

CHAPTER 21

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 21

Ver. 1. *And he looked up*, etc.] As Christ sat over against the treasury, looking upon the ground, he lift up his eyes; for the treasury was not in an high place, or above Christ, who was right against it. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions leave out this clause.

And saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury; (see Gill on “^{<4124>}Mark 12:41”).

Ver. 2. *And he saw also a certain poor widow*, etc.] Whom he took particular notice of above all the rest: the poor, and the widow, are regarded by him, and are his care; nor are their mean services, done in faith, and from a principle of love, despised by him, but preferred to the greater services of others, where faith and love are wanting:

casting in thither two mites; the value of a farthing. The Persic version renders it, “two bottoms of yarn”; (see Gill on “^{<4122>}Mark 12:42”):

Ver. 3. *And he said*, etc.] To his disciples, as the Ethiopic version adds; these he called to him, upon this occasion, as appears from (“^{<4123>}Mark 12:43)

of a truth I say unto you, that this poor woman hath cast in more than they all: than all the rich men; not in quantity, but in proportion to her ability; (see Gill on “^{<4123>}Mark 12:43”).

Ver. 4. *For all these have of their abundance*, etc.] Which they had remaining; the same Hebrew word **rty** signifying to remain, and to abound: they had large possessions, and gave in much, and yet had a great deal left; out of which they

cast in unto the offerings of God; or “gifts of God”: not as gifts unto him; or among the gifts of God; but into the treasury where the gifts, and freewill offerings were put; the same with the “Corban”, in (“^{<4126>}Matthew 27:6) and so the Syriac version here renders it, “the house of the offering of God”: and it is expressed in the plural; because there were several

chests, in which these gifts were put, for various uses; (see Gill on “⁴¹²⁴Mark 12:41”)

but she of her penury hath cast in all the living she had; (see Gill on “⁴¹²⁴Mark 12:44”).

Ver. 5. *And as some spake of the temple*, etc.] These were the disciples; Mark says, one of them; but it seems there were more than one; one might begin the discourse, and others join him:

how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts; (see Gill on “⁴²⁰¹Matthew 24:1”).

he said; what follows. This was as he went out of the temple.

Ver. 6. *As for these things which ye behold*, etc.] Some, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, read these words by way of interrogation; “are these the things which ye behold?” do ye look upon these with wonder and delight?

the days will come; and they are hastening on; a little while, a few years more:

in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down; (see Gill on “⁴²⁰²Matthew 24:2”).

Ver. 7. *And they asked him*, etc.] That is, his disciples, when they were come to the Mount of Olives, and as he sat upon that, (⁴²⁰³Matthew 24:3)

saying, master, but when shall these things be? when the temple shall be destroyed; and one stone shall not be left upon another;

and what sign [will there be] when these things shall come to pass? which shows that this refers to the destruction of the temple, and so the signs following; (see Gill on “⁴²⁰³Matthew 24:3”).

Ver. 8. *And he said, take heed that ye be not deceived*, etc.] With false Christs, and false prophets:

for many shall come in my name; making use of his name, taking it to them; not that they would pretend they were sent by him, but that they were he himself:

saying, I am [Christ]; so the Syriac and Persic versions supply as we do:

and the time draweth near; not that such will come, but when come, they will say, that the time of the deliverance of the Jewish nation from the Roman yoke is at hand:

go ye not therefore after them; do not be their disciples, or follow them where they would lead you; for nothing but destruction will be the consequence of it.

Ver. 9. *But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions*, etc.] Or seditions and tumults; “wars” may design the wars of the Romans, against the Jews; and the “commotions”, or seditions, the internal troubles among themselves:

be not terrified; as if the destruction of the nation, city, and temple, would be at once:

for these things must first come to pass, but the end is not by and by; or “immediately”. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions leave out this last word, and read, as in (see Gill on “~~4B16~~ Matthew 24:6”).

