.

Gessius Florus, however, Rome's last governor before the Jewish rebellion, made Pilate look like a paragon of virtue by comparison. Emperor Nero, perhaps distracted in the aftermath of the Great Fire of Rome, had not done a good job of screening overseas governors, and this wretch slipped through. Venal, corrupt, and brutal, Florus hoped that a Jewish rebellion would somehow cover his own crimes in Judea, and so he fomented discontent among his subjects wherever possible. Even the first-century Roman historian Cornelius Tacitus commented, "Jewish patience persisted until Gessius Florus became procurator" (History 5.10).

Justifiably outraged, Jerusalemites rose in revolt, even though Jews who had visited Rome warned that war would end in disaster because of Rome's overpowering resources. Zealots in Jerusalem—the "fourth party" after the Scribes, Pharisees, and Essenes, according to Josephus—carried the day, and the Jews won some surprising early victories against the Romans.

Until, that is, Commander Vespasian landed in Galilee with three legions. After that, it was a steady Ro-

man advance southward into Judea, with Jewish strongholds falling one after another along the way. In fact, Vespasian was at the walls of Jerusalem when news reached him of the turmoil in Rome following Nero's death. Soon Rome's eastern legions declared Vespasian the new emperor. Before hurrying off to Rome in 69 to don imperial purple, he transferred command of the Jewish war to his own son Titus (also future emperor), who would complete the siege and destruction of Jerusalem.

The Burning of the Temple

With careful strategy and maximum resources, Titus finished the job in a matter of months, despite fierce Jewish resistance. Spurning all overtures for peace, the Zealots inside Jerusalem fought amongst themselves as much as against the Romans, while Titus surrounded the city with a siege wall and simply waited. The starvation inside Jerusalem was severe because many of the Judeans from the countryside had taken refuge there. It got so bad, Josephus wrote in *The Jewish War* (6.194ff.), that dove dung went for premium prices, and one poor woman even ate part of her own baby!

The best of friends wrestled with each other for even the shadow of food. Others, mouths agape from hunger like mad dogs, staggered along, beating on the doors like drunken men. ... They put their teeth into everything, swallowing things even the filthiest animals would not touch. Finally they devoured even belts and shoes or gnawed at the leather they stripped from their shields.

After furious fighting inside Jerusalem, the Temple Mount finally fell to the Romans. According to Josephus, Titus had ordered that the Temple itself be spared (though some historians doubt this), but one of the Roman troops hurled a burning firebrand through a window of the Temple and it went up in flames anyway. The date, August 30 in the year 70, was the very day on which Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed the Temple in 586 B.C. What was left was torn down by the victors, almost in literal fulfillment of Jesus' famous statement, "Not one stone here will be left upon another" (Matthew 24:2). This was the catastrophic end of Temple Judaism.

Might it have been the end of Judaism itself? Possibly. The Romans, however, permitted a Jewish sage named Jochanan ben-Zakkai to be smuggled out of the Temple Mount in a casket. He virtually re-founded Judaism in a rabbinical school established at Jamnia near the Mediterranean. The previous central authority of the Temple was now transformed into the regional authority of the synagogue—a tradition that has remained to the present day. Also in Jamnia, the Jewish rabbis established the canon of 39 books in their Hebrew Bible—the Christian Old Testament—in the year 93.

The Bar-Kokhba Revolt

Josephus, our major source for all this information, does not name a single Christian victim in connection with great Jewish War. Why not? With immense luck—or blessing—the earliest Christians largely escaped all this horror for two reasons: (1) Only four years before the war's outbreak, James the Just of Jerusalem (the first Christian bishop according to both Acts 15 and Eusebius) was stoned to death by the Sanhedrin, which must certainly have led the struggling Jewish-Christian community to think about leaving. (2) Eusebius, the "father of church history," also tells us that Christians were warned by an oracle to flee the city some time before war's outbreak. In fact, they evacuated to Pella and other cities north of Jerusalem, and so escaped the Roman siege and conquest.

