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The Son Of Man Is Coming

Mark 13:24-37

Key Verse: 26, 27

Good morning! Last week Jesus said when we see wars, famines, earthquakes, and coronavirus, we should interpret them as signs of end times. In those troubled times, Jesus said to us “watch out, be alert, be on our guard”. And most importantly God wants us to use all signs and troubles as a good opportunity to preach the gospel to all the nations. Today, Jesus said that I am coming back again, so please wait for me. Honestly, it is difficult to believe his coming and it is more difficult to wait for him since we do not know when he is coming: maybe next year or 100 years later. People are busy in studying and working. Each week, students have to submit homework, do projects, and so on. Employees have to work in office or by remotely while at the same time they have to take care of their children at home because of coronavirus. Why then do we have to even concern Jesus’ 2nd coming? What does it mean to us? Through today’s passage, let us learn why Jesus is coming again? Why do we have to wait for him? How can we believe his second coming? What should we do while we are waiting for him?

1. People will see the son of man coming

Jesus promised he will come again, what the sign will be before his coming? There are three steps of signs in this chapter 13. First step is as we saw in last week, wars, famines, earthquakes, coronavirus have happened on earth. During those times, people were distressed a lot. But they are just signs of birth pains. The end is not coming yet. Now as second step, another disaster will begin in heaven. Can we read verse 24 and 25? But in those days, following that distress, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken” In this time, the sun and the moon will not shine any light. So in day time and in night time, there will be only deep darkness. To make it worse, the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken. This is called Armageddon or Apocalypse. At that time, people could flee to nowhere.

Then, as last step, all of sudden, Jesus will come back. Can we read verses 26 and 27? At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens. Jesus is coming down in clouds with great power and authority. His second coming is much

different from his first coming. When he came first time, he was born as a baby in a small town. There was no CNN headlines, no trumpet sound. It was very quiet. Nobody knew that even he was came. Even when he was taken up to heaven, he went up very quietly. However, when he comes in second time, he will come with great power and glory. 1 Thessalonians 4:16 says, “For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.” Everyone will see him. Everybody will hear the trumpet call of God. All people will know that he is coming. This time, Jesus also comes as the triumphal King who conquered the power of sins and the power of death. He comes as Lord of lords.

When he comes, what will he do? **“to gather his elect from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens”**. He will gather his elect from Delaware, Virginia, and Maryland. He will call his elect from other states of America, Latin America, Asia, Africa, Europe, Oceania, Amazon River, and north and south poles. Not only from earth but even from Mars, Jupiter if people live there at that time, he will call his sheep from everywhere. To his elect, his coming is a good news. Finally, there will be no more wars, earthquakes, and famines. There will be no more coronavirus and persecutions. He will wipe out our tears and will say “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things” (Mt 21).

Who are his elect? Have you ever thought about whether I am his elect or not? How do I know if I belong to his elect or not? In this passage, chapter 13, Jesus clearly said in verse 13 **“but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.”** **And also he said “watch out, be alert, be on your guard, the gospel must first be preached to all nations”**. Those who obey Jesus are his elect. Those who stands firm to the end are his elect. Most of all, our Lord Jesus himself knows who is his elect and who is not his elect. Before Jesus comes, all people, either believer or unbelievers, live together in the world. But when he comes, he will call only his elect. Then, while two men are in the field, only one will be taken and the other left. While two women are grinding with a hand mill, one will be taken and the other left. So being his elect is a matter of life and death.

What about those who are not his elect? Jesus’ 2nd coming is their judgement time. They could go nowhere to avoid his judgement. Who can be them? They are the one who does not stand firm to the end. They are the one who ignores Jesus’ invitation: come to me and drink the living water. They are the one who does not take Jesus’ warning through wars, earthquakes, and COVID 19. They are the one who does not love God with all their heart, all their soul, all their mind, and all their strength. When Jesus comes, they all will perish. So let us stand firm to the

end. Let us keep watch and share the gospel that when he comes again, he can call our names!

2. My words will never pass away

Jesus promised he would come back. But a question is that “is he really coming again?” It has been 2,000 years since he mentioned about his coming. But he did not come yet. There was a research about Jesus’ return in 2010 by the Pew Research Center (one of the best research groups). They asked people how they would think about Jesus’ 2nd coming by the year 2050. 41% of Americans believe Jesus’ 2nd coming while 46% of people do not believe his return. Among college students age, only 19% of them expected Jesus’ return. So in average, people do not much believe that he is coming back.

How about you? Do you believe his coming? Jesus emphasized once again he will surely come back soon. In verse 28, Jesus said “learn this lesson from the fig tree”. In spring, when its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, people now that summer is near. In the same way, when we see wars, earthquakes, famines, tsunami, coronavirus, the end times is near, right at the door. His 2nd coming is just around the corner. Can we read verse 30 and 31? “Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”

Jesus said all these things would happen until this generation would be gone. In fact, Jesus foretold the destruction of the temple in AD 33, and though no one believed what he said, since the temple had existed more than 1,000 years in Jesus’ time, however, as we learned last week, in AD 70, before one generation passed away, the temple was really destroyed. Not one stone was left on another. Likewise, Jesus said his second coming will happen. Jesus highlighted verse 31, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away”. Can we believe the heaven and the earth will disappear? Honestly, it is hard to believe. The heaven and the earth have existed millions of years or billions of years (?). But Jesus said, in some day, the sun, the moon, the stars will pass away. But his words will never pass away. Here “pass away” in Greek, “pa-RA-go”, meaning “disappear or perish”. So what Jesus said is “his words will never disappear” in another meaning, his every single word will come true no matter what. This is true in the Bible. Every word of God does not fall to the ground. In Genesis 18, Sarah, Abraham’s wife, was 89 years old and she was past the age of childbearing. But God promised she will have a son this time next year. When she heard it, she

laughed to herself as she thought, "after I am worn out and my lord is old, will I now have this pleasure?", but the words of God would not pass away. As God promised, next year, she bore a son, Isaac.