Ver. 10. *Then said he unto them, nation shall rise*, etc.] (See Gill on “~~4B17~~ Matthew 24:7”).

Ver. 11. *And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines and pestilences*, etc.] (See Gill on “~~4B17~~ Matthew 24:7”).

and fearful sights; or “terrible things”; whether heard, or seen, as dreadful thunderings, and lightnings; and a voice heard in the temple, saying, let us go hence; and an idiot that went about several years together, saying, woe to the people, woe to the city, etc. a flame was seen in the temple, and the doors of it opened of themselves:

and great signs shall there be from heaven; as comets and blazing stars, a flaming sword, or a comet like one, hanging over Jerusalem, and armies in the air engaged against each other^{f646}. The Syriac version adds, “and great winters there shall be”; that is, very long and cold; and so the Persic version, “and winter, and cold, shall be protracted”.

Ver. 12. *But before all these*, etc.] Before all these things come to pass:

they shall lay their hands on you; as the high priest, the priests, and the captain of the temple did upon the apostles, (~~4B18~~ Acts 4:1,3,17,18)

and persecute you; as upon the death of Stephen, (~~4B18~~ Acts 8:1)

delivering you up to the synagogues; to be scourged there; or to the courts of judicature, the consistories of the Jews, their great sanhedrim; before these the apostles were brought, (~~4006~~ Acts 4:6,7,15,17)

and into prisons; as were all the apostles together, and Peter at another time separately, (~~4006~~ Acts 4:3,18 12:4)

being brought before kings and rulers, for my name's sake; for being called by his name, and calling upon it; for professing, and preaching his Gospel; (See Gill on "~~4008~~ Matthew 10:18").

Ver. 13. *And it shall turn to you for a testimony.*] By this means they would have an opportunity of leaving their testimony for Christ before kings and rulers; and what they should meet with from them, would be a means of strengthening and confirming them in the truths of the Gospel; and be a proof and evidence to them of the certainty of the above things Christ had said should be accomplished; as well as be for a testimony against the rulers and governors, Jews, and Gentiles, before whom they should be convened; (see ~~4008~~ Matthew 10:18).

Ver. 14. *Settle it therefore in your hearts,* etc.] Resolve on this in your minds, and let it be a rule never to be departed from:

not to meditate before what you shall answer; not to sit down, and study a form of words, and scheme of things, what to reply to the ensnaring questions, that may be thought would be asked, by kings and rulers, or any of the judges before whom they should be brought; it being natural for persons, especially of a low life, to be timorous and fearful, to appear before such great personages, and to be thoughtful and solicitous what to say to any question that may be asked them; (see Gill on "~~4009~~ Matthew 10:19").

Ver. 15. *For I will give you a mouth,* etc.] A faculty of speaking, a freedom of expression, a door of utterance, a good degree of elocution, to speak properly, pertinently and freely to any point:

and wisdom; to answer with great propriety, and in the most prudent manner, to any difficult and ensnaring question; and to furnish with such knowledge of the Gospel, and with such gifts and abilities to preach and defend it, that they should be able to give a clear and distinct account of it, and prove every point in it, by the most strong and convincing arguments, and vindicate it against all objections:

which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist. This was remarkably fulfilled in Peter, and John, and in Stephen, (^{<4043>}Acts 4:13,14 6:10). The first word, “gainsay”, is left out in the Syriac and Persic versions.

Ver. 16. *And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren,* etc.] (See Gill on “^{<4001>}Matthew 10:21”)

and kinsfolks, and friends. The Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions add, “your”, to each of these relations, as your parents, etc.

and some of you shall they cause to be put to death; as Stephen was stoned to death, and James, the brother of John, Herod killed with the sword, (^{<4078>}Acts 7:58 12:2) and indeed all of them were put to death, except John, before the destruction of Jerusalem.

Ver. 17. *And ye shall be hated of all men,* etc.] (See Gill on “^{<4002>}Matthew 10:22”). (See Gill on “^{<4149>}Matthew 24:9”).

