

When Will These Things Happen?

Jesus' Misunderstood Last Sermon

Luke 21:5 And while some were speaking of **the temple**, how it was adorned with noble stones and offerings, he said,

6 “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.”

7 And they asked him, “Teacher, when will these things be, and what will be **the sign** when these things are about **to take place**?”

8 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.

9 And when you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified, **for these things must first take place**, but the end will not be at once.”

10 Then he said to them, “**Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom**.

11 There will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences. And there will be terrors and great **signs** from heaven.

12 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**.

13 This will be your opportunity to bear witness.

14 Settle it therefore in your minds not to meditate beforehand how to answer,

15 for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict.

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

17 You will be hated by all **for my name's sake**.

18 **But not a hair of your head will perish.**

19 **By your endurance you will gain your lives.**

20 “But when you see **Jerusalem** surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near.

21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it,

22 for these are days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written.

23 Alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! For there will be great distress upon the earth and wrath against this people.

24 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. [LUKE 17 STARTS HERE]

25 “And there will be **signs** in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth **distress of nations** in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves,

26 people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

27 And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

28 Now **when these things begin to take place**, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

29 And he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees.

30 As soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near.

31 So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near.

32 Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all has taken place.

33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

34 “But **watch yourselves** lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap.

35 For it will come upon all who dwell on the face of the whole earth.

36 But **stay awake** at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are **going to take place**, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

37 And every day he was teaching **in the temple**, but at night he went out and lodged on the mount called Olivet.

38 And early in the morning all the people came to him **in the temple** to hear him.

Luke 21:5-38

The Olivet Discourse: Preliminary Observations

There are **a couple of things** I want to deal with up front before looking at our passage. There's a lot to get through, so we don't have time for long introductions. But these are important and we must talk about them to provide context for our present situation.

The passage is Jesus' famous **Olivet Discourse**. This is a sermon that Jesus preached on Tuesday of his final week on earth. It was given somewhere on the Mt. of Olives, east of the Temple across the Kidron Valley. It is recorded in the three Synoptic Gospels, though there are **important differences** that we will discuss later.

At one point, the text deals with the “**coming**” of the “**Son of Man**” (**Luke 21:27**). This idea is found **in the middle** of the long sermon that gives many specific events that will take place before **this coming**. Perhaps rooted in the Creeds which say things like we believe Christ “**will come to judge the living and the dead**” (Apostle's Creed) or “**will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead**” (Nicene Creed) and perhaps also thinking about the parallel in Matthew where the Disciples ask Jesus, “**What will be the sign of your**

coming and of the end of the age?” ([Matt 24:3](#)), the popular interpretation of this great sermon is that it deals entirely with our own future. This in turn leads to two very different but important things to discuss.

First, [pop-eschatology](#) (known as Dispensationalism) is the view that insists what we are reading here deals with our own future. And since this is the popular view, it is the only one that many people have ever heard. Here are a couple of examples. Commenting on Matthew’s version, [Scofield](#) writes that the answer to “what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?” is “Mt. 24.4-33.”¹ This parallels [Luke 21:8-31](#), so most of our passage. Similarly, the *Prophecy Study Bible* says, “The balance of Mt 24 reveals Jesus’ detailed answer ... Jesus was speaking to his Jewish followers and warning of the prophetic signs that would occur just prior to his second coming.”² The balance of Matt 24 overlaps basically the entirety of [Luke 21](#), thus the whole of our passage. Now, both do realize that to a small degree, Jesus is predicting something that has already occurred to us, but they are internally contradictory in how they explain

¹ *The Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1917), n. [Matt 24:3](#), p. 1033.

² *The Prophecy Study Bible*, ed. Grant R. Jeffrey (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998), n. [Matt 24:1-3](#), p. 1104

this and neither could really care much less about it than they do.³ Their real point, all that really matters to them, is that 90%+ of this sermon deals with the Second Coming.

This leads to [the second point](#). Many people read this sermon in light of the same Second Coming as the Creeds discuss and as Dispensationalists interpret as still in our future. But whereas Dispensationalists have an explanation for how phrases like, “[This generation will not pass away](#),” an important idea found in all three versions of this sermon, do not refer to Jesus’ generation but to our own (or one in our very near future), others simply see Jesus as having totally screwed up his prophecy. Perhaps the 20th century’s most influential atheist, [Bertrand Russell](#), said, “[I am concerned with Christ as He appears in the Gospel narrative ... He certainly thought that his second coming would occur in the clouds of glory before the death of all the people who were living at the time. There are a great many texts that prove](#)

³ Scofield in his comments on both Matthew and Luke recognized that the disciples wanted to know when the temple would be destroyed. His answer is that [Luke 21:20-24](#) explains this. The problem is, Luke 21:20-24 is parallel with Matthew 24:15-21, which he says is not about the destruction of the temple. Similarly, Jeffrey says only [Luke 21:20-24](#) describes the destruction of the temple in 70 AD. Everything else in all the Gospel’s records of this sermon are about our own future. I have a much longer introduction of this in my sermon “[The End is Near?: Matthew 24:1-14](#)” *RBCNC* (June 28, 2008).

He believed that his coming would happen during the lifetime of many then living. That was the belief of his earlier followers.”⁴

Even [C.S. Lewis](#) fell prey to this trap. Arguing against a fictitious person like Russell in “The World’s Last Night,” that we *can* believe the Gospels because they tell the truth, even when it seems embarrassing, he writes, “‘Say what you like,’ we are told, ‘the apocalyptic beliefs of the first Christians have been proved to be false. It is clear from the NT that they all expected the Second Coming in their own lifetime. And, worse still, they had a reason, and one which you will find very embarrassing. Their Master had told them so. He shared, and indeed created, their delusion. He said in so many words, “*This generation shall not pass till all these things be done.*” And he was wrong. He clearly knew no more about the end of the world than anyone else.’”⁵ The verse he cites is found in [Luke 21:32](#) (cf. [Matt 24:34](#); [Mark 13:30](#)) and he calls it “the most embarrassing verse in the Bible.”⁶

⁴ [Bertrand Russell](#), *Why I Am Not A Christian* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957), 16.

⁵ [C. S. Lewis](#), *The World’s Last Night and Other Essays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1960), 97-98.

⁶ I have a much longer introduction of this in my sermon “[Jesus Was Right!: Matthew 24:16-35](#)” RBCNC (July 13, 2008).

