

Luke Chapter 21 Continued

Luke 21:20 "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh."

“Jerusalem compassed with armies”: A comparison with (Matt. 14:15-16 and Mark 13:14), suggests that this sign is closely associated with “the abomination of desolation”. This sign of Jerusalem under siege was previewed in A.D. 70, but awaits its fulfillment in the future.

We know that just a few years after Jesus spoke this, Jerusalem was surrounded and fell. I personally believe this had a dual meaning for then and for the last days, as well. One of the things we are to watch is what is happening to Israel and especially Jerusalem to know when we are near the end of the Gentile age.

The main thrust of verse 20 above is for the end of the Gentile age.

Luke 21:21 "Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto."

“The mountains”: Probably a reference to the region southeast of Jerusalem, particularly the Dead Sea area, where there are many caves and places of refuge. David hid from Saul in this area (1 Sam. 23:29). This would also include the hills of Moab and Edom.

The Greek word for “flee” is related to the English word “fugitive,” a person who is on the run to escape danger. Jesus warns those who live in Judea to escape the holocaust by taking refuge in the mountains.

This time to run and leave the temple and everything within the city walls is at the end of the Gentile age. Israel turned its back on the Lord and in this terrible time God lets this happen to Jerusalem.

Luke 21:22 "For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled."

“Vengeance”: I.e., God’s righteous retribution against sin.

God’s fury has come up in His face, and He will wait no longer for His beloved people to turn to Him. This is punishment time.

Luke 21:23 "But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people."

See (Mark 13:17). Jesus certainly felt compassion for those women who will be hindered from fleeing quickly because they carry children. But He may have been warning them about

atrocities that could include unborn children being slashed in the wombs and tiny infants being crushed (Hosea 13:16).

This would slow them down in their escape. At this late date, God will not wait to give them more time to get out. A woman in either situation above could not run to escape. It will be especially bad on those who can't get away.

Luke 21:24 "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

“The times of the Gentiles”: This expression is unique to Luke. It identifies the year from Israel’s captivity (586 B.C. to Babylon; 2 Kings 25), to her restoration in the kingdom (Rev. 20:1-6). It has been a time during which, in accord with God’s purpose, Gentiles have dominated or threatened Jerusalem.

The era has also been marked by vast spiritual privileges for the Gentile nations (Isa. 66:12; Mal. 1:11; Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10).

It is estimated that during the fall of Jerusalem about one million people perished. This is probably what the first part of (verse 24) is saying. These Israelites were captive in many nations until recently. Jerusalem was lived in by Gentiles until recently.

The times of the Gentiles has about been fulfilled, as well. It appears the second coming of Jesus is near.

Luke 21:25 "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;"

“There shall be signs”: The celestial signs and wonders described here immediately precede the return of Christ.

“Signs in the sun”: Such phenomena are a common feature of the Day of the Lord prophecy (see Isa. 13:9-10; Ezek. 32:7-8; Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15; Amos 8:9). The ultimate fulfillment of these prophecies takes place during the time of the Beast’s reign (Rev. 6:12, 13; 8:12).

There are signs in the sun. Sun spots have been seen with telescopes already, so there is the fulfillment of that part of this prophecy. One of the signs in the moon is that man has been able to travel there. You see, you could pick out anything you want from this prophecy, and could say it had already been fulfilled.

Luke 21:26 "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken."

It is no shock to anyone that men's hearts are failing for fear of things coming upon the earth. Just one push of a button could bring global nuclear war. You see, all of this in fact is already here.

Luke 21:27 "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

“Coming” (Quoted from Daniel 7:13; Mark 13:26-27; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; Rev. 19:11-16).

Just as He went away in a cloud, He is coming back in a cloud (Acts 1:9-11). He will have power and great glory, because He will be King of kings and Lord of lords.

Luke 21:28 "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

“Lift up your heads”: The dreadful tribulations and signs that mark the last days are a cause of great expectation, joy and triumph for the true believer.

“Redemption”: I.e., the final fullness of redemption, when the redeemed are reunited with Christ forever.

We see here, God is giving man some signs to watch for. When these things happen, praise God. The end is near. A generation many times in the Bible is spoken of as 40 years. In some few instances, it is even 120 years.

We are not to hang our heads and complain when all these things start happening. We are in this world, but we are not of this world. We are about to go home, so rejoice and praise God. Look toward heaven with anticipation and joy. Your redemption draweth nigh.

Luke 21:29-30 "And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees;" When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand."