Ver. 18. *But there shall not art hair of your head perish.*] That is, without the will of God, as in (^{<4009>}Matthew 10:29,30) or not one shall perish, but what shall be restored again: or the sense is, that though they should be betrayed by their friends, and hated, and persecuted, and imprisoned by their enemies, yet they should be no losers in the main; all things should work together for their good; and though even they should be put to death, yet that would be to their advantage, since instead of a temporal, troublesome life, they should enjoy an eternal and happy one: for this cannot be understood of entire preservation from all corporeal damages and hurt; seeing it is, before declared, that they should be put into prisons, and some of them put to death; nor of their preservation at the destruction of Jerusalem, for none of them was living at that time, but the Apostle John, and he was not in those parts.

Ver. 19. *In your patience, possess ye your souls.*] By patiently bearing all afflictions, reproaches, indignities, and persecutions, enjoy yourselves; let nothing disturb or distress you; possess that peace and joy in your souls, which the world cannot take away; (see ^{<4183>}Romans 5:3-5). The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, “ye shall possess”: and the sense may be this; by patient continuance, or by perseverance in the ways of God, and the truths of Christ unto the end, ye shall be saved; shall find your lives, and enjoy your souls, as in (^{<4002>}Matthew 10:22, 24:13).

Ver. 20. *And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies,* etc.] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions read, “with an army”; that is, with the Roman army, as it was by the army which Titus Vespasian brought against it, and besieged it with:

then know that the desolation thereof is nigh; signifying, that there would be no deliverance to be expected, as when the Assyrian army under Rabshakeh appeared against it; but that whenever the Roman army besieged it, its destruction might be looked upon as inevitable; nor was the siege raised until it was destroyed, which was about four years after.

Ver. 21. *Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains,* etc.] (See Gill on “^{<4246>}Matthew 24:16”).

And let them which are in the midst of it; either of Judea, as the preceding clause seems to direct the sense; or in Jerusalem, and which indeed was in the midst of Judea; and this sense is favoured by the Persic version, which renders it, “within the city”; let them go out of it, as the Christians did to Pella, Mount Libanus, and other places:

and let not them that are in the countries; either foreign countries, or in towns and villages;

enter thereinto: either into Judea, or into Jerusalem; contrary to this advice, they came from all countries to the feast of the passover at Jerusalem, and were there shut up by the siege and destroyed ^{f647}.

Ver. 22. *For these be the days of vengeance,* etc.] Of God's vengeance on the Jewish nation, for their rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah;

that all things which are written may be fulfilled; as in Moses and the prophets; (see ^{<6830>}Deuteronomy 28:20-68 32:22-26 ^{<2360>}Isaiah 6:10,11,12 ^{<2026>}Daniel 9:26,27)

Ver. 23. *But woe unto them that are with-child,* etc.] (See Gill on “^{<4249>}Matthew 24:19”).

For there shall be great distress in the land; of Judea. The Greek word **αναγκη**, here used, properly signifies “necessity”, but here intends afflictions and distress; in which sense it is often used by the Septuagint, as in (^{<4976>}Psalms 107:6,13,19,28 119:143 ^{<24915>}Jeremiah 9:15) and it is also by the Targumists adopted into their language, and used in the same sense ^{f648}; and indeed, the distress was very great, and such a time of tribulation, as

was never known since the beginning of the world, nor never will be the like; what with the enemy without, and their seditions and divisions within, the robberies, murders, and famine, which prevailed and abounded, their miseries are not to be expressed:

and wrath upon this people; of the Jews; even the wrath of God, as well as of man, which came upon them to the uttermost; and their own historian observes, that God, who had condemned the people, turned every way of salvation to their destruction ^{f649}.

