

Matthew 24:1-3

Introduction:

1. In the latter part of Matthew 24 and in ch.25 Jesus talked about His return, and He stated that no one knows when He will return (24:36, 42, 44; 25:13).
2. Our understanding of the information Jesus presented earlier in Matthew 24 must harmonize with His teaching in these verses.
3. As we study Matthew 24 we must remember the information revealed in:
 - a. Deuteronomy 28
 - 1) God promised to bless the Israelites if they obeyed Him, and He promised to curse them if they disobeyed.
 - 2) Prior to the Lord's ministry, God had punished the Jews many times for their disobedience, but He had never completely destroyed them.
 - b. Matthew 21-23
 - 1) The spiritual condition of the Jews, especially their leaders, was very low.
 - 2) As Jesus spoke in the temple, He showed that destruction would come upon that generation of people living in Jerusalem (23:36-38).

Discussion:

- I. (Matthew 24:1) AFTER THIS, JESUS LEFT THE TEMPLE
 - A. The temple
 1. Three temples had been built in Jerusalem, including:
 - a. the one built by Solomon that the Babylonians destroyed in 586 BC
 - b. the one built by Zerubbabel when the Jews returned to Jerusalem from captivity
 - c. the one built by Herod -- this is the temple that Jesus left.
 2. The temple was very important to the Jews.
 - a. It was the center of their religion.
 - b. It gave the Jews a sense of national security.
 - c. Unfortunately, the Jews often trusted in their temple more than they trusted in God (Jeremiah 7:4, 8-11).
 - B. As Jesus left, His disciples came to Him to show Him the buildings of the temple.
 1. The temple was beautifully decorated (Luke 21:5).
 2. The temple and the surrounding buildings were a long time being built (John 2:20).
- II. (Matthew 24:2) JESUS TOLD HIS DISCIPLES THAT THE TEMPLE WOULD BE DESTROYED
 - A. Jesus said that not one stone would be left upon another.
 - B. Some of the stones are reported to have been 25 cubits long x 8 cubits high x 12 cubits thick [38 ft. long x 12 ft. high x 18 ft. thick].
 - C. This information seems to have gotten the attention of the disciples.
- III. (Matthew 24:3) THE DISCIPLES ASKED JESUS SEVERAL QUESTIONS
 - A. They wanted to know:
 1. when the temple would be destroyed
 2. the sign of the Lord's return and the end of the world.
 - B. These questions give us some insight into what the disciples were thinking.
 1. Jesus had taught them that He will return one day.
 2. They apparently understood that the world will be destroyed when Jesus returns.
 3. It seems that they associated the destruction of the temple with the Lord's return.

Conclusion:

1. When we study Matthew 24-25, we must understand that Jesus was answering the questions asked by the disciples in 24:3.
2. We must associate the Lord's answers with the proper questions.
3. When Jesus answered the disciples' questions, He showed that the destruction of the temple and His return would be 2 different events.
4. We must study these chapters carefully lest we confuse these events.