

“Lift Up Your Heads”
(Because Your Redemption Draws Near)
Luke 21:20-38
4/5/20
Message 58

Introduction

- Title of the Message is: “Time To Wake Up”

- **When is Jesus Coming Back**

- **I can predict the exact date that Jesus will return in His Second Coming!**
 - Are you READY?...
 - It's Simple
 - What we will do is use the **Fig Tree** v. 29 and **Generation** v.32
 - The Fig Tree
 - Represents the nation of Israel
 - Which “budded” when Israel became a nation again, on May 14, 1948
 - A Generation
 - Biblical is 40 years
 - So You add 40 years to 1948 =
 - That tells you Jesus will return before the end of 1988!
- **It sounds silly now...**
 - Some guy wrote a pamphlet called 88 Reasons for the Rapture in 1988
 - It was all the rage among Christians in the late 1970's, right up until New Year's Day 1989
 - BUT Even then, some people wouldn't throw in the towel
 - Then he revised it in 89, 93 and 94

- **Jesus DID NOT tell us to make predictions**

- **NOW Why do we study Prophecy**

- **Simple**

- Jesus told us what would happen in the future
- SHOULD HAVE a Profound IMPACT on our daily living.
- Keep us on the right course

- **Sadly a lot of Christians are NOT interested in Bible prophecy**

- Here are some of the reasons

- **1st They refer to it as Dome and Glume**

- It's Negative

- **2nd Prediction that have NOT come TRUE**

- So many just don't want to touch the subject because of all the nuts out there making **wrong predictions**

- **3rd Still others have grown WEARY waiting for the Lord to come**

- They have been saying that for over 2000 years and YET He has not come...
- Peter has something to say about that...

- **Whatever the REASONS are for NOT Studying Prophecy**

- It has believers looking at the WORLD
- Rather than LOOKING UP to Heaven
- As we work through this text
 - Jesus calls upon us to **lift up [our] heads** and regain our passion for His return

Luke 21:28 (NKJV)

28 *Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."*

- **Review Last week: "Signs Of The End" Luke 21:5-19**

- We saw admiration of the great Temple (stones)
- Jesus said, not one stone would be left standing on the Temple Mount.

- When asked when this would happen
 - False Messiahs (vs.8)
 - Wars (vs.9)
 - Earthquakes (vs.11)
 - Famine (vs. 11)
 - Disease (vs.11)
 - Persecution (vs.12)
 - Jerusalem surrounded by armies (vs.20)
 - Signs in the heavens (vs.25)
 - **Fear (vs.26)**
- **We Also NOTED**
 - It's not unusual for prophecies in Scripture to have **double fulfillments**.
 - We see this in Luke 21
 - Near Future
 - Distant Future

• **3 Main Points**

- The Ruin Of Jerusalem vs. 20-24
- The Return Of Jesus Christ vs. 25-27
- The Response Of Believers vs. 28-36

The Ruin Of Jerusalem vs. 20-24

• **First: Jerusalem Surrounded by Armies v. 21**

Luke 21:20 (NKJV)

20 *"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.*

- **Both Near and Distant Future**
- **1st Near**
 - **He described the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70AD.**
 - He was looking forward about 40 years
 - We are looking back on it, knowing that His words were exactly fulfilled
 - The War Started IN 60AD
 - Destruction Occurred 70AD

- **Second: A WARNING to Flee**

Luke 21:21 (NKJV)

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.*

- **The Warning**

- Jesus said, When you see that...get out of there
- These are the days of terrible destruction that was predicted in OT prophecy

- This is one of those prophecies that has two fulfillments

- **1st Past**

- **Sadly the Jewish People didn't heed the Warning**

- When Rome laid siege to Jerusalem in AD 70
- The Romans were very shrewd to attack Israel at Passover
- They waited until Passover
- They knew the Jews would be coming back to Jerusalem
- Sure Enough they did
 - The normal population of 250,000 – 300,000
 - It would swell to 3 million or more at Passover because every Jewish male 20 years old and above must come
 - In spite of this warning from Jesus, thousands flooded into the city during Passover
 - Their belief...that God would protect them and so they didn't need to worry

- **What happened to the Jews still in Jerusalem?**

- In those days, if you were attacked by an invading army, you would run into the city to be protected by the city walls
- Safe inside, you would outlast the besieging army

- So What happened (Jewish historian Josephus)
 - A group of 1,000 fled to Masada where they held out against the Romans for 3 years before they all committed suicide to keep from being captured and turned into slaves.
 - Rome took Almost 100,000 Jews captive
 - Either to be sold in Egypt
 - Or to be used as sport for the lions in the amphitheaters
 - Over 1.1 Million were killed

