

## Episode #912 Matthew 24 Part 1-Two Important Questions

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. The Lord just completed His final, definitive confrontation with the corrupt religious leaders of Jerusalem. Now begins one of the most important, prophetic portions of Scripture.

III. Not One Left on Another! Matthew 24:1-2.

- A. Verse 1. Bullinger thinks this is a different prophecy from that in Luke, which was apparently spoken in the temple before He went out of it. This was the last time He would visit the temple before His trial. “Temple” here is *hieron*, the temple grounds, not the holy building. “Came” is approached, *proserchomai*, which we have pointed out occurs many more times in Matthew than in the other gospels. We have suggested the idea of approaching the king in this, the book that presents Christ as the King of the Jews. “Show” is exhibit, display, demonstrate, or set forth. They intended to point out the greatness of these buildings. Bullinger says this consisted of the courts, halls, colonnades, towers, and “wings.”
- B. Verse 2. “Assuredly” is amen, meaning truly. “Not” is the Greek *ou me*, meaning the strongest possible “no,” by no means, or no way. There would not be a stack of stones two high in the entire building! This was a prophecy, and it was fulfilled to the letter in the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D., when the entire complex was leveled. The wailing wall, which is said to be the one part left of the temple still standing, does not count, for it was underground at the time. Again “not” is the Greek *ou me*, meaning the strongest possible “no,” by no means, or no way. Yet the modern texts omit the *me* the second time.

IV. Two Important Questions. Matthew 24:3-8.

- A. Verse 3. This was sometime later, when they had gone back there. It seems they were staying at the Garden of Gethsemane near the Mount of Olives for the duration of the feast (no room in Jerusalem). The grounds may well have been owned by the family of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, and they were letting Him stay on their property.
  1. “Came” is *proserchomai* again, meaning they approached Him, like one approaches the king. They approached Him privately, without the crowds around to listen in. This literally means when He was by Himself.
  2. This could refer to what He had just said, and when not one stone would be left on another. Yet as we suggested in our introductory program, this could also be an introduction to what they were about to ask, since they ask plural about these things. The two things are the sign of His Parousia and the consummation of the eon. In this case, they mean “When shall these things be? Namely: the sign of Thy Parousia, and of the consummation of the eon?”
  3. “Sign” is the Greek *semeion*, which is the common word for miracles in the book of John, where it occurs 17 times. Acts is next most with 13 occurrences. Matthew and Luke have 9, and Mark 6.
  4. As we discussed last program, *Parousia* does not mean “coming.” *Para* means beside, and *ousia* means “being.” *Parousia* means “a being beside,” or to be present. They are asking about the personal presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, and not a “coming.” Moreover, it is a technical word that speaks of

someone being present because of who he is and what he does. As we showed last time, the disciples had no concept that the Lord was going away from them. See John 16:5-11. They were sorrowful at the news of His going away, so they surely had not realized that He was going away a few days earlier when they asked these questions. Yet they did realize that the Lord was not yet officially present as the King and the Messiah that He is.

5. End is *sunteleia*, which comes from two words. *Telos* means to end, and *sun* is a prefix that means together. So this speaks of when things come to an end together to produce a certain result. This word means a consummation, the conclusion or the expected and intended end. Not the “end of the world.”
6. “Age” is the Greek *aion* or eon. The Greek word has to do with an outflow. This present, evil eon we live in will never produce or consummate in anything. This evil eon will come to an end, but if it should go on for another two thousand years, we would have nothing but more of the same ongoing sin and corruption. Yet the eon of the kingdom of God will have its consummation, and it will produce something. This conclusion of the eon the disciples are asking about is the conclusion of the eon of the kingdom of God to come, not the conclusion of this present, evil eon. That eon is to be followed by the thousand-year Parousia of our Lord Jesus Christ.
7. The world is not yet ready for the Lord’s personal presence. You and I are not ready for the personal presence of Jesus Christ. Yet what God does in the premillennial kingdom—all those years in which He sends forth truth and light and righteousness—will change conditions and will change people on earth to such an extent that we will be ready for the personal presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. The conclusion of the kingdom eon takes place in what is often called the tribulation period.

V. Conclusion: The disciples wanted to know about the sign of Christ’s official presence, not of His coming back, as they didn’t know He was leaving. The consummation of the eon is when the great, premillennial kingdom of God consummates in Christ’s personal presence for a thousand years. We must keep straight the Biblical reality of God’s coming plans.