So [on one hand](#), we have people using Jesus' predictions made in our passage to throw dirt on the Lord, or at the very least, to say he didn't know what he was talking about, even though we should still believe he is God (a very strange argument indeed). [On the other](#), we have Christians having to make up really incredible arguments to justify why the literal meaning of words aren't what you think they are, all while having self-contradictory interpretations of the same sermon as given in the different accounts of the Gospels.⁷ It seems to me that this situation in which we find ourselves needs good answers, textual answers, exegetical answers to help us think clearly, not go running wild on speculations (either past or present which Jesus actually warns us about in this very passage), see that Jesus wasn't in fact wrong, and that Occam's Razor really is important in keeping us on the side that the simplest explanation really is the best.

⁷ And there are, of course, other interpretations out there that have just as many or even more implications, such as the one I heard this week which takes just about every conspiracy theory out there (flat-earth, mud-floods, lost timelines, Tartaria), and throws them into a stew made up of this strange form of full preterism where Jesus predicted his Second Coming, was right about it, ushered in the Resurrection of the saints in bodily form, who then reigned with Christ for 1,000 years building incredible buildings that we can't duplicate today, a time which is now over as we find ourselves living in Satan's release, which began at the Renaissance, where Satan was released and has been deceiving the nations ever since. [Truth Be Told \(@biblical_earth\)](#), "[It's More Obvious The More You Think On It](#)," *Tik Tok* (9-15-2023).

The Olivet Discourse: Structure and Context

Structure

We are looking at the first half of **Luke 21:5-38**. It contains **the last great sermon** of Jesus' career and is the last thing in Luke's Gospel prior to the events of Christ's passion. The ESV breaks it up, I think somewhat unhelpfully, into six divisions:

- **Jesus Foretells Destruction of the Temple (1-9)**
- **Jesus Foretells Wars and Persecution (10-19)**
- **Jesus Foretells Destruction of Jerusalem (20-24)**
- **The Coming of the Son of Man (25-28)**
- **The Lesson of the Fig Tree (29-33)**
- **Watch Yourselves (34-38)**

Why would this be unhelpful? It's because this is clearly all **one cohesive unit of thought**. It begins and ends with "the temple" (**Luke 21:5, 37-38**). In between, it sets forth a logical and fairly strict thematic chiasm:

- A. “Some were speaking *of the Temple* (περὶ τοῦ ἱεροῦ)” (5)
- B. “what will be the sign when these things are about to *take place* (γίνεσθαι)” (7)
- C. “See that you are *not led astray* (μὴ πλανηθῆτε)” (8)
- D. “for these things *must first take place* (δεῖ γὰρ ταῦτα γενέσθαι πρῶτον)” (9)
- E. “*Nation will rise against nation* (ἔθνος)” “*signs* (σημεῖα)” (10-11)
- F. *Persecution of the saints* (“*my name’s sake*,” 12, 17) (12-17)
- G. “**Not a hair of your head will perish**” (18)
- G’. “*By your endurance you will gain your lives*” (19)
- F’. *Flight of the Saints* (“*Jerusalem*,” 20, 24) (20-24)
- E’. “*signs* (σημεῖα)” “*distress of nations* (ἔθνῶν)” (25-27)
- D’. “When these things *begin to take place* (ἀρχομένων δὲ τούτων γίνεσθαι)” ... “when you see these *things taking place* (ὕμεῖς, ὅταν ἴδητε ταῦτα γινόμενα)” (28-33)
- C’. “**Watch yourselves** (Προσέχετε δὲ ἑαυτοῖς)” (34-35)
- B’. “Stay awake ... to escape all these things that are going to *take place* (γίνεσθαι)” (36)
- A’. “He was teaching *in the temple* (ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ)...” “the people came to him *in the temple* (ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ)” (37-38)⁸

This has **two implications**. First, this is all **one unit of thought** and is not, as the headings could mislead you, two to six different or perhaps even unrelated short passages. Second, the parallel **units help interpret one another**. This will be particularly important when we look at the strange heavenly phenomena that occur next time.

⁸ This follows the analysis of SJD, “[Luke 21:5-38](#),” *Biblical Chiasm Exchange* (May 26, 2015).

Harmony of the Synoptics on the Olivet Discourse and Why It Matters

Comparing Luke to Matthew and Mark is also helpful and important. But this can get a little complicated. So hang in there with me. Let's start at the beginning.

All three Gospels begin by noting that Jesus was just in the temple. Matthew and Mark say he was now leaving it when the disciples pointed out the wonderful stones and buildings of the temple (Matt 24:1; Mark 13:1). Luke simply says, “Some were speaking of the temple, and how it was adorned with noble stones and offerings...” (Luke 21:5). Why not? What a glorious building it was.

All three then tell us that Jesus spoke up in response. Luke puts it this way, “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” (Luke 21:6). The other two Gospels are also very close here, and their differences are unsubstantial. But the question needs to be asked of all three—what stones is Jesus talking about? The obvious answer and only possible contextual answer is that he is talking about the stones of the temple. Which temple? The temple *they have just come out of*, the temple known as

Herod's temple, the second great temple built in Israel. *Jesus is predicting its destruction*, a prophecy, which as R. T. France says, “was to be literally fulfilled by the Roman general Titus a generation later.”⁹

Israel's first temple—Solomon's temple—had been destroyed around 587 BC. 70ish years later, around 516 BC, under the sanction of Cyrus the Great, a *Second Temple* began construction under Zerubbabel and continued for perhaps fifteen years. It is often called Herod's Temple because from around 20-10 BC, Herod the Great began a massive expansion of the temple mount and complex. This temple would be *utterly obliterated* by the Roman armies in 70 AD, and we will look at this in much more detail shortly.

It is into this that we come to their response to Jesus and this is where the real interpretive challenges begin. As Luke has it, “*And they asked him, ‘Teacher, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?’*” (7). So *they are asking a question of timing and of signs*. Luke is basically following the Mark here (see *Mark 13:3*). However, Matthew has a very important difference. In Matthew they ask, “*Tell us, when will*

⁹ R. T. France, *Luke*, ed. Mark L. Strauss and John H. Walton, Teach the Text Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2013), 329.

these things be, and what will be the sign of *your coming* and *of the end of the age?*” (**Matt 24:3**). Matthew actually has three questions, not two: timings, signs, and *the end of the age*.

It is Matthew who adds the phrase, “**end of the age.**” Quite frankly, this makes Luke and Mark easier to interpret than Matthew, because we don’t have to worry about eschatological language in their versions. They simply ask when the temple will be destroyed and if there is anything they will see that will precipitate it. **Staying Luke** will help us see that what is before us really isn’t all that difficult to interpret, so long as you actually just read what is in front of you.

