

## Wednesday Evening Bible Study

April 29, 2020

### *Final Teachings on Finances and Future Things*

Text – Luke 21:1 - 19

#### Introduction (20:45 – 47)

The context of this portion of Scripture is the last week of Jesus' earthly ministry. He has been teaching in the Temple. This is after the Triumphal Entry, yet before the Upper Room and Last Supper. Jesus had just answered three questions from the religious leaders in chapter twenty that were attempts to trap Jesus in His words. They were trying to get Jesus to say something that would get Him into trouble, either with the people or with the Roman authorities. They asked him about His authority; then they asked him about paying taxes; and finally, the Sadducees asked him in a round-about way about the resurrection.

After silencing all of their arguments, Jesus warns the people about these religious leaders. He specifically rebukes them regarding their treatment of widows (read 20:45 – 47). He will now make an observation about a very giving widow woman, and actually compares her to all of the other people who gave

#### I. **An Pronouncement about the Finances of a Widow (vs. 1 – 4; also Mark 12: 41 - 44)**

Only Mark and Luke share this event with us. Matthew does not record it.

Jesus is just about to leave the temple and speak to His disciples about future events in v. 5 (also Matthew 24; Mark 13).

Jesus is near the treasury in the Temple, and he is watching the people give.

He still sees the amount that we give.

He still sees the amount that we have left after we give.

Jesus comments that many rich people gave "much" into the treasury; but what He didn't mention was how much the rich people had left after they had given. We know that they gave of their abundance.

On the other hand, the Lord tells us that the poor widow who only gave two mites (a very small amount – each copper coin worth about an eighth of a cent); had actually given "all her living." It says that she gave of her "penury" or extreme poverty.

Notice also that she gave to a corrupt religious system, but Jesus said she gave to God. (Some people don't give because they claim they cannot trust how the money is being used.)

Notice Jesus had just spoke about how the Pharisees had taken advantage of the widows. (Luke 20:45 – 47; Matthew 23:14; Mark 12:40)

Whenever we teach on this passage we tend to focus on the subject of giving; but I do not think Jesus is focusing on the giving aspect.

If the focus were on giving, Jesus would have only commented on what each party gave; but Jesus didn't stop with what they gave; He went on to mention what they had left.

**This passage is really about total surrender.**

The rich gave, and they certainly gave more than the woman did; but the widow had nothing left, which means she surrendered all.

She gave everything that she owned to the Lord.

Illustration – *I Surrender All*

*All to Jesus, I surrender; All to Him I freely give;  
I will ever love and trust Him, In His presence daily live.  
I surrender all, I surrender all, All to Thee, my blessèd Savior, I surrender all.  
All to Jesus I surrender; Humbly at His feet I bow,  
Worldly pleasures all forsaken; Take me, Jesus, take me now.*

Illustrate – *Is Your All on the Altar*

*Is your all on the altar of sacrifice laid? Your heart does the Spirit control?  
You can only be blest, And have peace and sweet rest,  
As you yield Him your body and soul. (Is Your All On The Altar?)*

Examples of surrender in the Bible:

Look at: Genesis 22:1 – 14; Acts 4:32 – 37 ; 1 Kings 17:8 – 16; 2 Corinthians 8:1 – 5

Notice the principle found in Colossians 3: 1 – 5.

*"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." - (Galatians 2:20)*

Dead people do not own anything.

This story teaches us much about the Christian living and levels of faith through these passages:

And your level of living directly applies to your level of giving.

1. **The Lowest Level of Christian Living (or Faith) Is Selfishness (the Self Life)** – though you may be saved – you still live your life doing your thing. You obey what you want. You give when you want.
2. **The Second Level of Christian Living (or Faith) Is Mere Submission (Obedience)**

You find out from the Bible what the bare minimum is and then you submit to that. You are doing the commanded things.

*"So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." - (Luke 17:10)*

You tithe but you don't give above the tithe.

3. **The Next Level of Christian Living (or Faith) is Sacrifice**

**A** At first you may be hesitant.

**B** But eventually you get to where you are happy about it.

*"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9:7 KJV)*

4. **The Final Level of Christian Living (or Faith) Is Surrender**

It really isn't living at all – it is actually dying to self.

This widow from our text – she was living here.

- \$10.00 in a wallet – Level 1 – don't give any of it
- Level 2 – give the dollar
- Level 3 – give more dollars
- Level 4 – give the wallet

## II. **A Prophecy Regarding the Future of the World (vs. 5 – 19; Matthew 24:1 – 14; Mark 13:1 - 13)**

In this section, Jesus starts a discussion of the future by talking about the beauty of the temple and prophesying of its soon-coming total destruction.

