

THE TIME OF DESTRUCTION | LUKE 21:5-24 | PASTOR MARK BOFILL | 8/02/2026

I. Destruction Declared (5-6) | II. Disciples Directed (7-19) | III. Desolation Described (20-24)

INTRO: Jesus now gives one of the most intense messages recorded in the Gospels. **It is a message of warning before judgment, truth before tragedy, and hope in the midst of turmoil.** God has always warned before He judges, so that those who listen are prepared for what lies ahead. – In today's message, Jesus specifically warns of **THE TIME OF DESTRUCTION**.

I. DESTRUCTION DECLARED (5-6) – **READ:** *The days will come!* Back in (19:43), Luke recorded Jesus' lament over Jerusalem, because **Israel had rejected her Messiah**, and the consequences were coming. **As Jesus left the temple**, his disciples commented on **the beauty of the structure**. But what Jesus said next would shake his disciples and the Gentile world for generations to come.

A. The Temple's Splendor (5): Some admired the temple's beautiful stones and costly decorations. – **Herod's temple** was one of the architectural wonders of the ancient world. Its **massive white stones** and **golden ornamentation** made it appear virtually indestructible.

1. While leaving the Temple, the disciples looked at it and saw permanence, beauty, and security.
2. Yet, **Jesus was not impressed by its appearance** because **He knew of its spiritual condition!**
 - **The building** was beautiful, but its worship had become corrupt.
 - **The stones** were magnificent, but many hearts had become hardened.
 - **The religious system** continued, but Israel's leaders were rejecting the Son of God.

P/A: Even today, there are many who admire church buildings, ministries, or traditions more than Christ Himself. God is not impressed by impressive structures but by surrendered hearts, (1 Sam 16:7)

B. The Temple's Sentence (6): Jesus once again **Announced the complete destruction of the temple**. What seemed permanent would soon become a **Pile of Ruins**. – This prophecy was fulfilled in A.D. 70, when the Roman army under **Titus** surrounded Jerusalem, destroyed the city, and burned the temple. (**tt. Luke 19:43-44**) – **The destruction of the temple reminds us:**

- **Religious privilege** does not replace repentance.
- **Sacred places** cannot protect rebellious hearts.
- **No earthly structure is permanent!** *It will all be shaken* (cf. Heb 12:25-29)... *God shakes the earth!*

P/A: Everything built by man will eventually fall, but those who Trust and Obey Christ will stand eternally. **Punchline:** The disciples saw stones to admire; **Jesus saw souls that needed to prepare!**

II. DISCIPLES DIRECTED (7-19): **His Prediction** raised questions, which would require a...

A. Discerning Deception (7-8) – **READ:** Curiosity about prophecy is natural! – The disciples asked: **WHEN** will these things happen? **AND WHAT SIGN** will indicate that they are about to happen? (7). – But Jesus redirects them to their need for discernment, **over date-setting** and **prediction**.

1. Jesus began with a warning against **DECEPTION** (8). **"Take heed that you are not deceived"** – **False messiahs would arise**, claiming divine authority and declaring that the decisive moment had arrived.
2. Jesus' warning teaches that **ALL Believers must "evaluate every message" by the Word of God!** – **Do not follow persuasive personalities blindly.** **"Therefore, do not go after them!"** (8b).

- Do not accept every prophetic claim.
- Do not confuse excitement with truth.
- Do not allow speculation to replace Scripture. **(1 John 4:1) “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God”**

P/A: BE WARNED! *Spiritual Deception often succeeds...* because people are more Fascinated by Predictions than grounded in Scripture. **Q: Don’t be fascinated with future events, be fascinated with JESUS CHRIST who is our future!** – *Jesus the Directs His Disciples to...*

B. Dismiss Distractions (9-11) – **READ: *Jesus saw the coming Wars, Commotions, Earthquakes, Famines, and Pestilences as DISTRACTIONS*** that would eventually happen.