But we need to understand what Matthew has done and how this fits into what we are looking at with Luke, for it makes all the difference in the world to each of those interpretations I brought up at the beginning. When **viewing the three accounts of this sermon side-by-side** (see chart below and for more detail see the Appendix at the end of the sermon), it is clear that **Mark is the most straightforward**. What I mean is, when you compare them, Mark is the only Gospel that isn’t moving material around into and out of this sermon. My opinion of why is because Mark tells us that **Peter** was one of the four disciples who asked Jesus this question

(**Mark 13:3**), and tradition tells us that Mark's source material for writing his Gospel was in fact Peter. So who better to recount this sermon than the man himself?¹⁰

Mark 13:1-9a	Matt 24:1-9a	Luke 21:5-12a
Mark 13:9b-13	Matt 10:17-22 Matt 24:9b-14	Luke 21:12b-19
Mark 13:14-20	Matt 24:15-22	Luke 21:20-24
Mark 13:21-23	Matt 24:23-28	Luke 17:20-25
Mark 13:24-32	Matt 24:29-36	Luke 21:25-33
	Matt 24:37-41	Luke 17:26-37
Mark 13:33-37	Matt 24:42-44	Luke 21:34-38
	Matt 24:45-51	
Black = Material in Order. Light Grey = Material Moved to/from another Place. Grey = Material Parallel to the Light Grey.		

Continuing a view of the three side-by-side (using Luke as our base, since that's the Gospel we are going through), we notice that **the first eight or so verses** are basically the same in all three. However, around **Luke 21:12-17** we discover that Matthew has taken these verses out of this sermon

¹⁰ This doesn't necessarily mean that Mark didn't leave things out, though. It is important to remember that Mark has been called, "The Gospel on the Run." It's the shortest of the Four, and even Mark was not interested in recording the entirety of Jesus' sermon. This is clear by comparing Matthew and Luke's accounts. Matthew has much more material than Mark. Mark's focus is mostly that of Luke: Jerusalem in 70 AD.

and placed them much earlier in his Gospel in chapter 10. That's not a big deal, since he clearly felt those verses would have more impact in a different place as he told his Gospel. But it shows that Matthew has no problems moving material around. Curiously, the next five or so verses in Matthew (**Matt 24:10-14**) are greatly expanded from Mark (**Mark 13:13b**) and Luke (**Luke 21:19**). Matthew really focuses in on the persecution the disciples will face.

Why would Matthew do this? I think it is because **he is reflecting, *theologically***, on the Sermon as delivered by Jesus as recounted through Peter in Mark. Mark is the Sermon proper (although shortened, see previous note), while Matthew is more theological in how he presents it. That's why Matthew has added the "coming" and "end of the age" language. Matthew is doing something the others aren't. At some point, Matthew will talk about the end of the age. For the most part, Mark and Luke do not.

But I said, for the most part, and here we need to remember that **Luke has actually done something similar to Matthew**. Once you get to **Matthew 24:23-28** and again **37-41**, the first which is in Mark, but the second which is not in

Mark, we find that Luke has taken this material and separated it completely out his Olivet Discourse. Recall that he had this material back in Luke 17. Why? It's because **Luke is also theologizing on the Sermon**. Luke is reflecting, just like Matthew is, on *the meaning* of the Sermon, and not just giving us the sermon in its rawest form.

How does this matter? We now need to bring up **Luke 21:20**. “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near.” This comes after thirteen verses that answered the disciples question about the temple, which is in Jerusalem. Those thirteen verses are parallel to the same material in Matthew and Mark, which means that those are also talking about the temple. To focus in on Matthew, this means that unless we have some compelling reason to deny it, that these verses in Matthew are in fact *not talking about the end of the age*. They are talking about the same thing that Luke is talking about. Dispensationalists are simply wrong on this point.¹¹

¹¹ **Going Deeper.** Preterists will argue that the “end of the age” refers to the end of the old covenant, and thus 70 AD. Theologically, this is possible. I have come to think it is better to understand “age” as to referring, as it often did, to the Great Year with its Platonic Months. The “age” he is referring to is most likely the Age of Pisces, which corresponds to the end of the Great Year and the resetting of all things from a cosmological perspective. While “age” (*aiōn*) and “covenant” (*diathēkē*) often appear together in the LXX as something like “a perpetual covenant,” “age” is never metonymous for covenant, but always modifies it adjectivally. This explains why Luke moves his “end of the age” material to ch. 17, rather than keeping it all

The proof of this is Luke. It's not sound exegesis to take parallel passages that have no significant differences and say one is about the destruction of the temple in 70 AD while the other is about our own future. How does that even make sense? Someone will say, "Because Matthew talks about Jesus 'coming' and 'the end of the age.'" True, but we can say two things about this. First, the stuff about the end of the age has *already been separated out by Luke* and placed in Luke 17 precisely so that you will understand that the "end of the age" part of the sermon as recorded in Matthew is *not* what we are looking at here. Matthew deals with the end of the age stuff much later in his sermon and Luke takes it out of this part and puts it in the earlier part, precisely so that we will know from an inspired hand how to interpret this.

Second, by simply reading the parallel accounts together you can easily see that Matthew's "coming" language is not the Second Coming, but a coming in judgment upon Jerusalem, the very thing all three talk about when they say, you will see "the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Matthew's "*the sign of your coming*" is parallel to "*the sign when these things are about to take place*" (Luke).

together as we would expect if the entire sermon dealt with the destruction of the temple and the "end of the old covenant."

What things? **The destruction of the second temple.** There's more than one coming of Jesus, just like there are many Days of the LORD. Those all echo or foreshadow the Great and Final Coming, the Great and Final Day, but they are not that Coming or Day. They are but a prelude.

What I'm essentially arguing is that **almost all of the Olivet Discourse in Luke is about the destruction of the Second Temple**, while the parallel material in Matthew and Mark are also about *the same thing*. That should be self-evident. Unfortunately, for many people, they've never even considered this before. Where Luke moves his material to Luke 17, this is the second half of Matthew's Olivet Discourse, and that is where Luke deals with the Second Coming. But that's behind us for the most part in Luke, and so we won't talk much more about it as we look at this discourse.

This is **seen most easily** in that verse **20-21**. “**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.**” The parallel in Matthew and Mark is stunning. They both say, “**So when you see *the abomination of desolation* spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the**

holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains...” The irony is that **most of today’s readers do *not* understand!** They think this is talking about some future third temple and an abomination performed by the Antichrist in our future. But Luke interprets it for us telling us that this is about Jerusalem being surround by armies. Which Jerusalem? The same one he’s been talking about. The one the disciples lived in, the one 2,000 years ago, the one that was destroyed in 70 AD.

