

Mark 13:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!

Analysis

Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! The disciple's wonder reflects Herod's temple's magnificence. Begun 20 BC, this expansion used stones up to 40 feet long, weighing 100+ tons. Josephus described white marble walls gleaming like snow, gold-plated pinnacles visible from miles away. The Greek *potapoi lithoi* (ποταποὶ λίθοι, 'what manner of stones!') expresses amazement at size and grandeur.

This marveling contrasts sharply with Jesus' imminent prediction of destruction (v. 2). The temple symbolized Jewish identity, God's presence, covenant faithfulness. To first-century Jews, imagining its destruction was unthinkable—yet Jesus foresaw it clearly. His prophecy fulfilled in AD 70 when Titus razed Jerusalem, temple stones literally toppled.

Historical Context

Herod the Great began temple renovation ca. 20 BC to curry favor with Jews and display his architectural prowess. Construction continued until AD 64, just six years before Rome destroyed it. The temple complex covered 36 acres. Jesus spoke this ca. AD 30-33, roughly 40 years before fulfillment. The Olivet Discourse (Mark 13, Matthew 24, Luke 21) was delivered during Passion Week, Jesus' final days before crucifixion. The disciples' awe at temple stones shows they hadn't grasped

His mission's radical nature—kingdom coming through temple's destruction, not preservation.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What 'magnificent stones'—impressive religious structures or traditions—might God be calling you to see as temporary rather than ultimate?
2. How does the disciples' focus on external grandeur contrast with Jesus' focus on coming judgment and spiritual reality?
3. What does this scene teach about the difference between human estimation of religious impressiveness and God's eternal purposes?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ λέγει αὐτοῦ
And as he went of his out of the temple saith of his
G2532 G1607 G846 G1537 G3588 G2411 G3004 G846

εἷς τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ Διδάσκαλε ἵδε ποταπαὶ λίθοι
one G3588 disciples of his Master G1492 what of stones
G1520 G3101 G846 G1320 G4217 G3037

καὶ ποταπαὶ οἰκοδομαί
And what buildings
G2532 G4217 G3619

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 10:4 (Parallel theme): Then the glory of the LORD went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the LORD'S glory.

Ezekiel 8:6 (Temple): He said furthermore unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? but turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations.

Ezekiel 10:19 (Parallel theme): And the cherubims lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight: when they went out, the wheels also were beside them, and every one stood at the door of the east gate of the LORD'S house; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above.

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