Ver. 24. *And they shall fall by the edge of the sword*, etc.] Or “mouth of the sword”, an Hebraism; see the Septuagint in (^{<0008>}Judges 1:8,25). The number of those that perished by the famine and sword, were eleven hundred thousand ^{f650}:

and shall be led away captive unto all nations; when the city was taken, the most beautiful of the young men were kept for the triumph; and those that were above seventeen years of age, were sent bound into Egypt, to labour in the mines; many were distributed through the provinces, to be destroyed in the theatres, by the sword or beasts; and those that were under seventeen years of age, were led captive to be sold; and the number of these only, were ninety-seven thousand ^{f651}:

and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles; the Romans, who ploughed up the city and temple, and laid them level with the ground; and which spot has been ever since inhabited by such as were not Jews, as Turks and Papists: and so it will be,

until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled; that is, till the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in; until the Gospel is preached all over the world, and all God's elect are gathered in out of all nations; and then the Jews will be converted, and return to their own land, and rebuild and inhabit Jerusalem; but till that time, it will be as it has been, and still is possessed by Gentiles. The word “Gentiles”, is left out in one of Beza's exemplars, and so it is likewise in the Persic version.

Ver. 25. *And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon*, etc.] They shall be darkened, and suffer very strange and surprising eclipses:

and in the stars; they shall fall from heaven, as in (^{<0009>}Matthew 24:29) and so the Ethiopic version reads here: all which, as it may be understood in a literal sense, so it may likewise in figurative and mystical one, and be

interpreted of the changes there should be in the Jewish state; (see Gill on “^{<4143>}Matthew 24:29”). So the Jewish writers ^{f652} interpret the sun, the light, the moon, and stars, in (^{<2112>}Ecclesiastes 12:2). By the “sun” they understand the kingdom of the house of David; by “the light”, the law; by “the moon”, the sanhedrim; and by the stars, the Rabbins; and the same seem to be designed by the stars here:

and upon the earth distress of nations; upon the land of Israel; in the several nations and countries belonging to it; as Galilee of the nations, Judea, and the region beyond Jordan, shall be in great distress:

with perplexity; of mind, not knowing what to do, which way to go, or step to take; the Syriac version, instead of it, reads “clapping, or pressing of the hands”; which is done by persons, when in an agony and great distress:

the sea and the waves roaring; which design some unusual and extraordinary storms and tempests, and inundations in the sea of Galilee, or Tiberias, which would be so very terrible, as to cause great uneasiness, distress, and perplexity; and so some versions render it, “because of the sea”, etc.

Ver. 26. *Men's hearts failing them for fear*, etc.] Of what these signs in the heaven, earth, and sea portend:

and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; on the land of Judea:

for the powers of heaven shall be shaken; (see Gill on “^{<4143>}Matthew 24:29”).

Ver. 27. *And then shall they see the son of man*, etc.] (See Gill on “^{<4143>}Matthew 24:30”).

Ver. 28. *And when these things begin to come to pass*, etc.] When the first of these signs appears, or any one of them:

then look up and lift up your heads; be cheerful and pleasant; do not hang down your heads as bulrushes, but erect them, and put on a cheerful countenance, and look upwards, from whence your help comes; and look out wistfully and intently, for your salvation and deliverance:

for your redemption draweth nigh; not the redemption of their souls from sin, Satan, the law, the world, death, and hell; for that was to be obtained,

and was obtained, before any of these signs took place; nor the redemption of their bodies at the last day, in the resurrection, called the day of redemption; for this respects something that was to be, in the present age and generation; (see ^{<4213>}Luke 21:32) but the deliverance of the apostles and other Christians, from the persecutions of the Jews, which were very violent, and held till these times, and then they were freed from them: or by redemption is meant, the Redeemer, the son of man, who shall now come in power and glory, to destroy the Jews, and deliver his people; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “for he draws nigh who shall save you”.

Ver. 29. *And he spake to them a parable*, etc.] That is, to his disciples:

behold the fig tree, and all the trees; that, or any other tree; (See Gill on “^{<4482>}Matthew 24:32”).

