

## Matthew 24:3-8 Looking at the Future

Introduction: Jesus has left Herod's temple for the last time. He has arrived at the mount of Olives about two miles away from Jerusalem. His disciples (Peter, James, John and Andrew according to Mark) come to Him with some questions about the future: (1) When shall these things be? (The destruction of the temple): (2) What shall be the sign of thy coming? (3) .....and of the end of the world (age)?

### I. The long range signs of the destruction of the temple.

(Signs that it was near but not signs that it was about to happen immediately.)

A. Jesus could have answered the question about the temple specifically but He didn't.

1. He could have said, "In 70 A.D." or "Forty years from now" or "When the Jews revolt against Rome" or "When Titus comes."
2. But instead he gave them signs to watch for, (long range and short range).

B. Sign #1: false Christs, verses 4-5.

1. There was a great expectation of the Christ among the Jews.
2. Jesus Himself is the Christ and He showed Himself to be the Christ.
3. Those who rejected Him would become easy prey to deceivers who would claim to be Christ.
4. Josephus records that a host of such deceivers came forth.

C. Sign #2: wars and rumors of wars, verses 6 and 7a.

1. These wars and rumors of wars were not limited to Israel, but they primarily involved Israel.
2. It would be in a war with Rome that the temple would be destroyed in 70 A.D. (forty years away).
3. In the meantime there would be many confrontations with Rome which would bring many rumors of rebellion and war.
4. Jesus cautioned them not to get upset each time such a confrontation and threat of war came along, verse 6.

D. Sign #3: famines, verse 7.

1. A famine is a shortage of food usually resulting from drought or flood.
2. Jesus said that there would be famine before the temple would be destroyed.
3. There was such a famine and Paul received a special offering among the churches and brought it to Jerusalem.

E. Sign #4: pestilences, verse 7.

1. A pestilence could be either a plague of pests (such as locust, lice, frogs, etc.) or a plague of disease.
2. These plagues along with the other signs would signal that the destruction of the temple would yet come.

F. Sign #5: earthquakes, verse 7.

1. Several earthquakes took place, Matthew 27:54; 28:2; Acts 16:26.
2. Each time an earthquake came it was a sign that the temple would eventually be destroyed.

G. These signs did not signal that the destruction of the temple would immediately come, but that it would come sometime in the near future.

1. The rumor of war did not mean that the destruction would come immediately.
2. All these signs were but the beginning of the sorrows that would bring the destruction of the temple, verse 8.

II. The need for us to look to the future.

- A. We all have an idle curiosity about the future.
- B. But our interest in the future should go far beyond idle curiosity.
  - 1. There are questions that concern our well being, the well being of our family, and the well being of our fellow human beings.
  - 2. The main question is, "Where will I spend eternity?"
- C. There are answers to these questions.
  - 1. Those who have trusted Jesus as Savior will spend eternity with God in glory.
  - 2. Those who do not trust Jesus as Savior will spend eternity in the everlasting fire.

Conclusion: I have trusted in Jesus as my Savior. How about you?

Preached at Pleasant Hill 8-10-86 A.M.