- **Christians Fled**

- Eu-see-bi-us tells us that Christians fled to Pella.
 - *Eusebius, writing in the 4th century, recorded that before the siege of Jerusalem took place, the church in Jerusalem received a prophecy that they were to flee the city, and they moved as a group to the city of Pella, just across the Jordan, south of the Sea of Galilee. (History of the Church, 3.5.3, cited in Morris)*

- **2nd Future**

- When Jerusalem is “surrounded” in the Tribulation period, the Jews will flee

Matthew 24:15–16 (NKJV)

15 “Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand),
16 “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

- **Abomination of Desolation (Antichrist claiming to be “god”)**

- Daniel 9:27 / 2 Thessalonians 2:4
- RUN
- Don’t look back
- Get OUT of Dodge

- **Some Believe they will Flee to Petra**

- Sighting (Is. 16:1-4)

- Some think that one of the places in the "mountains" where the Jews in the Tribulation will flee to is the ancient city of Petra.

• **Third: Judgment v. 22**

Luke 21:22 (NKJV)

22 *For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.*

- **1st Judgment Deserved**
 - Vengeance Means
 - The Deserved Penalty
 - Israel had sinned...
 - The Rejected their Messiah
 - God had warned the Jews that if they did not repent
 - He must discipline them
- **2nd The days of vengeance are prophesied in the Bible**
 - In Deuteronomy 32...in Moses' song to Israel at the close of his life
 - He's on Mt. Nebo on east Jordan...
 - seeing the land of Israel but knowing that he could not go in due to God's judgment on him for his sin in the wilderness
 - Moses wrote (Deuteronomy)...
 - And in there he had a song in which he predicted the future of Israel...
 - He predicted the days of vengeance

• **Fourth: Warning To Moms v. 23**

Luke 21:23 (NKJV)

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.*

- **1st Why Mention Pregnant Women and Nursing Mothers?**
 - I believe we see here the Mercy and Compassion of the Lord

- He did not want to discipline them; but the nation left Him no options
- So He warned the weak to flee
- **2nd Horrific what took place**
 - It was SO BAD we can't talk about in a family setting
 - During that siege things got very barbaric in the city
 - They became so hungry they ate the babies and placenta
 - Deuteronomy 28:49-58

• **Fifth: Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles v. 24**

Luke 21:24 (NKJV)

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.*

- **1st Israel Destruction v. 24a**
 - *24a And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations.*
 - They Will Fall
 - Led Captive
 - This HAS ALL been Fulfilled
- **2nd Times of the Gentiles v. 24b**
 - *Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.*
 - What is the TIMES of the Gentiles
 - This is the time **between** the **Destruction of Jerusalem until the days of the Second Coming**
 - The destruction of Jerusalem
 - Would usher in a period of time on earth known as the “times of the Gentiles”
 - That Jerusalem will be under Gentile control until these times are “fulfilled”.

- **Prophesied In Daniel (Daniel 9)**

- **70 Weeks are determined for Israel**

- Daniel said that after **69** of these “weeks”,
- The Messiah would be “cut off”.
- Crucified for our sins

- **Because they rejected their Messiah**

- They would be judge

- **There is Still ONE more week left**

- The 70th week
- God’s Time Clock for Israel stopped one week short.
- We are now in the Period known as the “times of the Gentiles”.

- **Time Of the Gentile is Finished**

- The LAST Gentile gets saved
- The Rapture will occur
- Then the LAST week will Take place
- His time clock will start again with Israel
- That last “week” is what we refer to as the Great Tribulation.
- Known as Jacob’s Trouble
- Paul talked about the “fullness” of the Gentiles in another way:

Romans 11:25–26 (NKJV)

25 *For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.*

26 *And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;*

- **3rd History of the Time Of the Gentiles**

- This verse accurately predicted the history of Israel for the past 2000 years!

