

The disciples are in awe of the incredible buildings they are seeing all around them. The size of the stones that were used to create these amazing buildings leaves them simply amazed. I grew up on the farm. One of the biggest buildings I saw with any frequency was the barn. I can remember the first time I saw the school building in my town. It amazed me. And then I went to the cities at some point. I didn't voice any of my amazement I'm sure...I was extremely shy back then...but I remember being shocked at the size of the Target store I went into. I understand the disciples amazement at the size of the buildings.

I didn't see exactly what the disciples saw, but I can imagine the disciples stirring emotions when they hear that Jesus says no a single one of these incredibly large stones will be left upon each other, that all will be thrown down. I suspect we'd want to know, too, about when this is going to happen. We don't want to be anywhere near this immense building when this begins.

This is apocalyptic literature. Our first lesson is also apocalyptic literature. Probably the most well known of all apocalyptic literature is Revelation. Lot's of fictional literature has come out of apocalyptic literature, and much of this fictional stuff leans heavily upon fear and devastation of earth and it's inhabitants. I don't know why that is done, because apocalyptic literature is meant to speak words of encouragement to people in the midst of troubled times. In the case of the disciples, they know that Rome has invaded and that life as it used to be, is gone. The temple is no longer a temple of the Jewish God, but has begun to see Roman statues all over. And then Jesus says the temple will be torn down and not one stone will be left on another.

Jesus tells them that there will be people trying to tell them things that just aren't true at all. Some people will claim to have the answers and some will even come in Jesus' name to convince people to do as they say. There's going to be wars and there's going to be natural disasters. To this, we might want to add that there will be pandemics, social unrest, and overwhelming injustices.

Help us God. As the disciples were afraid during their times after seeing all the signs that were happening all around them, so we are also seeing so much stuff that is happening all around us. Yes, there are buildings around the world that are being toppled, but it's more than that, isn't. So many of the things that we have held as important in our lives for so many years are being challenged. Political documents that have been so much a part of our lives are being challenged. Religion is not what is important in so many peoples live now. Mental illnesses are on the rise. The pandemic is still lingering on. Yes, like the disciples, we want to know what's going on and how is this all going to end.

Then Jesus says: "This is but the beginning of the birth pangs." When I hear these words, I automatically hear something wonderful. I can't imagine what the birthpangs are like, but I know they aren't fun: it's like what we are going through right now. But I am a parent, I know that when the birthpangs are over, there is the most wonderful thing—a child. God was in this whole mess: through it all, God was doing something. It reminds again and again of the words of Isaiah 43:19: "I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" In the midst of all your troubles, are you perceiving that God is doing something?

It's hard to find God in the troubles of our lives once in a while. I know that. But when I struggle to find God, I take some time out and rest in His presence. One of the things that can be done is this: Close your eyes. Now slowly, recite Psalm 46:10: Be Still and Know that I Am God. ... Be Still and Know that I Am. ... Be Still and Know. ... Be Still. ... Be.

Keep your eyes closed and just be. Check your breathing...is there tension? Check your body—is there tension? Relax. Let yourself just fall into God's loving embrace. In all of the troubles that are around you, this time is for you to rest into God's loving embrace and know that He is doing something new. No need to fear. God is in control. He is doing something new. It's okay if you don't know what that looks like, but know that it's going to be okay because God loves you. Rest in His. Relax fully into His loving embrace.

Normally, I would sit there for 10 – 20 minutes. We won't do that today, so I am going to ask you to wiggle your toes and fingers. Slowly open your eyes. Good morning.

Be Still and Know that I Am God

Be Still and Know that I Am

Be Still and Know

Be Still

Be

Amen