The Practical Message: The Birth Pangs of a New Age
The Spiritual Message: Storing treasurers in Heaven

While Solomon was in Gibeon, God came to him in a dream and asked him what he wanted as the new King of Israel. Solomon asked for wisdom to lead his people well. God gave him his heart's desire along with wealth, power and a long life. God also directed Solomon to build a temple of worship in Jerusalem.

Thirty years later the Temple Mount in Jerusalem was completed. Throughout the Mediterranean World, this temple was considered the largest and the most beautiful. This Temple Mount was larger than the temple complex in Ephesus. In Ephesus their main city goddess was Artemis and this temple was considered one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

Jews all over the known world were proud of their Temple Mount complex in Jerusalem. For this was a visible sign of the power of their God compared to all the other gods in the Middle East.
The Practical Message: The Birth Pangs of a New Age

Mark 13: 1-2

As Jesus was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!”

“And do you see all these great buildings?” replied Jesus. “Not one stone here will be left on another; everyone will be thrown down.” AMEN.

Jesus ministry began around 30 AD and ended around 33AD.

In the early 60's AD the Jews began to revolt against Rome once again. Every three years or so the Jews would begin another revolt either by not paying the taxes or armed insurrection.

Rome sent the 10th Legion from Damascus to end this Jewish revolt once and for all. As the legion crossed over the mountain range and entered the Sea of Galilee area, they destroyed the towns in this entire area. Small farm villages including Nazareth, larger towns like Magdala were destroyed. Those Jews not killed were sold into slavery. The fishing fleet at
the various fishing villages on the Sea of Galilee were attacked
and burned completely.

By 66AD the 10th Legion was besieging Jerusalem. The Jews could not defend their city against the power of the Roman Legion. The legion broke through the city gates and mass destruction began.

The central symbol of the Jewish Faith and the Jewish Culture was utterly destroyed. The entire complex was leveled so that all that was left was the foundation. All that remains today is part of the western foundation wall. This is the Wailing Wall that the Jews pray to in Jerusalem.

Jesus, the Great Prophets proclamation had come true;

Mark 13:2

"Not one stone was left on another, everyone will be thrown down. Amen.

In 70 AD this Roman Legion attacked the last stronghold of the Jewish Resistance, Masada. Masada is a city Herod built on a plateau overlooking the Dead Sea. Everyone there had committed suicide.
The Spiritual Message: Storing treasurers in Heaven

Mark 13: 7-8

When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains. Amen.

In the evening news, all we hear and see are images of war, fires, earthquakes, hurricanes, famine and destructive political posturing.

Should we live our lives in fear of what is to come?

Why did Jesus, the Great Prophet, mention the future destruction of the Temple Mount and by association the Jewish culture?

Jesus words make you think of death and destruction. However, the key word in this entire scriptural passage is "Birth".

Birth signifies a new beginning. Jesus is talking about a "New Jerusalem" a "New Garden of Eden".

Jesus sits at the right hand of God and is directing history. We are not alone, we live in God's world.
This prophecy is recorded in Mark's Gospel as a warning and a sign of "Hope for the future!"

Jesus is showing us the warning signs, the birth pains of the new world order to shows us he is in control and for us not be afraid.

The worlds citizens are going through birth pains as humans change their focus from self/power/wealth to focusing on God.

Jesus is showing us that storing up wealth in this world will not survive as the old world order goes through its birth pains and the new world order begins.

How do we here at Adolphustown Conway Pastoral Charge deal with these birth pains we see and hear about every day?

We store up treasures on earth which are spiritual. Our spiritual journey is focused on hope, faith, joy and love.

*We express our hope* by the prayers we pour out from our heart here in this your holy place. We pray each day to you, Jesus and you know our deepest fears and hopes.

*We express our faith* by coming together each Sunday, in this your holy place, feeling your presence. Our lives are renewed, because we feel your uplifting hand and your leading us on the path that draws us closer to you.
We express our joy, by helping family, friends, each other in this wonderful and loving faith community.

We express our love, by forgiving, by healing others emotional scars, by uplifting our friends and neighbors in their struggles in life. I know that many of you truly love your neighbor and your acts with kindness told to me are wonderful ways that you help with birth pains.

We store up treasures in heaven, where they survive and thrive and last for all eternity. The birth pains cannot affect these treasures.

Jesus written message in this Markan scripture is a warning of what is to come and to confirm that you will not travel this journey alone.

Jesus spiritual message is that he wants to have a personal relationship with you and the future "Garden of Eden" awaits you.

Jesus spiritual message is that as a faithful person, as a faith community, we can store treasures in heaven that will support us for all eternity.
We can continue to grow our spirituality by our prayers each day, by listening for the quiet voice calling you to Jesus.

By continuing your acts of love to your neighbor, and by reading the Holy Scriptures, our faith life is enriched and uplifted. The birth pains leading us into the "New Jerusalem or the new Garden of Eden" now are understandable.

Jesus, who sits at the right hand of God, directs history and will always ensure that even though the birth pains are difficult, his loving hand will support us always.

In these days, as these birth pains continue to escalate, we remain safe in the loving arms of Jesus.

Birth means a new beginning, the past is forgiven and forgotten. Jesus Grace, compassion and forgiveness is made real in this new birth.

We have stored up treasures in heaven that proclaim our devotion to you, Jesus, the Great Prophet.
Let us pray

Our Creator God made the Garden of Eden to show us how to live in peace and joy in this world.

Adam and Eve ate of the Tree of Life and their eyes were open to understand evil, greed, violence and self gratification. By their actions evil entered the world.

Jesus is proclaiming the birth pains as the world returns to its roots, the "New Jerusalem", the "New Garden of Eden."

Birth is a new beginning!

Jesus ministry shows us how to recreate a "New Garden of Eden" within your own heart, our own family and this faith community.

As Christians our focus must always grow to helping each other through love, kindness, compassion and understanding.

Come Jesus, bring the "New Jerusalem" the "New Garden of Eden" to us soon.

Amen.