

# Small Group Curriculum

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## *Week of 11-11-12*

1. Take a few minutes to explain the concept of proleptic prophecy. In Scripture, a proleptic prophecy predicts an event in the immediate future and a far-off event. For example, Isaiah 7:14 contains a prophecy of a child named Immanuel that would be born to a virgin. The Hebrew word “virgin” can mean a woman who hasn’t had sexual relations, or simply a young maiden. While we are more familiar with the prophecy being fulfilled in Jesus’ virgin birth, it was originally fulfilled in Isaiah’s day. King Ahaz’s nation was under siege from the Assyrians; the birth of the first Immanuel baby was to be a sign that he shouldn’t make treaties with other kings, but to trust in God. So the Immanuel prophecy had two fulfillments. The same is true in today’s passage. Jesus’ words predicted the fall of Jerusalem and its temple in 70 AD. The same prophecy also foretells the coming of the Anti-Christ and the tribulation.
2. Have a volunteer read Mark 13:14-27. How do the tone of Jesus’ words compare to anything we’ve heard him say up to this point in Mark’s Gospel? If you were one of Jesus’ disciples, how would you have reacted to this dramatic change in Jesus’ teaching?
3. Imagine that you were a Jew who survived the siege of Jerusalem in 70 AD. How would those events have changed your view of Jesus’ authority in light of this passage?
4. Jesus’ charge to “flee to the mountains” ran counter to the popular sentiment that led to the Jewish revolt against Rome. What are some other examples where following Jesus puts us at odds with popular political solutions?
5. The historian Josephus noted that the siege of Jerusalem resulted in famine, cannibalism, and slaughter. How do verses 19-20 assert God’s control over the then worst of situations?
6. Pastor Derek noted that beginning in verse 19, the scope of Jesus’ prophecy turns more cosmic in nature. Compare Mark 13:19 to Daniel 12:1, Jesus seems to be talking about the same events as Daniel, a coming time of great suffering that occurs before God restores all things.
7. Have a volunteer re-read verses 21-22. Point out that during the first Jewish-Roman War, several people offered themselves up as prophets or messiahs and provoked people to go to war against Rome, which only led to their deaths. ASK: “Since this is a proleptic prophecy about the end times, what kinds of spiritual deception can we expect in the future? What would be the consequences of buying into this deception?”
8. Have a volunteer reread 24-27. Vs. 24 suggests that the end times will be like an undoing of creation (Genesis 1:4, 19). What hopeful event occurs after this catastrophe? (Revelation 12:1)
9. How would Jesus’ appearance at the end of these frightening events encourage his disciples? How should it encourage us?
10. What would some unhealthy responses to this passage be? What are some faithful ways we could live in light of these prophecies?