

The Return of the King

Books get written on the date of the return of Jesus.

- *The Late Great Planet Earth*
- *88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Be in 1988*
- *The End: Why Jesus Could Return by A.D. 2000.*

1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. ² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. ³ For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

- Jesus is coming back
- Part of Advent is looking to His second coming.

We are told that Jesus' return will be quick and people will not expect it when it happens.

- **Matthew 24:36-44** "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. ³⁷ But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ³⁸ For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ⁴⁰ Then two *men* will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹ Two *women will be* grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴² Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. ⁴³ But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

So if Jesus' return is coming at an unexpected time, why bother even thinking about it?

1 Thessalonians 5:4-6 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵ You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. ⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober.

- We are not just any people on this planet. We are children of God.
- We should eagerly await the return of Jesus in the same way children wait for their fathers or mothers to return home, like military families.
- We know it is coming. It is real. It will happen.

There are 4 main parables about the return of Jesus that teach us how to look at the return of Christ. These parables are found in harmony throughout the Gospels. But we will look primarily at parables in Matthew 24 and 25.

In those 2 chapters, Jesus teaches exclusively about His return and the end times.

Although we will first at a parable in Mark because I like the specific wording in that account.

There are a lot more teachings, and also information found in the Epistles, plus prophecies from the OT, but we'll stick to these four parables today. And we won't even exhaustively look at them.

Maybe explain hermeneutical principles for parables?

Parable 1

Mark 13:33-37 Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is. ³⁴ *It is* like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch. ³⁵ Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning— ³⁶ lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. ³⁷ And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!"

- From this parable:
- You do not know exactly when this is going to happen

- Watch
 - While we do not know when Jesus is coming, we are still commanded to watch.
 - You may think there is sufficient time because many of the signs from the Bible have not been fulfilled. Things can move quickly!
 - **Isaiah 66:8** Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? *Or* shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, she gave birth to her children.
 - May 19, 1948 Israel became a nation
 - Because of the Holocaust, many Jews fled into Palestine setting the stage
 - **Isaiah 11:11** It shall come to pass in that day *That* the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people who are left, From Assyria and Egypt, From Pathros and Cush, From Elam and Shinar, From Hamath and the islands of the sea.
 - While we may **not** know when, we know the signs to look for.
 - **Matthew 24:4-15** And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, "I am the Christ," and will deceive many. ⁶ And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ All these *are* the beginning of sorrows. ⁹ "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. ¹⁰ And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. ¹¹ Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. ¹² And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³ But he who endures to the end shall be saved. ¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. ¹⁵ "Therefore when you see the '*abomination of*

desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand),

- Pray
 - What should we be praying?
 - Pray for the harvest (Jesus told us to anyways)
 - **Colossians 4:2-4** Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; ³ meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, ⁴ that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.
 - Pray for our own endurance
 - **Matthew 24:13** But he who endures to the end shall be saved.
 - Pray for His return to come
- Watch and Pray – Keep our eyes on Him and His return and do not get distracted by the world.
- Do not be caught in bed with the world when Jesus returns.

Parable #2 – The Sheep and the Goats

Matthew 25:31-46

Key passages:

- **Matthew 25:34-36** Then the King will say to those on His right hand, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'
- **Matthew 25:41** "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

There are consequences to the way our lives are lived, both good and bad, and His return will reveal those.

- The way we treat others reveals our beliefs about God.

- Do we believe others are made in His image? That they also are loved, valued, accepted?
- Part of expecting His return is living like He is coming back now.
- How important are others to us?
- **Philippians 2:3** *Let nothing be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

Parable #3 – The Talents

Matthew 25:14-30

Use Kingdom resources entrusted to you to glorify God until He returns
(Parable of the Talents)

- What has God given to you?
- Your skills. Your money. Your time.
- Do we spend on ourselves and our happiness, or do we advance His Kingdom?
- In this time of waiting, what are we doing with what has been entrusted to us?

Parable #4 – The 10 Virgins

Matthew 25:1-13

- Be prepared to wait a long time before the Lord's Return
- Keep your oil filled.

How do we keep enduring to the end?

Luke 12:35-36 "Let your waist be girded and *your* lamps burning; ³⁶ and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately.

- Keep those lamps burning!!!
- Do not lose zeal.

- We need the Holy Spirit.
- **Matthew 25:3-4** Those who *were* foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them,⁴ but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.
- **Acts 4:29-31** Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word,³⁰ by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.”³¹ And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Encourage each other to stay filled and endure.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

- These are the ending words of Paul after describing the return of Christ.