

## Luke Lesson 21

### Luke Chapter 21

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Memory verses for this week: *John 4:24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

**Introduction:** We continue our study of the book of Luke this week as we continue in chapter 21. Last week, we began our study with the religious leaders questioning Christ's authority. Jesus taught on the parable of the vineyard and we finished with Christ answering the Sadducees and scribes concerning the resurrection.

#### I. The Widow's Mites

*Luke 21:1 And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.*

*Luke 21:2 And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.*

*Luke 21:3 And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all:*

*Luke 21:4 For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.*

God is interested in people who are generous and give to help the cause of the Lord. Jesus was watching the people cast in to the treasury. He first observes some rich people casting in their gifts. No doubt some gave large sums. Finally a poor widow woman came by and cast in two mites. Two mites was a very small amount. Two mites made up a farthing, and it was not able to purchase much. But Jesus was deeply interested in what people give for the cause of the Lord. Just as in that day, God still watches and knows our giving and more importantly the heart from which it was given.

No doubt the rich had an abundance of money and could give large sums without a huge sacrifice. But the poor widow woman cast in all of her living. Jesus knew that she had almost nothing to give, but he was very impressed with her. When we give and do it sacrificially, God certainly knows and is pleased with our heart and love. Remember that heaven's arithmetic is not just the total of money given. There is an account given to how much we have and how much of that we give to God. No one who gives to the work of the Lord ever suffers due to rewards being given from the Lord to us. It is amazing when we put God first, how the old car seems to run a little longer and the refrigerator that should have quit working two years ago just keeps on working. God blesses those who give. We should be like King David who refused to give meaningless gifts. Remember

how there was a plague in the land and David wanted to buy a certain threshing floor from Araunah. Araunah wanted to give it to David, but he said if it didn't cost him something, he would not offer burnt offerings unto the Lord.

*2 Sam 24:21 And Araunah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? And David said, To buy the threshingfloor of thee, to build an altar unto the LORD, that the plague may be stayed from the people.*

*2 Sam 24:22 And Araunah said unto David, Let my lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good unto him: behold, here be oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing instruments and other instruments of the oxen for wood.*

*2 Sam 24:23 All these things did Araunah, as a king, give unto the king. And Araunah said unto the king, The LORD thy God accept thee.*

*2 Sam 24:24 And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the threshingfloor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.*

*2 Sam 24:25 And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.*

Two more verses on giving unto the Lord.

*Mal 3:10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

*2 Cor 9:7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*

*2 Cor 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:*

*2 Cor 9:9 (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.*

## **II. The Olivet Discourse**

*Luke 21:5 And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said,*

*Luke 21:6 As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*

Some of the people were very impressed with the beautiful temple which was adorned with stones and gifts. Jesus knew what was about to happen to the temple and all the buildings of the city, and tell them that there would soon not be left one stone upon another which would not be thrown down.

*Luke 21:7 And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?*

The disciples question the Lord and ask when these things would happen. And secondly, what sign would there be for these things to come to pass. Seemed like the people of this day always looked for a sign. Jesus was speaking of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem by the Romans which came to pass in 70 A.D.

### **III. The Course of This Age**

*Luke 21:8 And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.*

*Luke 21:9 But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by.*

*Luke 21:10 Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:*

*Luke 21:11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.*

In these verses, it speaks of how Jerusalem would be destroyed, and what state the world would be in during our current age. And then what the conditions would be right before the end. In Daniel Chapter 9, prophecy was given about the 70 weeks which were weeks of years. The first 69 weeks have happened, and there has been a gap in time from that 69<sup>th</sup> week until the beginning of the 70<sup>th</sup> which will be the 7 years of tribulation.

During the seven years of tribulation, there will be horrible things happening throughout the whole world. Jesus tells them that they should take heed not to be deceived because there would be wars and commotions but the end was not yet. Eventually nations will rise against other nations, and there would be earthquakes in divers places. Is that not the case today? Nations rising against nation and kingdom will have even greater fulfillment during the tribulation period.

Not many days can go by without another earthquake. It says as time draws to a close, there would be famines and pestilences. Many starve to death today in overcrowded countries, and we have crisis such as aids in America and Africa. Times are ripe for the soon coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The final week, the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel, will soon begin. If you don't know Christ as Lord and Savior, you will be left behind when Jesus comes and takes out the church before this begins. Today is the day you need to accept Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior. None of us have a promise that we will have tomorrow.

*Luke 21:12 But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.*

*Luke 21:13 And it shall turn to you for a testimony.*

*Luke 21:14 Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer:*

*Luke 21:15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.*

*Luke 21:16 And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death.*

*Luke 21:17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.*

*Luke 21:18 But there shall not an hair of your head perish.*

*Luke 21:19 In your patience possess ye your souls.*

Some of these things mentioned have happened since the death of Christ right up until today. But it will worsen and be very difficult in the seven years of tribulation. There will be a remnant of people saved during this time, and the largest number, if not all, will be Jews. Jesus warns what will happen in those days as the saved will be persecuted and delivered up to synagogues, prisons, and be brought before kings and rulers because of knowing Christ as Savior. God promises to give people the words to speak in that day. Families will turn against family members who are saved. It says in verse 18 that ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.

