



The Beginnings of Birth Pangs

Mark 13:1-8

1. The Temple (verses 1-2)

2. The Trouble (verses 3-8)

Last week, we went through the entire thirteenth chapter of Mark, looking at the 19 applications contained in the chapter. It would do well for us if we would read the entire chapter again. These are words that deal with the future. Jesus was telling His disciples of the things that were going to take place. He begins with the destruction of the temple (in verses 1-2). He continues with the trouble that will come (in verses 3-22). He then speaks of His return (in verses 24-27). He then gives a few parables for us to learn as it relates to future events (in verses 28-36).

The major question as we come to these words is this. Have these things been fulfilled? Now, I believe that some of these things have been fulfilled. I believe that some of these things have not been fulfilled. But, overall, I hope that you see that many of the things that Jesus discusses aren't so abnormal. In other words, many of the things that Jesus says are describing life in this fallen world.

The burden of my message this morning is this: Let us discern the times. Too often people look to this war or that war and worry and fear that we are near the end of time. Too often people hear of an earthquake someplace and instantly think that God is telling us that He is going to return soon.

One of the things that we will see in our text this morning (verses 1-8) is that much of what is said is amazingly regular. That is, Jesus is describing terrible things (to be sure) -- wars, earthquakes, famines. But, this is life in this world. This has been life since the days of Jesus. The only remarkable thing in our verses this morning is the destruction of the temple, which was fulfilled in the days of the disciples. It was truly amazing.

But, much of what is said describes life in a sin-curses world. Let's read.

Mark 13

As He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!" And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down."

As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew were questioning Him privately, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?" And Jesus began to say to them, "See to it that no one misleads you. Many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He!' and will mislead many. When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be frightened; those things must take place; but that is not yet the end. For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will also be famines. These things are merely the beginning of birth pangs.

"But be on your guard; for they will deliver you to the courts, and you will be flogged in the synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them. The gospel must first be preached to all the nations. When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but it is the Holy Spirit. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. You will be hated by all because of My name, but the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.

"But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. The one who is on the housetop must not go down, or go in to get anything out of his house; and the one who is in the field must not turn back to get his coat. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! But pray that it may not happen in the winter. For those days will be a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never will. Unless the Lord had shortened those days, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom He chose, He shortened the days. And then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ'; or, 'Behold, He is there'; do not believe him; for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order to lead astray, if possible, the elect. But take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance.

"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven.

"Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know

that summer is near. Even so, you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that He is near, right at the door. Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

"Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time will come. It is like a man away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, assigning to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert. Therefore, be on the alert—for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning—in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep. What I say to you I say to all, 'Be on the alert!'"

At this point, I want to jump into our exposition. I have two points this morning, The Temple (verses 1-2) and The Trouble (verses 3-13). First, we see the ...

1. The Temple (verses 1-2) ...

In verse 1, ...

Mark 13:1

As He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!"

Indeed, the temple was a wonderful sight. Herod, the king, was responsible for building this temple. It was actually the third temple to sit on this site.

The first temple was built by Solomon. When King David passed away, he left a kingdom in peace and with many resources. A healthy chunk of these resources went toward the building of the temple. It took nearly 200,000 men seven years to build it. They imported the wood from Lebanon. They gathered the stone from quarries. They covered the inside of the walls with gold!

It was a glorious sight. When the Queen of Sheba heard about Solomon and the glory of his kingdom, she paid him a visit. When she heard the wisdom of Solomon and saw the temple that he had built (1 Kings 10:4), she said, ...

1 Kings 10:6-7

"It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. Nevertheless I did not believe the reports, until I came and my eyes have seen it. And behold, the half was not told me. You exceed in wisdom and prosperity the report which I heard"

It was a great sight. But, this temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, in 586 B. C. He captured Jerusalem and burned the city with fire (2 Kings 25:8-12). He then took many exiles back to Babylon.

The second temple was built 70 years later by the Jews who returned from exile. Zerubbabel was among those who returned. He led the building of the temple. Ezra and Nehemiah came later to continue to rebuild Jerusalem. Nehemiah built the wall. Ezra taught the law.

Now, this temple wasn't quite as glorious as the first one. In fact, there were some old men who saw this temple. They were little boys when the first temple was destroyed. They remembered its glory. And they wept when they saw how small this temple was in comparison (Ezra 3:12). Even Haggai, the prophet, said that the second temple, "seemed ... like nothing in comparison" (Haggai 3:2).

