

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. **Enjoy discovering more about Him!**

"HARBINGER" | LUKE 21:5-38 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

When you were little, what kind of invention or event did you hope to see and/or experience in the future?

"The Destruction of the Temple" (Luke 21: 5-19)

Jesus prophesies about the destruction of the temple and tells his people to bear witness while they face persecution. **How can enduring tough times be an opportunity to share about Jesus?**

"What Should Those Living At the Time Do?" (Luke 21: 20-24)

Jesus warns them about judgement so they can escape and not have to go through it. **What do that show about God? What does that mean for people?**

"The 2nd Coming" (Luke 21: 25-28)

Jesus shares that while there will lots of fear and chaos in the world, he will come in power, and everyone will see. **When Jesus promises that He will return, how should his followers react?**

"Watch for Signs and Watch Yourselves" (Luke 21: 29-38)

Jesus shares that these signs show He is coming soon and so people should not get weighed down by the cares of this life or partying like there is no future but be watchfully praying. **How would you describe your habit of prayer?**

REFLECTION QUESTION:

Jesus warned people about the coming judgement so they can escape and stand before Him at judgement, confident because they followed Him. **Are you struggling with living for yourself instead of living for Him? Are you living with fear and anxiety instead of living in confidence in His plan? Pray that God will give you endurance to be faithful and to have your hope in Him.**

Harbinger

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-6 Larry: Adopt-a-Vs. Meet/Greet. Persp. Miss Prayer. Prep to Go.
- B. Slide7 Baptism: We are having our Spring Baptism on May 7th. If you have the desire to get baptized, we will hold *a couple class options* that you can attend so we can meet you and discuss the important step of baptism.
 1. You must attend 1 of the baptism classes: either Wed April 26, 7pm in the Mercy Room. Or Sun April 30, at Noon in Mercy Room, and our baptism class for the children, will be in room CK 8 (same day/time).
- C. Slide8 Church office closed tomorrow from 11:30am-4:30pm for staff development.
- D. Prayer: Lord, we're not here to make our heads fat, but our hearts right. Help us to focus on the 2nd coming, not on 2nd guessing.

II. Slide9 Intro: Harbinger [a sign, a forewarning, a forerunner, a messenger]

- A. *It's the end of the world as we know it.* R.E.M. song/D.C.Talk.
- B. Luther said, *There's only 2 days on my calendar, this day and that day.*
- C. This is Jesus' farewell prophecy (Olivet Discourse). This is about **2 things**:
 The Fall of Jerusalem (5-24, *only Lk*) and The Coming of the Son of Man (25-36).
 1. The fall of Jerusalem happened 40 years after He shared this. And it was like a *rehearsal* for the 2nd Coming. A type, a pattern.
 2. A little apocalypse, foreshadowing the climactic 1 still yet to happen.
 - a) So an immediate event, and a long time in the future event.
- D. Read this as a **certainty** of what is to come, even though we don't have all the *specificity* about the future.
 1. So Jesus gives us the words we need *to prepare* for the future.
 2. People try to figure out the future in so many different ways. From fortune cookies to Tarot Cards Readers (my fav: bird cages in China, *poop on cards*).

- a) Good evangelism idea, set up a table and tell people that you'll tell them their future, *for free*, share this chapter w/them :)

III. Slide10 THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE PROPHESED (5-9) READ

- A. To destroy the temple doesn't mean much to us, **but** for them it meant *the end of the world must be near*. [19:11 *they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately*]
- B. Historically, often times the prophets speak of **2 events** that seem like they're right next to each other, **but** actually are far off.
1. *i.e. prophetic telescoping* (mnt looks rt behind the other mnt, **but** actually far away).
- C. **Note**, it's about **readiness** and **faithfulness**, **not speculation about the future**.
- D. Slide11 **The stones** - the temple was impressive. One of the historians said, *as you approach the city, it looked like a stone clad mountain*. marble/gold.
- E. This isn't only a **political event** (Rome), **but a spiritual event**, *Gods judgment!*
- F. First, Jesus gives some non-signs vs.8,9.
- G. **If I round off dates**: AD **30** Jesus dies. A.D. **60** book of Acts ends. A.D. **70** destruction of the temple.
1. So you see a number of these events/happenings take place in **the book of Acts** preceding *the destruction of the temple*. (false messiahs)
- H. **Next**, He talks to them about *opposition and need for endurance*. (read 10-19)