After the war, some Christians returned to Jerusalem, where they must have kept a low profile since Zealotry and the yeast of Messianism among the Jews led to one last tragic uprising in A.D. 132 under a rebel named Shimon Bar-Kosebah. Rabbi Akiba, the leading Jewish sage at the time, put Bar-Kosebah on a white horse, led him through the streets of Jerusalem, and cried, "The Messiah has come! The Messiah has come!" He also changed his name to "Bar-Kokhba," which means "Son of a Star" (showing us that the gospel writer Matthew did not invent the idea that the Star of Bethlehem was a messianic symbol for Jews).

When the Zealots learned that Hadrian, the Roman emperor at the time, planned to build a new temple to Jupiter on the ruins of the old Jewish Temple, they rose up in revolt. Hadrian had a very difficult time conquering these rebels, some of whom hid out in caves on the western coast of the Dead Sea, where letters written by Bar-Kokhba have been discovered. Some 580,000 Jews perished, and the Romans also suffered great losses until they finally conquered the rebels. Furious at this renewed Jewish uprising and without a shred of patience left, they dismantled Jerusalem and rebuilt the city as "Aelia Capitolina" in honor of Aelius, Hadrian's family name.

All Jews were expelled from the city, and only Gentiles were allowed to live there. (This exile was moderated later when first Jewish Christians and then also Jews slowly returned to the city.) The Roman province of Judea now became Syria Palaestina—further diminishing Judaism in favor of the Philistines who had battled Saul and David a millennium earlier. It remained "Palestine" up through the British mandate in the 20th century and among Arabs to this day.

In the second and third centuries, Aelia Capitolina (a.k.a. destroyed Jerusalem) showed barely a glint of its former glory. It was not a ghost town, but it was sequestered to the boondocks of the Roman Empire.

Church and Synagogue

An equal-opportunity desecrator, Hadrian attacked Christianity when he raised a shrine to Aphrodite adjacent to his new temple at the site of Golgotha, where Christians had held liturgical observances until they fled the city in A.D. 66. But in trying to desecrate the site, he merely helped identify it for later generations.

It is no surprise to learn from Aristo of Pella, an early Christian historian whose works are not extant, that the Jerusalem church after the Bar-Kokhba revolt was now composed almost entirely of Gentiles. In his *Church History* (5.12), Eusebius lists 12 Gentile bishops of Jerusalem following Mark, the first.

Early on, Christians in Jerusalem recognized the importance of the sites where biblical events took place. The early Christian apologist Justin Martyr (c. 100-c.165) was born of pagan parents in Nablus, Samaria, and after his conversion to Christianity knew the cave or grotto where Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Melito, bishop of Sardis, visited there in the 160s. The mightiest mind in early Christendom, Origen of Alexandria, spent the last part of his life (230-254) in Caesarea and regularly visited the sacred sites, including Bethlehem.

Slowly, Jews were allowed to return to their Holy City. But other centers of Judaism across the Mediterranean world, such as neighboring Alexandria in Egypt, Ephesus in Asia Minor, Athens, and even Rome, could now compete through their synagogues for the authority once held by the Jerusalem Temple. Those Jewish Christians who had not abandoned the Temple (such as those described in Acts) now had to look elsewhere for cohesion and authority. The split between Jews and Christians

only widened in the future.

Both sides were responsible for this cleft. The first persecution of the church was by Jewish authorities in Jerusalem, and even the most cursory reading of Acts reveals the grief that Paul regularly received from synagogues along his mission journeys. Later, in some cities across the Mediterranean, Jews reported Christians to Roman authorities who had been lax in persecuting them. For their part, Christians attributed the destruction of Jerusalem to God's retribution against the Jews for having crucified Christ. Church and synagogue have gone their separate ways ever since. One can only conjecture as to what might have happened to Jews, Christians, and all of subsequent history had Jerusalem not fallen and the Temple endured.

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