

Beginning of the End

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Date: 13 July 2025

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[0 : 00] Take out your Bibles with me please and turn to the Gospel of Luke chapter 21. We're going to reveal all the things that are going to happen in the future.

Luke chapter 21. Jesus preaches what is known as the Olivet Discourse. A discourse meaning a sermon on the Mount of Olives. That's why it's called Olivet Discourse.

Not because it has all of it. Preacher joke. But essentially what's recorded here in Luke 21 is also recorded in Matthew 24 and Mark 13.

And except for one or two verses it's essentially the same. But those one or two verses make a difference.

And it's really about who Luke is writing to. Matthew writes to the Jews so he uses, he includes more of the Jewish language and the Old Testament references.

[1 : 18] Luke is writing to what most scholars believe are the Hellenists or the people who are scattered in the Roman speaking areas. So speaking Latin in other words.

And very unfamiliar with the Jewish background, the Jewish scriptures. So Mark is kind of giving more of a modern day, so to speak, translation.

So let's read it. We're going to, as Dan mentioned, I'm only, I cut it off.

The whole passage goes from chapter 21 of Luke, verse 5, through verse 36, Jesus' sermon.

But we're going to cut it off halfway because in verse 25, and as Dan mentioned, verse 27, we have a couple of references that take a little bit more time to unpack.

[2 : 23] And I don't want to do all of that today. We're just going to make it easy. Just the first, just verses 5 to 24. Okay? So nice and easy.

Just the future events brought there. Okay. If you're able, please stand as I read from the text of Luke, recorded by Luke, of Jesus' teaching here in verses 5, 24.

Luke 21, 5. And while some were speaking of the temple, how it was adorned with noble stones and offerings, he said, As for these things that you see, the days will come when there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.

And they asked him, Teacher, when will these things be and what will be the sign when these things are about to take place? And he said, See that you are not led astray.

For many will come in my name, saying, I am he. And the time is at hand. Do not go after them. And when you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified, for these things must first take place.

[3 : 46] But the end will not be at once. Then he said to them, Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, and in various places, famines and pestilences.

And there will be terrors and great signs from heaven. But before all this, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons.

And you will be brought before kings and governors for my name's sake. This will be your opportunity to bear witness.

Therefore, settle it in your mind not to meditate beforehand how to answer. For I will give you a mouth and wisdom which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict.

You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends. And some of you, they will put to death.

[4 : 55] You will be hated by all for my name's sake. But not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance, gain your lives.

Gain your souls, literally. But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near.

Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. And let those who are inside the city depart. And let those who are out in the country not enter it.

For these are days of vengeance to fulfill all that is written. Alas, for the women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days.

For there will be great distress upon the land. And wrath against this people.

[5 : 59] They will fall by the edge of the people. They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles.

Until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. So Jesus said and so it is written.

Let us pray quickly. Let us pray quickly. Father, open our eyes. Open our ears. Help us to hear what Jesus is saying. Help us to catch the emphasis of what he's saying.

But help us also, Lord, to understand what he says is ahead of us. As well as what was ahead of the disciples. And help us to hear what he instructs us to do.

And be faithful to do it. This we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. When I was a youth pastor, that was like another lifetime ago.

[7 : 04] Back in 1989. When I was a youth pastor, I found a book that said 88 Reasons Christ Will Return in 1988.

Now this was 1989. And Christ had not returned. And I used it as an illustration to show the kids.

There's a lot of false prophets out there. There are folks that think they've got it all figured out.

They come every year. They come every season. They come every time a new horse breaks up.

They come every time a new blood moon shows up. They come every time something changes in life. And the very things that Jesus said, don't worry about those things.

Those are the things they key on. Jesus only gives us the timing of one specific historical event.

That was fulfilled. That was fulfilled. Perhaps the most accurate prophecy ever fulfilled. And he gives it to us in this passage.

[8 : 11] The Bible records over 300 prophecies accurately fulfilled at Jesus' first coming. That's pretty amazing.

Jesus gives us one. Now he gives us several here. He's going to tell us about some general ones.

But he's going to tell us about one specific one that will be fulfilled within his generation.

Thank you. So what we're asking for, we don't want to just kind of read and study this to kind of, because it's interesting. We want to ask the question for ourselves as well.

What does the future hold? What does Jesus tell us here that we can expect in our own future? And I think there are things here. Notice in verse 5, the passage begins with people looking at the temple.

They're looking at the temple and how it was adorned with noble stones. It's a beautiful temple that they're observing. And it was absolutely stunning, this temple in the first century.

