



Your Redemption is Drawing Near

Luke 21

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Overview: As the end of Jesus' earthly ministry draws near, He explains to the disciples how the temple, and ultimately the world, will come to an end. His prophecy portrays terrifying events occurring locally which also point to future events escalating on a global scale. These events include wars between competing factions, natural disasters and famines, betrayals within families, imprisonment and execution of many of his followers, and untold agony toward otherwise innocent people. Yet, despite the extent and duration of these horrendous events, Jesus encourages his disciples to remain faithful. Their faithfulness is demonstrated by believing his words above all others; bearing witness to Him even in death; longing for Him until He returns; praying for strength to persevere; and living faithfully in the face of danger.

01. Predictive prophecy and eschatology are not given as talking points for theological thrill-seekers, but as gifts to the church providing certainty about the future and encouraging faithfulness in the face of persecution.

02. Our chief concern for the end times should be to steel ourselves in the face of immense adversity with an aim to encouraging brothers and sisters in Christ to remain faithful.

03. The single and ultimate solution for righting the wrongs of this world is the bodily, visible and final return of Jesus Christ.

04. Anticipating the return of Christ includes an awareness of his sudden appearing and an understanding of his purposeful delay; so let us watch and work at the same time.

1. Contrast the disciples' view of the importance of the temple and its beauty with Jesus' words concerning the destruction of the temple. Why would God provide such an elaborate structure and then allow others to destroy it completely? What does this act of judgment suggest about the importance of true worship? See Jeremiah 7:1-15 for further insight.

2. What mistakes do Christians sometimes make when discussing biblical prophecy? What mistakes do Christians sometimes make by not discussing biblical prophecy? What attributes of God can be deduced from predictive prophecy? See Isaiah 46:8-11 for further insight.

3. Critics of the Bible have long assumed that the promise of Jesus' return (verse. 27) is a failed prophecy since Jesus did not return when Jerusalem was destroyed. In what ways is this supposition clearly false? How does the delay of Christ's return further our resolve to live godly lives, rather than weaken our resolve? See 2 Peter 3:1-13 for further insight.

4. Take note of how Jesus prepared his disciples to suffer. How would you assess the modern evangelical understanding of suffering as it relates to the Christian life? In what ways does Luke 21 surpass any type of suffering that you may have experienced? How important is it for Christians to think rightly about suffering at the hands of others, and prepare ourselves to endure the kinds of events listed in our text?

5. Why is it important to look for the return of Jesus and remain active in day-to-day activities even though the relevance of what we do seems to be for this world only?

For Further Reading: Daniel J. Lewis, *3 Crucial Questions about the Last Days* (Baker Books, 1998).