LUKE 21

Lift Up Your Heads

a widow's two coins, a temple's last days, a city surrounded, and the Son of Man coming in a cloud

> *"But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."*
> LUKE 21:28

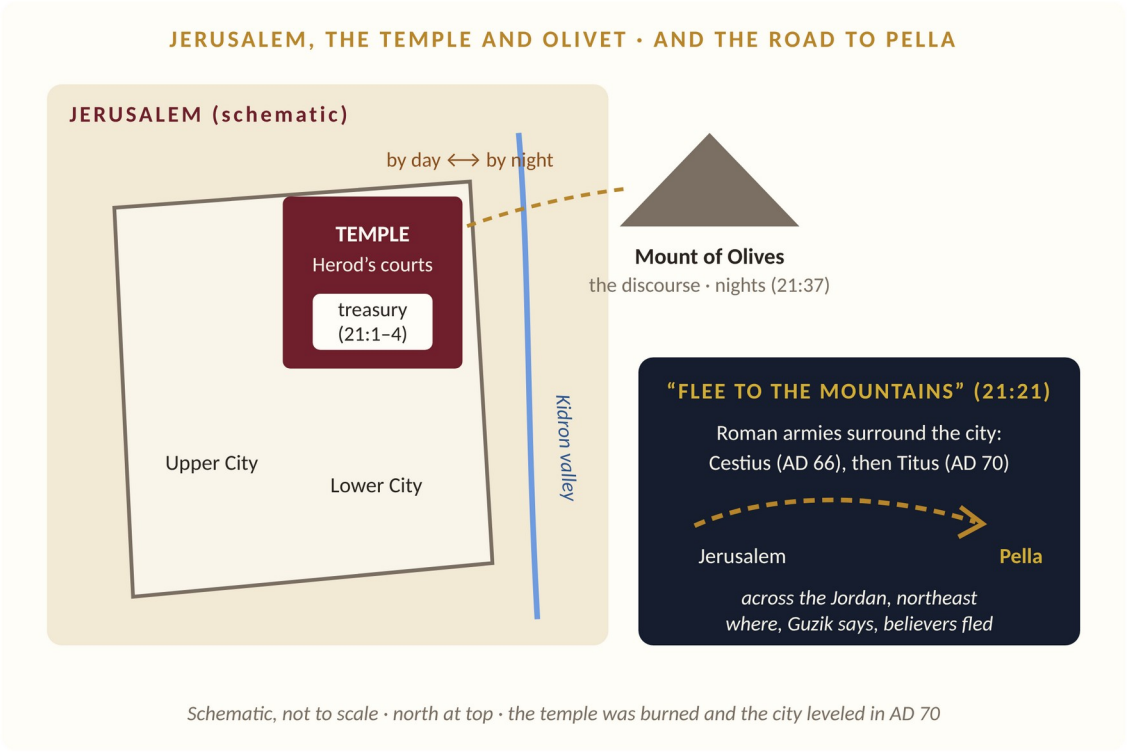
A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · FOUR VOICES: GUZIK · SPROUL · SPURGEON · HENRY

Where we are in Luke

1. Luke 21 is the last public teaching of Jesus in Luke's Gospel.

2. The temple was Herod's, begun about 20 BC and still being finished in Jesus' day.

3. Matthew 24 and Mark 13 record the same teaching, given on the Mount of Olives across the Kidron valley from the temple; it is called the Olivet Discourse.



All She Had to Live On

The rich and their surplus, a widow and her two small coins

LUKE 21:3

And He said, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all of them;

DAVID GUZIK

Jesus sees us give; one coin was half her money.

R.C. SPROUL

Jesus watched the giving; she was all in.

MATTHEW HENRY

Christ sees whether we give willingly; He sees in secret and rewards.

λεπτὰ δύο

LEPTA DYO · "TWO SMALL COPPER COINS"

A lepton was the smallest coin in circulation, a thin copper piece worth a fraction of a laborer's daily wage (Mark 12:42 says two of them made a kodrantēs).

Not One Stone Upon Another

Beautiful stones, deceivers and wars — and endurance under persecution

LUKE 21:8

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.

DAVID GUZIK

Good things become idols; wars are labor pains, not the sign.

R.C. SPROUL

The 'indestructible' temple fell in AD 70, as foretold.

C.H. SPURGEON

Signs keep us watching; repeat the message, don't invent it.