[9 : 20] Now this was the second temple. The first temple was built by who? Do you know? Solomon. Solomon. It was destroyed by who?

That's a harder one, isn't it? Babylonians. When they were captured, right? Taking away 70 years to Babylon, right? Daniel writes about that. That temple was destroyed.

It was rebuilt by? Hmm? Herod. David's a good guess, but it's a son of David. Not Herod, no. Zerubbabel.

Come on. I mean, you want to name your kids after that. Zerubbabel. By the decree of the emperor back then, Darius, sent him to go rebuild the temple at the charge of the Gentile nation.

But it was not. So anyway, it was rebuilt by Zerubbabel. That's the temple that's still standing in the first century. It is the temple that then sometimes people call a third temple because Herod expanded that temple and renovated it and decorated it.

[10 : 30] But it's still the same temple. So I would say it's still the second temple. Herod just added to it. He beautified it. He expanded the court to 35 acres.

Remember the old tabernacle? Just kind of this little... Herod just made it huge. The sanctuary he covered with gold and silver, crimson and purple.

And when the sun hit it just right, it was dazzling, they say. And so you can imagine that the disciples are standing over on the Mount of Olives across from the temple.

And they're looking at it. And probably the sun is shining off of it. And they're just talking about the temple, how beautiful it is. Because it was standing on the top of Mount Gerizim.

There. Is it Geri? No. Moriah. There where David had originally bought that spot. So they're talking about the dazzling, the noble stones.

[11:32] The stones in this temple were massive. 37 feet long by 12 foot high by 18 wide. There were some as large as 60 feet long.

One stone 60 feet long. Now those, if you go to Jerusalem, you can still see the western wall, right? And there's some windows where you can see down deeper where Solomon's original wall was.

That's where those massive stones are. Because in those days, you know, when Solomon's temple was destroyed, when Zerubbabel rebuilt, he just rebuilt on top of the ruins, right?

So there's ruins under ruins. That's just how they did architecture back then. And now we cleared out and do a whole new foundation. They got a foundation. They're good. So the temple.

They're looking at the external temple, which was impressive, and it was beautiful. It was beautiful. It's the one good thing Herod did. It's the same Herod that killed the infants.

[12:39] But he wanted to rebuild the temple to win favor of the Jews. Not being a Jew himself, but being their king. Not being a Jew. So it's a beautiful temple.

So they're remarking on it, and Jesus kind of says, Yeah, but days are coming. Where not one of those massive stones will be left on another.

It will be razed. It will be burned. Rome will obliterate it. Within 40 years. Which later in this sermon, in verse 32, Jesus said, This generation will not pass away until all these things have come to pass. A generation is 40 years. So by 70 AD, this prophecy would be fulfilled in exactness. So Jesus says that it will be destroyed.

Verse 7, then naturally they're going to ask when. When is this going to happen? What will be the sign of when these things are about to take place? So then Jesus, in typical fashion, does not answer that directly.

[13:59] He gives them some instruction first. In fact, he's going to tell them of a number of things that are going to be taking place in the years ahead. Including the destruction of the temple.

So he responds to their question by foretelling not just the destruction of that temple and when that will happen. But a number of things that are going to happen in their future. It will be the beginning of the end.

But it will not be the end. As he said in verse 9. These things must first take place, but the end will not come at once.

In the parallel versions in Matthew 24 and Luke 13, he says these are the beginning of the birth pains. It's the beginning of the end, but it's not the end. These are just the things that will become, these are the general signs that will be happening all along.

Before the end. Before the real end. Okay? So, I want to outline this two things here. We're only going, like I said, we're only going to verse 24.

[15:00] So, two prophecies here in these verses. In verses 8 to 19, there's three general signs that Jesus gives that will be happening.

Three general signs. And then in verses 20 to 24, one specific sign of a very specific event that will be fulfilled and done.

But these other general signs will be, I think, continuing all through history. Because we still see them happening today. So, first of all, Jesus gives the first prophecy, verse 8. There's three general signs that will be ongoing, but are not the end.

They do not signal the end. They just are general signs that keep going on. Verse 8, they are deceptions, deceivers. Verse 9, they are disasters. And then verse 12 and 13, they are persecutions.

I couldn't come up with another D. So, persecutions. So, verse 8, guard against deceptions. He says, first of all, watch that you are not led astray, for many will come in my name, saying, I am he.