Ver. 30. *When they now shoot forth*, etc.] Their buds, branches, and leaves; the Vulgate Latin adds, “of themselves”:

ye see and know of your own selves; without any hint, or direction from others, the case is so plain and obvious; the Syriac and Arabic versions read, “of them”; the trees, by their putting forth their buds and leaves; the Persic and Ethiopic versions leave out the clause “of yourselves”; and none of the Oriental versions lead the word see:

the summer is now nigh at hand: (see ^{<4482>}Matthew 24:32).

Ver. 31. *So likewise when ye see these things come to pass*, etc.] The signs before mentioned, in (^{<4218>}Luke 21:8-11, 20,25,26).

Know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand: a more visible and glorious display of the kingdom of the Messiah, in the destruction of his enemies, the Jews; (see ^{<4001>}Mark 9:1).

Ver. 32. *Verily I say unto you, this generation*, etc.] (See Gill on “^{<4484>}Matthew 24:34”). (See Gill on “^{<4485>}Matthew 24:35”). All the Oriental versions read here as there, “all these things”; before related.

Ver. 33. (See Gill on “^{<4212>}Luke 21:32”).

Ver. 34. *And take heed to yourselves*, etc.] To your souls and bodies, to your lives and conversations; be upon your watch and guard:

lest your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness; with excessive eating and drinking; for these, as they oppress and burden the

stomach, and disorder the body, so they stupefy the senses, and make the mind dull and heavy, and unfit for spiritual and religious exercises; such as reading, meditation, and prayer:

and cares of this life; concealing food and clothing, what you shall eat or drink, or wherewith ye shall be clothed; all such anxious and worldly cares, being that to the soul, as intemperance is to the body; for there is such a thing as being inebriated with the world, as well as with wine:

and so that day come upon you unawares; the day of Jerusalem's destruction; and this suggests, that such would be the carnality and security of some persons, and so they would be surprised with ruin at once; (see ^{<21726>}Luke 17:26-30).

Ver. 35. *For as a snare shall it come*, etc.] In which a bird is suddenly taken, and cannot get out again; the Persic version renders it, “as lightning and the splendour of the sun”; which break out at once, and enlighten the whole earth; so the destruction of the Jewish nation should be sudden and unavoidable, and universal; for it should come

on all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth: or land of Judea; and so it was, for not only Jerusalem, but all Judea, and Galilee, suffered in this desolation.

Ver. 36. *Watch ye therefore, and pray always*, etc.] Watch against every sin, snare, and temptation; particularly, against the above things, surfeiting, drunkenness, and worldly cares; pray continually, for fresh supplies of grace:

that ye may be counted worthy; not for watchfulness and prayer, but through the grace and goodness of God:

to escape all these things that shall come to pass; the dreadful miseries and distress, that shall come upon the Jews:

and to stand before the Son of man; with intrepidity, confidence, and pleasure; and meet him at his coming in this way, with joy and comfort; and likewise at death, and at judgment; (see ^{<2128>}1 John 2:28).

Ver. 37. *And in the day time he was teaching in the temple*, etc.] That is, Jesus, as the Persic version expresses it; his constant method every day, till the feast of passover came, was to go up to the temple, and there openly

and freely preach the Gospel to the people, who resorted thither in great numbers, for that purpose:

and at night he went out; of the temple, and out of the city:

and abode in the mount that is called the Mount of Olives; very likely to pray, both for himself and for his disciples, his time with them being short.

Ver. 38. *And all the people came early in the morning*, etc.] Not all the people in Jerusalem, every inhabitant of the city; this word “all”, is often to be taken with a restriction, and here it designs a large number; the Persic version renders it, “vast multitudes”: these, some out of curiosity, and others from a real love to him, and his ministry, rose betimes, and came early,

to him in the temple, to hear him; which is said, in commendation of Christ's hearers, and is worthy of imitation; as the former verse is a commendation of the preacher, in his constancy and diligence in his work, and following it with his prayers.