

Tommy Meador / General

The Gospel of Luke / Luke 21:1–38

Introduction

- <https://www.foxnews.com/lifestyle/hydro-flask-water-bottle-survives-fire-grateful-woman-continue-emotional-support> - People going crazy right now over Stanley cups, Yetis, Hydroflasks - apparently they survive the fire.
- Will you survive the fire? As a follower of Jesus, the fire of this life ([1 Peter 4:12](#))... Fires that if you walk through with eyes on Jesus will refine your faith. However, a greater fire coming - the fire of God's judgment for those who do not believe.
- Live in a world that is largely unaware of the fire that is to come, but you're not unaware. Jesus talks about it often.
- [Luke 21](#) = the last public discourse of Jesus in Luke's Gospel. It should not be surprising that Jesus talks about final judgement. Jesus wants us to be ready for the end of the world.
- After [Luke 21](#), our eyes will be firmly fixed on the last hours of Jesus' life, but before we turn to the last hours of Jesus' life, let's talk one more time about the end of the world. Two challenges from this passage as we live with our eyes on Jesus awaiting His return.

The passage:

- As we dive in to this passage, need to understand at the outset what Jesus is doing as He teaches. He's prophesying about the near future

for Jerusalem (70 A.D.) and the far future for the church (the return of Christ).

- [Luke 19:41-44](#): Jesus predicts the fall of Jerusalem because of the Jews rejection of Jesus as the Messiah. Judgement was coming for Israel - rightly so. The religious had made the temple big business. The Pharisees put on a religious show. Jesus accused the Jews of mistreating the prophets who warned them, and now they had rejected Jesus. God would judge Jerusalem for it's rejection of Jesus.
- [Luke 21](#) begins with a short story of a woman who is the opposite of the religious elite. The religious elite put on a religious show, but this woman is an example of faithfulness.
- As Jesus and His disciples leave the temple, some are talking about the beauty of the temple. Should have walked away saying, "This place is terrible." Instead, "This place is awesome."
- Temple designed to be an awesome place of worship symbolizing God's presence among His people. BUT... it had become a place of corruption because of the corrupt leadership.
- No wonder Jesus said in [Matt. 12:6](#), "Something greater than the temple is here..."
- Temple had a storied history... King Herod rebuilt when he came into power. Temple complex covered 35 acres - built of massive stones - some 60 ft. in length. Foundational stones 42 ft in length, 11 ft. high, 14 ft. width - weighting over 1 million lbs.! The most beautiful and most sacred place in the world! The way the sun hit the stone in the evening made it look like gold glittering (Golden gate).
- vs. 6 - "Not one stone will be left on another..." What a statement! Jaws dropped in disbelief.
- vs. 7 - Logical question: "When will these things happen?"

- Jesus laid out a timeline of events that would transpire in their lifetimes and would culminate with the absolute destruction of the temple in 70 A.D. What Jesus describes in the next few verses all happened in the days after His ascension.
- vs. 8 - False prophets - e.g., Theudas (mid 40s - led many astray - [Acts 5:36](#))
- vs. 9 - Wars - numerous international skirmishes in the 1st century. Caligula, emperor shortly after the ascension of Jesus, attempted to erect a statue of himself in the temple. Rumors of war and rebellion spread - only a matter of time before Jews would revolt.
- vs. 11 - Earthquakes - ([Acts 16](#)) - Major earthquake in Phrygia 61 A.D., Pompey 63 A.D.
- vs. 11 - famines - [Acts 11:27-28](#) - in the days of emperor Claudius, a famine in the whole known world.
- All these things happening in the days of the Apostles, and then persecution (vs. 12-19). In some ways, Book of Acts, written by Luke, a commentary on these verses. Peter and John persecuted. Stephen martyred. Eventually, the Apostle Paul persecuted.
- Persecution would not stop the spread of the Gospel, rather, the Gospel spread in spite of persecution. It seemed like persecution even fueled the spread of the Gospel as early followers of Jesus bore witness (vs. 13) in the face of persecution.
- vs. 14 - people like Stephen, Peter, and others stood boldly before the authorities and spoke the Gospel as led by the Spirit.
- vs. 18 - the early disciples followed Jesus with boldness knowing that they were safe in God's will. Their lives would be taken but their eternity was secure.