[16:13] They'll be saying two different things. One, they'll be saying, I am he. And they'll be saying, the time or the season is at hand. It's here. We're here. We're at the end. And Jesus says, when they say that, do not go after them.

Don't go after them. When you hear somebody that says they're speaking in the name of Jesus, they speak as if they're Jesus themselves, get away from them. And when you hear people say, they got it all figured out.

They got, this is here. We're in the very last days. And I would say, generally, we are in the end times, yes. But when you hear somebody say, this is it.

Just get away from them. Because how many have said that? And been proven to be false? And then rise back up again.

I mean, the church is so gullible sometimes. Just let them go. Just let them go focus on those things. They focus on the very things that Jesus says don't focus on. Verse 9, disasters.

[17:17] All kinds of different. You know, when you hear of wars and tumults, disasters, don't be terrified, for these things must first take place, but the end will not be at once. These are things that are going to be occurring.

Verse 10, nation will rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes and various famines and pestilences. There will be terrors and great signs from heaven.

We'll put that off there. All these different disasters, wars. Don't be startled by these things. These are things that grab our attention.

These are things that we read on our post. These are things that we see in the headlines, we hear over and over again, right? They are tragedies. They're terrible things that happen. And they call attention to themselves, and so we want to focus on them.

And Jesus isn't saying ignore them. He's simply saying don't be startled by them. They're going to keep occurring. They've been occurring for centuries. That's all he's saying.

[18:22] He's simply saying those are not signs of the end. Those are signs of ongoing. I remember, if you remember a few years ago, we went through the book of Revelation.

We figured it all out, right? We got it all figured out. We got charts and everything. No, we don't have charts. But remember, that's what I believe the four horsemen are. I believe the four horsemen are recurring over and over through history.

There's a new conqueror that comes, and then following the conqueror comes war. Following the war comes pestilence. Following the pestilence comes death. These things have occurred over and over and over again through the centuries.

You can look it up. It's a pattern that keeps occurring. That's my particular understanding of the Revelation of the horsemen. There will be the four horsemen that will come at the very, very end, yes.

But I think there are also general signs that occur over and over in history. And I think that's exactly what Jesus is saying here. So don't be diverted from the task.

[19:26] Don't be distorted by war. Don't let it distract you. These are things that must be. This is God's plan. Again, this is God's will for these things, for a nation to give away to another nation, for kingdom to give away to kingdom.

That has been God's plan for a long time. Babylon did not last, did it? What happened to Babylon? Persia overruled them. What happened to Persia? Greece. What happened to Greece? Rome. What happened to Rome?

Huns. Attila. A conqueror. What happened to the Huns? Somebody else came in. Somebody else came in. Somebody else came in.

Eventually the United States came in. What happens to when the United States time runs out? No nation lasts. Huh? Somebody else.

Whatever God wills. Maybe the end. What I'm saying is, see, I believe the end can come at any moment.

[20:27] I believe Jesus can come at any time. We're not waiting for anything. Okay? That's why he told parable after parable about, be ready. Be ready.

Don't be the one when he comes home and shuts the door you're left outside. Be ready. Be ready. Be ready. Because he can come at any moment. Any moment. There's no sign preceding that.

These are all the general signs that will keep on happening to tell us, yeah, we're in the end. I mean, there's nothing. This is going to keep going on. One more thing he says that's going to go on are persecutions.

Verse 12. And he kind of backtracks a little bit. He says, before all this, before all these deceivers come and these disasters happen, from the very beginning, in other words, before those things even happen, they will lay hands on you and persecute you and deliver you up to synagogues and prisons.

You'll be brought before kings and governors for my name's sake. Isn't that what we read in the book of Acts? It's the very things that we read in the book of Acts. They're brought before synagogues.

[21 : 34] They're brought before. Paul is brought before governors and kings. He's going to stand before Nero at the end of the book of Acts. The book of Acts ends before he gets there.

He's still waiting to see Nero. Caesar. And Caesar doesn't have a good answer for Paul. Paul dies. We know. So does Peter under Nero. Persecutions will come. Now, we know that happens to the apostles for God's name's sake.

But why? Verse 13. Why did they happen? Well, this will be your opportunity to bear witness. And again, we read in the book of Acts, we see that's exactly what happens. They bear witness. Peter and John get to preach.

Stephen gets to stand up and preach. Before Paul. They get to give witness. For which some allows them more room for witness.

[22 : 37] For others, it leads to their death. As Jesus said, some of you will die for this. But then he says, verse 14, this is interesting, right?

