

The Destruction of Jerusalem (Part 3)

Luke 21.25–38

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Prelude:

I. Jesus revealed

- A. that the magnificent temple in Jerusalem
- B. would be totally destroyed, and
 - 1. his words were fulfilled in AD 70
 - 2. when the Roman army attacked Jerusalem,
 - a) decimating the city and the temple.
 - b) To this day, the Jews have not tried to rebuild their temple.

II. Let us learn from this

- A. that another great day of destruction is headed our way,
- B. not merely of Jerusalem, but
 - 1. of the entire world.
 - a) Jerusalem and the temple were special places to God,
 - b) nevertheless, he destroyed them.
 - 2. The earth is a special place to him, as it is written:
 - 1 The earth is the LORD'S, and all its fullness,
The world and those who dwell therein.**
 - Psalm 24.1**
 - a) Yet, the day is coming
 - b) when he will destroy this old earth.

Persuasion:

I. Luke 21.25–28 • Signs

25 “And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; 26 men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 27 Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.”

A. Jesus wanted the disciples to know just how big the destruction would be.

1. He pictured it as having great upheavals throughout creation

a) Signs in the heavens:

(1) In the sun,

(2) in the moon, and

(3) in the stars

b) Signs on the earth:

(1) Nations distressed

(2) Perplexity

(3) The sea and waves roaring

2. He also included how it would affect people:

a) Hearts failing from fear and

b) the expectation of very bad things.

B. This is what makes most people think that he spoke of his Second Coming.

1. However, if you are familiar with the Bible,

2. you know that this language was often employed

a) in a symbolic way

b) to picture just how great a shake up would be.

C. If you know the prophets in particular,

1. you will recognize this kind of language, and
2. you will know that it referred to the destruction of various nations.
 - a) Concerning Babylong:

1 The burden against *Babylon* which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw.

- 4 The noise of a multitude in the mountains,
 Like that of many people!
 A tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together!
 The LORD of hosts musters
 The army for battle.**
- 5 They come from a far country,
 From the end of heaven—
 The LORD and His weapons of indignation,
 To destroy the whole land.**
- 6 Wail, for the day of the LORD is at hand!
 It will come as destruction from the Almighty.**
- 7 Therefore all hands will be limp,
 Every man's heart will melt...**
- 10 For the stars of heaven and their constellations
 Will not give their light;
 The sun will be darkened in its going forth,
 And the moon will not cause its light to shine.**
- 13 Therefore I will shake the heavens,
 And the earth will move out of her place,
 In the wrath of the LORD of hosts
 And in the day of His fierce anger.**

– Isaiah 13.1–22

- b) Concerning Egypt:

1 And it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, on the first day of the month, that the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2 “Son of man, take up a lamentation for *Pharaoh king of Egypt*, and say to him:

- 7 When I put out your light,
 I will cover the heavens, and make its stars dark;**

**I will cover the sun with a cloud,
And the moon shall not give her light.
8 All the bright lights of the heavens I will make dark over you,
And bring darkness upon your land,
Says the Lord GOD.**

**9 I will also trouble the hearts of many peoples, when I bring your
destruction among the nations, into the countries which you have not
known.**

– Ezekiel 32.1–32

3. The Lord used similar language in speaking of
 - a) nations as a whole (Isa 24; 34; Joel 3), and
 - b) Judah (Joel 2).
 - (1) Yet, no one denies
 - (2) that Babylon, Egypt, Edom, Judah, Israel, et al.,
 - (a) have experienced massive destructions.
 - (b) The Lord used symbolic language in a hyperbolic way
 - i) to let those nations what was coming upon them,
 - ii) that even the heavens would feel the destruction.
4. In one sense,
 - a) the nations are as nothing to God, but
 - b) they are also great entities of the earth.
 - (1) He recognizes authority,
 - (2) even if the authority is evil.
 - (a) Therefore, when an authority comes down,
 - (b) heaven feels it.
 - i) He also knows
 - ii) that falling nations affect his people.

5. Of course, ancient Jerusalem was greater than them all.
 - a) Jerusalem had a major part in the story of salvation.
 - b) God did not destroy something like that without affects.

D. Consider verse 27.

1. That sounds like the Second Coming of Christ,
2. if you remove it from the context.
 - a) Remember that in verse 6,
 - b) Jesus prophesied of the utter destruction of the temple.
 - (1) Verse 7 shows the disciples asking Jesus
 - (a) when these things would happen and
 - (b) what sign would there be
 - i) as these things were about to take place.
 - ii) Therefore, he was not talking about the end of time.
3. Again, the Scriptures use this kind of terminology
 - a) to picture the Lord moving against a nation in judgment.
 - b) Concerning what Isaiah said about the Lord and Egypt:

1 The burden against Egypt.

**Behold, the LORD rides on a swift cloud,
And will come into Egypt;
The idols of Egypt will totter at His presence,
And the heart of Egypt will melt in its midst.**

