

**Luke**  
**See Jesus**  
**What to Expect Until He Returns**  
**Luke 21:5-24**

(Synoptic passages: Matt. 24:1-28; Mark 13:1-23)  
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The Old Testament prophets, as well as Jesus Himself, right here in this chapter will mix immediate, close-at-hand events with long-range, way-out-there, end-of-the-world stuff.

If you want to understand a passage like Luke 21, you've got to be wearing your "spiritual bifocals" to help you see what's right here, up close, and also what's out there in the distance.

Jesus highlights three things you should expect to see happening more and more until He comes: deception, disaster, and persecution.

**I. Don't Be Fooled by False Teachers**

**Luke 21:8** "And He said, 'See that you are not led astray. For many will come in My name, saying "I am He!" and, "The time is at hand!" Do not go after them.'"

He tells them clearly that the end is not going to come as soon as they think.

**Luke 21:9** "...but the end will not be at once."

Even as you see an increase in disasters, wars, and persecution, don't make the mistake of thinking, "It's happening now!"

Notice this also from verse 8: "For many will come..."

The historian, Josephus, said that during the time of Felix, who interacted with the Apostle Paul in the book of Acts, there were so many people claiming to be Jesus Christ who had returned to earth that they were "...apprehended and killed every day."

As soon as Christ ascended back to heaven, they started to show up. It's not just people claiming to be Christ; it's people promoting a twisted version of Christianity and the Gospel.

**2 Timothy 3:1, 5, 7, 13** "But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty...<sup>5</sup> [people] having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power...<sup>7</sup> always learning and never able to arrive at the knowledge of the truth...<sup>13</sup> while evil people and imposters will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived."

**II. Don't Be Terrified by Calamities**

**Luke 21:9** "And when you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified, for these things must first take place..."

We see this all around us in our world today. As soon as one war settles down, another erupts.

The word "tumult" is the Greek word "akatastasia" which means a time of instability that's filled with commotion, confusion, disorder, anarchy, and opposition to any established authority.

**Luke 21:9** "...do not be terrified, for these things must first take place..."

What's comforting is that He said it was going to happen. This is not random! He said it *has* to happen and when it does, it is moving us closer to His return!

### III. Don't Be Surprised by Persecution

**Luke 21:12** "But before all this they will lay their hands on you and persecute you..."

**Luke 21:13** "This will be your opportunity to bear witness."

**Luke 21:14-15** "Settle it therefore in your minds not to meditate beforehand how to answer, <sup>15</sup>for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict."

### IV. Don't Be Confused about What Real Safety Looks Like

**Luke 21:16-18** "...and some of you they will put to death. <sup>17</sup>You will be hated by all for My name's sake. <sup>18</sup>But not a hair of your head will perish."

Verse 16 is talking about death in a physical sense and verse 18 is talking about spiritual life.

**John 10:28** "I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand."

"God is God. If He is God, He is worthy of my worship and my service. I will find rest nowhere but in His will, and that will is infinitely, immeasurably, unspeakably beyond my largest notion of what He is up to...God is the God of human history, and He is at work continuously, mysteriously, accomplishing His eternal purposes in us, through us, for us, and in spite of us..."

For us widows the question as to why the men who had trusted God...should be allowed to be speared to death was not one that could be smoothly or finally answered in 1956, nor yet silenced in 1996 [the year she was writing this]. God did not answer Job's questions either. Job was living in a mystery – the mystery of the sovereign purpose of God."

~ Elisabeth Elliot, *Through the Gates of Splendor*

"They were speared to death in the midst of obeying God. So, what does that do to your faith? Does it demolish it? A faith that disintegrates is a faith that was not resting in God Himself. You were believing in something less than ultimate. You were believing in your own, neat little program of how things are supposed to work. It's just a projection of yourself."

~ Elisabeth Elliot, at a 1976 conference

**See also Hebrews 11:33-39** for a great chapter of people exercising faith in God.

**See Revelation 19:6-9, 11-16** for the contrast between what will happen to believers and unbelievers on that final day!

Believers will experience the massive celebration of a wedding.

Unbelievers will face the horrible devastation of His judgment.