For many years, the temple served the people of Israel well. However, it was often used as a military fortress when trouble erupted in Jerusalem. For instance, about fifty years before the birth of Jesus, there were some political difficulties in the land. In which 12,000 Jews were killed. Many used the temple as a fortress to withstand the attackers. The result was that the Temple was often defiled and damaged.

The third temple was built by Herod, who didn't like the fact that the second temple was used as a fortress. So, Herod thought that rebuilding was necessary. In a speech to the Jews, he told them that the temple didn't measure up to the glory of Solomon's temple. And that he wanted to fund the building of a new temple.

Josephus recorded that Herod built the temple to make a name for himself. Whatever the reason, Herod provided the funding and the push to rebuild the temple. Construction on the temple began somewhere around 20 B. C. It took 46 years to build the temple (John 2:20), and was under constant construction until the Romans came and destroyed it. It was a magnificent structure.

About a dozen years ago, Yvonne and I had the privilege of seeing the remains. And what's remaining is remarkable. I remember how stunned I was to see how beautiful the stones were. They were made of white limestone that glistened in the sun. Each stone was intricately carved with beveled edges.

I also remember how large the stones supporting the temple mount were and that no mortar was used to hold the stones in place. They were cut perfectly flat, so that the stones could sit upon each other without any crack in between. Furthermore, the stones were so large, that none of them were going to be nudged out of their places.

I remember how they pointed out one stone that was 12m x 3m x 4m. That's 40 feet long, 10 feet high, and 13 feet deep. This stone weighs

in the area of 400 tons. How they got it there? I have no idea. Most of the stones were smaller, weighing only 2 to 5 tons each. How they got these stones there, I have no idea.

All of these stones supported the temple mount, upon which the temple sat. It must have been truly gorgeous. Tacitus describes the Temple as "possessing enormous riches." [\[1\]](#) The Talmud said that Herod's temple was the most magnificent building in the world. [\[2\]](#) And these were the riches upon which the disciples fixed their gaze, as recorded in verse 1, "Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!"

I find this remarkable that the disciples were still marveling at the buildings. They had seen these stones many, many times. And they were still so magnificent, that they continued to inspire. Usually, the things that you see over and over and over again become so regular that you hardly notice them anymore. But not these buildings.

Then, in verse 2, Jesus tells of their destruction.

Mark 13:2

And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down."

Here is Jesus giving the disciples a prophecy. He prophesies of the destruction of the temple.

At the end of chapter 12, we saw how corrupt the worship in the temple had become. The religious leaders were prideful men who liked "to walk around in long robes, and [liked] respectful greetings in the market places, and chief seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets" (Mark 12:38-39). They devoured widows houses and "for appearance's sake [they offered] long prayers." (12:40). Of these men, Jesus says, "These will receive greater condemnation."

In the very last paragraph in chapter 12, we saw how the Pharisees oppressed the poor, compelling them to give all that they have. The widow is case in point.

The religious system was broken. It needed repair. And Jesus says here in verse 2 how the judgment will come. "Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down."

I love the accuracy of this prophecy. If you go to Jerusalem today, you can't see any of the temple itself. It was destroyed when the Romans entered Jerusalem in 70 A. D. All you see now is 35 Acres of walled property. In order to make the floor of the temple mount so smooth, the ancients have brought in tons and tons and tons of filler. Today, two mosques sit upon the temple mount. The most prominent is the Dome of the Rock. It is an octagon-shaped structure in the center of the temple mount. It has a dome of solid gold. The other mosque is called the Al-Aqsa mosque. It sits on the southern end of the temple mount. It faces toward Mecca. But, in the days of Jesus, there was one prominent structure on the temple mount: Herod's temple.

Herod's temple may have been right in the middle of the temple mount. There were various courts: The court of the Gentiles. The court of the women. The bronze altar was there. The bronze laver was there. In the holy place, you had the lampstand, the table of showbread, and the altar of incense. And behind the veil, inside the holy of holies sat the Ark of the Covenant. But, where exactly the building was, we don't know. There are no remains of the temple at all.

In the academic circles today, there are debates with differing views about the exact location of the temple on the temple mount. I have read some of the arguments one way or another. A few years ago, Biblical Archaeology Review put forth several theories explaining the location of the temple on the temple mount. [\[3\]](#) Hershel Shanks, the editor of the magazine asked David Jacobson, an expert on the Temple Mount, to weigh the pros and cons of the two major theories of the location of the temple. Asher Kaufman holds one view. Leen Ritmeyer holds another view. But, Jacobson has his own theory of where the temple was. So, he put forth his theory. This was followed up by Leen Ritmeyer and Asher Kaufman who defended their theories.