Settle it, therefore, in your mind, not to meditate beforehand on how to answer. Well, you get arrested. You got to be thinking, okay, okay, how do I answer good for Jesus? How do I answer good for Jesus?

How do I, okay, got to get my testimony. And Jesus is saying, no, no. Don't think about it. Don't worry about it. Do not worry about it. Because that's your moment that I'm going to work in you. That's the moment. You want to see God act? Verse 15. And that's exactly what happens in the book of Acts with Peter and John.

This is exactly what happens. Now, by the way, that's not about all the times we give our testimony. Peter tells us, remember, Peter tells us to have a defense ready.

[23 : 50] To have an answer ready for those who ask for the hope that is within us, right? Those are general. When people just ask, they're asking. They're just giving your testimony. Have that testimony ready, yes. But when you're under persecution, that's a God time.

That's a God time. Just trust the Holy Spirit to speak through you. When you're facing the test. And you may not be pulled before governors or councils. You might be pulled before a school board. You might be pulled before a council of the town. You might, you know, there might be those kind of moments when you must speak. But that's where you let God speak through you.

Okay? Because that may not be governors and kings, but it's, it might be a persecution situation. Hotspot.

Trust God to supply the word. Notice, and then he says, you know, have some tenacity here because you're going to be delivered even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends.

[24 : 56] You thought they were friends. They'll betray you. They'll turn you over. Some will even die. You will all, verse 17, you'll all be hated for my namesake. And notice what the real target is of the hatred.

You'll be hated by all. Why? Because my namesake. Because you stand for me. You bear my name. I remember one time when I was preaching in another congregation and I was given a hard message and I kind of said, don't kill the messenger.

I'm just a messenger. It's God's message. But people are kind of getting upset with me because I'm ruffling some feathers and stuff. That's always fun.

But I was feeling the pressure. I was just thinking, don't, you know, I'm just a messenger. I'm just giving God's word here. But sometimes when you're the messenger, you're the target.

But the real target's God. The real target's Jesus. For my namesake. But not a hair of your head will perish.

[26 : 01] What does that mean when he said some of you will be put to death? How is it? But not a hair of your head will perish. Does that just mean that in heaven we get our hair back? Is that? What does that mean?

Not a hair, not a literal thing, I think. He's talking about, remember earlier he talked about, you know, watch the sparrow because God knows the sparrow. And so he knows you. In fact, he knows you so well.

He knows every hair, you know, how many hairs you have on your head, which is easier for some than others. But it's, I think it's in that reference that he knows you. Not a hair on your head will suffer because you're eternally saved.

Not that you're physically saved, but you're eternally saved. And I think you get a full head of hair when you get to heaven. I mean, that's something to look forward to. Do we get picked to cut?

Do we get what? Do we get picked to cut? Pick to cut? I don't know. Full head of hair is highly overrated. What's overrated? A full head of hair.

[27 : 06] A full head of hair is highly overrated. Amen, sister. I, you know, whatever. Having been both directions, it's highly overrated. And then, and then verse 19, he gives one more instruction here.

He's in the face of these things going on, right? So in the face of deceptions, avoid those people who's, who think they got it figured out or who, who speak with too much authority.

Disasters, don't be startled by those. Persecutions. What's the, one, trust the Lord to give you the words. And secondly, he says in verse 19, by your endurance, you will gain your lives.

Let me translate that literally. By your endurance, gain your soul.

Not you will gain your soul. Jesus gave an imperative there. He did not give a future tense. He said, hold on to your soul by your endurance.

[28 : 11] Gain your soul. What does that mean? Possess your soul. What does that mean? What is it about our soul? That's vulnerable.

Is your soul vulnerable? Absolutely. Remember Jesus said, hate your soul in this world so that you can save it.

If you follow your soul in this world, you will go on the broad road. You will do take the easy way.

You will just give, you want the shortcut. That's what my soul, my soul wants it easy.

My soul, Jesus' soul wanted out, right?

Let this cut past. His soul, that's his soul. David said his soul is downcast, right? His soul is in trouble. That's where we feel the debt, the soul.

[29 : 08] Take hold of your soul by your endurance. In other words, don't follow your soul. Don't let your soul be in control.

You control your soul. Right? You renew your mind. And that affects your soul and your heart. Your mind.

Because my heart can go sick. My soul can go... Yeah? My soul can go up and down. My soul can fly in the heights, right? My soul can...

What did David say? My soul thirsts for God. Right? My soul can be in the heights. But my soul can be in the depths. And we learn from David about the soul.