1. **These events were real and frightening, but the disciples were not to panic!**
2. Jesus did not say, **“Nothing difficult will happen.”** He said, in effect, **‘Do not allow what happens to control your heart.’** – **WHY?** Because...we should know that **WARS** do not remove God from His throne!
 - **DISASTERS** do not cancel God’s promises.
 - **CHAOS** does not mean Christ has lost control.
 - Difficult Events in life are NOT permission to abandon our mission! – **(Psalm 46:1-2) “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear!”**

P/A: The Christian response to a shaking world is **NOT Panic**, but **PRAYER, Preparedness, and Faithfulness**. Jesus said: **“Do not be terrified; for “these things” must come to pass first!** (Luke 21:9).

But did you catch it? **“the end will not come immediately”** (37 yrs would pass until the Temple would be destroyed)

Jesus makes clear that during such time, His disciples were to...

C. Display Devotion (12-13) – **READ: *Before Jerusalem’s destruction, they would face persecution:***

1. They would be **Arrested**, brought before **Synagogues**, and **Imprisoned**.
2. They would **Stand before Kings and Rulers**, and **they would suffer** because of the name of Jesus.
 - Yet persecution would become an opportunity: **“it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony”** (13).
 - **What the enemy intended for intimidation, God would use for proclamation!** – We see this throughout **ACTS**, as **Peter, Stephen, Paul**, and **others** testified through suffering.
3. **Punchline: Their courtroom of persecution became the Pulpit of Proclamation!**

P/A: Likewise, when we are persecuted... Do not merely ask God to remove every difficulty, Ask Him to use your difficulty as a testimony! **(1 Pet 3:14-15) “But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you are blessed... always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you”**

D. Depend on Divine Wisdom (14-15) – **READ: Jesus told His disciples NOT to prepare an anxious, self-protective defense in advance (15)... WHY?** Because Jesus **promised supernatural help** when on trial for their faith! – **When the moment came: Christ would give them Courage...** Christ would provide **Wisdom...** He would help them **Speak...** Jesus would help them sustain their **Witness!**

P/A: God does not always give us “Tomorrow’s Words”... Today! He gives us what we need when obedience brings us to the moment of need. **“...all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist”** (*Who do you depend on when you are persecuted by your family, friends, or neighbors?*)

Because Persecution would become so deeply personal, His disciples MUST...

E. Determine to Endure (16-19) – **READ:** Following Jesus would **COST** them the approval of both relatives and friends (16a). Yes... **Betrayal** and **Persecution** even from loved ones! – **“Some of them” would even be killed!** (16b) – “Their Rejection” would come because of the **Name of Jesus Christ** (17)

- (2 Tim 3:12) **“...all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution”**

1. Jesus then said, **“But not a hair of your head shall be lost”** (18). Even though they would be physically harmed, they were to endure! They were to Trust Jesus’s Words!– But **Even Death cannot produce eternal loss** for those who belong to Christ (Rom 8:28)

2. Jesus also told His disciples **HOW** to endure it all; **by PATIENCE**, **“By your patience possess your souls”** (19), aka **STANDFAST!** – **God will preserve His people completely for His kingdom**

- **True Faith Perseveres!** Endurance does not earn salvation; it reveals genuine trust in Christ.

P/A: Endurance Requires **Faithfulness!** – But do not measure Faithfulness by how easily you escape suffering, but by how firmly you remain devoted to Jesus through it. (History recorded their faithfulness!)

Segue: The Disciples **DIRECTION** was to be **Discerning** and **Devout**, amid the Dangerous times that lie ahead. – **Jesus then gave His disciples a clear and observable Warning;** the **ANSWER** to their **WHEN** and **WHAT SIGN** question asked in (vv.7-8).