Birth Pains – Luke 21:8-19

I’ve said a lot now, but not looked at the specifics. In most of what follows, we will be looking at **historical data recorded for us long ago** by historians who were there. I take much of this from Gary DeMar’s excellent book *Last Days Madness*.¹² In the first few verses of explanation by our Lord, he will talk about things like **antichrists (Luke 21:8)**, **wars and tumults (9)**, **nation against nation (10)**, **earthquakes, famines, and pestilences (11)**, **terrors and great signs from**

¹² Gary DeMar, *Last Days Madness: Obsession of the Modern Church* (Powder Springs, GA: American Vision, 1999). For this part see esp. Ch. 6 “Signs for All to See.” He in turn takes a lot of this from Jacob Marcellus Kik, *The Eschatology of Victory* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Pub., 1971).

heaven. These are things many people apply to us today, as in right now! Now, Matthew and Mark both add something that Luke drops at the end of this list. “These are but the beginning of the *birth pains*” (Mark 13:8; Matt 24:8). Importantly, Jesus says that when you see these things *do not* think this is the end (vs. 6; Mark 13:7) or “the end will not be at once” (Luke 21:9). Ironically, this is exactly the opposite thing that most people do today. They think that when they see these things that this must be the end! Oh that we would learn to *read* the Bible. Let’s see how these all found fulfillment in the First Century.

AntiChrist’s

First, he says “see that you are not led astray” (8). Many false Christ’s will come and saying, “I am he!” And “the time is at hand.” This is a very ironic and important warning. It is ironic because many people today are led astray by just these things. Certain prophetic movements today are filled with false prophets and misunderstood warnings. It is important because Jesus said *do not to be led astray* into wild speculation, losing faith, and eventually apostatizing all together because of failed prophecies of Christ’s return.

In the first century, prior to the destruction of the temple, many were led astray by scoundrels. Perhaps the best known is **Simon the Sorcerer** from Acts 8. It says, “There was a certain man named Simon, who formerly was practicing magic in the city, and astonishing the people of Samaria, claiming to be someone great; and they all, from smallest to greatest, were giving attention to him, saying, ‘This man is what is called the Great Power of God.’ And they were giving him attention because he had for a long time astonished them with his magic arts.” Jerome quotes Simon as saying, “I am the Word of God, I am the Comforter, I am Almighty, I am all there is of God.”¹³ Irenaeus tells how Simon claimed to be the Son of God and the creator of angels.¹⁴

John summarizes what took place, “**Many antichrists have come**” (1Jn 2:18). Growing up the way I did, this verse was never taught. I was taught only that there was “**The Antichrist**.” But John says that anyone who denies the Father and the Son (1Jn 2:22), anyone who does not confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (4:3) are deceivers (2Jn 1:7) and antichrists. This is not future. It is past! And it is present!

¹³ Jerome, *Commentary on Matthew* 24:5.

¹⁴ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.23.1-2.

Josephus (*Antiquities of the Jews* 20.5.1) tells about a man named **Theudas** who persuaded a great number to follow him to the river Jordan which he claimed would divide for their passage. **Dositheus**, a Samaritan, pretended that he was the lawgiver prophesied of by Moses.¹⁵ One writer notes there were so many of these impostors preying on the gullibility of the people that under the procuratorship of Felix, “Many of them were apprehended and killed every day. They seduced great numbers of the people still expecting the Messiah; and well therefore might our Saviour caution his disciples against them.”¹⁶ Apparently, the first century had just as many David Koreshes and Jim Jones as our own day.

Wars and Rumors of Wars

Jesus talks about “wars and tumults” (**Luke 21:9**). And again, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom” (**10**). He says see that you are not to be terrified, but this must take place, *but the end will not be at once*. Alexander Keith writes, “The Jews resisted the erection of the statue

¹⁵ **Alexander Keith**, *The Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Religion Derived from the Literal Fulfillment of Prophecy Particularly as Illustrated by the History of the Jews* (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1832?), 59.

¹⁶ **Thomas Newton**, *Dissertations on the Prophecies, Which Have Remarkably Been Fulfilled, and at This Time are Fulfilling in the Whole World* (London: J. F. Dove, 1754), 333.

of Caligula in the temple; and such was the dread of Roman resentment, that the fields remained uncultivated. At Caesarea, the Jews and Syrians contended for the mastery of the city. Twenty thousand of the former were put to death, and the rest were expelled. Every city in Syria was divided into two armies, and multitudes were slaughtered. Alexandria and Damascus presented a similar scene of bloodshed. About fifty thousand of the Jews fell in the former, and ten thousand in the latter. The Jewish nation rebelled against the Romans; Italy was convulsed with contentions for the empire; and, as a proof of the troublous and warlike character of the period, within the brief space of two years, four emperors, Nero, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, suffered death.”¹⁷

Tacitus writes that prior to 70 AD there were “disturbances in Germany,” “Commotions in Africa,” “Commotions in Thrace,” “insurrections in Gaul,” “intrigues among the Parthians,” “war in Britain,” and “war in Armenia.”¹⁸ We tend to think that ours is the worst age of wars. But all this took place during *Pax Romana*. Some period of peace! Maybe that’s not quite what you thought the period of the early church was like!

¹⁷ Keith, 59-60.

¹⁸ *Annals of Tacitus*, cited in DeMar, 79.

Earthquakes

Jesus talks about great earthquakes (11). Acts 16:26 records “a great earthquake” that shook “the foundations of the prison house.” Secular writers record earthquakes in Crete, Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Samos, Laodicea, Hierapolis, Colossae, Campania, Rome, and Judea. Pompeii was damaged by an earthquake on Feb 5, 63 AD. Josephus describes an earthquake in Judea of such magnitude “that the constitution of the universe was confounded for the destruction of men.”¹⁹ These things are not new to our day. Indeed, if the first century is any indication, they may not even be increasing in our day. What is increasing seems to be our ability to spot them all over the planet, and to have human beings be killed by them! Earthquakes are birth pains, not the end of the world.

Famines

Jesus talks about famines in various places (11). Acts 11 tells us, “Now at this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them named Agabus stood

¹⁹ Cited in [Newton](#), 335.

up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there would be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the reign of Claudius.” Tacitus and Seutonius also mention famines during the period prior to 70 AD. All famine is but a birth-pain and not the end itself!

