

Sermon Study Guide

LUKE 21:7 | “WHY WHEN – UNDERSTANDING JESUS’ ANSWER BEGINS WITH APPRECIATING THE DISCIPLES’ QUESTION”



THE SETTING (LUKE 21:5-6)

The disciples admire the temple.

Jesus responds: “*Not one stone will be left upon another.*”

WHY THIS WAS SHOCKING

- God's glory filled the tabernacle, then Solomon's temple — that presence was what made it the temple.
- God's glory departed before the exile. The rebuilt temple was never said to be filled again.
- When Jesus enters the temple, God's glory has returned — and the leaders reject him.

They wanted the building, but not God.



THE WALK TO THE MOUNT OF OLIVES:

Matthew tells us the questions come roughly a mile from Jesus' prediction — the disciples spent that walk processing.

WHY THE MOUNT OF OLIVES MATTERS

- David fled over it when betrayed by Absalom — a low point for Israel's king.
- Zechariah 14 — the place where God comes to establish his kingdom.
- The Triumphal Entry — the disciples had already connected this mountain with messianic expectation.



THE QUESTIONS

LUKE 21:7, MATTHEW 24:3

THEY DID NOT ASK

- Why is this happening?
- How do we stop it?
- What do we do?

THEY ASKED

- When will these things be?
- What will be the sign?
- What will be the sign of your coming?
- What will be the sign of the close of the age?

The disciples heard the destruction of the temple not as the end, but as the beginning of a sequence — one that leads somewhere they were hoping for.

To understand Jesus' answer in verses 8–36, we need to understand the three assumptions behind their questions...



THREE ASSUMPTIONS BEHIND THEIR QUESTIONS:

1

GOD HAS A PLAN FOR ISRAEL

History is not circular — random events repeating with no destination. It is a line, moving toward a divinely determined goal.

Key Texts

- Isaiah 46:9-10 – *God declares the end from the beginning. His counsel stands; his purpose will be accomplished.*
- Daniel 4:34-35 – *Nebuchadnezzar: God does according to his will; none can stop his hand.*

Old Testament Pattern:

- Again and again: Israel falls, is judged, appears finished.
- Again and again: God restores, keeping every promise.

This is why the disciples were not hopeless. They had the whole Old Testament behind them.

2

JESUS KNOWS — AND FULFILLS — THAT PLAN

Jesus as Prophet

The disciples believe Jesus has special access to God's purposes. He has been speaking as one sent by God throughout Luke.

Jesus as Messiah — the Son of David

- 2 Samuel 7 *God promises David a son whose kingdom will be established forever.*
- Jeremiah 23:5–6 *A righteous branch will reign as king; in his day Judah will be saved and Israel will dwell securely.*

Jesus as the Son of Man

- Daniel 7:13–14 *One like a son of man comes with the clouds and receives an everlasting dominion over all peoples and nations.*

Every Jewish person who knew Scripture would have heard that title and thought of Daniel 7. The disciples believed Jesus was that figure — not just a player in God's plan, but the key to it.

3

THE DAY OF THE LORD IS COMING

The disciples expected a coming day when God would visibly step into history and change everything.

What That Day Includes

- God judges evil — including unfaithful Israel, not only the nations.
- God defeats every enemy and removes every threat to his people.
- God restores and regathers Israel.
- God establishes his kingdom on earth.

Key Texts

- Isaiah 2:12; 13:9–10 *The Lord has a day against all that is proud. The day comes with wrath and fierce anger.*
- Amos 5:18–19; 9:11–15 *It is a day of judgment — even for Israel. But after judgment, God raises up the fallen booth of David and restores his people.*
- Zephaniah 3:20 *At that time God will gather Israel and restore her fortunes before the eyes of all peoples.*
- Jeremiah 32:37–42 *God will regather Israel, give them one heart, make an everlasting covenant, and do them good with all his heart.*

The disciples were not asking, “Is it over?” They were asking, “When does the next thing happen?” — because they believed the destruction of the temple was the beginning of the sequence that leads to all of this.



THE BIG IDEA: *Knowing where history is headed gives us strength to face the present.*

NOTES: