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Audience - Were the disciples asking what signs they should expect to see before the temple fell, or what signs to look for 2000 years later in a Facebook comment thread? (Luke 21:7)



By Dan Maines

Were the disciples asking what signs they should expect to see before the temple fell, or what signs to look for 2000 years later in a Facebook comment thread? (Luke 21:7)

The disciples were not concerned with events 2000 years later, but with what Jesus had just told them about the temple's coming destruction. Luke 21:7 records them asking, "Teacher, when therefore will these things happen? And what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?" Their entire question is anchored to His prophecy in verse 6 that not one

stone of the temple would be left upon another.

This was not curiosity about the end of the physical universe, nor about events far removed from their lives. It was a direct question about their own lifetime, because the temple represented the heart of their covenant world. When Jesus said it would fall, they immediately wanted to know when and what signs would warn them.

Jesus answered them with signs that matched the events of the Jewish-Roman war: false messiahs, wars and disturbances, Jerusalem surrounded by armies, and the urgent command to flee to the mountains (Luke 21:20-21). These were all things His disciples could see with their own eyes.

If we stretch their question into our time, we miss the urgency Jesus pressed on His audience. He tied it all to "this generation" (Luke 21:32), proving the focus was first century fulfillment. The disciples were not waiting for Facebook notifications 2000 years later, they were watching for real events that would mark the end of the Old Covenant age and the judgment on Jerusalem.

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