And Jesus speaks of his own soul the same way. His soul was in distress. He's bleeding drops of blood. His soul is in distress in the Gethsemane. So take hold of your soul.

[30 : 07] If you're going to endure, in other words, we're going to go through hard stuff. We're going to go through trials. My soul is going to want out of trials. My soul is going to want to avoid the trials. My soul is going to want to...

Right? I don't want to do the endurance thing, Lord, anymore. I would just like to rest. I could use a couple of years off. A day won't do it.

Right? Does that make sense? And it's interesting because he says you control your soul by endure. Just endure.

Endure. Keep going. Let me ask the question. Why does the world hate Christians? As Jesus said, you will all be hated.

You will be hated by all. Why is Christianity among all religions targeted? Huh?

[31 : 08] Is it so true? Why do we tolerate everything else but Christianity? Yeah. I mean, that's hatred.

This is exactly what Jesus said. Let us not be surprised at this. It's frustrating. Right? It's frustrating everything gets twisted. And then a few bad apples get lifted up as if all Christians are like that.

So Jesus explained in John 15. He says, if the world hates you, know that it hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own.

But because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you. A servant is not greater than his master.

If they persecuted me, they will persecute you. If they kept my word, they'll also keep your word. But all these things they will do to you. Why?

[32 : 06] On account of my name. Because they do not know him who sent me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin.

But now they have no excuse for their sin. Whoever hates me hates my father also. So you can't say, oh, I love you. You know, I love God, but I don't believe in Jesus.

You can't say that. Jesus doesn't allow you to do that. Whoever hates me hates my father also. If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin.

But now they have seen and hated both me and my father. But the word that is written in their law must be fulfilled. They hated me without a cause.

But when the helper comes, whom I will send to you from the father, the spirit of truth, who proceeds from the father, he will bear witness about me.

[33 : 09] Here again is the promise of the spirit as you're under persecution. Why does the world hate Christianity? Because Jesus turns the light on in the dark. He tells the truth.

He exposes sin. He tells people they're not okay. And it's not okay to stay in that darkness.

Christians are not of the world, so we live differently.

We're hated because we're not like the world. Are we? We're different. Don't we not have different values? Do we not have to make different choices based on those values?

We don't live in a way that puts people off, hopefully, not intentionally. We live, hopefully, open and honest lives about our own brokenness, our own sin, our own need of Christ.

We don't stand apart from others as if we've got all the answers. We simply show beggars. We're beggars and show other beggars where to find bread, right? I'm broken.

[34 : 13] I'm not. We're not better than anyone. We're just rescued. We're called to witness. We're not called to shame the sinner.

We're not there to condemn the world like Jesus didn't come to condemn. We don't come to condemn the sinner. We share our own experience. We share our guilt and shame. We share our rebellion and our ruin and our need of Christ.

We testify to God's transformation in our own lives, how he opened our eyes, changed our heart, forgave us, gave us new hope, and gave us a purpose in life. When we do, some will dismiss it. Some will mock it. Some will scoff. Some will hate us because it's too close to their own home. But some will listen.

Some will listen. Some will. So first Jesus gives the general signs that will be ongoing, but they're not the end.

[35 : 15] Then Jesus gives one specific sign in verse 20 through 24. Remember the disciples asked in verse 7, when will these things be and what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?

Jesus answers that in verse 20 to 24. He gives the exact when this will happen, and he gives the sign of when this is about to take place.

The second prophecy is about the temple and Jerusalem that will be entirely destroyed and obliterated, leveled, decimated, not one stone upon another.

What will be the sign? Verse 20. When you see, when you see what? When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then what?

Then you know. Then you know. There's the sign. Then you know. That desolation has come near. It's about to be fulfilled.

[36 : 19] When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies. This will be seen by the disciples. This is a specific historical event that occurred in the years AD 66 through AD 70.

This is when, in 70 AD is when no stone will be left upon another. There would be total destruction. This is a prophecy. There's no prophecy probably more literally fulfilled than this one.

Let me quote Josephus. Now, I know Josephus isn't the most accurate and isn't, sometimes exaggerates because he was getting money from Rome to make Rome look good.

Okay. Okay. But he was a Jew. He lived in the first century. He was an eyewitness. Here's what he wrote. He said, Caesar, Caesar at that time was Vespasian.

Caesar ordered the whole city and the temple to be raised to the ground. And all the rest of the wall encompassing the city was so completely leveled to the ground as to leave future visitors to the spot.

[37 : 33] No ground for believing it had ever been inhabited. Now, this is Josephus. He might be exaggerating a tiny bit. But Jesus said no stone would be left on another level.