The "fig tree" is symbolic of the house of Israel. You remember that was what was meant when Jesus cursed the fig tree. So, this was talking about when Israel lives again. The "blooming" means to me is when Israel became a nation in 1948.

There are signs in the sun. Sun spots have been seen with telescopes already, so there is the fulfillment of that part of this prophecy. One of the signs in the moon is that man has traveled there. The fig tree throughout the Bible is symbolic of Israel.

In my opinion, this fig tree shooting forth is when Israel became a nation in 1948. I believe this is just another sign that the end is near.

Luke 21:31-32 "So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled."

“This generation”: This cannot refer to the generation living at that time of Christ, for “all these things”, the abomination of desolation (Matt. 24:15), the persecutions and judgments (Matt. 24:17-22), the false prophets (Matt. 24:23-26), the signs in the heavens (Matt. 24:27-29), Christ’s final return (Matt. 24:30,) and the gathering of the elect (Matt. 24:31), did not “take place” in their lifetime.

You see, we don't know what generation God is speaking of. It is fun to anticipate. If God had wanted us to know for sure when this would happen, He would have told us in the Word. Our job is to stay ready.

Luke 21:33 "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away."

“Heaven and earth shall pass away”: The “heaven” refers to the physical universe. Some scripture interpretations include the words “with a roar”. The “roar” connotes a whistling or a crackling sound as of objects being consumed by flames. God will incinerate the universe, probably in an atomic reaction that disintegrates all matter as we know it (see 2 Peter 3:10).

You cannot put value on anything in this earth or even on heaven itself. This earth will pass away. God's Word is the only thing that will not pass away.

Luke 21:34 "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and [so] that day come upon you unawares."

“That day”: I.e., the day of His return. When Christ mentions His return, he invariably enjoins watchfulness (12:37-40; Matt. 25:13; Mark 13:33-37).

We are cautioned over and over to watch and wait. Sin should not be in the vocabulary of the Christian. The Lord is coming back for a church without spot or wrinkle. If we are living like the world, pleasing our flesh, when the Lord comes back, we will go the way of the world. The Son of man cometh when you least expect Him.

Luke 21:35-36 "For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

“Pray always”: A common theme in Paul’s epistles (Romans 1:9; 12:12; Ephesians 6:18; 1 Thess. 5:17; 2 Thess. 1:11).

Just as death comes without warning many times, we see here that the return of the Lord will be unexpected by the world. Even the Christians will not know the day or hour. "Watch and pray that ye may escape" has to do with the catching away of the Christians.

Those who are washed in the blood of the Lamb and living for Jesus when He comes will be snatched away into heaven to remain until the wrath of God is complete. You can read about the catching away (in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

Luke 21:37 "And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called [the mount] of Olives."

“In the day”: I.e., during the days of that final week in Jerusalem.

Jesus went into the temple to teach the few days after Palm Sunday. He went to the Mount of Olives to sleep each night. Perhaps, He was there praying. This was Jesus' favorite place to go to pray.

For whatever reason He was there, it was a good place to rest.

Luke 21:38 "And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him."

It seems that even that last week before the crucifixion, the general public came to hear Jesus teach. In (verse 38), "coming early in the morning" shows great devotion, and also, that they were eager to be taught of Him. My only question is; where were they when they crucified Jesus?

Luke Chapter 21 Continued Questions

1. The desolation is nigh when you see what?
2. Where should we watch to know the end is near?
3. Let them which are in Judaea flee to the _____.
4. Why will God allow this to happen to Jerusalem and its people?
5. In verse 22, this time is called the day of _____.
6. Verse 23 says woe to whom?
7. In verse 24, what happens to them?
8. During the fall of Jerusalem, approximately how many died?
9. Jerusalem will be trodden down of the Gentiles until when?
10. What is a sign in the sun we have been seeing recently?

11. Why will men's hearts fail them?
12. How will they see the Son of man coming?
13. In what book in the New Testament does it say Jesus will come back the same way He went away?
14. When these things come to pass, what is the Christian to do?
15. Who is the fig tree symbolic of?
16. What is probably meant by this fig tree shooting forth?
17. When you see Israel spring forth, know ye that what is nigh?
18. This _____ shall not pass away till all be fulfilled.
19. What two things shall pass away, but God's Word will not pass away?
20. What are we cautioned not to be doing?
21. In verse 36, what two things must we do?
22. What should we want to be accounted worthy to escape from?
23. Who will be caught away to be with Jesus?
24. What did Jesus do in the daytime?
25. Where did He go at night?
26. Why did the people come early in the morning to the temple?