

The Seduction Of The Non-Elect

The Lord Jesus had been asked by his disciples what signs will precede the destruction of Jerusalem, the desolation of the temple and the overthrow of the Jewish nation. His comments here in Mark 13, and in Matthew 24 and Luke 21, tell the disciples what to look for and expect. Christ's words were given as timely warnings to prompt His people to flee their homes for safety when the judgments coming on the Jewish nation begin.

Daniel's prophecy

The 'abomination of desolation' of which the Lord speaks is a reference to the book of Daniel and means the Roman armies who would surround, enter and destroy the city. The Saviour warns that when the time comes the enemy will act swiftly with a ferocity unequalled in human history. It would take almost forty years but the wrath of God and judgment of Jesus Christ would be severely visited upon the Jews who slew the Son of God and proudly declared, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Mat 27:25).

God's elect people

Three references in these verses to the Lord's 'elect' are particularly notable. First, the Saviour tells His disciples the coming days of terror and destruction will be shortened, or lessened, for the sake of the elect. The meaning is that the complete annihilation of the Jews would not be permitted but would be prevented. A remnant would be saved for the sake of the Lord's chosen people, either those living at that time or their descendants in generations to come.

False preachers

Second, we are told there will arise men whose claims to be alternative saviours with other ways of salvation and deliverance are so plausible, and their powers so persuasive, as to deceive many, even, says the Lord, if it were possible the very elect of God, the very Bride of Christ. However, it is not possible! The Lord's chosen will not and cannot be finally deceived. Having been chosen by the grace of God to eternal life, and in consequence having truly believed and followed Christ, the elect will not be seduced by another gospel.

The elect gathered in

Third, this period of destruction and devastation will bring to an end the Jewish religion with its sacrifices and cause the gospel to surge outwards amongst the Gentile nations. The Son of man will come in the clouds with great saving power. His messengers of light, His gospel ministers, will go forth 'bringing many sons unto glory'. The Lord Jesus sends His preachers into the world to gather His chosen, redeemed people from the ends of the earth by the preaching of the gospel.

Switching off the light

The going out of the sun, moon and falling stars typifies the removal of divine light from the Jews. The presence and glory of Christ will shine no more amongst them. The light of the scriptures will grow dim. The prophets who once guided the Jewish nation through this world will no longer grace their dark night and the Jewish people, having lost their pillar of fire will be plunged into darkness. In turn, the Sun of Righteousness will rise upon the Gentiles and the gospel will lighten the world as the Lord Jesus Christ is preached to the nations and shines on them.

'I have foretold you all things'

In these few verses our blessed Saviour answered the disciples' questions about when these things should be and opened to their view a picture of imminent local devastation and progressive worldwide transformation. Christ's kingdom was not Jewish and it was not physical, it was global and spiritual. The chosen would be brought to Christ, the elect people of God would be called from every direction and gathered upon the four winds into the garner of Christ's harvest.

The blessed elect

Tomorrow, God willing, we shall draw further lessons from the Saviour's assertions about His elect people and the protecting hand of God that rests on them. By grace Christ's light shines in their hearts, illuminating their understanding so they are not deceived though all the world lies in darkness. Despite the seduction of the non-elect, the salvation of God's chosen people is assured and precisely ordained as to time, place, means and even the content of the message that

leads them to Christ and glory.

Amen

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