

Times of the Gentiles, Part 1 - Understanding Jesus (Luke 21:20-24)^a

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Outline

1. Understanding Jesus^c
2. Mediatorial Kingdom^d
3. Failure of Davidic Rule^e
4. Babylon Past and Future^f
5. Presentation of The King^g

Passage: Luke 21:20-24

20 But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. 21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. 22 For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. 24 And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. (Luke 21:20-24)

What the NT reveals

1. **Parallel (synoptic) gospel passages concerning the fall of Jerusalem: Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21**
2. **All the passages have a *dual reference*: referring to both near-term (fall of Jerusalem to Rome in 70 AD) and far-future events (leading up to the Second Coming)**
3. **This passage in Luke concerns the near-term fall of Jerusalem**

Without OT, what would we assume?

1. **Jerusalem will be surrounded by armies - a sign that its desolation is near**
2. **Those in Judea are to flee to the mountains**
3. **Distress in the land, wrap upon *this people***
4. **They will fall by the edge of the sword**
5. **Let away captive into all nations (yet another diaspora)**

6. **Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles (ἔθνῶν [ethnōn] - ethnicities other than Jews) until . . .**

Jesus defines a specific period of time

1. **End-points**

- A. Begins with the fall of Jerusalem (or does it?)
- B. Ends when Gentiles no longer trample Jerusalem “underfoot”

2. **Implied characteristics of the time period**

- A. Gentiles will have dominance over Jerusalem in some sense
- B. A large number of Jews will be dispersed out of the land, residing among the nations

3. **An ongoing Jewish/Gentile distinction — *beyond the cross***

- A. If we only have the NT revelation—and conclude the period begins in 70 AD—then it would seem the present time is part of the “Times of the Gentiles”
- B. Our Lord Jesus is making a Jewish/Gentile distinction beyond the cross: beyond the close of the canon, all the way down to our own day—and beyond!

But is this all there is to understanding this enigmatic phrase from Jesus?

1. **Jesus doesn’t elaborate—we are left with sketchy details about what he means**

2. **As elsewhere in the NT, *Jesus assumes we have an understanding of God’s revelation leading up to this point in history***

- A. Jesus answered and said to [the religious leaders], “Have you not even read this Scripture: ‘The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.’” (Mark 12:10)
- B. Jesus answered a challenge from the Sadducees, “Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God?” (Mark 12:24)

The OT has much more information concerning this time period—and provides an important correction to what we might otherwise conclude from Luke’s passage alone: *the time period begins much earlier than the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD*

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Links Mentioned Above

a - See http://www.spiritandtruth.org/teaching/Times_of_the_Gentiles/001_Understanding_Jesus/index.htm.

b - See <http://www.spiritandtruth.org/id/tg.htm>.

c - See [../001_Understanding_Jesus/index.htm](http://www.spiritandtruth.org/001_Understanding_Jesus/index.htm).

d - See [../002_Mediatorial_Kingdom](http://www.spiritandtruth.org/002_Mediatorial_Kingdom).

e - See [../003_Failure_of_Davidic_Rule](http://www.spiritandtruth.org/003_Failure_of_Davidic_Rule).

f - See [../004_Babylon_Past_and_Future](http://www.spiritandtruth.org/004_Babylon_Past_and_Future).

g - See [../005_Presentation_of_the_King](http://www.spiritandtruth.org/005_Presentation_of_the_King).

h - See <http://www.spiritandtruth.org>.