

Luke 21:5-19
The Coming Destruction of Jerusalem

Introduction: This takes place on the evening of March 31, 33 AD. Jesus has left the temple (cf. Mt. 24:1-3; Mk. 13:1-4) and is taking the road back to Bethany just on the East side of the peak of the Mount of Olives. Thus, this is known as the Olivet Discourse, Jesus' most detailed teaching concerning future events.

His purpose is not to satisfy their curiosity about the future but rather to prepare His Jewish disciples for what lies ahead for Israel and Jerusalem.

- 1) Jesus gives general teaching on the future—21:5-7
 - a) The setting—21:5-6
 - i) Impressed with externals—21:5 ⁵ *And while some were talking concerning the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and dedicated gifts,*
 - (1) Large white marble stones as large as 67x12x18
 - ii) Catastrophic destruction of Israel—21:6 ⁶ *“These things that you^{pl} see—the days will come in which not one stone will be left upon another that will not be demolished.”*
 - (1) As impressive as it is, it is still only temporary.
 - (2) He restates His earlier teaching from 19:43-44
 - b) The curiosity—21:7 ⁷ *So they asked Him, saying,*
 - The questions are asked by Peter, James, John, and Andrew (cf. Mk. 13:3)
 - i) *“Teacher, **when** therefore will these things happen?”*
 - (1) The plural (“these things”) indicates they understand this to include more than the temple’s destruction.
 - ii) *And **what** will be the sign that these things are about to take place?”*
 - (1) Jesus deliberately does not give them a sign for which to look.
 - iii) Luke does not include the third question concerning the end of the age (cf. Mt. 24:3)
- 2) Jesus warns His listeners concerning normal events—21:8-11 (re: 3 things)
 - a) Religious false messiahs—21:8 (the need for **DISCERNMENT**)
 - i) Stay alert—⁸ *“Watch out that you^{pl} are not misled;*
 - (1) Phony prophets—*for many will come in My name, saying, ‘I (emphatic) am He,’ (i.e. the Messiah)*
 - (2) Date-setters—*and, ‘The time has approached.’*
 - (3) This shows us that Jesus understood a significant interval between His departure and His return.
 - ii) Stay away—*Therefore, do not follow after them.*
 - b) Social and political chaos—21:9 ⁹ *But when you^{pl} hear of wars and revolutions, do not be terrified;*
 - i) Why? *because it is necessary for these things to happen first, but the end is not immediately.”*

- (1) Jerusalem's fall and destruction is simply an example of end-time chaos and destruction.
- c) Emotional unrest—21:10-11 ¹⁰ *Then He continued saying to them,*
- i) International hostility—21:10 *“People group will arise against people group, and kingdom against kingdom.*
- ii) Instability—21:11 (note the play on words)
- (1) Natural disasters—¹¹ *And there will be both great earthquakes, and famines [λιμός] and (epidemic) plagues [λοιμός] in various places;*
- (2) Visual displays—*and there will be both terrifying sights and great signs from heaven.*
- 3) Jesus teaches about specific events in the near future—21:12-19 ¹² *But before all these things, (what comes before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD)*
- a) Persecution begins—21:12-13 *they will lay their hands on you^{pl}, delivering you^{pl} to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you^{pl} before kings and governors*
- i) Why? *because of My name.*
- (1) Genuine allegiance to Christ costs something
- ii) The result—21:13 ¹³ *And it will turn out for you^{pl} to bear witness.*
- (1) An opportunity to bear witness to Jesus (cf. Phil. 1:12-13)
- b) Providential preparation—21:14-15 ¹⁴ *Therefore resolve in your^{pl} hearts not to rehearse beforehand how to defend yourselves;*
- i) No preparation for the courtroom is necessary
- ii) Why? ¹⁵ *for I (emphatic) will give you^{pl} words (lit. “a mouth,” i.e. verbal ability) and wisdom which none of your^{pl} adversaries will be able to contradict or resist. (cf. Ac. 6:10)*
- c) Persecution will intensify—21:16-19
- i) Intense hostility for some in the midst of persecution—21:16-17
- (1) Divided families—¹⁶ *You^{pl} will be betrayed even by parents and relatives and friends and brothers;*
- (2) Possible martyrdom—*and they will put some of you^{pl} to death.*
- (a) Stephen, James, Paul, Peter, and Andrew
- (3) Hatred—¹⁷ *And you^{pl} will be hated by everyone because of My name.*
- (4) Commitment to Christ is a costly choice that could split a family and nullify the ties of blood. (Bock)
- ii) Protection for some in the midst of persecution—21:18-19
- (1) ¹⁸ *Yet not a hair of your^{pl} head will perish. (cf. 1st Sam. 14:45; Ac. 27:34)*
- (2) ¹⁹ *In (the sphere of) your^{pl} endurance gain your^{pl} lives.*
- (a) Genuine saving faith is persevering faith that does not renounce Christ just because life becomes difficult.
- 4) Things we need to remember
- a) The Jews had been told about this already in Deut. 28:63-68.
- b) God graciously cared for His own, even in the face of death.
- i) Remember His goodness displayed in John 17:24; 21:19