Here in America, we don't yet suffer much persecution and are free to gather in churches without being attacked. However, I heard on the radio that more people had died in the foreign countries for the cause of Christ since 1900 than during the previous 1900 years since Christ died. Be certain that these words of prophecy will come to pass. God never lies, but Satan tries to mislead every soul he can. I am so thankful that before the worst of the trials, Jesus is coming to take us out of this wicked world.

Matthew Henry had excellent commentary on verses 18 and 19.

*In your patience possess ye your souls; get and keep possession of your souls.''* Some read it as a promise, "You *may* or *shall* possess your souls.'" It comes all to one. Note, *First*, It is our duty and interest at all times, especially in perilous trying times, to secure the possession of our own souls; not only that they be not destroyed and lost for ever, but that they be not distempered now, nor our possession of them disturbed and interrupted. "*Possess your souls*, be your own men, keep up the authority and dominion of reason, and keep under the tumults of passion, that neither grief nor fear may tyrannize over you, nor turn you out of the possession and enjoyment of yourselves.'" In difficult times, when we can keep possession of nothing else, then let us make that sure which may be made sure, and keep possession of our souls. *Secondly*, It is by patience, Christian patience, that we keep possession of our own souls. "In suffering times, set patience upon

the guard for the preserving of your souls; by it keep your souls composed and in a good frame, and keep out all those impressions which would ruffle you and put you out of temper.” i

#### IV. Destruction of Jerusalem Foretold

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

*Luke 21:21 Then let them which are in Judaea 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.*

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

*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.*

*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.*

Jesus warns again of the destruction that would come when the Roman armies invade Jerusalem in 70 A.D. He tells how that the people would be scattered abroad and the town trodden down of the Gentiles. And these tribes are still pretty scattered as we see the time of the Gentiles nearing fulfillment. There is a similar account in Matthew Chapter 24 that can be confused with these verses. We believe the account in Luke to be about the destruction of Jerusalem soon after the death of Jesus where the Matthew account speaks of the time during the last half of the tribulation. The last 3 ½ years will be “Great Tribulation”.

*Mat 24:15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)*

*Mat 24:16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:*

*Mat 24:17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:*

*Mat 24:18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.*

*Mat 24:19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!*

*Mat 24:20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:*

*Mat 24:21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

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iHenry, Matthew, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Bible*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers) 1997.

*Mat 24:22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.*

*Mat 24:23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.*

*Mat 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*

*Mat 24:25 Behold, I have told you before.*

*Mat 24:26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.*

*Mat 24:27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*

*Mat 24:28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.*

*Mat 24:29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:*

*Mat 24:30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

*Mat 24:31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

## **V. The Return of the Lord in Glory**

*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;*

*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.*

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

*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.*

These verses clearly speak of the time of the tribulation as do those we read from Matthew Chapter 24. Any times it says that Christ comes in 'Power and Great Glory', it is in reference to the second phase of Christ's second coming which is at the close of the tribulation. Praise God that those in that day can look up because the redemption draweth nigh.

J. Vernon McGee had a good comment about how things seem bad today.

**For the powers of heaven shall be shaken [Luke 21:26].**

There are people who quote this verse and say it is a picture of today. My friend, if I may use a common colloquialism of the streets, “You ain’t seen nothin’ yet.” If you think we are seeing a fulfillment of this verse now, you are wrong. Things are bad today, I agree. Political crises and social distress are cause for great concern. Physical disturbances are overwhelming, but they are going to get much worse in the last days.

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

Christ could return at any moment. Things are happening so fast today that the church, the body of Christ, could be taken from this earth before you have finished reading this paragraph. If it is, I hope you will be with me in His presence. **ii**

## VI. Parable of the Fig Tree

*Luke 21:29 And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees;*

*Luke 21:30 When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand.*

*Luke 21:31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.*

*Luke 21:32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.*

The fig tree as used in Scripture is a symbol of the nation Israel. God is telling us that when we see Israel beginning to gather back to her own land we know the coming of the Lord is near. In 1948, the Commonwealth of Nations effectively reformed the nation of Israel. Ever since then, more and more Jews are gathering back to their homeland. Is this the generation that would not pass away until all be fulfilled? I with all my heart believe it is.

How long is a generation? If it were 50 years, it means Christ would have returned by 1998. Since he has not, we know it must mean 60 or 70 years. So when will it be? 2008... 2018? None of us can know for sure. But all things appear to be in place for Christ’s return.

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

One thing is constant. The Bible is God’s Word, and men may try to destroy it or pervert it with new words that replace God’s true words, but they will never destroy God’s word. He says my ‘words’ shall not pass away.

*Psa 119:89 LAMED. For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.*

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iiJ. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible commentary [computer file], electronic ed., Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1981 by J. Vernon McGee.

*Psa 119:90 Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.*

*Psa 119:91 They continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all are thy servants.*

*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.*

*Luke 21:35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.*

*Luke 21:36 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.*

*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.*

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

We are to take heed that we don't let life so overwhelm us that we let the day of the Lord sneak up on us. None of the affairs of this life are all that important. But the things of God are VERY important. Without Christ, we have nothing. With Christ, we have ALL things. Jesus was constantly helping the people and was in the temple teaching. It says they came out early in the morning to hear him teach. He wanted them to know what was to come to pass. Do you care about others? Don't let the gospel be hid to anyone you know.

*2 Cor 4:3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:*

*2 Cor 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

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*Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

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