- THEN it happened. (vs. 20-24) As the church grew and those who repented of their experienced new life in Christ, Jerusalem, the city that rejected Jesus, fell. Judgment came. God used Rome as a tool of judgment against Jerusalem.
- In 66 A.D. - Jewish Zealots led a revolt against Rome. Rome with her massive army could not defeat the Jews. Fighting went on for several years until a Roman general, Titus, ordered a wall of earth to be built around Jerusalem. Jerusalem trapped and cut off from the outside world. Cut off from food and water supplies. Anyone not a Roman caught in the dry moat between the walls of Jerusalem and the Roman wall built around was crucified. **As many as 500 Jews crucified a day - for about a year!**
- Finally, 70 AD the temple torched. Infants thrown into the fires, priests massacred, women raped. Titus ransacked temple ransacked and its possessions take to Rome to celebrate the Roman defeat of Jerusalem. Historian Tacitus - 600,000 Jews died in the siege. Josephus - over a million people total. **Nothing as horrific in Jewish history until the Holocaust.**
- **It seemed like the Kingdom God fell when the temple was burned to the ground BUT the Kingdom of God did not fall that day because something greater than the temple was here.** The real temple - Jesus Christ - the living temple went to a cross, died in the place of sinful man, and rose from the dead defeating our real enemy - not the Roman regime that burned Jerusalem to the ground - but sin and death - so we could escape not the fires of a Roman army but the fires of eternal hell.
- Through death and resurrection of Jesus God establishes His eternal Kingdom not on Temple Mt, but in the hearts of people who surrender to Him. To disciples: "It's going to fall - is this what you are going to look to? Or, are you going to look to something greater?"

- 25-28 - a long time away event. There will be signs (Jesus doesn't give details). There will be tribulation. The destruction of Jerusalem establishes a pattern we can expect to repeat as we await the return of Jesus. Wars, rumors of wars, famines, persecution, etc. THEN, the day will come when the Son of Man ([Daniel 7:13](#)) will return. Everything that humanity erects will fall and Jesus alone will stand as the eternal King and Savior of the world. vs. 28 - Redemption is near!
- vs. 29-33 - a fig tree - a reminder of the signs of the times. The leaves of a fig tree serve as a sign of what's to come. To disciples: When you see these signs, know what's about to happen.
- 34-37 - It's coming - the end of temple AND the end of the world. Be on guard.
- **How do we respond to this passage?**

Put your eyes on the true temple

- For the ancient Jew - eyes were on the temple - the place where they believed God resided. Jesus very clear: Put your eyes on the true temple.
- You need that same instruction because you are often tempted to take your eyes off of the true temple.
- What Jesus describes in these verses as judgment came for Jerusalem are the same things we can expect as we await His return. All the more reason to put our eyes on Him.
- When I put my eyes on the true temple:
 - **I will not be deceived** (vs. 8) - easy to be deceived because you live in a deceptive world. Evaluate every voice you listen to. Whose voices influences you the most? Are the voices that influence you most speaking consistently with Scripture? If not, those voices have to go. How many times have you said, "I wish I would have listened

to..." You need to evaluate every voice that's influencing your life and be willing to admit there are some voices you need to stop listening to because they are influencing you away from Jesus.

- **I will not be afraid** (vs. 9-11) What is faith over fear? Not wearing a mask? Faith over fear is that I'm going to walk by faith regardless of the earthly outcome. My eyes are on the heavenly outcome because I'm convinced that living in God's will is the safest place I can be. I will not fear people, but I will fear God. I give an account to Him and no one else.
- **I will not miss opportunities** (vs. 12-16) - I know why God has left me here. To make disciples. You are not going to be able to keep me silent. I have the guarantee that the Spirit of God will use me. I will live with bold faith even if the world seems boldly against me. What step of faith is God calling you to make but you are unwilling to make because you are afraid?
- **I will not give up** (vs. 19, 28) - I'm willing to endure because I know what's in store for me. I know life will be hard, but at the same time, I know Jesus is enough. He is enough when family rejects me. He is enough when I lose my job. He is enough when I get the diagnosis of cancer.
- For many of us, our lives seem characterized by deception, fear, missed opportunities, and giving up. It doesn't have to be.
- Think about it. This is amazing. The King of kings is telling us what is to come, and He is telling us how to live as we await His return.

Take your eyes off of every distraction.

vs. 34 - Be on guard so that your not dulled... Be alert (vs. 36)... Pray

- **Be honest about what distracts you.** Dull minds - is that you? A life of unwise choices? A life not on guard? [Gal. 5:19](#) - works of the flesh - Your

mind is dull because you've engaged the works of the flesh rather than engaging Jesus. The distractions of life may cause you to be unprepared for the Lord's return. Maybe even a life trapped in distraction. What distracts you from living with your eyes on Jesus?

- **Repent of a distracted life.** - vs. 36 - pray - pray for strength. Pray that God would take away the distractions. What decision could you make today that would help you be less distracted? What distractions do you need to repent of?
- The last public discourse of Jesus is a reminder that judgment is coming. Christ will return to bring judgment to all those who have rejected Him.
- Are you under judgment, or are you under grace? Have you turned to the ONE who came to deliver you from the judgment of a just and holy God? Have you believed in the One who died in your place taking the judgment of God upon Himself so you would never have to experience His judgment? Who rose again three days later to give you eternal life? This morning, turn to Him. Repent and believe.
- Follower of Jesus, will you pray for strength to keep your eyes on the ONE who will return again for you?