Okay. Destined. Why? Verse 21. First of all, he says, when you see this, when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, verse 21, then let those who are in Judea, which is the country surrounding Jerusalem, let them flee to the mountains.

Let them get out. Let those who are inside the city depart. Get out of the city. Escape. When you see it surrounded, get out. This is exactly what happened.

The army, when they first surrounded the city, they allowed people to leave. Okay. Rome did not come to just kill the innocent. It came because there were people revolting.

There were Jewish zealots revolting. Let them get out. Let not those who are in the country enter. Don't come back in the city. If it's surrounded by armies, get out.

[38 : 48] Mark and Luke add, if you're on the roof, don't come inside to get, just get out. Don't even take time to go back for your pictures. Just get out. Right? This is a tragedy ready to happen.

If you wait too long, the siege will occur. You won't get out. It's a siege that took about three and a half years. Takes a while to build the ramps up to the top of the walls.

This is how they did it. Back in the old days, Jerusalem was surrounded by walls. You got to build the ramps up to the walls so you can come up and over the wall. And then start the destruction.

It takes a while. During that time, that three and a half years, guess what? The food's not coming in. There's limited supplies. People start dying. People start killing one another.

By the time Rome gets in there, there's not a lot to do. And this is the sword of Rome. You don't... Yeah. This is the sword of Rome at Rome's height.

[39 : 48] You don't rebel against Rome unless you have Jesus leading you, I guess. But this is what... Nah. So, the reason...

But why? Verse 22. Why? For these are days of vengeance to fulfill all that is written. Why do these armies come and surround Jerusalem? Why is its desolation near?

Because these are days of vengeance to fulfill all that is written. And this is God's vengeance for the ongoing, unrepented rebellion.

And for the unbelief in his Christ that he sent. As Jesus... Remember when Jesus came to the city and he wept over it. And he said, oh, that you would have...

That you... What did he say? That you would have recognized the day of your visitation. But now that you have not recognized that, then your destruction is coming.

[40 : 47] And he was weeping. Understand. He's weeping. Because his people have rejected him. Even though he has made it crystal clear.

By that... I mean, he's already come in on the donkey by that point. Right? He's made it crystal clear. Yet God's vengeance was spoken of back in Deuteronomy 28.

If you don't keep the covenant, you will live under a curse and everything will go wrong. Highlighted again by the prophet Jeremiah, prophet Isaiah, prophet Zechariah.

All depicted this destruction of vengeance that would come. Daniel specifically spoke about a day when it would come to an end in Jerusalem. So what was the extent of the desolations?

Called the desolation. Verse 20. What's the extent? Verse 23. And Jesus is saying, oh, for the vulnerable people in those days. Alas, for the women who are pregnant and those who are nursing infants in those days.

[41 : 50] It's horrible for them to be in that situation. Because there's a great distress. This will be a great distress upon the land. Our Bibles have a great distress upon the earth.

Do you have that in verse 28? Should be land. Should be land. Same word in the Greek. Same word means land or earth. Clearly this is about the land of Israel.

So that should just say land. Great distress upon the land and wrath against this people. So we're not talking about the whole earth. We're talking about a distress upon a particular land and a particular people.

In 70 AD. God says that's enough. They, verse 24, then they will fall by the edge of the sword. They will be led captive among all the nations.

Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles. Specifically the Romans until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. What does that mean? Well, one thing it means, how significant it is, is that if the temple's destroyed, what comes to an end?

[43 : 01] What was the temple for? For sacrifice. For worship. For drawing near to God. We just read that in our, you know, oh, what a joy to come, right?

To give thanks, to come up to the temple and give thanks to the Lord. It was meant for that wonderful purpose. But the people had made the temple a den of thieves.

Not the people, but the priests and the corruption that, and then to top it off, Jesus comes and they reject him. In fact, they will, in the next couple of days, kill him.

So God's vengeance comes. So it's the end of sacrifices. It's the end of the priestly system. It's the end of worship. Now, Jews around the world, they can still pray to God, just like anybody else. But they can't do one iota of the book of Leviticus. How do they deal with sin? According to their belief in the Torah.

[44 : 10] They cannot. Now, the last time the temple got destroyed back in 500s BC by Babylon, 70 years, and then they rebuilt the temple.

And so the Jews came back and they had worship again. But this time when the temple was destroyed in 70 AD, how long has it been? It's not 70 years.

It's 2,000 years. What does that say to those who are Jews? Still the time of the Gentiles.