MATTHEW HENRY

Speak of God's presence, not pomps; constancy is your testimony.

πλανάω

PLANAŌ · "MISLEAD, LEAD ASTRAY"

To cause to wander, to lead off the road (our word "planet" is a "wanderer").

Jerusalem Surrounded by Armies

Flight to the mountains, days of vengeance, and the times of the Gentiles

LUKE 21:21

"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;

DAVID GUZIK

Believers obeyed and fled; 1948; Daniel's last week ahead.

R.C. SPROUL

Days of vengeance — but "until" means it stops.

C.H. SPURGEON

Hated, yet untouched; the Messiah gathers the Gentiles.

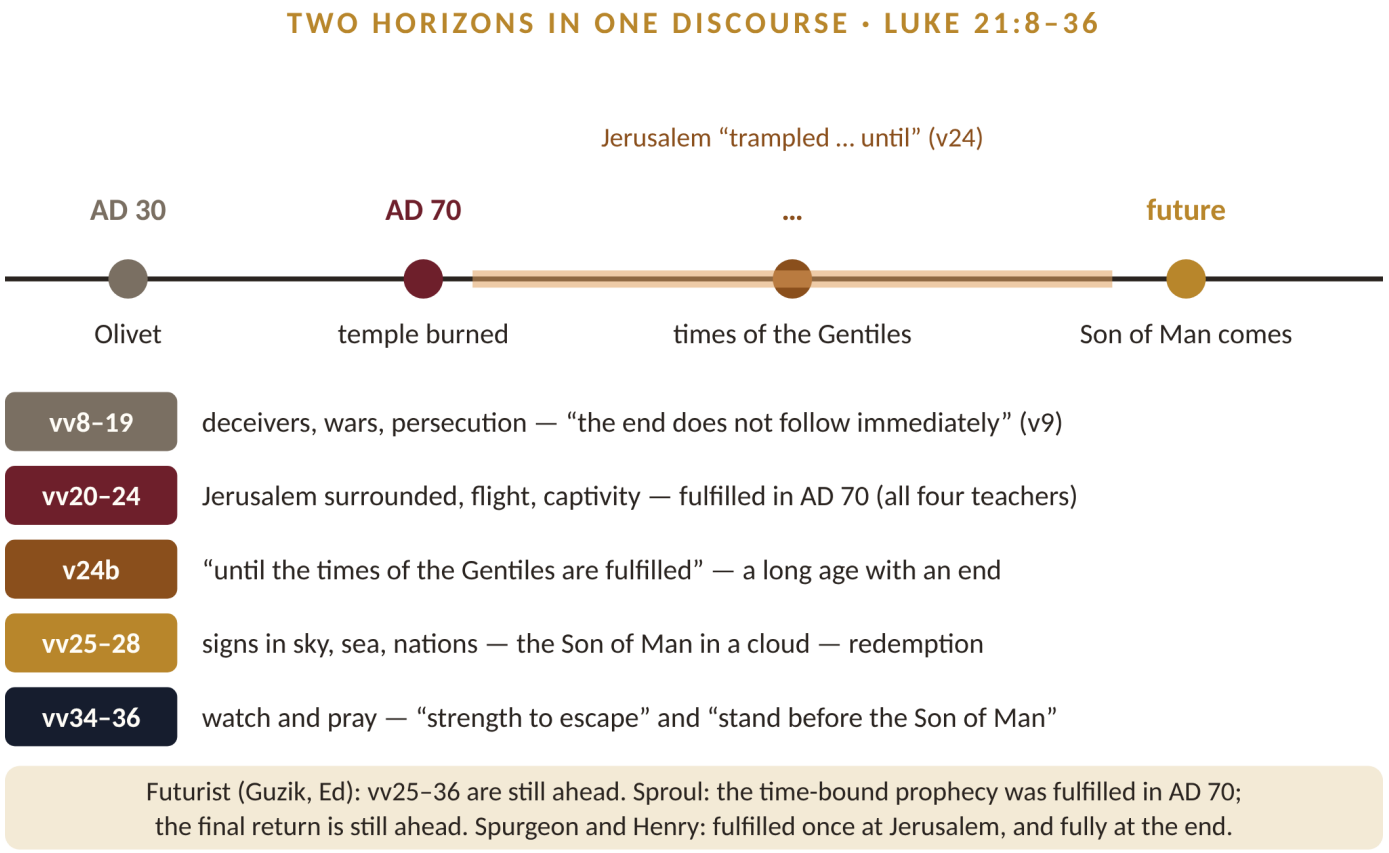
MATTHEW HENRY

Reprieves are not pardons; two readings of the Gentile times.