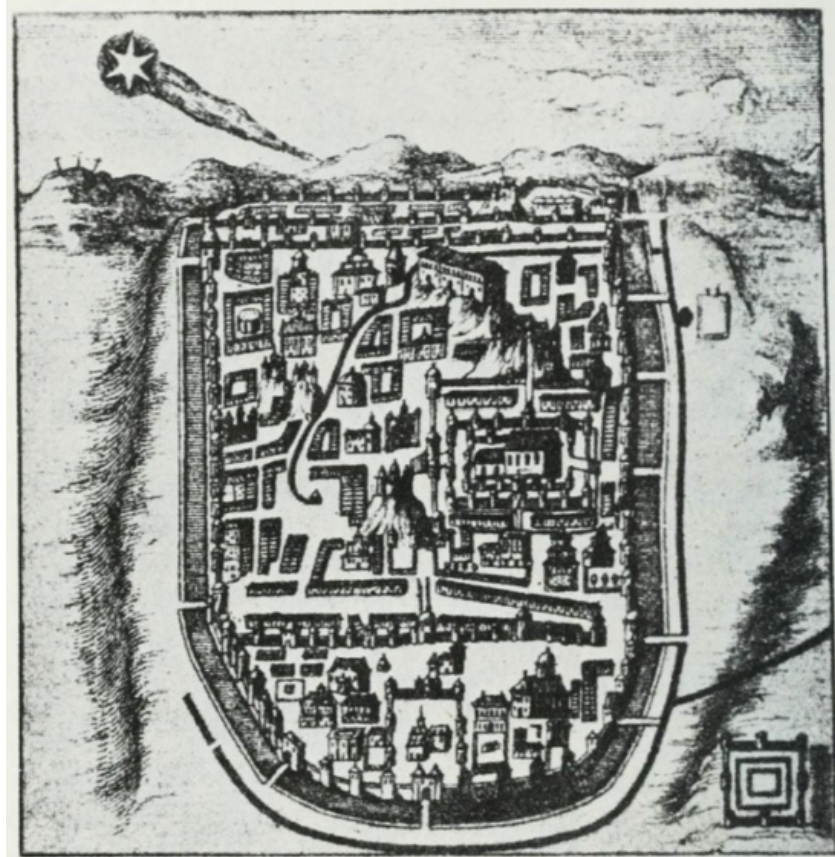
"Signs in the Heavens"

Jesus says there will be “terrors and great signs from heaven” (11). What kind of signs? As DeMar says, comets were often taken as warnings of some approaching calamity or change in political structures.²⁰ A comet appeared around A.D. 60 during the reign of Nero. The public speculated that some change was imminent: Tacitus wrote: “As if Nero were already dethroned, men began to ask who might be his successor.”²¹ Nero took the comet’s ‘threat’ seriously, but survived it by several years. Halley’s Comet appeared in 66 A.D. Not long after this Nero committed suicide. Historians have linked the appearance of Halley’s Comet not only with the death of Nero, but with the destruction of Jerusalem

²⁰ Demar, 81.

²¹ Cited in Nigel Calder, *The Comet is Coming!: The Feverish Legacy of Mr. Halley* (New York: Niking Press, 1985), 12.

four years later. A seventeenth-century print depicts the comet as it passes over Jerusalem.²²



Halley's Comet of A.D. 66 shown over Jerusalem in this seventeenth-century print. The Comet was regarded as an omen predicting the fall of the city to the Romans which actually occurred four years later.

Josephus recounts that “there was a star resembling a sword, which stood over the city, and a comet, that continued a whole year,”²³ and goes on to describe other unusual phenomena.

²² Picture in Isaac Asimov, *Asimov's Guide to Halley's Comet* (New York: Walker, 1985), 6.

²³ Josephus, *Wars of the Jews* 6.5.3.

Tribulation and Suffering and the Gospel

Jesus turns his attention to **the Disciples** themselves (12). In this he makes an **urgent plea** to stand firm in difficult times. This is a main theme of all biblical apocalyptic literature. He says that “**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**” (Luke 21:12). But, “**This will be your opportunity to bear witness**” (13). A bit later Jesus adds, “**You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death. You will be hated by all for my name’s sake**” (16-17). (Notice how “Name’s sake” repeats, giving us a small structure.)

Peter and John were **put in jail** (Acts 4:3). They were **warned not to speak** to any man in **the name of Jesus** (4:17). They were **flogged** (5:40). Stephen was **stoned** to death (7:54-60). Saul was busy **murdering** Christians (9:1). James was **killed** with a sword (12:1-2). Paul was **stoned and dragged** out of the city (14:19). And this is only the beginning of what happened to the disciples of Christ in those days. And it’s not

an accident that those are all found in Acts, Luke's second volume! You think you have it bad because Christians are not allowed to pray in public school? We need a little perspective. Even after all that has happened in 2020, we do not yet know the meaning of tribulation and persecution.²⁴

A word should be said about vv. 14-15. Like the rest of this passage, most today see this as a prophecy about us today. What I'm trying to show you is that while there is certainly *application* today, as all Christians can expect to be persecuted for their faith by the world, Jesus was *talking to* the Disciples specifically, not to you or even about you, *per se*. These verses say, "Settle it therefore in your minds 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." Some people say the meaning is that we should never study theology or apologetics, because that ruins the spontaneity of the Holy Spirit (Matthew and Mark both discuss the Holy Spirit in the parallel). This is absurd and dangerous. Jesus isn't warning them not to study and learn anything. He's telling them *not to worry*

²⁴ In Matthew's version, even more things are mentioned, such as falling away, false prophets, increased lawlessness, and the spread of the Gospel to the four corners of the earth. All of this also found fulfillments in the days before 70 AD. For more, see my sermon "The End is Near?"

themselves overly when this happens to them, because God's power will in fact help them to do what they are preparing their entire lives to do.

It is quite possible that the very center of this entire sermon is **vv. 18-19** and they are related to what I just said. “But not a hair of your head will perish (*apolētai*). By your endurance you will gain your lives.” Is Jesus contradicting himself? Didn't he just say many of them would be killed? How then can he say not a hair of their head will perish?

Jesus has previously taught, “Why, even the *hairs* of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value ...” (**Luke 12:7**). And he said, “For whoever would save his *life* will *lose* it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it” (**9:24**). Jesus is talking about **eternal life**, life after death, where moth does not consume and rust does not destroy (see **Matt 6:19-20**), where tears are not from sadness and pain is not from sin. This is **the great hope of the Gospel**. Even if and when we die, we will *not perish* (*apolētai*), but **have everlasting life** (**John 3:16**). This is the very center of Jesus's sermon as it is recorded in Luke. The Gospel. Right in the midst of a great prediction of the end of Jerusalem and the entire way of life the Jews had known for a thousand years.

The Sign – Luke 21:20

It is important to reiterate that all of these things were **just the birth pains**, but the end would not come all at once. But the disciples had actually **asked for a sign**. “*Is there something we can look forward to seeing so that we may know for certain that the end is near?*” Again, this is the *disciples’* question, not ours. Jesus is talking *to them*, not us.

It is in **vs. 20** that we get the sign. “**But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near**” (20). Now, this is extremely **interesting because of the parallels**. Mark says, “**But when you see *the abomination of desolation* standing where he ought not to be (let the reader understand)...**” (**Mark 13:14**). It’s very important to know that all older translations (KJV, Geneva, Tyndale, Wycliffe, Vulgate) all say “... standing where *it* ought not.” “It” vs. “he.” That’s a big difference.

