

Luke 21:20-38

**Introduction:** Jesus now explains the future events in two stages: first will be the introductory example, and second will be the actual fulfillment

**1) Jesus explains the times of the Gentiles to His disciples—21:20-28**

- a) Jesus illustrates the beginning of the times of the Gentiles: Jerusalem's less intense destruction—21:20-24
  - i) The siege of Jerusalem—21:20 <sup>20</sup> *But when you<sup>pl</sup> see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that its devastation has approached.*
    - (1) As prophesied in Jer. 30:7; Dan. 9:26; Zech. 12:1-9; etc.
  - ii) Avoid Jerusalem at all costs—21:21-22
    - (1) Do the opposite of normal behavior—21:21 (they ran to town for safety)
      - (a) <sup>21</sup> *Then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains,*
      - (b) *and those who are in the midst of her must leave,*
      - (c) *and those who are in the country must not enter her;*
      - (d) It is not always cowardly to flee danger.
    - (2) Why?—21:22 <sup>22</sup> *because these are the days of vengeance, to fulfill all the things that are written.*
      - (a) Jesus expected OT prophecy to be literally fulfilled.
  - iii) Great distress—21:23-24 <sup>23</sup> *But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days;*
    - (1) Why? *because ...*
      - (a) *there will be great distress upon the land and wrath to this people;*
      - (b) <sup>24</sup> *and they will fall by the edge of the sword,*
        - (i) Josephus, an eyewitness, states over 1 million Jews died and another nearly 100,000 were taken captive by the Romans. (
      - (c) *and will be led captive into all the nations,*
      - (d) *and Jerusalem will (continue to) be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.*
        - (i) The “times of the Gentiles” continues from 586 BC until the end of the establishment of Christ's earthly kingdom after the Tribulation.
    - (2) The times of the Gentiles
      - (a) Is of limited duration
      - (b) Is confined at both ends by God's work with Israel
      - (c) Is anticipatory of Israel future restoration (Rom. 11)
- b) Jesus describes the End of the times of the Gentiles: the ultimately intense destruction at the coming of the Son of Man—21:25-28
  - i) Emotional response to the signs—21:25-26 <sup>25</sup> *And there will be signs in the sun and moon and stars; and on the earth distress of nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and waves, <sup>26</sup> people fainting from fear and the apprehensiveness of the things which are coming upon the inhabited world; because the powers of the heavens will be shaken.*

- (1) Like people in the face of a natural disaster, but even more so
  - ii) Jesus' triumphant return—21:27 <sup>27</sup> *And at that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.*
    - (1) The opposite of how Jesus appeared in His humanity
    - (2) Cf. Dan. 7:11-14
  - iii) Respond differently than the world—21:28 <sup>28</sup> *But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your<sup>pl</sup> heads, because your<sup>pl</sup> redemption is approaching.”*
    - (1) The unsaved world will cower in fear and perplexity
  - c) All of this demands a repossession of the Land by Israel.
- 2) Jesus tells a parable to illustrate the arrival of His kingdom—21:29-33**
- a) Learn from the example in creation—21:29-31
    - i) The illustration—21:29-30 <sup>29</sup> *Then He told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees; <sup>30</sup> as soon as they put out leaves, you<sup>pl</sup> see for yourselves and know that summer is already near.*
    - ii) His main point: the coming of the kingdom of God will be visible—21:31 <sup>31</sup> *In the same way also, when you<sup>pl</sup> see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near.*
      - (1) Following the Tribulation period
  - b) Be comforted by His promise that things will happen quickly—21:32-33 <sup>32</sup> *Truly I say to you<sup>pl</sup>, this generation (those who see the signs) will not in any way pass away until all things take place. <sup>33</sup> Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not in any way pass away.*
    - i) Jesus clearly compares the temporary nature of creation with the eternal nature of His words.
- 3) Jesus gives practical application of His teaching—21:34-36**
- a) What are they to do?—21:34-35 <sup>34</sup> *Pay attention to yourselves,*
    - i) The potential distractions are real—*so that your<sup>pl</sup> hearts are not preoccupied (made insensitive) in binging (and its effects) and drunkenness and distractions of (everyday) life, or that day will come upon you<sup>pl</sup> unexpectedly <sup>35</sup> as a trap, (i.e. sudden unexpectedness)*
    - ii) The judgment will be universal—*because it will come upon those who live on the face of all the earth.*
  - b) Jesus restates the warning—21:36
    - i) What? <sup>36</sup> *Be alert therefore in all times,*
    - ii) How? *praying*
    - iii) For what? *that you<sup>pl</sup> may be considered worthy*
      - (1) A favorable result—*to escape all these things that are about to happen,*
      - (2) A favorable verdict—*and to stand before the Son of Man.”*
- 4) Luke reminds Theophilus of Jesus' activity during the Passion Week—21:37-38**
- a) His daily routine—21:37
    - i) Courageous—<sup>37</sup> *Now during the day He was teaching in the temple,*

- (1) Despite the opposition from the religious leaders
  - ii) Wise—*but at evening He would go out and spend the night on the mount called Olivet.*
- b) The daily, eager response to His teaching—21:38 <sup>38</sup> *And all the people would get up early in the morning to listen to Him in the temple.*
- c) Compare with 19:47-48

**5) Things for us to remember**

- a) God knows the future because He has purposed the future (cf. Is. 46:9-10; Dan. 4:34-35; Eph. 1:11). He is not sitting on the edge of His throne wondering what might happen.