

LUKE Lesson 54

The Olivet Discourse: Conditions on Earth at the Time of the Lord's Return (21:5-38)

14 June 2019

5-6 When Jesus saw people admiring the beauty of the temple, He prophesied of its total destruction. This was fulfilled in 70 A.D. by Titus and the Roman Army.

7-8 Upon hearing of the destruction of the temple, later, on the Mount of Olives (Mt. 24:3) the disciples wanted to know when to expect it and what signs to look for regarding the Second Coming. Their inquiry moved Jesus to warn them about being deceived by people who would like to take advantage of their sign-seeking (2 Tim 3:13, 1 Jn 4:1).

“Saying, I am Christ” (vs 8). This can refer to men who say that Jesus is Christ, but they only say it to gain the peoples' trust so they can deceive them. It can also refer to men actually claiming to be Christ. Jesus warns us to be on guard against these kinds of deceivers in the last days.

Vs 9 Wars and commotions should not be looked upon as a sign we are in the last days. There have been wars since Genesis 14. Wars are not a new thing on the earth. Men have been saying we're in the last days since 2800 B.C.

10-12 The disciples that Jesus is speaking to were persecuted in the days of the early church (see Acts), fulfilling verse 12. Since that time, there have been numerous earthquakes, famines, and pestilences on this earth (vs 11). The great signs from heaven are yet future (Rev 6:12-13, 8:10-12, 9:1, 15:1; Joel 2:30-31, Isa 13:10).

13-15 When the time comes that you are being persecuted for your faith in Jesus Christ, you will have a wonderful opportunity to give a testimony that will glorify Him. Don't meditate, don't rehearse, don't boast about what you would say in such a situation. You don't know what you'd say. Thankfully, the Lord promised that He would give you “a mouth and wisdom” (vs 15) to speak powerful words in such times of persecution.

Note: this passage is misapplied by pastors who don't want to study to show themselves approved unto God (2 Tim 2:15). The Lord isn't telling preachers that He'll put words in their mouth every time they preach.

16-17 Betrayal and hatred of the believer by family, friends, and brethren will precede the Second Coming.

Vs 18 This is not a promise of physical protection in your temporal body, but a promise that regardless of what happens to you, the Lord can restore “every hair of your head” when He resurrects you.

Vs 19 Don't get impatient. God's promises will be fulfilled on time. Patience is increased by trials (James 1:3).

Vs 20 When Jerusalem is surrounded by the armies of the world, the Lord's return is nigh (very close). Keep your eyes on Jerusalem.

22-25 Jesus prophesied of the fate of the Jewish people; wrath against them, death, captivity in other nations, Jerusalem lost to the Gentiles.

The signs are in the sun, moon, and stars, not on the earth. This verse does not support Charismatic "signs." There shall be distress upon the earth, not signs.

Vs 26 Another sign on earth is that men's hearts would be full of fear from looking at things that are coming on the earth. TV and radio have contributed to an increase in fear (Eccl 1:18) as men learn about terrible things happening all around the world. Mass communication gives men plenty to worry about.

27-28 The Lord is often found in a cloud. See [bbbckuwait.org/bible studies/Revelation lesson 7](http://bbbckuwait.org/bible-studies/Revelation-lesson-7). Jesus will come in a cloud to redeem the nation of Israel.

29-31 The fig tree is a symbol of religion. The fig tree pollinates itself internally with no outside intervention. It does it all by itself; the perfect picture of self-righteousness taught by every religion. Right before the Lord returns, everybody will be forced to submit to one great world religion (Rev 13:15) in which the Antichrist will claim to be Christ.

Vs 32 "This generation" is not a reference to a period of time. The Lord Jesus Christ was generated through the lineage of Abraham. Fourteen generations are counted in Matthew 1:16-17. We are all generated from and descendants of Adam (Gen 5:1). The word "generation" designates a race of people. Jesus is promising that there will still be Israelite people alive on this earth when He returns.

Vs 33 Heaven and earth shall pass. So, stop trying to save planet Earth (temporal). God's words shall not pass away (eternal).

Vs 34 In light of all these prophecies, Jesus warns the believer not to be a glutton, a drunkard, or someone whose care for the things of this life cause them to forget about the Second Coming.

Vs 35 The Lord returns as the smiting stone (Dan 2:34); a snare to anyone who's not prepared. The Second Coming (nor the Great Tribulation) is not confined to Palestine. It shall "come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth."

36-38 Watch and pray always.
