

A Declaration of Those Things Which Are
Most Surely Believed Among Us
An Expository Study of The Gospel According to Luke
Chapter 21- Luke 21:5- 38
317- When Therefore Will These Things Happen?-
Part 3- The Promise of Judgment

June 26, 2016

Luke 21:5-38

5 And while some were talking about the temple, that it was adorned with beautiful stones and votive gifts, He said,

6 *"As for these things which you are looking at, the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another which will not be torn down."*

7 They questioned Him, saying, "Teacher, when therefore will these things happen? And what *will be* the sign when these things are about to take place?"

8 And He said, *"See to it that you are not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not go after them.*

9 *"When you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end does not follow immediately."*

10 Then He continued by saying to them, *"Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom,*

11 *and there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven.*

12 *"But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name's sake.*

13 *"It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony.*

14 *"So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves;*

15 *for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute.*

16 *"But you will be betrayed even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death,*

- 17 and you will be hated by all because of My name.
- 18 "Yet not a hair of your head will perish.
- 19 "By your endurance you will gain your lives.
- 20 "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is near.
- 21 "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;
- 22 because these are days of vengeance, so that all things which are written will be fulfilled.
- 23 "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;
- 24 and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.
- 25 "There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves,
- 26 men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.
- 27 "Then they will see *THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD* with power and great glory.
- 28 "But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."
- 29 Then He told them a parable: "Behold the fig tree and all the trees;
- 30 as soon as they put forth *leaves*, you see it and know for yourselves that summer is now near.
- 31 "So you also, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near.
- 32 "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all things take place.
- 33 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.
- 34 "Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap;
- 35 for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth.

36 "But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

37 Now during the day He was teaching in the temple, but at evening He would go out and spend the night on the mount that is called Olivet.

38 And all the people would get up early in the morning *to come* to Him in the temple to listen to Him.

To the Glory of God

Now we began this "journey" through the Gospel of Luke on Sunday morning, October 19, 2008. So, last October, we passed the eight-year mark of this incredible journey through Dr. Luke's Story of Salvation. And eight years ago I told you that the reason why I wanted to go through Luke was for several reasons. I told you back then:

"Over the last two years- (2006-2008) I have been spending much of my *personal* devotional time meditating on the Words of Jesus and on the way that Jesus acted. I spend anywhere between 60-80 hours every week studying those Books that I am using here in the Church on Sunday or on the radio. Over the last several years I have been simultaneously studying **Jude, 1John, Hebrews, and Romans** so that I can provide you with well-balanced diet of nourishing spiritual food.

But, I still have the need to steal away to do my own *private* reading, studying, and meditating- for my own *personal* benefit. And I found myself so attracted to the Words and Deeds of my Lord found in the Gospels. The result of this is that I love Jesus with a new found respect and longing. I long to have the single-minded devotion to His Father's Will that Jesus had- to rub off on me. I long to share His profound understanding of the human heart and His ability to see through all the outer layers of our lives and all the confusion and words- and go straight into what is really bothering us.

I long to have His way with words, words that *always* brought to light a person's real loves. And I long, like Mary, to sit at His Feet and drink in the living Water of His Teaching, until it so satisfies my heart that I can be as free as He was from the love of money and from the love of the praise of men and from pride and from anxiety about tomorrow.

I have taken from the four Gospels a hunger to be holy, to be real and authentic, an earnest desire not to play church or play religion, and not to waste my life with things that don't matter.

And all these new found longings and this hunger have driven me to pray that God would work me over and not allow me to creep along so slowly in my quest to be like Jesus. And out of this meditation and prayer has emerged a burning fire to study and to preach from **The Gospel According to Luke**.

Interestingly enough, one of the Passages that caused me to want to preach through **Luke** doesn't even come from Luke, but it comes from **Matthew**. It is found in the first part of **Matthew 28:20** that says:

Teaching them to observe all that I commanded you;

And I can remember thinking in years past that these Words must surely grip *every* Pastor's heart and shine on the path of his preaching and show him the way to go. Jesus said it is the mission of those whom He sends, to teach *all* the things that He commanded and to help people learn how to obey them. And so I hope you can understand the force that a Statement like that has on a Pastor who is wondering what he should preach?