- Roman rule continued until 324AD
- Byzantine Empire controlled Jerusalem until 614
- The Persians governed briefly until 629.
- In 638 Muslim Arabs conquered the Holy City.
 - (The Ummayyads, ruling from Damascus, built the Dome of the Rock mosque on what was believed to be the site of the Jewish Temple, completing it in 691)
- The Abbasid Arabs took over in 750
 - (Their capital was Baghdad)
- The Egyptians imposed their rule in 878.
- The Crusaders, thinking they were acting in the name of Yeshua, came to the Holy Land in **1096** “to reclaim it from the infidels.”
 - (In 1099 they not only defeated the Muslims but massacred all the Jews they could find.)
- The Crusaders in turn were driven out in **1187** by the Kurdish Ayyubid leader Saladin
- Battles between Crusaders and Muslim Arabs continued until **1244**
- With dominion being established by the Egyptian Mamluks in **1250**.
- Suleiman the Great displaced them in 1517, and his Ottoman Turks held sway in the Holy Land for 400 years.
- They were defeated by Britain’s General Allenby in World War I.
 - (The British Mandate given by the League of Nations lasted until 1948, when, in the wake of the Nazi Holocaust, the world’s conscience was momentarily pricked enough to permit the State of Israel to be established by a just over 2/3 vote of the United Nations General Assembly)
- The U. N. plan of 1947 Jerusalem was to have been an internationalized city, but when 5 Arab countries attacked Israel within hours of her independence she fought back and conquered the western, more modern part of Jerusalem.

- (Nevertheless the Old City of Jerusalem, the portion the present verse speaks about, which includes the Temple site, was occupied by Jordan until the 6-Day War)
- On June 8, 1967, the Israeli army entered the Old City and converged on the Western/Wailing Wall, liberating Jerusalem at last.
- Then the gov. of Israel granted management of the Temple site to a Muslim Council.
- Today the Muslim Council still controls the Temple Mount.
- As far as God is concerned, the most important piece of real estate in Jerusalem - and prophetically speaking, the most important in the world - is still trampled by Gentiles
- So I believe that this time continues until Jesus returns

The Return Of Jesus Christ vs. 25-27

Luke 21:25–26 (NKJV)

25 *“And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, **with perplexity**, the sea and the waves roaring;*

26 *men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.*

• **First: Tribulation Period**

- Jesus looks much further in history – past our own day to the final time of God’s judgment on the earth, a time we call the Great Tribulation
- These are real events in the earth and around the earth, in its atmosphere
- They have not yet occurred; but they will occur during the last seven years before the Lord returns in His Second Coming
- They are described in specific detail in the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ

• **Second: Second Coming**

- Luke 21:27 Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.
 - This is the return of Jesus to take over the earth.
 - He will return and establish the kingdom of God on the earth – a time period we are told elsewhere will last for 1000 years
- The Lord wasn’t telling His disciples all these things just to satisfy their curiosity

- His overview of prophecy had a practical purpose...Here it is: The Response Of Believers

The Response Of Believers vs. 28-36

• **First: These Things / Redemption v. 28**

Luke 21:28 (NKJV)

28 *Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."*

- **1st When you see these things happening**
 - What are the "signs" that show this?
 - Jesus has been talking about them since verse 8:
 - False Messiahs (vs.8)
 - Wars (vs.9)
 - Earthquakes (vs.11)
 - Famine (vs. 11)
 - Disease (vs.11)
 - Persecution (vs.12)
 - Jerusalem surrounded by armies (vs.20)
 - Signs in the heavens (vs.25)
 - Fear (vs.26)
- **2nd Redemption**
 - **Redeem, or Redemption**
 - Refers to purchasing back something that was lost or sold
 - In this context
 - The earth and the human race were lost in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve sinned
 - Our parents sold us all into slavery to Satan
 - **Jesus, on the Cross, paid the price required for redemption**
 - He now owns the earth and all that is in it
 - But He has not finalized the transaction
 - It's like a landlord who has a tenant that needs evicting

- Jesus is the Landlord; the devil needs evicting
- The Lord will evict him during the Great Tribulation
- Then return to rule the earth He's purchased back with His blood
- **3rd LOOK UP**
 - He is Coming Soon
 - Stay Awake
 - Be Encouraged

• **Second: The Kingdom is Near vs. 29-31**

Luke 21:29–31 (NKJV)

29 Then He spoke to them a parable: *"Look at the fig tree, and all the trees.*

30 *When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near.*

31 *So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near.*

- **1st What Some Bible teachers Believe**
 - In the Bible, the fig tree often is a symbol for the nation of Israel
 - A lot of Bible teachers assumed the budding of the fig tree meant the return of Israel to her land in 1948
 - As remarkable a fulfillment of prophecy Israel's return was, that is not the budding of the fig tree
- **2nd Notice Jesus said, Look at the fig tree, AND ALL THE TREES**
 - He was using the budding of trees as a general illustration
 - Without any direct reference to the return of the nation of Israel
 - Simply put, He was saying that when leaves sprout on a tree,
 - You know that something else is right around the corner – the fruit is going to appear
 - In the context of our verses,
 - When you see the signs Jesus mentioned in verses 25 and 26, then verse 27 is right around the corner!