ἐρήμωσις
ERĒMŌSIS · "DESOLATION"

From erēmos, a desert: a laying waste, making a place empty.

Two horizons



Read the bar left to right: the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 opens a long age of Gentile trampling that ends when the Son of Man comes — and notice which verses sit on each side of that age.

The Son of Man Coming in a Cloud

Signs in sky and sea, redemption drawing near, a fig tree, and words that will not pass away

LUKE 21:28

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

DAVID GUZIK

No AD 70 fulfillment of vv25–27; the generation that sees.

R.C. SPROUL

Judgment imagery; an age group; Jesus came in AD 70.

C.H. SPURGEON

A rehearsal at Jerusalem; two meanings, outer and inner.

MATTHEW HENRY

A little day of judgment, an earnest of His second coming.

ἀπολύτρωσις
APOLYTRŌSIS · "REDEMPTION"

Release by payment of a ransom (lytron).

Four readings

HOW OUR TEACHERS READ THE HARD SAYINGS

	vv20–24	vv25–27	“this generation” (v32)
GUZIK	AD 70 (Pella)	still future — no AD 70 fit	those who see the signs
SPROUL	AD 70 (Romans)	judgment imagery, AD 70 coming	an age group: AD 30–70
SPURGEON	AD 70 (no Christian lost)	a rehearsal at Jerusalem; again	two meanings, outer and inner
HENRY	AD 70	type of the end: AD 70 a specimen	those then alive (AD 70 first)

All four agree on AD 70 for vv20–24 and on a real, visible return of Christ; they part on how much of vv25–32 is still ahead.

Every teacher puts verses 20–24 in AD 70; read across each row to see where they divide on the cosmic signs and on “this generation.”

Keep On the Alert

Hearts weighed down, a trap for the whole earth, and strength to stand

LUKE 21:34

"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;

DAVID GUZIK

Watch and you won't be snared; taken before the calamity.

C.H. SPURGEON

Care can intoxicate; don't love this world.

MATTHEW HENRY

Cares overcharge the heart; be awake, and keep awake.

κραιπάλη
KRAIPALĒ · "DISSIPATION"

Only here in the New Testament: the hangover and dullness that follow a drinking bout.

What to carry from this chapter

1

The widow came right after the warning.

Chapter 20 ends with scribes “who devour widows’ houses” (20:47); chapter 21 opens with a widow who gave “all that she had to live on.”

2

Jesus counts what is left, not what is given.

The rich gave out of perisseuma, overflow; she gave out of hysterēma, lack.

3

The first word about the future is a warning.

Not a date but “See to it that you are not misled” (v8).

4

Persecution is a pulpit.

“It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony” (v13).

More to carry

5

Endurance is not passive.

Hypomonē is staying under the load.

6

Obedience saved the Jerusalem church.

Guzik and Spurgeon both say the believers who heeded verse 21 fled the city, and that few if any perished.

7

“Until” has an end.

Sproul: “up to this point and then it stops.”

8

The teachers honestly differ on verses 25–32.

Guzik: “History records no adequate fulfillment of these words in A.D. 70.”

Talk it through

1. The widow gave out of her lack, not her leftovers. What would it look like for me to give God something I will actually miss?

2. The disciples were admiring beautiful stones. What good thing in my life — even a religious one — has started to become an idol?

3. Jesus' first word about the future was "do not be misled." Where do I go looking for certainty about dates instead of faithfulness for today?

4. Some believers will be betrayed even by family (v16). How does verse 18–19 help a man who has lost relationships for following Jesus?

5. Our teachers read verses 25–32 differently. What do all of them agree on, and how does that shape the way I live this week?

CLOSING

Luke 21 starts with two copper coins and ends with the Son of Man coming in a cloud. In between, Jesus tells the truth about wars, betrayal, a burning temple and a trampled city — and none of it is meant to frighten His people. Give Him everything, do not be misled, endure, and when these things begin, straighten up and lift up your heads.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

Full Deep Dive, O·I·A study and reflection journal: see the Luke study page.