

# Day 157, Luke 21

by David Servant

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*God measures our sacrifices not by how much we give, but by what we still possess after giving, and Jesus' Olivet Discourse reveals signs of His return.*

**Topics:** "Sacrificial Giving", "End Times"

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## Description

David Servant emphasizes the significance of sacrificial giving, using the example of the widow's two small copper coins to illustrate that God values our sacrifices based on what we have left after giving. He challenges listeners to consider their own giving in light of their possessions and highlights that even those who give little can be considered great givers in God's eyes. The sermon delves into the disciples' questions about Jesus' return and the end of the age, exploring the challenges of interpreting the timeline of events and the signs preceding His return.

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## Transcript

The little story of the widow who gave her two small copper coins contains a big challenge to us. God measures our sacrifices, not by how much we give, but by how much we still possess after we have given. And by that measure, many who give very little are, in God's eyes, very big givers. That poor widow who gave her two copper coins gave her food money. She would find herself with much more treasure in heaven than all the rich folks who made much larger contributions. This is a truth worthy of our meditation.

Keep in mind, as I have told you in the past, if you make \$30,000 per year in 2009, you are in the top 7% of the world's wage earners. If you earn \$50,000 per year, you are in the top 1%. Most of us reading this are quite wealthy by the world's standards.

Both Matthew and Mark also recorded Jesus' Olivet discourse. Remember that, according to Matthew, the disciples' questions were not only about the temple's future destruction, but also about the signs of Jesus' coming and the end of the age (Matt. 24:3). They probably didn't imagine that those events would be separated by at least 2,000 years, and what Jesus said didn't help them to imagine such a scenario. In any case, part of what Jesus said in His response obviously applied to the events leading to the temple's destruction, and part of what He said obviously applied to the events leading to His return. The challenge is to sort all of that out (assuming that there is no overlap), and that challenge has given rise to varying interpretations.

In my humble opinion, Luke first focuses on Jesus' response to the disciples' question about the signs preceding His return and the end of the age (21:8-11). He then moves backward in time to focus on the more immediate future beginning in 21:12, starting with the words, "But before all these things..." He then proceeds to inform them of what they can expect over the next few decades. They would be persecuted and delivered to synagogues and prisons. Remember that before the close of Acts 6, all twelve apostles had spent a night in jail and stood trial before the Sanhedrin. Peter and John spent two nights in jail and had been on trial twice. In both cases, just as Jesus promised, the apostles received supernatural utterance and wisdom that none of their opponents could resist or refute (21:15).

Also just as Jesus promised, almost all of the twelve were martyred for their faith. In some cases, they were apparently betrayed by their own friends or families (21:16). All were hated during their ministries (21:17).

In verse 20, Jesus foretells of Jerusalem's siege and destruction. It was in A.D. 66 that Rome sent a general named Cestius to crush a Jewish revolt. He surrounded Jerusalem for six months of siege, and then withdrew for an unknown reason. After Cestius' withdrawal, all the believers, following Jesus' instructions we've just read, fled from Jerusalem and Judea. It was a brief window of opportunity to escape. When Jerusalem fell to Roman general Titus in A.D. 70, no one who obeyed Jesus' instructions in 21:21 perished in the ensuing holocaust, having been forewarned forty years before.

Once Jerusalem fell, just as Jesus foretold, the survivors were "led captive into all the nations" and Jerusalem has been "trampled under foot by the Gentiles" (21:24). Jesus said that would occur "until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" (21:24.) Although many consider Israel's 1947 statehood and its 1967 recapture of Jerusalem's old city as signs that the "times of the Gentiles" are now fulfilled, we should remember that there is still further Gentile trampling of Jerusalem to come when the anti-christ rises to power.

I am persuaded that beginning in 21:25, Jesus then began revealing signs that would occur prior to His return, which would all happen at an undetermined time after the fall of Jerusalem. And in my humble opinion, the generation that will see the "signs in the sun and moon and stars" (21:25) and so on, will see Jesus return (21:32).

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