This temple was begun by Herod the Great in 20 b.c. (*see note on 2:1*) and was still under construction when the Romans destroyed it in a.d. 70 (*see note on v. 2*). At the time of Jesus' ministry, the temple was one of the most impressive structures in the world, made of massive blocks of stone bedecked with gold ornamentation. Some of the stones in the temple complex measured 40x12x12 ft. and were expertly quarried to fit perfectly against one another. The temple buildings were made of gleaming white marble, and the whole eastern wall of the large main structure was covered with gold plates that reflected the morning sun, making a spectacle

that was visible for miles. The entire temple mount had been enlarged by Herod's engineers, by means of large retaining walls and vaulted chambers on the S side and SE corner. By this means the large courtyard area atop the temple mount was effectively doubled. The whole temple complex was magnificent by any standard. The disciples' conversation here may have been prompted by Jesus' words in 23:38. They were undoubtedly wondering how a site so spectacular could be left "desolate."<sup>1</sup>

This is a parallel passage to the Olivet Discourse given in Matthew 24 and Mark 13; however, Luke's emphasis begins with the more immediate future event of the destruction of Jerusalem with its Temple in 70 A.D. Jesus will then move forward and discuss the persecution that God's people have faced throughout the church age, and will face in the future Tribulation Period. Note – the Church will be removed by way of the Rapture before the Tribulation Period (1 Thessalonians 4:13ff.; 1 Corinthians 15:51ff.; Revelation 4:1), but more people will be saved immediately after the start of the Tribulation Period.

### **Explain End-times Chart Below**

#### **A. An Observation about the Signs of the End Times (vs. 5 – 11)**

After observing the small gift of the woman, the disciples must have been thinking about the costliness of the very ornate Temple. Jesus uses their thoughts to tell them that this Temple would soon be utterly destroyed. The Temple was destroyed by the Roman General Titus in 70 A.D. The destruction of Jerusalem was just the beginning of many problems for Christians and Jews alike in the first century. However, the persecution of the first century would not be when Jesus would come back.

Before the Lord comes back to retrieve His Bride, there will be many difficult days, which will include wars, and natural disasters, such as earthquakes, famines, and pestilences. The Bible calls these the "beginnings of sorrows" (Matthew 24:8).

#### **B. An Opportunity to Speak (vs. 12 – 15)**

Notice that the persecution for believers will begin "before all these things." Believers have been persecuted since the first century.

### **From Church History Notes – Lecture Two – The First 200 Years**

#### **The First Martyrs:**

- A John the Baptist** – beheaded by Herod ([Matthew 14:3 – 12](#))

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<sup>1</sup> John MacArthur Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1438.

Note – John the Baptist is said to be the last of the Old Testament prophets as well as the first of the New Testament prophets. He is not part of the church. (John 3:29) He is the friend of the bridegroom, not the bride or part of the bride. The bride of Christ is the Church.

- B Jesus** – crucified
- C Stephen** – stoned to death in Jerusalem in A.D. 34 (Acts 7:59)
- D James the son of Zebedee** – beheaded by Agrippa in A.D. 45
- E Philip** – stoned in Phrygia in A.D. 54
- F James, the brother of Jesus** – beaten to death on the steps of the Temple in A.D. 63.
- G Barnabus** – burned on Cyprus in A.D. 64
- H John Mark** – dragged through the streets of Alexandria in A.D. 64
- I Simon Peter** – crucified (upside down) by Nero in A.D. 69

Note Peter's wife was also crucified.

- J Paul** – beheaded by Nero in A.D. 69
- K Additional martyrs of the first century**

Aristarchus, Epaphras, Priscilla and Aquilla, Andromicus, and Juna were all martyred by Nero in A.D.70. Silas was beaten to death in Macedonia; Onesiphorus and Porphyrius were dragged to death by horses; Andrew was crucified; Bartholomew was flayed alive; Thomas was burned by hot plates and eventually stabbed to death; Matthew was nailed to the ground and beheaded; Matthias was crucified and beheaded; Luke was hanged in Greece in A.D. 93; Antipas was roasted alive in A.D. 95.

Note – John the apostle is said to have been boiled in oil by Emperor Domitian but miraculously survived. He was banished to the penal isle of Patmos where he was given the Revelation by the Lord. Tradition has it that he was eventually released and returned to Ephesus where he was the pastor. He died at the age of 100 being the only apostle that was not martyred.

God will someday glorify all those who were persecuted for His sake.

These examples given have already happened, and is still happening now in other parts of the world. It may also begin to happen more and more here in America, even before the Rapture.

God says that when it happens, we are not to worry about what we will say. The Holy Spirit will speak through us, and testify for us.