Well, exactly. Yes, it is. It is still the time of the Gentiles. But I guess wouldn't that make you think? Wouldn't that make you think if you're a Jew?

How do I deal with my sin? Well, hopefully they read David and they find out David had a way.

When he couldn't offer sacrifices, what did he do?

[45 : 12] He appealed for mercy. Psalm 51, he appealed for mercy. Because remember, he had sinned in a way that no sacrifices could help him. He had sinned intentionally.

He had sinned. He broke about half of the... He broke the second half of the covenant. I mean, he's a dead man. So he appealed the mercy and God being gracious forgave him.

That's how you deal with sin. But no temple. So what's the time of the Gentiles? Well, okay. There's a phrase in Romans 11.

Remember in Romans 11, Paul is talking about there's been a partial hardening for the Israel, right? And now it's the time of the Gentiles, right? He talks about how there's a partial hardening on Israel, right?

Until the fullness of the Gentiles. This is Romans 11, 25. And so he implies that there will be a time when God again comes to the Jews.

[46 : 19] When God again will bring in more Jews. Whatever the word is. Restore his compassion on the Jewish race.

So that... This is the time of the Gentiles. It has been a Gentile time, not a Jewish time. Has it not? There is still a Jewish nation. There is still Jewish people. And we pray for them.

And we have compassion upon them. And we worry about them. And we think about what they've been going through for 2,000 years. And Paul intimates that there's still a future.

So we pray for that. Was it the last line of our call to worship today? We pray for peace in Jerusalem. Jerusalem's divided into four. The Jews only have one quarter of it, right?

You've got a Jewish quarter. You've got an Arminian quarter. You've got a Christian quarter. And you've got a... What's the big presence there? Who owns the Temple Mount? Arab.

[47 : 22] Muslim. I mean, they've got the biggest quarter. They've got the Temple Mount. Where the mosque is built directly over the Holy of Holies. You go into that mosque, you can see the Holy of Holies.

I've seen it. So time to the Gentiles. Which implies that time...

And the word for time there is kairós. Meaning season. Not chronos. Kairos. Which means season. God time. Season is a God time. It's an age.

It's a season where God is working in different ways. So it implies that he has a season for the Gentiles. Once all the Gentiles that he has determined come in. Then apparently, maybe, hopefully, seemingly, he turns back to the Jews.

I'm not an expert in these things. So where does this come from? Remember, Jesus said it's days of vengeance to fulfill all that is written.

[48 : 30] Well, let's look at one of those places. Just one. Daniel 9. Daniel 9. Daniel has a vision.

If you read the book of Daniel, Daniel has lots of visions. But he has a vision about Israel's future in Daniel 9. And it's a vision that describes 70 weeks.

Not literal weeks. These weeks are prophetic weeks. A week is seven days. So in prophecy, the week is seven years. So 70 weeks is 70 times seven.

How many is that? A lot. 490. 490. 490. Thank you very much. 490 years.

70 weeks refers to 490 years of prophecy. Daniel's given a vision about how those weeks break down. And they apply specifically to what happened to Israel in 70 AD.

[49 : 36] So here's Daniel 9, beginning of verse 24. 70 weeks. This is, by the way, it's Gabriel speaking to Daniel. Remember Gabriel? Oh, he's the Christmas angel. Well, he's also the Daniel

angel.

So 70 weeks are decreed about your people, the Jewish people, and your holy city, Jerusalem. Two, watch this. To finish transgression. To put an end to sin.

To atone for iniquity. To bring in everlasting righteousness. To seal both vision and profit. And to anoint a most holy place.

Wow. 70 weeks. All that's going to occur. Know, therefore, and understand, that from the time of going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks.

So for seven weeks. Or seven times. How many years? Seven times. 49 years, right?

[50 : 39] 49 years. Okay. I'm sorry. Then for 62 weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat in a troubled time. That's when Zerubbabel rebuilt the temple.

During that time. After the 62 weeks. So we got seven and 62. So now we're up to 69. After the 62 weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off. An anointed one.

Or literally, a Messiah. A Messiah will be cut off. Now we're in 30 AD. When Jesus was crucified.

An anointed one. A Messiah will be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end shall come with a flood.

To the end there will be war. Desolations are decreed. There's that word desolations. There's the prophecy of the destruction of this temple that had been rebuilt.

[51 : 44] It comes at the same time that the anointed one is cut off. That the Messiah is cut off from the people. Which is, that's how Isaiah 53 describes in this cut off.