- The Lord will return to establish the kingdom on earth

• **Third: That Generation Will Not Pass Away v. 32**

Luke 21:32 (NKJV)

32 *Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place.*

- **1st There are dozens and dozens – of interpretations for the use of the word generation**
 - Here are 2 simple meanings that fit the context
 - **1st Generation refers to the People Alive at the time these signs occur.**
 - It's a promise that, even though it will seem like the end of the world, and the extinction of humanity, the events unfolding for those seven years of the Great Tribulation are under God's control and will lead to the glorious return of Jesus to make the earth both right and righteous.
 - **2nd Generation is that it refers to the Nation of Israel as a particular ethnic group within the human race.**
 - If that is the case, it's a promise that, even though nations try to exterminate the Jews, God will keep them alive and fulfill His promises to them.
 - Especially in the last 3½ years of the Great Tribulation, the devil will be making every effort to kill every last Jew.
 - But God will miraculously preserve a remnant who will recognize Jesus as their Lord at His return

• **Fourth: His Word Will NEVER pass Away v. 33**

Luke 21:33 (NKJV)

33 *Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.*

- Why say this? As always, there are many possible reasons
- **1st Judgment Is Coming**
 - NO MATTER what man Does to TRY and STOP it THEY CANT
 - Judgment is COMING
- **2nd To Keep Us Focused / Comfort us**

- Jesus told us to lift up [our] heads because [our] redemption draws near
- Instead of growing discouraged because the Lord hasn't yet returned for us, we ought to be encouraged that, every minute, His coming is nearer!
- We do not want to fall into the trap of looking around at the world and making ourselves more comfortable in it – thinking the Lord has delayed His coming.
- 2 Ways to continue to Lift Up our Heads
 - **1st By continuing to emphasize Bible prophecy**
 - Encourage Each Other that Christ is indeed Coming Soon
 - **2nd We lift up [our] heads by remembering the reason Jesus has not yet returned.**
 - It's because God is longsuffering...
 - Not willing that sinners should perish in the Great Tribulation or for eternity.
 - It's by praying for, then sharing with, unbelieving family, friends, neighbors, and strangers.
 - So Lift up our heads and get to work 😊

• **Fifth: Take Heed vs. 34-35**

- How Then SHOULD WE LIVE

Luke 21:34–35 (NKJV)

- 34** *"But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly.*
- 35** *For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth.*

- Jesus mentioned two categories of sin: Carousing and cares.
- **1st Carousing:**
 - Jesus mentioned Carousing and Drunkenness together
 - Carousing
 - Literally refers to the hangover that comes after a time of intoxication
 - Drunkenness

- Refers, of course, to being drunk
- Means...
 - Unprepared
 - Weighed down
- **2nd Cares**
 - This is worry and anxiety about daily life
 - He put it on an equal par with carousing
 - Fear, stress, worry, and anxiety are just as damaging to your spiritual heart as carousings we normally consider sin
 - Means:
 - Unprepared
 - Weighed down
- **3rd Snares**
 - A snare – and emphasized the importance of readiness.
 - This is because the second coming of Jesus has 2 distinct aspects, separated by an considerable time.
 - The first
 - Comes suddenly, unexpectedly, as a snare, in a time of peace and safety.
 - The second
 - Comes with great anticipation to a world almost destroyed by the judgment of God, with Jesus coming to the earth with His people from heaven.

• **Sixth: Watch v. 36**

Luke 21:36 (NKJV)

36 *Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."*

- **1st Watch & Pray**

- This is what we're supposed to do.
- While we are watching, we should be "praying"
- Watch refers to your overall occupation, that of a watchman
- ARE WE WATCHING AND PRAYING?
 - I would Add Working (About Our Fathers Business)
- **2nd Worthy to Escape**
 - Pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape those things that will come to pass:
 - Jesus told His followers to pray always, that they may be found worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass.
 - The good news in Jesus is that we don't have to go through this calamity that is coming.
 - He will take as many as are ready before this calamity begins.

• **Seventh: The public nature of Jesus' ministry vs. 37-38**

Luke 21:37–38 (NKJV)

37 *And in the daytime He was teaching in the temple, but at night He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet.*

38 *Then early in the morning all the people came to Him in the temple to hear Him.*

- **In the daytime He was teaching in the temple:**
 - Jesus did not hide in these few days before His betrayal, arrest, and crucifixion.
- **At night He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet:**
 - Like many Galileans who came to Jerusalem for Passover, Jesus essentially camped out on Mount Olivet in the days leading up to Passover.

Closing

- So... ARE WE
 - AWAKE and READY for His return
 - Lift Up Your Heads / Your Redemption is NEAR

- Be Encouraged

Communion

- Vic