It's all confusing and difficult to know what's really right. No, it's actually impossible to know, because there is no archeological evidence for where the temple was. Every stone has been torn down! There is not a single stone left upon another of the Herodian temple. All that we have are the walls that fortified the mount upon which the temple sat!

Such is the accuracy of the prophecy of Jesus. Jesus said, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down." Such things would have been difficult for the disciples to believe. If the stones supporting the wall are any indication of the nature of the temple, itself, it would be difficult to believe that all would be destroyed. But, it has. It has all been done! The temple is no more.

And here's the big point of application. If Jesus could predict the absolute destruction of the temple, then He is able to be trusted with other prophecies that He made. These come in my next point.

We have seen The Temple (verses 1-2). It will be destroyed. Now, we come to ...
2. The Trouble (verses 3-13)

It will come. We see this beginning in verse 3, ...

Mark 13:3-4

As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew were questioning

Him privately, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?"

We see here a change of location. They left the temple mount and went east. They went down the Kidron Valley and up onto the Mount of Olives. In all, a walk of about a kilometer -- not too far. It would have taken them about 20-30 minutes to get there. And when they arrived upon the Mount of Olives, they were sitting down, opposite the temple. From the Mount of Olives, you have a great view of the entire temple mount.

I'm sure that such a view would have prompted their memory about what Jesus said. He said something about "these great buildings" falling down? Really? But, my guess is that the words of Jesus were rumbling through their minds ever since He uttered them. "Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down." "Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down." "Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down."

Certainly, during the walk across the Kidron Valley wasn't the appropriate time to say anything. But, when they had seated themselves and when they had looked upon the Old city of Jerusalem and when the temple mount was staring them in the face, it was appropriate for them to ask about it.

Mark 13:4

"Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?"

Not well their question. It's a two-fold question. When will these things be? And what will be the sign when these things are fulfilled? In Matthew's gospel, the disciples also ask about "the end of the age."

In the response that Jesus gives, please note that Jesus doesn't give any indication of the time that these things will take place. Rather, He simply tells them about the trouble that they might expect. There are many in our day and age who can learn a thing or two from this. People today are always trying to learn when Jesus is coming back, rather than trying to learn how to wait for Jesus to come back.

This is what the entire chapter is about. The disciples ask, "When are these things going to be." And Jesus says, "Here's what you can expect." "You can expect trouble." If there is anything to learn from these words of Jesus, it's that life will be hard until He returns.

I have entitled my message this morning, "The Beginning of Birth Pangs." Jesus uses this phrase in verse 8. After talking about the deceivers who come; after talking about the wars that will take place; after talking about the natural disasters that take place (earthquakes and famines), Jesus then says, "These things are merely the beginning of birth pangs."

Let's take this analogy into the real world. A woman comes to the doctor. She is obviously pregnant. And she asks the doctor, "Doctor, when is my baby due?" And the doctor proceeds to tell her all about labor, and what to expect. "At some point, your water will break. You will start having contractions. At first, they will be irregular, coming every 15 minutes or so. They may begin feeling like some cramps. But, some of them may hurt quite a bit. That's the beginning of birth pangs. It will get worse."

This is what Jesus says here. Peter and James and John and Andrew were asking about when. Jesus told them of the beginning trouble that they would face. But, in these words, Jesus said, ...

Don't be misled.

Mark 13:5-6

See to it that no one misleads you. Many will come in My name, saying, "I am He!" and will mislead many.

In other words, people will rise up and proclaim to others, "I am the Christ! I am the anointed one from the Father!" But, there's more to it than merely saying, "I am the Christ." They don't stop there. They continue on to say, "So, you must follow me. You must do what I tell you to do."

Many will be misled by their example. This is a sad fact of history. Many have come and have claimed that they were the Christ or that they were some anointed prophet. In so doing, they have obtained a following for themselves.

The early disciples saw and heard of several of them. Josephus, who was a Jewish historian during the time of the early church, told of how the city of Jerusalem was filled with many deceivers, who persuaded multitudes of people to follow them into the wilderness. Once they were there, they claimed that they would exhibit many signs and wonders, which would be performed by the providence of God. [\[4\]](#)

Josephus told of one such deceiver who came out of Egypt to Jerusalem, claiming to be a prophet. He persuaded some six hundred people to follow him to the Mount of Olives, where he would command the walls of Jerusalem to fall down. When Felix, the governor, found out about these things, he killed four hundred of this man's followers and took the other two hundred alive. [\[4\]](#)

Josephus also told of a man named Theuda, who persuaded many people to follow him to the river Jordan, claiming to be a prophet. He claimed that at his own word, the river would be divided and they would cross the river (just as in the days of Moses and Joshua). However, Fadus, procurator of Judea heard about this man's efforts and slew many of them, including Theudas, himself, whom they beheaded. [\[5\]](#)

Here's the reality of the situation: throughout all the ages, there have always been false Christs and false prophets. We are not immune to this today. In the 1970's Jim Jones took nearly a thousand people down to Guyana, where they drank the Kool Aid and died. In the 1990's,

David Koresh had about a hundred followers in Waco, Texas. He believed that he was the Lamb of Revelation 5, because he received revelations from God in how to interpret the seven seals in Revelation 6. On April 19, 1993, during a FBI assault on their compound, he and 73 other members of the Branch Davidians died.

Today, there is a Russian man named Sergei Torop, who calls himself, "Vissarion Christ." He is affectionately known as "Jesus of Siberia." He believes that He is the reincarnation of Jesus. He lives in a mountain log cabin near the town of Petropavlovka, near the southern border of Siberia. He has thousands of followers who are creating what they call "The Last Testament Church."

Jesus says, "Don't be misled" by these false Christs. Now, the chances that any of us will really be misled by one of these people claiming to be Christ is really quite slim. However, there are plenty of dangers out there. There are dangers of being misled.

Religion is a great tool to get lots of followers and obtain lots of power. And many have used it for such. There are many false religious leaders across this planet. And many of them are self-deceived. Many people are caught up in the deception, particularly when it comes to predicting the end of the world.

A case in point in our day would be Harold Camping. He is the president of Family Radio, which provides Christian radio to some 150 markets across America. He used this radio station to deceive many into believing that Jesus was returning. The first time was in 1994. He wrote a book entitled, "1994?" in which he detailed how the Bible predicted that judgment day would be on September 6, 1994. Well, September 6, 1994 came and went.

His second prediction came in 2011. Harold Camping thought that Jesus would return to earth on May 21, 2011. When this didn't quite turn out right, he modified his prophecy to say that Jesus has a "spiritual coming." The real judgment was coming on October 21, 2011. Well, October 21, 2011 has come and gone.

I don't know how many people were caught up in actually following Harold Camping in these things. I would suspect that the number was in the thousands. These were people who were genuinely convinced that the end of the world was coming. I doubt that future generations will know much about Harold Camping. But, the same thing has been tried before. And it has stuck.

The Jehovah's Witnesses claim that Jesus came back in 1914. That's when "the time of the Gentiles ended," and the "last days" began. That's when they say the kingdom was established in heaven. Today, they are Jehovah's representatives upon earth. And countless millions are following them.

In the 1840's, William Miller obtained for himself many, many followers. People were convinced that Jesus would return in 1844. When He didn't return, he and his followers developed the theology that Jesus didn't come to earth on that day, but Jesus entered the heavenly holy place on that day and began the process of purging our sins. And when Jesus is done, then He will return. There are plenty of people who still believe this today.

If you get anything from my message this morning, get this. Don't be misled.

The second command in our text comes in verse 7, ...

Don't be frightened.

Mark 13:7-8

When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be frightened; those things must take place; but that is not yet the end. For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will also be famines. These things are merely the beginning of birth pangs.

When we anticipate the end, we ought not anticipate a time of great peace. It is the false prophet who announces "Peace, peace" (Jer. 6:14; Ezek 13:10) when there is no peace. Jesus says that there is going to be conflict.

This world has never known peace. Not in the times of Jesus. Not in our times. There have always been wars. There have always been rumors of wars. There have always been nations rising against nations. There have always been kingdoms rising against kingdoms.

From cover to cover, the Bible is filled with wars. In Genesis 14, we read of wars in the time of Abraham. In the time of Joshua, there were wars and rumors of wars. In the time of the Judges, there were nations rising against nations. You read through the books of Samuel and Kings and Chronicles, and you are inundated with kingdoms rising against kingdoms. You can hardly find a time in world history in which some nation was not fighting against some other nation in war. [\[6\]](#)

For the disciples of Jesus' day, it was no different. The historian, Josephus, wrote a book entitled "War of the Jews," in which he traced the history of the many wars fought against the Jews. None was greater than the war launched against them by the Romans, when Titus came and destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A. D. Many Jewish people died in the attack. Since that day, there have always been wars and conflicts in the world. From the crusades of the middle ages to the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, there has never been a time of global peace. Conflicts have been world-wide: World War I and World War II. Conflicts have been among nations: North and South Korea fought in the Korean war. There have been civil wars, religious wars, and trade wars.

As Jesus paints a picture of life, it's not pretty. We ought not to expect that everything will go so easy in this life.

At the end of verse 8, Jesus speaks about natural disasters that will come upon us.

Mark 13:8

... there will be earthquakes in various places; there will also be famines. These things are merely the beginning of birth pangs.

Jesus predicted earthquakes and famines. Josephus tells of an earthquake in Judea. He wrote, "there broke out a prodigious storm in the night, with the utmost violence, and very strong winds, with the largest showers of rain, with continued lightnings, terrible thunderings, and amazing concussions and bellowsings of the earth, that was in an earthquake." These things were so terrible that Josephus commented that "any one would guess that these wonders foreshowed some grand calamities that were coming".^[1] In 109 AD, Cornelius Tacitus, a secular Latin writer, also mentioned earthquakes in Laodicea and Rome during the reign of Nero, who reigned shortly before the fall of Jerusalem.^[8]

Earthquakes have continually shook this globe since the days of Jesus. In 526 A. D. there was an earthquake in Antioch, Syria, where 300,000 people were killed. In 1556, an earthquake took place in the Senshi Province of China where over 830,000 people were killed. In 1755, an earthquake took the lives of 60,000 people at Lisbon, Portugal. In the kingdom of Naples in 1857, an earthquake took more than 12,000 lives. In 1783, 30,000 people died in "the great Calabrian earthquake." In the 1900's major earthquakes were recorded in San Francisco, Italy, Turkey, China, Japan, Chile, and Peru (only to name a few cities). The Tsunami that hit the coasts of southeast Asia, killing more than 200,000 people, was caused by an earthquake.

Not only have earthquakes been with us since the days of Jesus. Famines have been a reality on the planet since the days of Jesus. There were famines during the days of the early church. In Acts 11:28, a prophet named Agabus "stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world." Luke adds, "And this took place in the reign of Claudius."

When Josephus described his time, he wrote of how many people in Jerusalem died for lack of food. He then described of how a certain queen, named Helena did great good for the people in Jerusalem. Josephus writes of an event that took place in his lifetime: "Queen Helena sent some of her servants to Alexandria with money to buy a great quantity of corn, and others of them to Cyprus, to bring a cargo of dried figs. And as soon as they were come back, and had brought those provisions, which was done very quickly, she distributed food to those that were in want of it, and left a most excellent memorial behind her of this benefaction, which she bestowed on our whole nation." Josephus also records that Helena's son, Izates, sent great sums of money to the principal men in Jerusalem to help with the famine as well.^[9]

But, famines weren't just a problem with the Jews in Jerusalem at this time. Famines have always taken place throughout the world. The Bible records famine in the time of Abraham (Gen. 12:10). There was famine in the time of Isaac (Gen. 26:1). There was famine in the time of Jacob and Joseph (Gen. 42:1-6). Ruth was born in Moab, because her father-in-law went there due to a famine (Ruth 1:1). The history of Israel and Judah is intermingled with famine. Famines have continued throughout all of history up until this day. In recent years there have been famines in Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe -- just to name a few countries.

OK. "So what?" I hope that you are stuck with the fact that Jesus isn't really telling us anything different about life in the future than the regular life that we experience. Oh, there may be a sense in these verses that it's going to get worse before Jesus returns. And that may well be the case. But, it has to be really bad before anything especially alarms us as perhaps nearing the end.

But, even if it gets really bad, we still need to follow the words of Jesus. In verse 7, He instructs us, "Do not be frightened."

Let's look at Psalm 46. We see in this Psalm that God is Our Refuge (verses 1-3). God is Our River (verses 4-7). God is Our Rest (verses 8-11) The message of the Bible is that you need always to seek your refuge in God, whatever your difficulties may be. Have the situations of the world stirred your heart to fear? Seek refuge in God. Are you in danger? Seek your safety in God's protective care. Are you finding yourself to be weak? Seek strength from God. Are you trapped in your sin? Seek refuge in the cross of Jesus Christ.

Are you fearful of the future? Run to God and find Him to be a help in your trouble. I leave you with Psalm 46, verse 10: "Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on December 9, 2012 by Steve Brandon.
For more information see www.rvbc.cc.

[1] Histories 5.8.1. see <http://www.abu.nb.ca/courses/ntintro/jerusaltempl4.htm>

[2] The Babylonian Talmud, Bava Bathra 4a

[3] July/August 1999; September/October 1999; March/April 2000

[4] Josephus, Antiquities 20:8:5

[5] Josephus, Antiquities, 20:5:1

[6] <http://boards.straightdope.com/sdmb/showthread.php?t=254219>

[7] Josephus, Wars of the Jews, 4:4:5

[8] Tacitus, *The Annals*, Book 12 and 14

[9] *Antiquities* 20:2:5