On the airplane in 2001 to come to America, I was excited but very anxious about a new life in the US. While I worried, Isaiah 43:18,19 hit my heart. It says "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." I felt God spoke to me that "forget what I have done in Korea and expect God who will do new things in a new land America". I was not sure what God would do new things for me. But his words did not pass away. So far he has done so many new things in my life. At UM, I was first one who received working visa as a foreigner in the division of student affairs. I was first student who graduated computer science after failed five times in class. I was the first person who submitted 23 recommendation letters to US immigration office when I applied for green card, probably first UBF missionary to pioneer a new campus in the middle of coronavirus. God's words does really pass away.

Jeremiah 29:11 says "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" when God said this promise to Israel, she was in a bad situation. They disobeyed God that they brought their own punishment from God. Babylon, a merciless nation, attacked Israel and she was oppressed by Babylon. In such a hopeless situation, Jeremiah looked up to God and proclaimed to Israel "God has plans for you, plans to prosper you, plans to give you hope and a future". No one could believe what God said in the midst of their miserable situations. However, God's words did not pass away. As God promised, he brought Israel from Babylon and Israel prospered once again under the leadership of Nehemiah and Ezra. Why does the Bible record what God said and how it fulfilled in everywhere? To teach us that his words will never pass away. So the same God promised us Jesus' 2nd coming. No matter what happens, no matter how long it takes, his words will not pass away and Jesus will surely come again.

3. Each with their assigned task

We just learned Jesus will surely come back. But when? What should we do while we wait for him? Jesus mentioned about the time. Can we read verse 32? "But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." People are interested in knowing when Jesus would come. Jesus, however, clearly said even he does not know but only God knows. But in

history, some people claimed they were special in calculating the day of the end times. They predicted but all failed. So keep in mind, if anyone points out a specific date, they are false teachers. Do not believe them. The Bible says only the Father God knows the day. Then, question is what we should do until he comes again? Let us read verse 34. “It’s like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.” There is a man and he is leaving away. Before he leaves, he calls his servants and put them in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. Based on this parable, there are two things that we must do. **First, do our assigned task.** In the parable, the man gave his servants each with their assigned task. Some were given in cooking, others cleaning, others fixing. The man expected while he was away, his servants would be faithful to their assigned task. This is what Jesus expects us to do. In history, some false teachers proclaimed when the end times comes, you do not need to study, you do not need to work. They said when the world collapses, those things are useless. They intimidate people to sell all their property to offer to them and live somewhere on mountain or farm together waiting for Jesus’ second coming. But this is not biblical at all. Jesus called us and assigned each to our own tasks. Until Jesus comes, if you are a student, you are to take up the cross of your study faithfully, that is how you prepare for Jesus’ 2nd coming. If you are an employee, you are to obey your boss and work hard with all your heart whether their eye is on you or not. This is what we should do until our Lord Jesus’ return. Do your daily job (cleaning, cooking, praying, studying the Bible, ...) faithfully in the presence of God. Most importantly, Jesus assigned us a task of preaching the gospel to all the nations. Jesus said last week “the gospel must first be preached to all the nations”. This is the heart of God to all peoples. God does not want anyone to perish but have eternal life. How can people have eternal life? Through the gospel. Without the gospel, people are dying in their sins and they will perish.

Second, keep watch. While we do our assigned tasks faithfully, at the same time, we should keep watch. We should not be too busy in doing our own tasks. That is why Jesus said “be on guard and keep watch”. In Matthew 24, there is the same event which Jesus mentioned about his second coming, In the days of Noah, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage. Of course, we should eat, drink, and marry. But the people in Noah’s times missed one thing: they did not keep watch at all. They did not believe the warning of Noah: flooding. While they were super busy in studying, working, doing business, and marrying, all of sudden the flooding broke out. All perished except Noah and his family. So

we need to keep watch, especially, Jesus said “watch and pray that we may not fall into the temptation”, so pray to God to help us keep being alert. (Mt 26:41)

Lastly, read verse 36. “if he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping”.

Here sleeping is spiritual sleeping, in other words, sleeping in our sins. When Jesus comes again, if he finds us sleeping, how much he would be disappointed. But when he comes back, if we welcome him at that moment, how much he would be happy! When he returns, if we are doing his assigned task faithfully, how much he would appreciate us! There is a song titled "**Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Ole Oak Tree**". It was popular in 1970s. The song is told that there was a man who has "done his time" in prison. He wrote to his wife, asking her to tie a yellow ribbon around the "ole oak tree" in front of the house which the bus will pass by if she wants him to return to her life. If he does not see such a ribbon, he will remain on the bus (taking that to mean he is not welcomed). To his amazement, the entire bus cheers the response – there are 100 yellow ribbons around the tree, a sign he is very much welcome. In the same way, Jesus said that he will come back. So let us welcome him with a spiritual yellow ribbon (keep watch, be alert, be on guard, preach the gospel).

As conclusion, Jesus is coming again to gather his elect. No matter how long it takes, he will surely come. He wants us to do his assigned task faithfully and keep watch to the end.