Matthew says a bit more. “**So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand)...**” (**Matt 24:15**). This refers to **the central prophecy** of the Hebrew portion of Daniel (**Daniel 9:25-27**). This is the famous prophecy of the seventy weeks (70 series of 7 year cycles;

vv. 24-25). Pop-eschatology (Dispensationalism) interprets the first 69 weeks to take us to the time of Jesus. However, the last week, they believe was put on hold and will only come to pass in our future. It is called **the Great Tribulation**. Essentially, they see virtually everything in Jesus' sermon as predicting this time, because of what Jesus says here.

In Daniel's prophecy, it says that “seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness ... an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of *the prince who is to come* shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. *Desolations* are decreed. And *he* shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator” (Dan 9:24, 26-27).

Scofield popularized the idea that the “he” of vs. 27 is the “prince that shall come” of vs. 26, whose people (Rome) destroyed the temple in 70 AD. But he did not see this as

being fulfilled then. Rather, this “he” refers to [the Anti-christ](#) of the future Great Tribulation. He taught that the Antichrist would make a covenant with the Jews at the beginning of the Tribulation and rebuild their temple. But half-way through he would break the covenant and commit some terrible sacrilege inside the Holy of Holies, which Jesus called the Abomination of Desolation, following in the steps of [Antiochus Epiphanes](#), his prototype who did the same thing when he offered a pig on the altar to Zeus in 167 BC (see [1Macc 1:54](#)).²⁵ It’s interesting to note that Dispensation-[alists](#) have called these verses in Daniel, “[the most important revelation, in many ways, made in the Scriptures,](#)”²⁶ and “[the key](#)” to prophecy and “[one of the most important prophecies of the Bible.](#)”²⁷ One has said, “[No single prophetic utterance is more crucial.](#)”²⁸

Many are familiar with this interpretation because of books like *Left Behind* and *Late Great Planet Earth*. What these people are not familiar with is the much older and better in-

²⁵ See *Scofield Study Bible*, notes on Dan 9:25-27, p. 914-15.

²⁶ [Clarence Larkin](#), *The Book of Revelation: A Study of the Last Prophetic Book of Holy Scripture* (Philadelphia, PA: Rev. Clarence Larkin Estate, 1919), 49.

²⁷ [John F. Walvoord](#), *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation* (Chicago: Moody, 1971), pp. 201, 216.

²⁸ [Alva J. McClain](#), *Daniel's Prophecy of the 70 Weeks* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1940), 9.

terpretation which is that the “he” who makes a strong covenant and who is called the “prince who is to come,” is **not Antichrist, but Jesus Christ!** Who covenants with his people? *Jesus*. Who put an end to sacrifice on the cross? *Jesus*. Who atones for iniquity? *Jesus*. Who puts an end to sin? *Jesus*. As Riddlebarger has noted, dispensationalists have confused Christ with Antichrist. “**A more serious interpretive error is hard to imagine.**”²⁹

You can hear that “**desolation**” and “**abominations**” are in this prophecy. It’s into this that you need to understand the “**wing [kanap] of abominations**” is literally an “**extremity.**” It could refer to the **pinnacle of the temple**. Further, when Jesus says that when you see the abomination of desolation standing “in the holy place,” the word “place” (*topō*), is not the word for the Most Holy Place (*hagion hagiōn*) in **Daniel 9:24** (or anywhere else). In other words, Jesus isn’t talking about some guy going into a place no one can see and offering a pig on the altar. He’s talking about something public, that everyone could see. And the “place” he is referring to is Jerusalem, not the Most Holy Place in the temple.

²⁹ **Kim Riddlebarger**, *A Case for Amillennialism: Understanding the End Times*, Expanded Edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2013), 153. For much more on this see my sermons, “[Abomination of Desolation: Matthew 24:15](#),” *RBCNC* (July 6, 2008) and “[Antichrist or Jesus Christ: Daniel 9:24-27](#),” *RBCNC* (Nov 8, 2020).

The “he” of the ESV and other modern translations’, “when you see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not to be” is actually an “it.” That “it” is the armies of Rome. And they ought not to be standing outside the walls of Jerusalem. Luke is clearly giving you the biblically inspired interpretation of the meaning of “abomination of desolation.” He says it is when the armies surround the holy city. And this is exactly what they did.

The Christians Believed Jesus – Luke 21:21-

We won’t have time today to look at the entire sermon, so I want to finish by thinking about how the earliest Christians understood Jesus. It is clear from what happened, that they believed him because they knew he was talking *to* them *about* them. We will finish with Luke 21:20-24, however we will start here in vs. 22, as this describes what it will be like.

Jesus says, “For these are days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written...” (22). Not only does this refer to earlier prophecies Jesus made about Jerusalem which became Scripture (cf. Luke 13:34–35; 19:42–44), Jesus is referring to the likes of Deut 28:64, “And the Lord will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there

you shall serve other gods of wood and stone, which neither you nor your fathers have known,” **Jer 20:4-6**, which deals not merely with captivity in Babylon, but also with “the wealth of the city, all its gains, all its prized belongings, and all the treasures” (5), **Hosea 9:7**, “The days of punishment have come; *the days of recompense* have come; Israel shall know it,” and importantly also **Zech 12:3** (for Zechariah was written after the Babylonian captivity), “On that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples. All who lift it will surely hurt themselves. And all the nations of the earth will gather against it,” and many other passages.”³⁰

It is important to keep in mind that the destruction of the first temple saw a reprieve of mercy in the building of a second. No such thing has happened for 2,000 years with a third temple.

Jesus continues, “Alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! For there will be great distress upon the earth and wrath against this people. They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled

³⁰ **David W. Pao** and Eckhard J. Schnabel, “Luke,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI; Nottingham, UK: Baker Academic; Apollos, 2007), 376. See also (cf. Lev 26:31–33; Deut 28:49–57; 32:35; 1Kg 9:6–9; Isa 34:8; Jer 5:29; 6:1–8; 7:8–15; 26:1–9; 46:10; 50:27; 51:6; Dan 9:26; Hos 9:7; Mic 3:12; Zech 11:6; cf. 8:1–8).

underfoot by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” (23-24). “‘The times of the Gentiles’ is not known as a phrase with a distinct meaning at the time. To speak of ‘times fulfilled’ suggests a divine control of history, and so in context the phrase seems to mean ‘for as long as God permits the Gentiles to have the upper hand.’ No specific cutoff point for the period of Gentile dominance is stated.”³¹

Now, since very few are familiar with what happened in 70 AD, let me give you a brief summary of the events of those days:³²

In 66 A.D., the Jews, greatly troubled by Florus, the procurator of Judea, revolted against Rome. That same year, Cestius Galus, governor of Syria, came upon Jerusalem to end the revolt, but for some reason withdrew and nearly lost his troops to the retaliating Jews.