And he shall make, that going on, this prince who is to come. He shall make a strong covenant with many for one week. So that's the 70th week.

And for half of the week. Also, now you got half of the, for last week. He shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abomination shall come one who makes desolate.

There's your abomination of desolation. Until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator. You want me to unpack all of that? No, I don't either. And I don't even know how to.

I just want us to get the general picture from Daniel. Because there's lots of different views of Daniel here. Let's just get what's clear. The first 69 weeks before Messiah, what's clear is that the temple is destroyed and restored again.

[52 : 52] That's Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel comes after Daniel. So this is Daniel's being told what will happen next. After the 69 weeks, the Messiah is cut off.

And the city and the temple is destroyed and the sacrifices stopped. All of that fits 70 AD.

Because that's what happened in 70 AD. How did that happen? In AD 66, there was a Jewish revolt.

Jewish zealots revolted against Rome. 67, according to historical writings, 67 zealots stormed and took the temple.

They began to do. They are not priests. They began to go into places in the temple that only priests could go. So they desecrated the temple. They desecrated what was holy.

[53 : 51] They did atrocities. They murdered people in the temple. Some think that what those zealots did in those years before 70 AD.

was... Some consider that the abomination of desolation. Because they did make abominations in the holy place.

But probably not what Daniel is referring to. So why did Rome come to destroy Jerusalem?

Because of those rebels.

Because there was a revolt against Rome. And if you revolt against Rome, guess what's going to happen? Rome will take you down.

And they will take you down to the point... Well, as Caesar decreed, he wanted it raised to the ground. And burned with fire.

[54 : 49] How do you burn rocks? You know how hot it has to be to burn rocks? It has to be really hot. When I was in Israel, we went to some of the places where they had burned rocks. And they showed us.

And they... I don't remember how hot it had to be. But it had to be really, really hot to burn rocks. So there you go.

After a three and a half year siege, Rome entered Jerusalem. Burned the city. Raised the temple. Leveled every stone. By the way, the general who led that...

It was the 10th Legion of Rome. His name was General Titus. He would become a next emperor after Vespasian.

So how do we apply all this? What's all this? It's very interesting, right? It's interesting. It's interesting to know. How do we apply this whole thing about the temple being destroyed? What does that mean for us? What difference does that make?

[55 : 52] Well, one... First of all, what we can learn is that God is serious about his warnings. God is serious about his warnings. If we do not repent, when he tells us to repent, there will be consequences.

We can expect judgment. Secondly, God is in control of history. God is in control of history. He determines. He decides when judgment comes, how it comes.

And he is the one that holds the future. Thirdly, there are times for Christians to flee. There are times to stand.

And there are times to flee. Well, we're told in Matthew 3 to flee the wrath of God. That's to flee. We're told in 1 Corinthians 7, 18 to flee immorality.

That's something we should flee. We're told in 1 Corinthians 10 to flee idolatry. That's something to flee. There are times to flee. Because those things are dangerous. Fourthly, and I think probably most importantly, since this temple is destroyed, what happens?

[56 : 57] Where's the new temple? Jesus. Jesus. Jesus is the new temple. First. He is the new temple.

Remember he said, destroy this temple and in three days I'll raise it up. His temple. But then he even made a different, he spread that temple around, didn't he?

Because everyone who knows Jesus is a temple. Each one of us who has the Holy Spirit is a temple of the Holy Spirit. And each one of us who believes as a community of believers, we are the temple of the Spirit.

We together. Christ can be the temple all by itself because he's perfection. We need each other to be full, to be complete. So how do we deal with sin if Jesus is our temple?

Man, we don't have to go up a hill or anything. We just get on our knees. We talk to Jesus. Jesus has already dealt with our sin. But when we still sin, what does he want us to do?

[58 : 05] He wants us to walk in the light. He wants us to confess whatever his light shines on us. To confess our sins. And he's faithful just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us of all unrighteousness.

He not only forgives us, he washes us from all unrighteousness. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for sending your son to tell us what's ahead, what we can expect.

Help us to hear this, Lord. There are deceivers out there. Help us to be aware and careful. There are disasters that happen and they worry us.

They call us to alarm. We pray for the people who suffer under these disasters. But Father, help us to, again, not be startled in the sense that we think this is the end.

Amen. And finally, Father, when we are persecuted, when we're hated, when we're dismissed, when we're disregarded, when we're lied about, we're scorned, grant us the courage to trust in you and to take hold of our soul by our endurance.

[59 : 25] Help us to walk by your spirit. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.