IV. Slide12 WHAT HAPPENS BEFORE THE DESTRUCTION? (10-19) READ

- A. **Kingdoms warring** against each other.
1. Since 3,600 BC there's been 15,000 wars, according to *the Canadian army Journal*.
 2. **3.64 billion people** have been annihilated during those wars.
 3. The value to fund those wars in history would be equivalent to **a belt of gold** around the earth. **100 miles wide and 33' thick**.

4. Well, if there's **always been** wars and rumors of wars, what are we supposed to be looking for? **Intensity and Frequency**. Both Matthew and Mark use the illustration of ... *a woman's birth pangs*.

B. **Disasters** in the world, *earthquakes, famines, & pestilences, terrors and great signs on the earth*.

1. **Earthquakes and famines**. We read about 1 of those **famines** in Acts 11. We also read about one of the **earthquakes** in Acts 16 when *Paul and Silas* were singing praises in jail unto God.

C. **All of these things took place and are taking place all throughout history**. **But** he's pointing out specifically the ones that *are leading up to AD 70*.

1. **There is much blood shed, leading up to AD 70**. [20K Jews died in Caesarea. 13K slaughtered in Scythopolis. 15K in Alexandria. 10K in Damascus]

D. **Everything Jesus said, came to pass!**

E. (12) **But also, you will be persecuted**. *Cheer up guys it's going to get worse*.

1. *Vs.12 is a great introduction to the book of acts* ... all the persecution that takes place, starting in chapters 4 & 5. *Later Paul being brought before the governors and other officials*.

F. (13) **And this will be your opportunity to fight back? Flee? Nope ... to bear witness**.

1. **Sometimes** evangelism is like the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8), it's a softball, *Do you understand what you're reading? No teach me*. **Other times**, it's like *hey they all hate you*.

a) Well, that's terrible ... *No, it's your time to bear witness!*

G. (vs.16,17) ramps up the **intensity**, even *family members* being against you. **And why? For His name sake** (17).

1. Even though we talk about **love/salvation** *the gospel will always bring opposition*.

H. (18) **But not a hair of your head will perish** - a great word of promise. **Obviously** because of what he just shared, he's talking about **eternally**.

1. **James** was beheaded in ch. 12 **but** ultimately *not a hair of his head perished*. You may lose your *physical life* **but** you will not be lost *eternally*.
- I. The call to **endure**, is a call to endure with **hope**. Hope in the Bible, is **not** fingers crossed, **but** thumbs up, **Jesus has got us**. Suffering now, glory later.

V. Slide13 **WHAT SHOULD THOSE LIVING AT THE TIME DO? (20-24) READ**

- A. Titus started his campaign against Jerusalem and AD 66.
- B. (21-24) normally most would flee **to** the city (fortified). **Instead**, Jesus says, *no, head for the hills!* Don't stick around, escape!
- C. I've seen this *Arch of Titus relief* in Rome, that tells the story of **Titus' Victory**. (you see the Menorah from the Temple in the spoils).
- D. **Now again**, there is a *typological* correspondence. A *pattern* here, what happened in Jerusalem, will happen **in the end**.
 1. **The point is simple**: Jesus tells us about *judgment in the future* **so** you won't have to endure it.
 2. **Flee**, the wrath of God, and find your refuge in Jesus Christ. There is a way of escape ... and *His Name is Jesus*.
 3. **This Jesus** who utters these words would go to the Cross and bear the **wrath of God that we deserve**. **So that** we would not fear judgment, **but** actually *anticipate His coming with Hope*. *Maranatha, Jesus Come*. (Why judgment again? God is more **Holy** than you can imagine, **and Sin** is more terrible than you can imagine).