So these two things together, my experience with Christ's teachings in my own personal time of meditation and the straightforward demand that Jesus gave in the Great Commission to teach all His Commands, these two things have given rise to my decision to begin a series on **The Gospel According to Luke**.¹

So I pray that as you have "journeyed" with me these eight years, and as the Words and Acts of the Lord Christ has become evident in your eyes and ears and mind and heart that you have come to see Jesus as the Treasure of your life, and that He is the best and the highest expression of the Glory of God. And that as your eyes have beheld the King in His Splendor that you have become hungry for more and more of Who Jesus is.

Now, the Apostle Paul said in **2 Corinthians 3-4** that the Purpose of Preaching is for your eyes to be unveiled so you can behold the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ. And so, week after week as we go to the next verse or the next Passage, God the Holy Spirit takes the foolishness of the Word preached and performs a miracle.

And as you behold that magnificent Glory, you are changed. How could you remain the same? The Apostle said you are changed into that

¹ Blair Bradley; A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us; An Expository Study of the Gospel According to Luke; #1- Introduction; October 2008

same Glory, from one realm to the next, even as by the Lord, Who is the Spirit.

So that is what is happening to us each Lord's Day as we leave the comfort and safety of our own individual homes and gather together here. We are beholding Jesus. We are seeing Jesus.

And as we behold the sinless Lamb of God through the infallible Word of God, God is developing three things in us:

- ✓ Admiration for Jesus
- ✓ Respect for Jesus
- ✓ Awe for Jesus

And as this Admiration, Respect, and Awe is developed within us, we find that our Love for Jesus grows. And as the gift of Love that God gave us for Himself grows, the things of this world grow strangely dim in the Light of His Glory and Grace. The pull of the world on us is *less*, the attraction of sin is *diminished*, the deceitfulness of riches is *reduced*, and the lust of other things that has the power to choke the Word, until the Word no longer has any effect on us, is *crippled*.

And we have noticed that our obedience is better and it is filled with joy. Our desire to obey is coupled with genuine happiness. Our effort to be found faithful to what Jesus said is aligned with hope and strength and a delight that goes far beyond human energy or human will-power.

The Commandments of the Lord are not burdensome, the Call to pray is not pushed away, the blessing of being able to open God's Word and read it in English is a delight, and we so value our times of godly fellowship. And as Jesus has become clearer, and what he said more understandable, we have noticed a hunger and thirst for Righteousness, and that we now pant after God in the same way that a deer pants after the water brooks.

And all of this is a Work of the Spirit, and to Him alone belongs the Glory, but it is a Work that Scripture promised us would happen, if we would simply slow down and take the time to not just go through this Gospel Record, but to *linger* on the Words of Jesus and to *savor* what our Redeemer said and to look full into the Face of our sweet, sweet Savior.

And now we find ourselves in the last week of Jesus' earthly Life.

And we are toward the *end* of that last week, and in the Passage that Brother Andy just read to you Jesus is bringing up things that are hard, and difficult, and frightening, and terrible, and very serious. But as we go through these verses and as we spend time looking at each detail of every single one of these Promises of Judgment, the very same glorious transformation that occurred in you with the Words of Jesus that were sweet and easy will happen with these Words that are harsh and tough.

Now here our Master and King is promising Divine Judgment upon the Jews. And we know that God has done this before. God has judged His chosen people, the Jews, before. At least five different "Empires" ruled over Israel after Joshua had conquered the land:

- ✓ The Assyrian Empire (721 BC)
- ✓ The Babylonian Empire (586 BC)
- ✓ The Persian Empire (530 BC)
- ✓ The Greek Empire (200 BC)
- ✓ The Roman Empire (61 BC)

But, all of these conquerings and captivities and enslavements were *corrective* by design. So, none of these were designed to utterly destroy them. All of these were designed by God to bring the Jew to repentance, *within* the existing Covenant. The people of God had grown worldly and sinful; they had begun to adopt the pagan ways of the lost world around them and so God raised up pagan nations to invade Israel and bring *corrective* discipline to God's people.

The result was that, in all their troubles, the Jews were brought to a place of repentance. And as they turned again to the Lord and cried unto God, God heard their cry and restored them. And as God restored them, they picked right back up and worshipped God and sacrificed animals and engaged in the temple worship, just like they had *always* done under the Original Covenant. And God did this over and over and over again.

God would bless His people and they would get fat and lax and lazy and worldly and sinful as a result of all the peace and safety and blessings. And so God would send Prophets to them to call them to repentance and to return to God. And the Jews mostly scorned the Call to repent and they ridiculed the Prophets and killed them, until God would send a foreign army into their land to *humiliate* them, to *humble*

them. And in their slavery, they would cry out to God for forgiveness, and God would hear their cry and He would annihilate the foreign nation that He had raised up and He would restore the Jews back into their land. And as they were restored back into their land, they began to worship God under the very *same inferior* Revelation that they had *always* used. And then the process would begin all over again.

Now we must understand that the only reason *why* God preserved national and ethnic Israel during all of the many decades of their sinful deeds and hard-hearted acts is because Messiah was yet to come. God sovereignly preserved the Jew from being annihilated and utterly wiped off the map in several ways:

- ✓ By giving them their land
- ✓ By imposing His Law on them
- ✓ By imposing a language on them
- ✓ By giving them their civilization
- ✓ By imposing sexual restraint on them
- ✓ By imposing dietary restrictions on them

God destroyed the world, while saving Noah and his family, by a flood, and God took one of the sons of Noah, Shem, and from Shem came the Shemites or the Semitic people from which came the Jews. **Luke 3:36** says that Jesus was a direct descendant of Shem.

After God gave them their language, He gave the Jewish people His Law and made a Covenant with them. And in that Law, God placed restraint on their sexuality that had harsh and unmerciful penalties attached to it. God Himself established a single Standard for all sexual expression. And that one Standard was:

Sexuality is to be expressed only between one naturally born Man and one naturally born Woman within the narrow confines of Holy Matrimony

... and all other expressions of human sexuality including adultery, fornication, incest, bestiality, polygamy, homosexuality, prostitution, and sexual slavery was condemned by God as sin.

Now when you consider this, we must remember that sex was God's idea. God *could* have made humans to enjoy one another through touching elbows, and God could have made babies come through tulips.

But, in His great Wisdom, God created human sexuality as a symbol of the mystery between Christ and His Church.

And so, God has decreed that sex is *only* glorifying to Him when it is very *narrowly* expressed. And any effort to *widen* or *enlarge* the expressions of human sexuality to include anything other than the one single Divine Standard of one man and one woman in Holy Matrimony *dishonors* God, because it tells a lie about Christ and the Church.

And so, all expressions of human sexuality, except one, is sin; all of them. And it is sin because it dishonors God. But another reason it is sin is because, left unchecked, human lust hurts us. Unbridled sexual expression is *always* destructive to human beings. And it is destructive *emotionally*, but it is also destructive *physically*. One of the little secrets that is going on in this world today is that along with the *widening* and *expansion* of allowable sexual expressions is an exponential increase in venereal diseases.

And so, *partly* to uphold the honor of His Glory, but *partly* to protect His people from complete annihilation, God restrained sexual expression in the Jews, under penalty of death. And the result is that the Jew was mainly spared from the ravages of uncontrollable diseases in an age when Common Grace had not yet given Mankind anti-biotics. History tells us two things about human sexuality during that time period:

- ✓ Entire civilizations were wiped out by sexually transmitted diseases, but not the Jew.
- ✓ Jewish women had the lowest instance of cervical cancer of any of the people groups in the Middle East.

... this is another example of how God sovereignly preserved His people until Jesus could be born.

Another aspect of God sovereignly preserving the Jew until Jesus could be born was in the case of food. God prohibited His people from eating food that would kill them. We need to remember that there was no refrigeration back then, and so food that was easy to spoil, and that could not be raised or preserved properly or easily was forbidden.

After God gave them His Law, He gave them the land. And God commanded Joshua to invade a land and to drive out the people who

were *already* living on that land and who *had been* living on that land for centuries, and to kill the ones who resisted.

So, God went to great lengths to call a people, who were *not* a people, "His people", and to preserve them until the Messiah could be born.

And now this Messiah lives! And He stands on the earth. And at this point in Luke's Gospel Record the Messiah is about 33-1/2 years old. And He stands before Jerusalem, and Jesus promises an end to all the supernatural preserving that God has mercifully given the nation of Israel up until this point.

But, what Jesus promises here in **Luke 21** is *not* corrective Judgment. What is coming on Jerusalem, and the Jews this time, is *not* designed to cause them to repent so they can *continue on* in their limited and inferior understanding of God and worship. This is *not* designed to humble them so they can cry out to God and be restored into believing and obeying the same Covenant that their fathers had. No, *this* Judgment is different.

This Judgment will bring an *end* to the First Covenant. And it will usher in the infinite superior New Covenant. *This* Judgment will *end* animal sacrifices. *This* Judgment will *end* the Levitical Priesthood. *This* Judgment will *end* Temple worship. *This* Judgment will *end* ethnic Israel being God's exclusive people.

When what Jesus discusses here in this Passage happens, it will no longer be enough for Jews to cry unto God. Every Jew who will be saved, from now on, will have to confess with his mouth that Jesus Christ is God Almighty in human flesh. After this, it will not be enough to ceremonially wash their hands. No, every Jew will have to have God wash his sinful heart with pure water. It will not be enough to wash his garments, no, every believer, whether Jew or Gentile, will have to believe and trust and be miraculously born again by Grace through Faith alone in the finished Work of Christ alone. And the outward sign that new birth has already happened will be complete emersion in water in baptism in Christ's Name.

Being a citizen of Israel will no longer be enough. Under the New Covenant all saved people will be part of Christ's Church, *regardless* of his nationality. And all who are truly born again are members of that eternal and invisible Church.

So this Judgement is different. It is *not* corrective in nature, it is designed to bring an *end* to one way of life and to institute another. So, that is the first two points, this Judgment promised by Jesus here in these verses:

1. The Judgement is Divine
2. The Judgement is Decisive

It is *Divine* in that the very same God Who instituted the First Covenant, initially, is the same God Who is now ending it. And this Judgment is *Decisive* in that once what Jesus says here happens, there will never be any going back to the way things were.

Now, with all that in mind, let's begin to exegete these Words of Jesus in this Passage. And to do that correctly, we need to get back into the proper setting of this entire Passage.

Jesus has just completed His complete rejection of all of the major religious groups that were perpetrating a false way of worship on the Jews. The Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Scribes were very fastidious, they were serious, they were smart, they were sincere, they were earnest, and they were working very, very hard. And all three groups were wrong. And they were wrong about everything that mattered.

They were wrong about God, they were wrong about what pleased God, and they were wrong about Salvation. They were completely wrong about everything that mattered. Let me put this another way; the only things these groups were right about was what didn't matter. Everything that was eternally important- they had completely missed the boat.

And so Jesus attacked these people at what supposedly was their strongest point. He attacked what they believed and what they taught. Look at what Jesus told these men:

Matthew 12:3

Have you not read what David did

Matthew 12:5

Have you not read in the Law,

Mark 12:10

Have you not even read this Scripture:

Mark 12:26

Have you not read in the book of Moses,

Matthew 22:29

You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures nor the power of God.

Jesus attacked their man-made theology. He said that these phonies didn't understand the Scriptures. That they were completely wrong about what God had said in sacred Scripture.

And then Jesus attacked their hypocritical lives. He attacked their love for money and prestige, He attacked their treatment of the poor and weak, and He attacked their rejection of the sick and the cripple. Jesus said:

Luke 20:46-47

46 "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and love respectful greetings in the market places, and chief seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets,

47 who devour widows' houses, and for appearance's sake offer long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."

And then Jesus attacked their own relationship with God. He told them one time:

John 8:44-47

44 "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

45 "But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.

46 "Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me?

47 "He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear *them*, because you are not of God."

And these groups have now all completely rejected Jesus as being of God in any way and have labeled Him as Satan himself. And, if it were not for the fear that killing Jesus would spark a riot among the people, these men would have destroyed Jesus a long time ago.

Perhaps the most telling condemnation that Jesus gave these religious hypocrites was in how He denounced their treatment of the poor and widows. And so, as we begin Chapter 21, Dr. Luke tells us that Jesus saw a poor widow woman putting all that she had into the Temple Treasury.

And Jesus categorically condemned any teaching that takes the weakest member and forcibly extracts her last bit of sustenance. This episode captures the insidious effect that false teaching has on weak and unstable souls better than almost anything else.

Here is a poor widow woman who has been totally deceived by the Jewish leaders into thinking that she can earn the right to go to Heaven by giving the last of her money. And so Jesus condemns that as hideous, and it was at that moment that some bright soul walks up and says to Jesus:

Isn't the Temple shiny and pretty?

And it was in response to that silly statement that Jesus answers:

Luke 21:6

As for these things which you are looking at, the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another which will not be torn down.

And so His disciples ask a question that would have only been normal:

When?

Luke 21:7

"Teacher, when therefore will these things happen? And what *will be* the sign when these things are about to take place?"

And from verse 8 until verse 36 Jesus is answering that question:

"When are you going to destroy the Temple? When are you going to end the Old Covenant? What is going to be the 'sign' when You will do this?"

And, over the last two weeks, we have gone over the first thing that Jesus said in response to that question:

Luke 21:8

See to it that you are not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not go after them.

And so now we have come to the point where we are going to go verse by verse, sign by sign, issue by issue as to when Jesus is going to "come" in Judgement against the unbelieving Jews and destroy the Temple and institute the glorious New Covenant.

And so he begins by telling them about wars:

Luke 21:9&10

9 "When you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end *does not follow* immediately."

10 Then He continued by saying to them, "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom,

Now, remember what has been going on in Israel over the last 150 years until this very moment. Different men have risen up all claiming to be the Messiah, and they have gathered followers and they have all advocated in some capacity to begin an armed revolt against the pagan Romans and remove them out of the land.

As I have told you many times, the average Jew did not see the Messiah the way we see Him today. They had no concept of being lost. As a born Jew they considered themselves to be "God's people" by birth and ethnicity, regardless of the sinfulness of their lives.

And so, to them, "Salvation" was not being forgiven for sin and made righteous by and through the Work of the Messiah. No, to the average Jew of that day, "Salvation" was being "saved" or "rescued" or "delivered" or "healed" from the pagans who had occupied their land now for hundreds of years.

And this issue was one of the biggest reasons why so many Jews rejected Jesus. They were looking for a patriotic, nationalistic "Messiah" who would lead the armies of Israel against the pagans and restore Israel to its former Glory that they had under King David. And so when Jesus stood before them and taught them to love their enemies and to forgive and to overthrow evil with good, these people rolled their eyes and went to find somebody else that would agree with them that the Romans had to die.

So at the very time that the Jews were increasing in their nationalistic furor to re-establish the country militarily, Jesus downplays all of this by saying,

John 18:36

My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.

So, the concept that the Kingdom of God will be a restored Israel was condemned by none other than Jesus Himself. Now, please turn with me to **The Acts 5**. Now several years after this moment here in Luke 21, when the Apostles were put on trial, a wise and highly respected member of the Sanhedrin, a man named Gamaliel, spoke up and said this in **The Acts 5:32-39**:

32 "And we are witnesses of these things; and *so is* the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him."

33 But when they heard this, they were cut to the quick and intended to kill them.

34 But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law, respected by all the people, stood up in the Council and gave orders to put the men outside for a short time.

35 And he said to them, "Men of Israel, take care what you propose to do with these men.

36 "For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a group of about four hundred men joined up with him. But he was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing.

37 "After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census and drew away *some* people after him; he too perished, and all those who followed him were scattered.

38 "So in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action is of men, it will be overthrown;

39 but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God."

Now history tells us that it was this Gamaliel had personally trained Saul of Tarsus, who later became the Apostle Paul, in being a Pharisee. So Gamaliel had great pedigree. And here he references two men, Theudas and Judas of Galilee, who had both laid claim to be the Messiah. And even though they both had a number of followers, they were both killed and their teachings were discredited and their followers were scattered.

The point here is that this happened all the time. In fact, the Roman Government was very slow to understand the importance of Who Jesus was and what He did, because at first, they considered Him to simply be another one of these men who were trying to overthrow the Romans.

So, the "wars" that Jesus is referring to, here in verse 9, are not armed nations going to war after the manner of World War I or World War II, but rather these small insurrections consisting of several hundred followers of a would be "messiah".

