

# Further up, Further in

## Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
Presbyterian Church

### “PREPARATION FOR FAITHFUL SERVICE, PART 3”

For individual study or group discussion

When studying the passage of Scripture known as “*The Olivet Discourse*,” it is important to recognize whether Jesus is talking about the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 or about his second coming. Earlier in our study of Luke 21, the disciples asked Jesus, “*When will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?*” (Luke 21:5–7; Matthew 24:3; Mark 13:4). In today’s passage, we see Jesus answer both questions. In Luke 21:20–28, Jesus prepares his disciples for faithful service by cautioning them to take heed not to reject God’s warnings about the coming judgment on Jerusalem and also to eagerly await the redemption that will come to all who faithfully endure.

**Jesus prepares his disciples for faithful service by calling them to take heed. Ruin meets those who reject God’s warning. (vv. 20–24)**

In verse 20, Jesus warns of the temple’s coming desolation by the Roman armies. Approximately 40 years after Jesus’ warning, the Roman general Titus surrounded Jerusalem, and the temple was set aflame and put to ruin. The ancient Jewish historian Josephus records his eyewitness account of the destruction of Jerusalem in “*Jewish Wars*,” where he states that over 1 million Jews were killed and another 97,000 captured.<sup>1</sup> The Christians who took heed and remembered Jesus’ words escaped. As one commentator summarizes: “*When judgment comes, the people of God always find safety in his promises. This is the way it has been all through history. God told Noah to build an ark so that he would be safe from the great flood. God told Lot to flee from the city of Sodom so that he would be safe from the fire and the brimstone. God told Jeremiah that his life would be spared when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians. These men were all rescued by the grace of God, whose promises they believed.*”<sup>2</sup>

- Review Jesus’ teaching and prophecies concerning Jerusalem’s destruction (Luke 19:41–44, 20:9–18). According to Jesus, what was the reason for Jerusalem’s impending destruction?
- Read Luke 9:23–27; 14:25–33. Recall Jesus’ radical call to forsake all and follow him. Describe what it takes to follow Christ. Discuss what it must have felt like to be a disciple of Christ after witnessing the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

**Jesus prepares his disciples for faithful service by calling them to eagerly await. Redemption meets those who faithfully endure. (vv. 25–28)**

Although most of Luke 21 deals with the fall of Jerusalem, verses 25–28 focus on the second coming. According to New Testament scholar Dan MacDougall: “*The language is cosmic. Jesus returns on the clouds and [the disciples] will see him. This is after ‘the times of the Gentiles,’ and [the judgment] is upon the ‘world’ and the ‘nations.’ In the minds of the OT Jews, what happens to Jerusalem is what happens to God’s kingdom. But the disciples must know the kingdom of God survives. The audience was to be ready to escape the Fall of Jerusalem, but ultimately be ready to stand before the Son of Man.*”<sup>3</sup> The signs of Jesus’ second coming are scary and apocalyptic, “*roaring of the sea and waves*” and “*the powers of the heavens will be shaken*” (vv. 25–26). But Jesus emphasizes that Christians should “*straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near*” (v. 28). His coming to judge the world is a comfort to believers. For believers, Christ bore our punishment on the cross so that when he returns to judge the living and the dead, we will have the hope of redemption, not judgment. “*He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth*” (Isaiah 25:8).

- Luke 21:25–28 speaks of the signs of the second coming. What do these verses teach us about recognizing God’s hand in the unfolding of history and events?
- With the themes of destruction, persecution, and the second coming, Luke 21 also carries a strong message of hope and redemption. Where do you see hope in this text and how should that hope influence your daily life and interactions?

DATE: November 3, 2024

SPEAKER: Wil/Chad

SERIES: The Gospel of Luke

PASSAGE: Luke 21:20–28

## RENEW: 31 Days of Prayer

### DAY 10: Priority of Mission

**PRAYER:** Our Redeemer, our Savior, who is presently making all things new, we praise you for leaving the comforts of heaven to take up the cross that we might have life and love everlasting. You are exceedingly generous in your mission for us, graciously in your sacrifice for us, and glad in your service to us. Make it so for us as well, as we live and move in this fallen and needy world. Give to us abundance of generosity, grace, and gladness. Cause us to lay down our comforts, our treasures, and our very lives for the sake of the Gospel on the mountain, in the city, and around the world. Use our gifts and our vocational callings to bring peace and good where there is chaos and lack. Unleash our resources for the advancement of the Gospel where there is darkness, despair, and distress. We pray that your Spirit would make us servants. For you, Jesus, came not to be served but to serve and to give your life as a ransom for many. Help us not to neglect the priority of your mission each day in the many small acts, obscure places, and common ways in which you call us to faithfulness. Through both the little and the large moments of faithfulness, extend your fame and make your name great in every square inch of the earth. We pray with thanks and hope that you delight to use your broken people to bring healing in every sphere. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

### PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

Redeemer Presbyterian,  
supported church plant

### PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

May and Kev, supported  
missionary partners

<sup>1</sup> Josephus, Flavius. *Jewish War*, VI.9.3 [https://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/0037-0103,\\_Flavius\\_Josephus,\\_De\\_Bello\\_Judaico,\\_EN.pdf](https://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/0037-0103,_Flavius_Josephus,_De_Bello_Judaico,_EN.pdf) (October 29, 2024)

<sup>2</sup> Ryken, Philip G. *Luke, Volume 2: Reformed Expository Commentary*. 2009, Phillipsburg, NJ. P&R Publishing. 428

<sup>3</sup> MacDougall, Dan. Notes on Luke 21:5–33. October 16, 2024. Summary letter to Brian Salter on MacDougall’s master’s thesis, *The Fig and the Fig Tree Imagery in the Gospel of Matthew*.