VI. Slide14 **THE SECOND COMING (25-28) READ**

- A. **Now the 2nd section**. *The Second Coming of the Son of Man*.
 1. We must not confuse this event with His coming **for** the church (rapture) for that can occur at any moment. **We're not looking for signs**, we are looking **for the Savior**. [The Coming **for** the saints (rapture). Coming **with** the saints]
- B. (25) Note now it **isn't** in **Jerusalem**, it's **among the nations/earth**.

- C. **Roaring of the sea and waves** - always represent *chaos/judgment* throughout Bible.
- D. (26) **Note** the reaction of the people, *fainting w/fear & trepidation* - this verse represents *the terrifying aspect of this text*.
- E. (27) **Now** the encouragement to the **believers**. **Powerful!** *And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory*.
1. This coming, they will **see Him**. There will be no Wiseman fumbling around with Google maps to know if He came. **No one** will be asking *if Jesus returned*. No, *every eye will see him*. Jesus' veil will be lifted, and you will see his glory.
 2. **In a cloud**, His presence - like at the transfiguration. and the cloud at the Tabernacle. **Now the whole world will be his holy of holies**.
 - a) He's coming to renew *the whole thing*. **Paradise restored**. **Everything is purified, and beautified**.
- F. **Now**, obviously, this hasn't happened yet, **but just as certain as the first part was fulfilled, so this will be also**.
1. This gives us as believers **Courage, Hope, Joy** (*read* vs.28). The day of our great and complete redemption.
 2. Eugene Peterson put it, *When all this starts to happen, up on your feet. Stand tall with your heads high. Help is on the way!*
 - a) **Know this the game is almost over, and Jesus wins!**

VII.Slide15 **WATCH FOR TREES/SIGNS (29-33) READ**

- A. Not only the fig tree, **but** really all trees for that matter.
1. When you see *the signs of Spring*, know **summer** is coming!
 2. **In our valley**: when you see the *strawberry stands* open up, when you see the *Calif Wild Poppy's* bloom, when you pull out your *flip-flops* ... know **summer is near!**
 - a) When you see *these signs* know, **Jesus' Coming is near!**

VIII. Slide 16 WATCH YOURSELVES (34-38) READ

A. So how do we prepare for His second coming?

B. Be Watching (34,35)

1. This is the story of *the prodigal son*.

2. **But notice** He puts *the cares of this life* on equal par to *dissipation* (excessive indulgence in alcohol) and *drunkenness*.

a) **Yours** might not be a party issue, **but** an anxiety issue.

C. **Stay Awake** (36a) be *spiritually alert at all times*. Have a quiet confidence in who **He** is.

D. **Be Prayerful** (36b) like *the disciples in gethsemane* needed prayer *for themselves*.

1. **How does a bird asleep on its perch never fall off? The secret is the tendons of the bird's legs.** When they bend their leg at the knee, the claws contract and grip like a steel trap. From sleeping birds we can learn the secret of holding things which are most precious to us -- *honest, purity, thoughtfulness, honor, character*. That secret is **the knee bent in prayer**, seeking to get a firmer grip on those values which make life worth living. When we hold firmly to God in prayer, we can rest assured he will hold tightly to us.

E. **An Example of the Faithfulness of Jesus** (37,38)

1. After a *super charged chapter*, here is *the quiet faithfulness of Jesus*.

2. He knows what's ahead of Him, **the cross**. **But** he just *quietly goes about His Fathers business*. [emphasize: *every day, at night, early in the morning*]

F. ***Next Sun, Family mtg. Remodel** (why & what), finances, future.

G. Keywords: Jerusalem, the Coming,