– Isaiah 19.1

- c) As David praised the Lord for delivering him from all his enemies:

**8 “Then the earth shook and trembled;
The foundations of heaven quaked and were shaken,
Because He was angry.
9 Smoke went up from His nostrils,**

**And devouring fire from His mouth;
Coals were kindled by it.
10 He bowed the heavens also, and came down
With darkness under His feet.”**

– 2 Samuel 22.8–10

E. However, concerning Jerusalem,

1. Jesus said further
2. that would be the time
 - a) to look up and
 - b) to lift their heads, because
 - (1) their redemption would be near,
 - (2) as he said in Luke 21.28:

**28 “Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up
your heads, because your redemption draws near.”**

3. Even in our generation,
 - a) although we are not Jerusalem,
 - b) we are the heavenly Jerusalem, and
 - (1) the political, moral, upheavals
 - (2) that we are witnessing
 - (a) give us an opportunity
 - (b) to look up and lift our heads, because
 - i) the Lord is shaking things up, and
 - ii) while we might be troubled by such things,
 - (1) he often shakes things up
 - (2) before he brings in something good.

II. Luke 21.29–33 • The Kingdom of God

29 Then He spoke to them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. 30 When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near. 31 So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. 32 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place. 33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.”

- A. They knew how to read a fig tree or any tree and
 - 1. know when summer was close.
 - 2. The fruit tree goes through certain cycles
 - a) so that we can predict
 - b) when it will do certain things.
 - (1) Likewise, Jesus explained clearly
 - (2) how the disciples could know
 - (a) that the destruction was about to happen and
 - (b) that they should get away from Jerusalem as fast as possible.
- B. The kingdom of God would be near as they watched these signs unfold.
 - 1. Therefore, they need not fear.
 - 2. Eventually, everything
 - a) that stands in opposition to the kingdom/church
 - b) will fall by God’s hands.
- C. Jesus assured his disciples,
 - 1. that their generation would not pass away
 - 2. until everything that Jesus prophesied came to pass.
 - a) Some people think that he referred to the generation living
 - b) at the end of time, but
 - (1) he just talked about the temple and city destruction, and

(2) indicated that those things would happen in that generation.

(a) Also, in verse 32, speaking to his disciples,

(b) he said, “this generation,” would not pass away until...

D. Jesus gave assurance of these things

1. when he promised

2. that his words were more stable than heaven and earth.

a) And he proved to be right.

b) That should lead us to believe

(1) everything else that he said, and

(2) what he said in regard to the Second Coming.

(a) Okay, Luke 21 does not speak of the Second Coming, but

(b) Jesus and his apostles did elsewhere and

i) we should know fully

ii) that it will come to pass

(1) just as the obliteration of the temple and city

(2) came to pass.

III. Luke 21.34–36 • Do Not Let Your Hearts Be Weighed Down

34 “But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. 35 For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36 Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

A. Jesus gave this warning because

1. what he prophesied

2. would not happen for another 40 years.

a) They could forget the prophecy.

- b) They might start living as they chose to live.
 - (1) If they weigh themselves down with
 - (2) carousing, drunkenness, and the cares of this life,
 - (a) those things would consume their minds and their lives, and
 - (b) they would miss his signs of the impending destruction.
- B. As he taught in verse 35,
 - 1. this was not only a concern for Christians living in Jerusalem, but
 - 2. for Christians everywhere.
 - a) I think that more Christians have fallen away in the last 20 years
 - b) over these worldly things
 - (1) than any other factor.
 - (2) Think of all the people you know
 - (a) who have fallen away in the past two decades and
 - (b) you will discover that most of them have been weighed down
 - i) with the worldliness.
 - ii) Let us all beware of this problem in our own lives.
- C. Therefore, he instructed them, in verse 36, to watch and to pray.
 - 1. Watch by holy and godly living.
 - 2. Pray
 - a) to be worthy that they could escape all the destruction and
 - b) to stand before the Son of Man.
 - (1) Keeping in constant contact with the Father
 - (2) will keep you strong.

IV. Luke 21.37–38 • Jesus Taught, Taught, and Taught Some More

37 And in the daytime He was teaching in the temple, but at night He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet. 38 Then early in the morning all the

people came to Him in the temple to hear Him.

A. He taught daily during the day in the temple.

1. Nightly he went out of the temple and spent the night on Mount Olivet.
2. The next day he would arise and
 - a) go back to the temple and
 - b) the people would return also to hear him.

B. Teaching is what Jesus was all about.

1. People are converted by the word of God.
2. Therefore, they need to hear it.

Exhortation:

I. Jesus did all these things,

- A. knowing that the worst day in his life was coming, but
- B. he also knew he was doing the will of God.

II. He warned of the impending doom, but

- A. he gave his disciples assurance
 1. that he knew what they were facing and
 2. that they could endure it.
- B. These things have been recorded
 1. that we might know
 2. they endured whatever the world threw at them.
 - a) We can also endure.
 - b) However, you have to follow Jesus Christ.