



### Luke 21:5-19

**5** When some were talking about the Temple, remarking how it was adorned with fine stonework and votive offerings, Jesus said, **6** 'All these things you are staring at now - the time will come when not a single stone will be left on another: everything will be destroyed.' **7** And they put to him this question: 'Master,' they said, 'when will this happen, then, and what sign will there be that this is about to take place?'

**8** 'Take care not to be deceived,' he said, 'because many will come using my name and saying, "I am he" and "The time is near at hand." Refuse to join them. **9** And when you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened, for this is something that must happen but the end is not so soon.' **10** Then he said to them, 'Nation will fight against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. **11** There will be great earthquakes and plagues and famines here and there; there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.

**12** 'But before all this happens, men will seize you and persecute you; they will hand you over to the synagogues and to imprisonment, and bring you before kings and governors because of my name **13** - and that will be your opportunity to bear witness. **14** Keep this carefully in mind: you are not to prepare your defence, **15** because I myself shall give you an eloquence and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to resist or contradict. **16** You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relations and friends; and some of you will be put to death. **17** You will be hated by all men on account of my name, **18** but not a hair of your head will be lost. **19** Your endurance will win you your lives.'

Other readings: Malachi 3:19-20 Psalm 97 (98) 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12

Each of the synoptic gospels (Mark, Matthew and Luke) contains a report of the words of Jesus about the future and the end of the world. These words are pronounced by Jesus in Jerusalem shortly before his passion and death. The location is in the vicinity of the temple, and Jesus announces that one day it will be destroyed.

This topic leads into broader teachings about trust in God in the midst of disasters and persecutions. Christians are not to waste time calculating when the end will come. They are not to allow themselves to be misled by false prophets and false messiahs. Above all, they are to trust in the provident care of God, who will give them eloquence and wisdom to defend themselves and preach the truth. 'Your endurance will win you your lives.'

*Am I fearful about the future or do I trust in the providence of God?*

*Do I waste my energy calculating how to reach salvation?*

*We pray for all victims of natural disasters and religious persecution.*

*We pray for the gift of patient endurance.*