### **C. An Opportunity to Stand (vs. 16 – 19)**

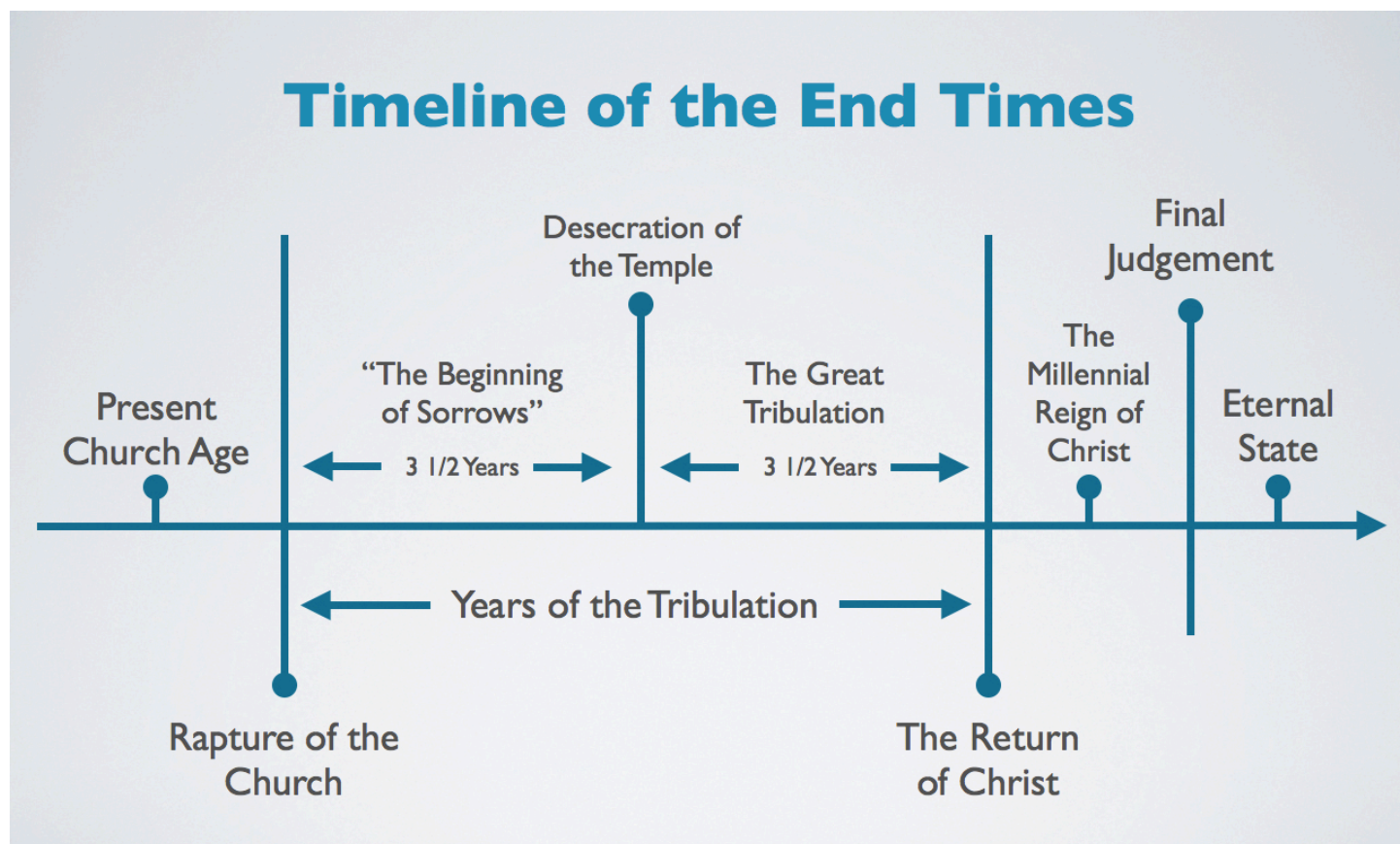
The events referred to here are likely a reference to the Tribulation Period.

Neighbors and even family members will betray believers and turn them into the authorities who will seek to drive out the name of Christ.

Note – Luke 21:18 is likely a reference to the 144,000 evangelists who will be marked and miraculously protected during the Tribulation.

#### D. An Obliteration of the City (vs. 20 – 24)

Though both Matthew and Mark reference this overall passage, Luke’s focus is somewhat different. Vs. 20 – 24 seem to be a reference to the destruction of the City of Jerusalem back in 70 A.D. (See also Luke 19:41 – 44). “The Jewish historian Josephus claimed that nearly a million people were killed by the Romans, and over 100,000 taken captive, when Titus captured the city.”<sup>2</sup> This is a foreshadow of what Satan will try to do to God’s people during the Tribulation Period.



<sup>2</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 262.