

Luke 21:36

by Chuck Smith

Jesus teaches his disciples to watch and pray always, so they will be accounted worthy to escape the great tribulation and be standing before the Son of Man.

Scripture: Matthew 24:29, Luke 21:36

Topics: "End Times", "Prayer", "Watchfulness"

Description

Chuck Smith emphasizes the urgency of watching and praying as Jesus foretells the signs of His return and the destruction of the Temple. He explains that the disciples were concerned about the end times and the signs that would precede these events, which include wars, natural disasters, and societal turmoil. Smith encourages believers to pray for strength to escape the tribulations that will come and to be found worthy to stand before the Son of Man. He highlights the importance of being spiritually prepared and vigilant in the face of impending challenges. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a life of prayer and readiness for Christ's return.

Transcript

Watch and Pray

I. The background.

A. These are the last few days before Jesus is arrested and crucified.

1. He has been teaching daily in the Temple.

2. The rift between Jesus and the religious leaders has been growing.

3. The crowds are gathering early in the morning to hear Him.

B. One of the disciples were remarking on the huge stones that

were used in the construction of the Temple.

1. Jesus commented that not one of these stones would be left standing upon another.

2. When they arrived back at the Mount of Olives where they had been spending their nights, the disciples asked about the remarkable prediction.

3. They desired to know the signs that would precede the destruction of the Temple and the end of the world.

4.

They no doubt thought that the they would be synonymous events. Surely the Temple will stand till the end of the world.

C. In the answer of Jesus, He gave to them both the signs of the destruction of the Temple and the signs of the end of the world systems, which will take place when He comes again to establish the Kingdom of God upon the earth.

1. In the prophecy of Daniel the stone not cut with hands smites the image and grows into a mountain that covers the earth.

2. So in the reading the answer of Jesus to the question of the signs, you must distinguish between the signs of the destruction of the Temple, and the signs of the end of the age.

D. In telling them of the future, generally it is going to be quite bleak.

1.

There will be false messiahs, and fighting and

bickering among nations.

2. There will always be those men with lust for power who will gather their followings to seek to gain control over other men.

3. Men's attempt at governing over men will fail because of greed.

4. This does not signify the end.

E. But then there will be Nations rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. This seems to describe world wars, and this does constitute a sign that the end of the age is approaching.

1. This will be accompanied by great earthquakes in diverse places, famines, pestilences, and great signs from heaven.

2. The things that we are seeing now are only a precursor of things to come.

3.

These for the most part will be fulfilled during what is known as the great tribulation period.

F. This was the general overview, Jesus then goes back and fills in details of the signs that will precede the destruction of the Temple in verses 12-24 which will end with the Jews being led away captive and dispersed throughout the world, and Jerusalem being under Gentile control until the times of the Gentiles is fulfilled.

1. We know that in June of 1967, the Israeli troops regained control of the city of Jerusalem, and the

Gentile rule over the city ceased.

2. As I see it, that marks the time when the times of the Gentiles was fulfilled, and we are now in a short transition period before Jesus comes to establish the Kingdom of God.

II. The signs of His coming to set up God's Kingdom. A. Jesus speaks of signs in the sun, and moon, and stars. Matthew in recording the words of Jesus said that He told of sun being darkened and the moon not giving her light, and the stars would fall from heaven, and the powers of the heaven would be shaken. 1. The Spirit of God spoke through the prophet Joel saying, JOE 2:30 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. JOE 2:31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. 2.

The prophet Isaiah declared by the Holy Spirit, ISA 13:6 Howl ye; for the day of the LORD [is] at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. ISA 13:7 Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt: ISA 13:8 And they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces [shall be as] flames. ISA 13:9 Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.

ISA 13:10 For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. ISA 13:11 And I will punish the world for [their] evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. ISA 13:13 Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger. 1. John speaks of this in the book of Revelation.

REV 6:12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; REV 6:13 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. REV 6:14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. REV 6:15 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; REV 6:16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: REV 6:17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

B. While these things are going on in the heavens, Jesus said on the earth will be distress of nations with perplexity. 1. Another translation is national problems with no answers. a. What is the answer to the gang wars? b. What is the answer to the drug trafficking? c. What is the answer to runaway government spending? d. What is the answer to terrorism? 2. Men's hearts failing them for fear as they see all of these cataclysmic events. C. Immediately after these events they will see Jesus coming in the clouds with great glory. 1.

The clouds could be the saints that will be coming with Him. In the book of Hebrews it speaks of a great cloud of witnesses, in reference to the Old Testament saints. 2. Paul wrote to the Colossians declaring "And when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in Glory."

III. Jesus tells His disciples to watch and pray always.

A. What were they to pray for?

1. That they would be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass.

a. The these things that He is referring to must be the things of the great tribulation, the great cataclysmic events in heaven and the sufferings on the earth as God's wrath is being poured out.

b. I would suggest that you read Romans 1 beginning with verse 18 in this context, as he describes the reasons why God's wrath is going to poured out. The social conditions he described are exactly what we see today.

2. That we might be standing before the Son of Man.

a. In Revelation chapters 4 and 5 John is describing the heavenly scene, the throne of God surrounded by the Cherubim, and the 24 thrones of the elders.

b. He describes the worship that takes place.

c. He then speaks of the sealed scroll in the hand of the One sitting on the throne.

d. He tells of the call for anyone who is worthy to come and loose the seals on the scroll, and the unworthiness of any man any where to do so.

e. He then describes how that Jesus appearing as a lamb that been slaughtered steps forward takes the scroll and begins to loose the seals.

f. Simultaneously a great multitude in heaven breaks forth in song declaring, "Worthy is the Lamb to take the scroll and loose the seals, for He was slain and has redeemed us unto God by His blood out of every family, tongue, people and nation. A song only the church can sing.

C. As I understand it, when the judgment of God comes upon the earth, you will be either here on the earth facing this horrible period of God's wrath being outpoured on a Christ rejecting world, or you will be among that heavenly throng singing the praises of the Lamb. Jesus tells you to pray always that you will be in the heavenly throng. Believe me I am.

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