

23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, 22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Trinity – 2022

Saturday, 11/12 at 4:00 & Sunday, 11/13 at 9:00

*Celebrating Bethlehem's 118<sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary*



**Text: Luke 21:5-28 NAS 1995**

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: On Tuesday of Holy Week, *a few days before Good Friday*, Jesus told His disciples about the **coming** ♦deception, ♦trouble, ♦persecution, and ♦destruction. Then He told them *how to respond!* What happened? Let's hear what Jesus said:

1. **Jesus mentions the destruction of the temple:** <sup>5</sup> And while some were talking about the **temple**, that it was adorned with beautiful stones and votive gifts, He said, <sup>6</sup> “As for **these things which you are looking at** [*that is, the temple itself*], the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another which will not be torn down.”
  - a. **The temple mount:** wall of stones—16 feet thick and, in some places, 20 stories high, the stones—weighed between 2 and 400 tons (that is, 4,000 and 800,000 lbs.).
  - b. **Herod's temple:** construction took a workforce of over 10,000; it was “shining white marble and gold, with bronze entrance doors, it was said that you could not look at the temple in daylight as it would blind you.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-second-temple-at-the-time-of-jesus>

2. **Jesus' disciples asked *when* and for a *sign***:<sup>7</sup> They questioned Him, saying, "Teacher, **when** therefore will these things happen [*to the temple*]? And **what will be the sign** when these things are about to take place?"
3. **Jesus answered: *Do not be deceived***:<sup>8</sup> And He said, "See to it that you are not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, '**I am He** [*that is, Yahweh*],' and, 'The time is near.' Do not go after them." // Then He said why...
4. **Jesus told what would precede the destruction**:<sup>9</sup> "When you hear of **wars and disturbances** [*that is, political unrest, turmoil, revolution, insurrection*], do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end [*of the Jewish nation*] *does not follow* immediately."<sup>10</sup> Then He continued by saying to them, "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom,<sup>11</sup> and there will be **great earthquakes**, and in various places **plagues and famines**; and there will be **terrors and great signs from heaven** [*such as meteors, comets, and eclipses*]."
- <sup>12</sup> "But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and **will persecute you** [*that is, they will pressure you to reject me, by*], delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name's sake.<sup>13</sup> It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony.<sup>14</sup> So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves;<sup>15</sup> for **I will give you utterance** [*that is, the very words to say*] and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute."
- <sup>16</sup> "But **you will be betrayed** even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put *some* of you to death,<sup>17</sup> and you will be hated by all because of My name.<sup>18</sup> **Yet not a hair of your head will perish**.<sup>19</sup> By your

**endurance** [not giving up] you will gain your lives.” // Lenski: “When a disciple suffers... death through wicked men, let him not think that God has forgotten him—he is in God’s care and keeping to the last hair of his head” (1017).

5. **Jesus told when and how to respond:** <sup>20</sup> “But **when you see Jerusalem surrounded by [Roman] armies**, then recognize that her desolation is near. <sup>21</sup> **Then** those who are in **Judea** must **flee** to the mountains, and those who are in the midst of the **city** must **leave**, and those who are in the **country** must **not enter the city**; <sup>22</sup> because these are days of vengeance, so that all things which are written will be fulfilled.” // In Judea—*flee*; in Jerusalem—*leave*; in the country—*do not enter the city*!
6. **Jesus told of the coming difficulties:** <sup>23</sup> “Woe to those who are **pregnant** and to those who are **nursing** babies in those days; for there will be great distress upon the land and wrath to this people; <sup>24</sup> and they will **fall by the edge of the sword**, and will be **led captive** into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles **until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled** [that is, until Jesus’ second coming].”
  - a. **What happened?** Jesus’ words came true **AND** many ignored His advice to flee and leave and not enter! “It is estimated by the ancient historians **Tacitus** (AD 56-118) and **Josephus** (AD 36-100) that there were about **1,100,000 people killed** in the siege [and **97,000 taken captive** (Lenski, 1021)]. Males aged 17 and older were either put in hard labor camps or made to be gladiators. **Women** and children were sold into slavery.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.worldhistory.org/article/1993/the-siege-of-jerusalem-in-70-ce/>

b. Why is what happened significant? As the **unlikely** destruction happened in AD 70, **so Jesus' unlikely return will also happen – just as He said!**

7. **Jesus told about His second coming:** <sup>25</sup> “There will be signs in **sun and moon and stars** [sun—darkened, moon—no light, stars—will fall from the sky (Matt. 24:29)], and on the earth **dismay** [severe emotional stress] among nations, in **perplexity** [anxiety – why?] at the roaring of the sea and the waves, [and how else will the unrepentant respond?], <sup>26</sup> men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world [why?]; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. <sup>27</sup> Then **they** [that is, all who are living on the earth] will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory. <sup>28</sup> **But** when these things begin to take place, [you, my disciples / Christians / repentant ones] straighten up and lift up your heads, because your **redemption** [rescue, deliverance] is drawing near.”

### Take Aways:

- **Truth** – Regarding Herod's temple, Jesus said what seemed impossible – **BUT IT HAPPENED!**
- **Relevance** – Regarding Jesus' return, Jesus said what seems impossible – **BUT LET US KNOW IT WILL HAPPEN!**
- **Inspiration** – When we are repentant, *we are ready!* Since we care about others, *let us call them to repentance!*

**Let Us Pray:** Dear Holy Spirit, give us passion, courage, and the best words to point others to Jesus!

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