

Matthew 24:15-22 A Warning of the Great Tribulation

Introduction: Jesus said that the temple would be destroyed. The disciples asked, “When?” They also asked what would be the sign of His coming? He gave them ten signs. These ten signs would point them to the nearness of the destruction of the temple and also point us to the nearness of His coming. This text warns of the Great Tribulation.

I. A sign to watch for.

- A. Jesus gave a special sign to watch for: the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, verse 15.
- B. Daniel's prophecy is in Daniel 9:26-27.
 - 1. The prophecy predicts the coming of a prince who would destroy the city of Jerusalem, Daniel 9:26b.
 - 2. It predicts the overspreading of abominations.
 - 3. The center reference reads “with abominable armies.”
 - 4. To the Jews this would be Gentile armies.
 - 5. These Gentile armies would destroy the city of Jerusalem.

II. A warning to flee.

- A. Jesus warns all who are in Judea to flee when they learn that these armies are coming, verse 16.
- B. Those on the housetop are not to go inside to get supplies, verse 17.
- C. Those who work in the field are not to go after their robes (mantle), verse 18.
(The outer garment is laid aside while working.)
- D. Not a minute was to be wasted.
- E. Expectant mothers and mothers with child could not make it, verse 19.

III. An encouragement to pray.

- A. They were not to pray that the invasion would not come.
- B. They should pray that it would not come in winter, verse 20.
- C. They should also pray that it would not come on the sabbath.

IV. A similarity to the invasion of A.D. 70.

- A. The warning that Jesus sounded and the prophecy that Daniel made almost fit to a “T” the events of 70 A.D.
 - 1. Titus and his abominable armies moved in.
 - 2. They spread over the city of Jerusalem and destroyed it.
 - 3. The tribulation and blood shed was very great. (It was made worse by the fact that the Jews had gathered from all over for the Passover. Ironically, the season when Jesus was crucified forty years earlier.)
- B. But this similarity and the warning which Jesus gave saved the lives of the Christians.
 - 1. At the earliest sign of invasion, the Christians fled to the mountains.
(To Pella of Edom mainly.)
 - 2. Eusebius said that not one Christian died in the invasion.

V. The Great Tribulation yet ahead.

- A. The Roman invasion by Titus in 70 A.D. was not the Great Tribulation.
 - 1. Jesus said that He would come immediately after the Tribulation, verses 29-30.
 - 2. Neither was it the Roman invasion by Hadrian, (about 140 A.D.?)

- B. Thus the Great Tribulation is yet ahead.
- C. It is not only going to bring great suffering in Israel and Jerusalem, but in all the world.
 - 1. It is going to be worse than anything that has ever happened in all the world, verse 21.
 - 2. It will be worse than anything that ever will happen as far as historical periods of time are concerned, verse 21.
 - 3. It is going to be so bad that if it lasted very long everybody in the world would be killed, verse 22.

VI. The urgent need of our day.

- A. It is urgent that the lost be saved.
 - 1. The Tribulation is the worst thing to ever happen in the history of the world, but even that is not as bad as going to hell.
 - 2. The Tribulation lasts only 3 ½ years. (7 at the most), but hell is forever.
 - 3. I know how it feels to be headed for the fires of hell.
- B. It is urgent that Christians be watchful.
 - 1. We need to watch for the ten signs which point to the coming of Christ.
 - 2. We need to watch for the signs that the Gentile powers are about to converge on the holy lands and the holy city.
- C. It is urgent to be prayerful.
 - 1. No matter what trouble comes our way in life, it is the Lord who is our source of strength and help.
 - 2. But let us not wait until the trouble comes; let us pray now.
- D. It is urgent that Christians be dedicated.
 - 1. Let us not set our goal on enjoying the pleasures of life.
 - 2. Let us not set our affections on the wealth of the world.
 - 3. Let us not waste our time on the things that count the least, but let us use what time we have to serve the Lord.

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