

In the Meantime

Luke 21:5-28

Introduction

It all starts with an observation about the temple. “Isn’t it a beautiful building? God must really like what we’ve done for Him!” Jesus reminds them that the temple, like other physical things, is temporary. There is coming a day when it will be no more. Their natural response is to wonder how long until this happens. Jesus could have very easily said, “A little less than 40 years from now”, because that’s what the Romans did in AD 70. But their question is two-pronged. The temple is such a magnificent structure that they assume Jesus is talking about the end of the world—**Judgment Day**. So, He begins to teach them what they need to know about **Judgment Day**.

Judgment Day Is Coming

Jesus has already let them know the certainty of **Judgment Day**. The prophets had foretold it, but it’s been so long in coming, that some may wonder if it’s real. Jesus says, “*The days will come*” (v. 6). **Judgment Day** is coming, make no mistake. It’s a certainty.

Sometime in the Future

Jesus isn’t about to tell them exactly when **Judgment Day** is coming. *But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father (Mark 13:32)*. In His **State of Humiliation**, Jesus, Himself didn’t know the exact day or hour. After His Resurrection, He would be asked that question again. *He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority (Acts 1:7)*. In His **State of Exaltation**, He now knows all the Father knows. However, for us on earth, the exact time is above our pay grade. We don’t need to know. In fact, it would only hurt us. Not knowing the exact day, leaves us in a necessary state of uncertainty. We must plan, as if He won’t return in our lifetime. But there is also a sense of urgency, because He could return today.

Things Must Happen

Today

In **verses 9-26**, Jesus gives a litany of things that must happen before **Judgment Day**. Some of those things are fulfilled in the time of the apostles. Some have been fulfilled today and others have yet to be fulfilled. *Wars, earthquakes, famines and pestilences* we see happening today. Ambrose interprets the *signs from heaven* as people falling away from the faith. We see that happening, too.

In the Time of the Apostles

While we see *persecution* happening today, it was also fulfilled in the time of the apostles, just like Jesus said. And, as mentioned before, *Jerusalem was destroyed* in AD 70.

The Time of the Gentiles

After Jesus talks about the *destruction of Jerusalem*, He talks about the *time of the Gentiles*. This is the age we’re living in today. The Gospel has been brought to us Gentiles (all non-Jews). So, where

does that put us? In the **Last Days**, or the **End Times**. However, *“And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams”* (**Acts 2:17**). Living in the **Last Days** doesn’t necessarily mean Jesus is going to return tomorrow. The apostles realized they were living in the **Last Days**. Jesus Christ has come, died, been resurrected and ascended back to the Father. There is no other breaking in for God to do until the end, when Jesus returns for **Judgment Day**. No matter how long this time lasts, it’s the **Last Days**.

Until Then

There is an old Gospel song titled *“Until Then.”* The verses sing about heaven and being with Jesus forever. But the chorus says, *“Until then, my heart will go on singing; until then, with joy I’ll carry on.”* What does Jesus say we are to do *until then*? First, He gives a warning—*don’t be deceived by false Messiahs*. Many will come, claiming to be Him. Keep your head in the Bible and your eyes on Jesus. Don’t be fooled by counterfeit Christs.

Working for Jesus

As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good (**2 Thessalonians 3:13**). Paul warns against being idle. But, why were the people being idle? Why had they obviously quit their jobs? They misunderstood the **Last Days** and thought that Jesus was coming back right away. Paul is saying to live like you have your whole life to live. Keep your job and don’t get tired of serving the Lord.

Means of Grace

God has also given us the Means of Grace to get through this in between time. This is how He nourishes and strengthens us in these **Last Days**. We expectantly look forward to Jesus’ **Second Coming**, but, in the meantime, we continue to receive His grace and serve Him.

*May the peace of God,
Which passes all understanding,
Keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus*