In 67 A.D., the Roman Emperor, Nero, sent General Vespasian to end the uprising. Vespasian marched through

³¹ R. T. France, *Luke*, 334. It can be pointed out that **Tobit 14:6** says, “God will bring them back into the land of Israel; and they will rebuild the temple of God, but not like the first one, until the period when the times of fulfillment shall come.” Perhaps, and this is only speculation, the “end of the age” is the cut off time, and hence, Jesus’ two-part sermon as given in Matthew.

³² I am following **Jeff Randolph**, “[A Brief Summary of the Destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD](#),” 2007. It is no longer online, but is still accessible via the [Internet Archive](#).

Galilee, where Josephus, the leader of that revolt surrendered and became captive. This is the same Josephus we know as the great historian. But he was a Jewish priest who led a revolt against the Romans in Galilee. He was captured by the army in 67 A.D. and was held prisoner until 69 A.D. He returned with Titus to Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and became an eyewitness to the final siege of Jerusalem.

In 68 A.D., Nero committed suicide, and civil war ensued as four emperors took the throne between June 68 A.D. and December 69 A.D. During this time Vespasian, the fourth emperor, was proclaimed Caesar by the army, and so decided to head for Rome, leaving the problems in Israel to his son Titus.

By the spring of 70 A.D.,³³ the Jews found themselves defying the Roman armies surrounding the capital city. Titus brought five legions of Roman soldiers, in addition to auxiliaries, engineers, cavalry etc. – some 80,000 men in all. He was there to force the Jews to submit and to try and preserve the city as a prize for Vespasian.

But Jerusalem had walls and cliffs, and the Jews would not submit. Only the north side was free of cliffs and Titus

³³ I'm now following "[The Siege of Jerusalem](#)," by Jared Jackson. It is also no longer online, but can be found at the [Internet Archive](#).

pointed his attack there. The war machine broke through the first of three walls in early May. Within five days, they were through the second.

Food rations were scarce inside the city by now. At nights, some would sneak out through hidden passages to steal food from the soldier's tents. Titus decreed that those captured were to be crucified. As one historian puts it, "A forest of crosses littered the countryside as trees were stripped off the land to satisfy the orders for crucifying some 500 Jews per day." A rampart was built around the city to seal off the hidden passages. Hunger became so intense that the citizens became insane with famine, resorting to murdering one another over food and for food (i.e. cannibalism). Those who were not eaten were cast over the walls into piles of bodies that remained unburied.

The campaign took longer than Titus expected. The soldiers were becoming difficult to manage. They could see Herod's temple and all of its gold glittering in the evening. They wanted the spoils and treasures of the city. The army grew in rage. Those Jews who tried to escape had their bodies ripped open and soldiers searched their stomachs for jewels and gold.

Gradually, **the city was subdued**. But the massive stone walls of the temple impeded their progress. The soldiers pressed on by burning down the enormous doors of **the temple**. Titus commanded his men to put out the fire and “**spare the Sanctuary**.” But the Jews attacked the army even as they were trying to put out the fire. The army retaliated and went berserk.

Suddenly, without command, a soldier launched **a torch** through the Golden Window of the temple setting the fabrics inside aflame. Instantly the entire temple was on fire. Titus again ordered that the fire be put out, but this time it was too late. Eventually the soldiers completely tore apart the compound, looking for rumoured treasures. They **plundered the city** and extracted vengeance from the Jews who had resisted them so bitterly. Titus, having lost the treasure of the city, had it razed to the ground. As for the temple, **not one stone was left upon another**.

Now let's listen to some of the things Josephus said about all this.

- “**The famine was too hard for all other passions... children pulled the very morsels that their fathers were eating out of their very mouths, and, what was still more to be pitied, so did the mothers**

do as to their infants ... but the seditious [Jews] everywhere came upon them immediately and snatched away from them what they had gotten from others ... they also invented terrible methods of torment to discover where any food was” (*Wars* 5.10.3).

- “Neither did any other city ever suffer such miseries, nor did any age ever breed a generation more fruitful in wickedness that this was, from the beginning of the world” (*Wars* 5.10.4).
- “The [Romans] ran everyone through whom they met with, and obstructed the very lanes with their dead bodies, and made the whole city run down with blood, to such a degree indeed that the fire of many of the houses was quenched with these men’s blood” (*Wars* 6.8.5). [My comment: They say that over 1,000,000 Jews were killed in the final siege of Jerusalem.]
- “But for all the rest of the wall, it was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited” (*Wars* 7.1.1).

It’s amazing how similar this is to exactly what Jesus predicted. But the cherry on top is what happened to the Christians. In our last verses today Jesus warned his disciples, “When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies ... Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country

enter it” (Luke 21:20-21). And guess what happened? Though a million Jews were slaughtered, not one Christian residing in that city lost his life. Why? Because they fled, just as Jesus told them to.

But how could this have happened? Josephus tells us that just prior to the final onslaught, the army left, “without any just occasion in the world” (*Wars* 2.19.7.540). They just left. This gave the Christians just enough time to flee to the mountains. Why? Because they knew and listened to the words of their Savior. They had seen the birth pains. They had seen the sign—the abomination of desolation. They knew it was time to flee.

But how could such a thing have happened? How can people in a locked up city flee like this? They can’t. Unless there is sovereign intervention. Josephus says that as the Jews were about to open the gates in an act of surrender, the army left. “It was, I suppose, owing to the aversion God had already toward the city and the sanctuary that He delayed from putting an end to the war that very day” (*Wars* 2.19.6.539). But whereas this was Josephus’ explanation, the William Winston, the editor of his works in English writes,

There may another very important, and very providential, reason be here assigned for this strange and foolish retreat of Cestius; which, if Josephus had been now a Christian, he might probably have taken notice of also; and that is, the affording the Jewish Christians in the city an opportunity of calling to mind the prediction and caution given them by Christ about thirty-three years and a half before, that “when they should see the abomination of desolation” [the idolatrous Roman armies, with the images of their idols in their ensigns, ready to lay Jerusalem desolate,] “stand where it ought not;” or, “in the holy place;” or, “when they should see Jerusalem encompassed with armies,” they should then “flee to the mountains.” By complying with which those Jewish Christians fled to the mountains of Perea, and escaped this destruction.³⁴

Here is what I would like to leave you with today. It does not do anyone any good to reinterpret prophecies that already happened by denying that they happened. I get that there are reasons to see Jesus sometimes talking about events that are still future to us. But Luke has already dealt with that by taking those parts and moving them to an earlier chapter.

