

MARK 13:1-2

ARCHITECTURAL PERSPECTIVE

¹ *As he was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!"* ² *"Do you see all these great buildings?" replied Jesus. "Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down."*

In the human experience, small is cozy while big is awesome. The huge cathedrals with the vaulted arches and soaring spires fill us with the feeling of transcendence appropriate to the worship of the all powerful God. In contrast, the small country chapel elicits the sensation of the warm and intimate presence of the God of love. What we need to keep in mind is that in both cases we are dealing with our reaction, that which is elicited in us, and not the actual transcendence or personal presence of God. This architectural symbolism is an aid to our understanding of the One being worshipped and not the actual nature or glory of God. No matter how magnificent and awesome an edifice is, God is infinitely more magnificent and awesome. He is so much more powerful than anything in creation that when he moves there is nothing that will not dissolve before him. Jesus is not teaching us that the material is evil or useless, but that it is only a shadow of the reality of the Creator. Whether we are viewing a magnificent cathedral or the Grand Canyon, we need to see through the stones because they are there as windows to the awesome nature of God, and know that when God appears the windows will no longer be needed.

O God, as I gaze up at the vast array of stars in the night sky, contemplate the intricacies of a living cell, stand in the mist of a great water fall or listen to thousands of voices singing hymns, touch me through your Spirit that I might remember that you are the reality behind all these wonders and fall to my knees in worship before you. Amen.