III. DESOLATION DESCRIBED (20-24) – **READ:** The **SIGN** of the imminent siege in **Matthews’** and **Luke’s** account **differ greatly here:** Matthew specifically references **Daniel’s Prophecy** (Dan 11:31; 12:11), which requires theological interpretation. **Luke focuses more on the literal, historical event.** **“But WHEN you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, THEN know that its desolation is near...”**

A. The Surrounding Armies (20): In (Luke 19:43), Jesus had already Warned and Wept over Jerusalem saying, **“Your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side.”** **The SIGN** would then be **unmistakable!**

- The City that rejected God’s prophets and would Crucify God’s Son **would then experience God’s devastating judgment!** – **God used a Roman Army to Destroy His People!**
- **God’s Judgment was NOT Impulsive.** – It came **AFTER** generations of patience, repeated warnings, and the **ULTIMATE REJECTION** of His beloved Son.

P/A: **God’s Patience is Great,** but His patience should never be mistaken for permission to continue in sin!

B. The Swift Escape (21): **Jesus THEN gave urgent instructions for WHEN the time appeared:** 1) Those in Judea were to flee to the mountains. 2) Those inside Jerusalem were to leave! 3) Those in the countryside were not to enter the city. (Normally, people fled to cities for protection. Jesus instructs the Opposite)

- Their Safety depended upon **believing** His warning and obeying His word.

P/A: **When God clearly commands us to flee from sin,** delayed obedience is dangerous disobedience.

C. The Scriptural Execution (22): **“For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.”** – The word **VENGEANCE** does not describe **uncontrolled anger.** It describes **Righteous Justice.** God was holding the nation accountable for persistent unbelief and rejection. –

Part of Isaiah's prophecy foretold that **Messiah came, "To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn..." (Isa 61:2)**

P/A: God's Scriptural Warnings are as trustworthy as His Promises! We cannot embrace the promises of Scripture while dismissing its warnings! (Mark 13:31) **"... My words will by no means pass away."**

D. The Severe Distress (23): Jesus also expressed a Special Compassion for pregnant women and nursing mothers, because escape would be especially difficult for them. **The entire land would suffer through "great distress and wrath!"**

1. **Important Truth:** God's heart is broken over judgment, but His holiness requires justice. – (2 Pet 3:9)

"The Lord is... not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance"

2. This Terrible Event was in many respects a **"Dress Rehearsal"** for what will happen when Satan vents his anger on Israel and the believing Gentiles during the last half of the Tribulation (Rev 12:17).

E. The Scattered Nation (24): Jesus then described three devastating consequences which actually took place in 70 AD: massive Casualties "fall by the sword", mass Enslavement "taken as prisoners", and a Prolonged Geopolitical Occupation; **"trampled on by the Gentiles!"** (God had an established a limit!)

1. **The Jewish historian Josephus** claimed that nearly a million people were killed by the Romans, and over 100,000 taken captive when Titus captured the city. – *Israel did not heed God's prophets...*

- Over 1400 year earlier, **Moses had prophetically warned the Hebrew nation of EXILE** if they were to turn away from God (**Deut 4:25-27**), *ttm*.
- **Israel was Principally Scattered in three major historical exiles and dispersals:** the Assyrian conquest of the northern kingdom in 722 BC, the Babylonian exile of the southern kingdom in 586 BC, and the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

2. The word **"Until"** significantly points to Limitation and Future Hope. – However, **Gentile domination of Jerusalem would not last forever**, because **God's redemptive purposes would continue.** (*tt. Rom 11:25*)

P/A: This Description of Destruction does not mean God has lost control. – As Jerusalem fell and Israel was scattered among the nations then, **history confirms that the Lord's Words were fulfilled exactly as He had spoken!** – May **THE TIME OF DESTRUCTION** that Jerusalem experienced **REMIND US** to Trust His Word, Heed His warnings, and Rest in His faithfulness for **WHAT IS NEXT!**

CLOSING THOUGHTS: **The disciples admired the temple**, but Jesus prepared them for its destruction. – Their **SECURITY** could not rest in stones, buildings, or earthly stability. Their **SECURITY** had to rest in **JESUS CHRIST**, and so does ours!

- **Everything around us may be shaken**, but **Jesus Christ remains unshaken!**
- **Build your life on Him**, believe His Word, and faithfully endure until He comes!