³⁴ Flavius Josephus and William Whiston, *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1987).

In not taking Jesus' words as the earliest Christians did, we miss **the tremendous proof that these are to his deity**, something even C. S. Lewis failed to grasp. These words aren't embarrassing to our Lord. They are some of the greatest proofs of all that he is exactly who he said he is: God in human flesh. Take his predictions at face value and come to see that his deep concern and weeping over this city was because he knew what was going to happen to it. He knew because he is God. It was horrible, horrendous, unspeakable. Yet, God loved his people so much that he told them about it in advance, that they might see and flee. What kind of love is this? The love that dies for sinners. In this Christ you can put all your hope and trust.

Matthew 24	Mark 13	Luke 21
¹ Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple.	¹ And as he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!"	⁵ And while some were speaking of the temple, how it was adorned with noble stones and offerings, he said,
² But he answered them, "You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down."	² And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down."	⁶ "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."
³ As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age? "	³ And as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, ⁴ "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?"	⁷ And they asked him, "Teacher, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?"
⁴ And Jesus answered them, "See that no one leads you astray. ⁵ For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray.	⁵ And Jesus began to say to them, "See that no one leads you astray. ⁶ Many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and they will lead many astray.	⁸ 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.

⁶ And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet.	⁷ And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. This must take place, but the end is not yet.	⁹ And when you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified, for these things must first take place, but the end will not be at once.”
⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places.	⁸ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines.	¹⁰ Then he said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ¹¹ There will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences. And there will be terrors and great signs from heaven.
⁸ All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.	These are but the beginning of the birth pains.	
^{9a} “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death,	⁹ “But be on your guard. For they will deliver you	¹² But before all this they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to
Matthew 10:17-22		
¹⁷ Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, ¹⁸ and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles.	over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them. ¹⁰ And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations.	the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors for my name’s sake. ¹³ This will be your opportunity to bear witness.
¹⁹ When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. ²⁰ For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.	¹¹ And when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.	¹⁴ Settle it therefore in your minds not to meditate beforehand how to answer, ¹⁵ for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict.
²¹ Brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death,	¹² And brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death.	¹⁶ You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death.
²² and you will be hated by all for my name’s sake.	¹³ And you will be hated by all for my name’s sake.	¹⁷ You will be hated by all for my name’s sake.
But the one who endures to the end will be saved.	But the one who endures to the end will be saved.	¹⁸ But not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹ By your endurance you will gain your lives.
Matthew 24 cont.		
^{9b} and you will be hated by all nations for my name’s sake. ¹⁰ And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. ¹¹ And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. ¹² And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³ But the one who endures to the end will be saved. ¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.		
¹⁵ “So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),	¹⁴ “But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not to be (let the reader understand),	²⁰ “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near.
¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁷ Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house, ¹⁸ and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak.	then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁵ Let the one who is on the housetop not go down, nor enter his house, to take anything out, ¹⁶ and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak.	²¹ Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it, ²² for these are days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written.

¹⁹ And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days!	¹⁷ And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days!	²³ Alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days!
²⁰ Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath.	¹⁸ Pray that it may not happen in winter.	
²¹ For then there will be great tribulation , such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be.	¹⁹ For in those days there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be.	For there will be great distress upon the earth and wrath against this people.
		²⁴ 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.
²² And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.	²⁰ And if the Lord had not cut short the days, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he shortened the days.	
		Luke 17
		²⁰ Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, "The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed,
²³ Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There he is!' do not believe it.	²¹ And then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it.	²¹ nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you."
²⁴ For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.	²² For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect.	
²⁵ See, I have told you beforehand.	²³ But be on guard; I have told you all things beforehand.	
²⁶ So, if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out. If they say, 'Look, he is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it.		
		²² And he said to the disciples, "The days are coming when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it.
²³ Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There he is!' do not believe it.	²¹ And then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it.	²³ And they will say to you, 'Look, there!' or 'Look, here!' Do not go out or follow them.
²⁷ For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.		²⁴ For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day.
		²⁵ But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.
		Luke 21 cont.
²⁸ Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.		
²⁹ "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven,	²⁴ "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵ and the stars will be falling from heaven,	²⁵ "And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars,
		and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves,
and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.	and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.	²⁶ people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken.
³⁰ Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming	²⁶ And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.	²⁷ And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.		
³¹ And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.	²⁷ And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.	
		²⁸ Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”
³² “From the fig tree learn its lesson:	²⁸ “From the fig tree learn its lesson:	²⁹ And he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees.
as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near.	as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near.	³⁰ As soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near.
³³ So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates.	²⁹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates.	³¹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near.
³⁴ Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.	³⁰ Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.	³² Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all has taken place.
³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.	³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.	³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.
³⁶ “But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.	³² “But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.	
		Luke 17 cont.
³⁷ For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.		²⁶ Just as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man.
³⁸ For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark,		²⁷ They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.
³⁹ and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.		
		²⁸ Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot— they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building,
		²⁹ but on the day when Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed them all—
		³⁰ so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed.
¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.	¹⁴ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.	
¹⁷ Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house, ¹⁸ and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. ⁴⁰ Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left.	¹⁵ Let the one who is on the housetop not go down, nor enter his house, to take anything out, ¹⁶ and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak.	³¹ On that day, let the one who is on the housetop, with his goods in the house, not come down to take them away, and likewise let the one who is in the field not turn back.
		³² Remember Lot’s wife.
		³³ Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it.
		³⁴ I tell you, in that night there will be two in one bed. One will be taken and the other left.
⁴¹ Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left.		³⁵ There will be two women grinding together. One will be taken and the other left.”

<p>⁴⁰ Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left.</p>		<p>³⁶Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left</p>
<p>²⁸ Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.</p>		<p>³⁷ And they said to him, "Where, Lord?" He said to them, "Where the corpse is, there the vultures will gather."</p>
		<p>Luke 21 cont.</p>
<p>⁴² Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ⁴³ But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.</p>	<p>³³ Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴ It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. ³⁵ Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning—³⁶ lest he come suddenly and find you asleep.</p>	<p>³⁴ "But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap.</p>
		<p>³⁵ For it will come upon all who dwell on the face of the whole earth.</p>
	<p>³⁷ And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake."</p>	<p>³⁶ But stay awake at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."</p>
		<p>³⁷ And every day he was teaching in the temple, but at night he went out and lodged on the mount called Olivet.</p>
		<p>³⁸ And early in the morning all the people came to him in the temple to hear him.</p>
<p>⁴⁵ "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? ⁴⁶ Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. ⁴⁷ Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. ⁴⁸ But if that wicked servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed,' ⁴⁹ and begins to beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards, ⁵⁰ the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know ⁵¹ and will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.</p>		

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