And we know that for at least three exegetical reasons:

1. These insurrections were going on all the time to the point where they were causing disruptions in food and water supplies and interrupting business and governmental functions.
2. The context of Jesus saying this right after He spoke about "false christs" or "false messiahs".
3. The Greek word for "war" as used here is different from the usual word that was used to talk about real wars.

So this has absolutely nothing to do with world events going on in our day or events that may happen in our future. This is a very *precise* and *narrow* prophecy about *how* and *when* and *why* Jesus is going to "come" in horrific Judgement and put a final end to the Old Covenant.

So Jesus is telling His disciples to not get carried away with all these “false messiahs” and to stay focused on the Gospel, and to not allow the patriotic fervor that these small groups were advocating to rob them about what really mattered. And then He said:

... for these things must take place first, but the end *does not follow immediately.*"

Now this is interesting. Jesus is saying here that even though these false messiahs and their followers are not correct, God is still using them. So, even though their effort to rid the Nation of Israel from pagans was *misguided*, it was God's Will. God was using these wayward men to cause Rome to take these insurrections seriously until they finally decided to end it all, in 70 AD, by destroying Jerusalem along with the Temple and the Jewish way of life.

But then Jesus said that these small little insurrections or mini-wars will continue, but the final Judgment against the Temple is not going to be immediate. And as I have told you, it took almost 40 years from this moment for the Judgement that Jesus promised here to be realized.

Now look again at verse 10:

Then He continued by saying to them, "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom,

Now why did Jesus mention the words “**nation**” and “**kingdom**” here in verse 10? Surely this has something to do with world events in our day, right? Wrong. We must remember the Jewish way of thinking that was common during the 1st Century. And one of the ways to do that is by using resource materials that gives us insight into the Jewish way of life in Jerusalem during this time period. And one of the best that I am aware of is a three volume series by Alfred Edersheim, a former orthodox Jew who lived during the early to mid-19th Century, who renounced Judaism and became a believer who was a very outspoken advocate of The Doctrines of Grace.

Edersheim wrote several books, among them were:

1. The Temple: its Ministry and Services as they were in the Time of Jesus Christ (1874)
2. Sketches of Jewish Social Life in the days of Christ (1876)
3. The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah (1883)

Edersheim said, that during the first century, it was common for people to look at Israel as being several different "nations" rather than a single country. That the people in the north and middle sections of Israel were so vastly different from the people in Jerusalem proper, that they were referred to as different "nations". Biblical scholars think that this is why such distinctions were made in Scripture about at least four areas:

1. Judea
2. Galilee
3. Samaria
4. Jerusalem

So, as these pseudo-messiahs continued to rise up and stir the people up into committing assassinations, kidnappings and other terrorists acts, there were what we would call "skirmishes" going on all the time. Many of them were what we would call "small police matters", but some were quite large and required the might and brutality of the Roman army itself to put down.

And because these events were going on constantly, everybody knew that sooner or later the might of Rome itself was going to clamp down on all of Israel. And, so, along with these mini-battles going on all the time, there was a constant dread and fear that Rome was coming at any minute to stamp them all out.

So Jesus is comforting His disciples here by telling them that even though these various sections of Israel would periodically descend into political and social chaos, and even though there was going to be periodic violence, some very intense, that this was *not* the final Judgement that was coming.

Also, in Israel, during the First Century, to the far south was an area called "Idumea". This is where Herod was from. And it was considered to be a completely separate "kingdom" during this time, *politically*. And so there was jealousy and political jockeying going on

between Judea and Jerusalem and Idumea as to who would take “first seat” in the political landscape in Jerusalem. And this was going on all the time as well.

So verses 9-10 describe a general situation where the entire nation of Israel is being constantly stirred up because of these false messiahs and political fervor and violence is increasing exponentially during the years immediately after the Resurrection. Assassinations and kidnappings and murders and other terrorist activities are going to increase and there would be a heightened friction between the various “nation groups” within Israel until it seemed as though the country was tearing itself apart.

And so Jesus is telling His disciples to trust Him and to remain focused on why they were called, and to understand that while God is not the Author of sin, He is going to sovereignly *allow* these things to take place so that it will lead to the final cataclysmic Judgement of God. But they are to take heart because Jesus also promised them in verse 28:

But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

Amen. Let's pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.