

Matthew 24:3-14 Signs of His Coming and the End of the Age

Introduction: The disciples had come to Jesus asking: (1) When shall these things be (2) what shall be the sign of thy coming (3) and of the end of the world?

I. A review of the signs of the destruction of the temple.

- A. Jesus gave ten signs which would indicate the coming of the destruction of the temple.
- B. Five were external. (They could be seen in the world outside of Christianity.) verses 4-7.
- C. Five were internal. (They could be seen within Christianity.) verses 9-14.
- D. No single sign was fulfilled by a single event. (For example, after one false Christ it could not be said, "This sign is fulfilled." Others must come. Each sign had a small beginning and intensified as time went by.
- E. At no point of time could it be said, "All the signs are fulfilled and so the destruction of the temple is immediate."
 1. There might be other false Christs, wars and rumors of wars, etc.
 2. Thus no definite time for the destruction of the temple could be set.
 3. The closest thing to setting a time was the preaching of the gospel in all the world, (verse 14), but even that was not definite. (It might be preached to a few more people and cities.)
 4. The best thing the signs could do was to say, "It is near."
- F. Also, as the fulfillment of the signs became more intensified, one could know "it is very near."

II. A review of the questions.

- A. We know what the disciples meant by the first question. (They meant "When will the temple be destroyed?")
- B. We may assume too quickly that we know what they meant by the second question.
 1. We usually think in terms of the second coming to earth because we know He has gone away.
 2. They did not know He was going away; they did not even understand that He was going to be crucified.
 3. When He was crucified, they did not expect Him to arise on the third day.
 4. They expected that some way some how He was about to come into power and establish His throne, Matthew 18:1; 20:21.
- C. What they were really asking was, "When are you going to establish your throne?"
- D. The last question was, "What shall be the sign of the end of the world?"
 1. The word translated "world" means "age".
 2. Thus they were asking, "When will the Gentile age end?"
- E. The last two questions blend into one: "What will be the sign of your coming to power and the end of Gentile rule?"

III. A peculiarity about the answer.

- A. Jesus did not specify which part of His answer applied to which question.
- B. Rather He just started naming off the signs as though they answered all of the questions. (Which they do.)
- C. The same five external signs which in the days of the apostles signaled the nearness of the destruction of the temple, when seen today signal a nearness to the second coming of Jesus. (False Christs, wars and rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes.)
- D. The same five internal signs which in that day signaled a nearness to the destruction of the temple, in our day signals a nearness to the coming of Christ to power and the end of the Gentile age. (Renouncing Christianity, persecutions, false prophets, Christian love waxing cold, and the gospel preached in all the world.)
- E. Those disciples did not understand that Jesus would be gone for near 2000 years, but Jesus did.

IV. The signs as they relate to the return of Jesus to earth.

A. #1: False Christs.

1. Not that they claim to be Jesus, but the Christ. (God in flesh.)
2. Father Divine, the Indian Guru, Jim Jones, Moon, and many others.
(One black man from Longview.)

B. #2: Wars and rumors of wars.

1. In my lifetime there have been five major wars plus many others.
2. The middle east constantly threatens to break out into full fledged Armageddon at any time.

C. #3: Famines.

1. Ethiopia, Libya, Russia, Pakistan, India, China, etc.
2. The greater part of the world is desert.
3. The United States and Israel produce most of the world's food.

D. #4: Pestilences.

1. In the insect world there are locusts (grasshoppers), killer bees, fire ants.)
2. In the plagues of diseases: bubonic plague, flu, aids

E. #5: earthquakes. (Greatly increased since 1948.)

F. #6: Persecution of Christians. (Russia, Cuba, China, Nicaragua, Philippines, even U.S.)

G. #7: Many renouncing Christianity.

H. #8: False prophets.

1. Every false doctrine was caused by a false prophet.
2. New ones spring up every day.

I. #9: Love for Christ waxing cold.

J. #10: The gospel preached in every nation.

1. We know about all the world now.
2. It has been preached in every nation.

Conclusion:

1. We do not know the exact time but we know the Lord's return is getting near.
2. As we see the signs intensify we know that it is very near.
3. As I see it coming I am glad I am saved.
4. Are you saved?
5. Are you serving the Lord? Are you using whatever time you have for His honor and glory?

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